ACTIVE LIVING & TRANSPORTATION PLAYBOOK
The Active Living & Transportation Playbook provides a ten-strategy path to increase active living and transportation, and to improve community health and safety.
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This Playbook is a guide to help communities partner with local governments to create healthy, active streets and encourage active transportation.

The Active Living & Transportation Playbook is designed to answer a key question: “Where do we start?” The strategies are organized in a sequence that many communities have followed, starting with pilots, programs, and awareness-building activities, and then moving toward policies that promote and support active living on an ongoing basis.

Local government agencies, such as city planning, traffic, and public works departments, are uniquely positioned to shape community design and transportation systems, including streets, transit networks, and trails. City leaders, mayors, and council members can set an agenda for safer, healthier, and more active communities. Cities and counties should work in partnership with schools, businesses, and community organizations in deciding which strategies to pursue. Partnership is the key to long-term success!

- The four strategies (Transform the Street-Space, Show the Way, Test It Out, and Get Kids Moving With Programs) are activities, programs, and environmental changes that spark community momentum for policy action. Local governments and community groups can implement these strategies before adopting a new policy or use them to make changes after supportive policies are in place.

- The six policies (Get Kids Moving With Policies, Share What’s There, Complete Our Streets, Design for All, Plan for Activity, and Safety for All) provide a menu of options for ensuring commitments to active living and transportation are embedded in decisions about budgeting, road maintenance and repair, and land development. These six policies correspond to Healthy Living community outcomes for Cities and Government.

Creating healthy, safe, and active communities isn’t a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Communities will need to assess local needs, opportunities, and readiness for change before deciding which strategy to act on first. Many communities may choose to pursue multiple strategies.
This Playbook provides communities with a one-stop shop for inspiration, guidance, and key resources that support active living and transportation.

For each strategy, the Playbook includes a description explaining what the strategy is and why it matters, examples of the strategy in action, and links to the best in-depth resources for more information (such as implementation guides and model policies).

The strategies are generally organized from “easiest” to “hardest” in terms of cost, political buy-in needed, and complexity of implementation. To assist communities and local decision makers, the Playbook includes icons that indicate how easy the strategy is to implement, the amount of resources or cost it requires, and how potentially politically challenging it is.

For communities that are just getting started, or where there is little awareness about the importance of active living and transportation, the first four strategies (Transform the Street-Space, Show the Way, Test It Out, and Get Kids Moving With Programs) are good places to start. For communities where more awareness exists or where successful programs are already in place, the six policies (Get Kids Moving With Policies, Share What’s There, Complete Our Streets, Design for All, Plan for Activity, and Safety for All) provide options to establish a long-term, sustainable commitment to active living and transportation.
WHY ACTIVE LIVING & TRANSPORTATION MATTERS IN OKLAHOMA

Building physical activity into daily life is critical to the health, safety, and well-being of everyone.

Thirty-two percent of adults in Oklahoma are obese\(^2\) – meanwhile, 82 percent of Oklahomans drive alone to work, and a quarter of those commutes are more than 30 minutes long.\(^2\) Research shows that each hour spent in a car per day is associated with a 6 percent increase in the likelihood of obesity. Conversely, each hour spent walking per day is associated with a 5 percent reduction in the likelihood of obesity.\(^3\)

Long commute distances are often cited as a reason why people do not walk or bike to work. However, work commutes represent only 13 percent of all car trips.\(^4\) Personal, family, social, and recreational travel make up the vast majority (67%) of trips.\(^4\) This provides a significant opportunity to promote active transportation as people travel to meet their daily needs: visiting friends or family, or traveling to a coffee shop, grocery store, day care, school, or place of worship. Many of these trips are two miles or less, and could be made by active transportation if communities had safe, convenient places for people to walk and bicycle.

Increasing opportunities for active transportation also benefits low-income households, who are less likely to own cars. Thirty-one percent of Oklahomans who make less than $10,000 a year take public transit to work, while only 3 percent of Oklahomans who make more than $75,000 a year take public transit to work.\(^5\) Families and individuals without a private car must rely on transportation that may be less safe or convenient.

The good news is that people are more physically active, and mentally and physically healthier, when neighborhoods are designed to promote active living and transportation.
active living and transportation. Designing, building, and retrofitting our communities with sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and other safe amenities means more people can be physically active – and healthier – in their daily lives:

- Physical activity (i.e., bicycling or walking) is linked to higher cognitive functioning and greater emotional well-being, and can help prevent mental health disorders.\(^6\), \(^7\)

- Adults who bicycle enjoy lower weight and blood pressure, and are less likely to become diabetic.\(^8\) Bicycling also reduces mortality rates by decreasing the incidence of traffic-related deaths and respiratory illnesses.\(^9\)

- Encouraging young people to bicycle supports long-term health. Adolescents who bicycle are 48 percent less likely to be overweight as adults.\(^48\)

- A man who lives in a walkable, mixed-use area (where homes, commercial buildings, schools, and other daily needs are near each other) is ten pounds lighter than a similar man who lives in a car-oriented area.\(^10\)

- Studies also show that residents living in “walkable” environments are more likely to know their neighbors and participate in social activities.\(^10\), \(^11\)

- Walking and biking are good for the local economy. Multiple studies show that people who visit shopping districts by bicycle spend more on a weekly basis than those who visit by car.\(^12\)–\(^17\) Building infrastructure that supports biking and walking also creates more jobs than traditional road projects.\(^18\)

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**PER $1 MILLION SPENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active transportation infrastructure</th>
<th>11 jobs created</th>
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<tr>
<td>Repaving and widening roads</td>
<td>8 jobs created</td>
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Why It Matters for Rural Communities

Sixty-six percent of Oklahoma’s traffic fatalities occur in rural areas, even though these places are home to about 35 percent of Oklahomans. Many rural communities have commercial areas (traditionally main street or downtown), residential areas, and agriculture or open space areas where context-sensitive improvements could be made. Providing safe transportation infrastructure is important for improving health and safety in every community, including rural communities.

- Rural two-lane highways with a paved shoulder width of four to six feet have a lower number of collisions involving people walking and biking than rural roads without shoulders.

- The number of crashes involving people biking increases significantly on rural roads with shoulders less than three feet wide.

- Rural highways with a paved shoulder width of eight or more feet reduce collisions by 13 percent.

- In residential and commercial areas, narrow, or “skinny,” streets (24 feet wide) are safer than wider streets (36 feet wide).

- The wider the street, the greater the collision rate; on average, 36-foot-wide streets have a 487 percent higher collision rate than 24-foot-wide streets.

NARROW, SLOW-SPEED STREETS INCREASE DRIVERS’ YIELD RATES

The speed limit and design of a road affects whether drivers will yield to pedestrians:

- Two-lane road with 25–30 mph speed limit: drivers are 40–59% likely to yield to pedestrian

- Two-lane road with 35–40 mph speed limit: drivers are 15–39% likely to yield to pedestrian

- Four-lane road with 35–40 mph speed limit: drivers are less than 15% likely to yield to pedestrian
“During the course of my 20-year career, it has become very clear to me that there are two key elements that greatly contribute to the success and vitality of towns and cities. They are quality of life and sense of place. Quality of life relates to security, opportunity, and amenities. Sense of place goes more toward local character and quality of how things are done. It’s what defines us as a community. Streets that include trees, sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting and bike lanes provide safe and comfortable choices for us to recreate and travel. That improves our lives and helps create sense of place.”

– Doug Moore, APA, CFM, Pryor Creek, Oklahoma

Why It Matters for Kids
Less than 10 percent of Oklahoma kids walk to school, and less than 2 percent bike.24 Getting more kids active has significant benefits.

- **Healthier Kids:** By walking to school, students get more exercise, reduce their risk for obesity and diabetes, and improve their overall health.25

- **Better Academic Performance:** Students who exercise before school are more focused and engaged, and get better grades.26 Also, healthier children miss fewer days of school.27

- **Traffic Safety:** Ten to 14 percent of morning rush-hour traffic is attributable to families driving their children to school.28 Walking children to school reduces traffic congestion and lowers the risk of traffic collisions.29

- **Improved Environment:** Fewer car trips means lower greenhouse gas emissions and decreased levels of air pollution.30 This, in turn, minimizes children’s exposure to pollutants,31 which is of particular benefit to students with asthma.32
TRANSFORM
THE STREET-SPACE

Create vibrant, active public spaces and transform how people think about, see, and experience streets.

It’s easy to forget that streets are one of our primary “public spaces.” They can comprise up to 80 percent of the public land in a town or city. One of the most significant barriers to creating safe, healthy, and active streets may be our own preconceptions! There are low-cost strategies that local governments can implement with community partners to encourage people to use their streets in a whole new way. Sometimes all it takes is a little imagination and a new approach.

**Play Streets and Open Streets** are short-term permitted closures of all vehicular traffic for one day (called Open Streets or sometimes “Sunday Streets”) or for simply a few hours each day (Play Streets). The purpose is to encourage community residents of all ages to be physically active and connect with their neighbors in a fun and safe environment. Play Streets and Open Streets support physical activity by closing streets to motor vehicle traffic, which allows children and families to play in the street. Play Streets and Open Streets can include activities that encourage healthy, fun physical activity for everyone (e.g., hula-hooping, basketball, and dance parties).
Build a Better Block projects temporarily transform an entire block to improve safety and increase economic vibrancy. Usually located on vacant or neglected commercial streets, Better Block projects host pop-up stores, cultural and artistic activities, and temporary street changes, such as outdoor seating or the creation of bike lanes from temporary materials (like duct tape or chalk).

Parklets are curbside parking areas that have been converted (temporarily or permanently) into vibrant mini-parks or plazas. The parklet idea originated in 2005 with an annual worldwide event called Park(ing) Day. Local governments can implement a parklet permit program. Local businesses, residents, and neighborhood associations can apply to build parklets, which are often located on neighborhood commercial streets or in town centers. Parklets support physical activity by making streets safer, and more attractive places to walk, and by creating walkable destinations within neighborhoods or along commercial streets.

Community Examples

Dallas, TX: The Dallas Center for Architecture sponsored two month-long pop-up parklets in April of 2012 and 2013. The public parklets in downtown Dallas were constructed as moveable, modular platforms, each occupying a single parking space and capable of hosting a variety of activities, including outdoor cafe seating, an open-air gallery, a reading room, and more. The parklets were made available for programming by interested groups.

Kentucky: Second Sunday is an annual event during which counties throughout the state are encouraged to close designated streets to car traffic while providing healthy activity programming. Ninety-four percent of Kentucky’s 120 counties (75 of which are rural) host Second Sunday events.

Oklahoma City, OK: Better Block OKC aims to create quick, inexpensive, and high-impact changes that exhibit permanent solutions. Oklahoma City’s Better Block team created hybrid bike-rack benches out of reclaimed pallets, a series of pop-up shops, reverse-angle parking, cafe seating, dog parks, and more, putting innovative ideas on the ground to help revitalize a historic block. Watch the Open Streets OKC 2014 event video.
Key Resources: Transform the Street-Space

- **The Open Street Project** provides news and general information about Open Street initiatives across the nation, as well as resources and technical assistance.

- **Better Block** provides news and information on Better Block projects located around the world.

Implementation guide for Open Streets

- **The Open Streets Guide**, developed by the Alliance for Biking & Walking, highlights initiatives across the country, discusses the benefits of Open Streets events, details various funding and organizational structures, and provides examples of best practices for starting or improving an Open Streets initiative in your community.

Implementation guides for Parklets

- **Reclaiming the Right of Way: A Toolkit for Creating and Implementing Parklets**, was developed by UCLA’s Luskin School of Public Affairs. This toolkit describes what a parklet is, gives examples and case studies of parklets in cities across the United States and Canada, and discusses parklet design.

- **The San Francisco Parklet Manual**, created by the San Francisco Planning Department, describes the proposal process and permitting (initial permit and renewal), as well as parklet design, construction, and maintenance.
Install wayfinding signs and maps that increase awareness of places to walk and bike, and promote “placemaking.”

Just as people driving rely on street signs, people walking or bicycling need signage that points out safe routes and key destinations. Signs and maps (called “wayfinding”) can help people find trails and bikeways, help locate places people can walk or bike to (like a park or museum), and help communities foster a sense of place. Signs can also clearly inform people of the “time distance” to important community locations (e.g., “15-minute walk to the library”). Installing wayfinding can be a simple, low-cost project, or it can be a larger, more complex signage program in which professional design, community branding, planning, financing, and maintenance are involved. Wayfinding systems, when combined with other strategies, are part of a holistic approach to increasing walking and bicycling.
Community Examples

**Lancaster, PA:** Lancaster, a small city in central Pennsylvania, demonstrated the potential of a municipal wayfinding system to raise awareness of under-used destinations. After Lancaster installed a city-wide wayfinding system in 1999, attendance at five major destinations in the city increased by 10 percent in one year. In addition, the city found that name recognition went up for secondary destinations like the art museum and central market.

**Mount Hope, WV:** Mount Hope (population 1,500) wanted to increase awareness of the walkability of its downtown corridor in anticipation of an upcoming tourist event that would bring 30,000 visitors. However, they lacked the funding for more traditional, permanent signage. Using the Walk Your City tool, volunteers in Mount Hope created and installed 80 directional signs along the downtown corridor that told people walking how long it would take them to walk to certain destinations. The Walk Your City signs also include QR codes (a bar code that can be read by an imaging device, such as the camera on a smartphone) that people can scan for directions. The town can track how many times each sign has been scanned, thereby also tracking usage and impact.

**Key Resources: Show the Way**

- **Walk [Your City],** a DIY tool for creating walking and biking signs, boosts the impact of wayfinding by linking informational street signs with web-based walkability campaign management and data collection.

- The Urban Wayfinding Planning and Implementation Manual, developed by The Signage Foundation Inc., describes steps to implement a comprehensive signage and wayfinding program.
Implement pilots and make low-cost changes to roadways that enhance safety and comfort for people walking and bicycling.

Communities that are not yet ready to commit to a whole scale redesign of their streets or roads may want to start small, with a few low-cost interventions that can pave the way to safer, more attractive, and more comfortable streets for people walking and biking. Pilot projects give people a chance to try out new designs, and can help build support for changes as well as test their consequences. Pilots also provide the opportunity to engage residents and community members, collect feedback about changes, and educate people about safer roadway layouts. Changes to paint and road configurations can be implemented by a local government, with existing or new funding for road maintenance and repair. Community partners can organize community support, collect data, and solicit community feedback.
Rightsizing Roads, also called “road diets,” are projects in which the total number of vehicle lanes, and/or lane widths, are decreased to improve road safety and make room for bicycle lanes and/or wider sidewalks. Rightsizing road projects are one of the most important strategies for decreasing collisions that involve people walking and biking. A typical project involves the conversion of a four-lane street into three lanes, with one vehicle travel lane in each direction and a center turn lane. The space created by eliminating the fourth lane is used to install bikeways, refuge islands, or wider sidewalks. Because these projects mainly consist of restriping (painting), rightsizing is a relatively low-cost way to retrofit existing roadways with bikeways in both directions, particularly when planned in conjunction with reconstruction or simple repaving projects. Many cities and towns address rightsizing roads in re-pavement programs. The Federal Highway Administration provides guidance on which roads may be good candidates for a road diet, based on traffic volume. Jurisdictions may also want to consider other relevant factors, such as proximity to schools or other destinations or rates of collisions and injuries.

Enhanced Bicycle Lanes are design improvements for standard bicycle lanes. Many cities and towns have begun to explore a variety of low-cost ways to increase safety and comfort for people biking:

- Using green paint in conflict zones to alert drivers to look out for and be aware of people biking.

- Painting buffered bike lanes, where a buffer zone two feet or wider is added between car lanes and bike lanes.

- Installing protected bike lanes (i.e., “cycle tracks”), where a physical barrier buffers the bike lane from the vehicle travel lane. Physical barriers may be parked cars, raised curbs, planters, or tubular markers (“flex posts”).
**Enhanced Pedestrian Ways – Crosswalks & Curb Extensions** are enhancements for basic pedestrian infrastructure. Many streets have unsafe crossing conditions for people walking. Enhanced crossing treatments include highly visible painted crosswalks (ladder, zebra/continental style), pedestrian safety islands (especially important for wide streets with multiple lanes), and curb extensions. All these treatments can be low-cost if paint, bollards, and planters are used. No reconstruction of the roadway is necessary for these pilot projects.

### Crosswalk Markings

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<tr>
<th>Ladder</th>
<th>Zebra</th>
<th>Continental</th>
<th>Solid</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Dashed</th>
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Curb extensions make streets safer for people walking.

**Community Examples**

**St. Petersburg, FL:** In 2008, the city painted a bike lane green in a major intersection, and installed signs instructing vehicles to yield when crossing the bike lane to make right turns. A study on the effects of the green pavement, conducted by the National Association of City Transportation Officials, showed that 98 percent of motorists yielded to people biking in the green weaving area, and that conflicts declined.

**Tulsa, OK:** In 2014, a demonstration project for a rightsizing road or road diet (pictured on p. 13), converted a street called 4th Place from four vehicle travel lanes to two vehicle travel lanes with bike lanes in each direction, and street parking on one side of the road. A small multidisciplinary working group, comprising Engineering Services, Traffic Engineering, and Planning Department, formed to manage both the creation of street design options and the community engagement process. Through a consensus-building exercise, residents shared their knowledge about the street, discussed options for making changes, and selected the final design. The city and residents deemed the process and project to be an overwhelming success.

**TIP**

Changes to streets that enhance safety can be especially effective near schools, supporting Safe Routes to School programs and policies (see pp. 16–21). For example, a protected bikeway near a school could support “bike trains.” Surveys and interviews with parents and students are effective ways to build community support for safer infrastructure.

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Key Resources: Test It Out

- The Urban Street Design Guide, produced by the National Association of City Transportation Officials, is the perfect primer for anyone who wants to learn about better, safer street design. Through words, diagrams, and images, it describes better street design principles for different types of streets (downtown, neighborhood, commercial, etc.), street design elements, interim design strategies, intersection design, and design controls. The web-based version of the guide is free.

General resources to learn more about traffic calming

- The Road Diet Informational Guide, developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation and Safe Roads for a Safer Future, includes safety, operational, and quality of life considerations from research and practice. It guides readers through the decision-making process to determine whether road diets are a good fit for a particular corridor. This guide also provides design guidance and encourages post-implementation evaluation.

- Traffic Calming for High-Speed Rural Roadways – Synthesis of Research Studies, conducted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, covers research on traffic calming for high-speed rural roadways.

Implementation guide for traffic calming

- The Traffic Calming Guidelines, from the South Carolina Department of Transportation, describes what traffic calming is, the process of how to do it in South Carolina, and examples (most of which are in small towns).
GET KIDS MOVING WITH PROGRAMS

Implement context-sensitive Safe Routes to School programs to ensure that all children can safely walk, bike, and roll to school.

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) movement promotes safety and convenience for children and their families to walk, bike, or roll to school. By walking or bicycling to school, children incorporate physical activity into their day and arrive at school focused and ready to learn. Walking and bicycling to school also builds community cohesion and helps reduce air pollution and traffic congestion around schools and neighborhoods.36–38 One study showed that locations with Safe Routes to School interventions saw a 44 percent decline in school-aged pedestrian injury during school travel hours, while injury rates in locations without Safe Routes to School interventions stayed the same.31
All children, no matter their race, ethnicity, or income level, and regardless of where they live, should be able to safely walk, bike, or roll to school.

Safe Routes to School programs have been built around “Five E’s”: education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, and evaluation. Equity is another important “E” that should be incorporated into SRTS. All children, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or income level, and no matter where they live, should be able to safely walk, bike, or roll to school. SRTS programs should be designed and implemented to take inequities into account (including rates of chronic disease, injury, and access to safe streets). Improvements should be prioritized in communities with the greatest health risks and needs.

Local governments can partner with schools and community-based organizations by evaluating routes for walking and biking, providing funding and traffic enforcement, and making changes to streets, sidewalks, and trails. Community partners often assist Safe Routes to School programs with community outreach, education, and program evaluation. Specific roles and responsibilities depend on the capacity of each city or town, school, and community-based organization. Safe Routes to School efforts can also be directly linked to school wellness policies in partnership with schools and school districts.

The prospect of students walking or bicycling to school often leaves families concerned about real and perceived safety issues. Communities can help address these concerns by implementing “walking school buses” or “bicycle trains,” which encourage groups of students to walk or bicycle to school together, escorted by adult leaders. These programs can be part of an organized school-wide effort with trained safety leaders, or they can consist of informal groups of children and parents who meet up to walk or bicycle together.

**Community Examples**

**Oklahoma City, OK:** *NeighborWalk* was a two-day program piloted at three schools. NeighborWalk engaged 122 elementary students and their teachers in an interactive education program that encouraged healthy choices like biking and walking, as well as participation in civic life. The NeighborWalk partnership included the Neighborhood Alliance of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma City Office of Sustainability, Oklahoma City Public Schools, and University of Oklahoma College of Architecture Division of Regional & City Planning. Several other organizations provided program and volunteer support, including Oklahoma City Planning Department, Oklahoma City Police Department, Oklahoma City MAPS 3 Sidewalks and Trails Subcommittee, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center College of Public Health, and Target Stores.

**TIP**

Consider adapting the *NeighborWalk* program for your community.
Lawton, OK: Lawton Safe Routes to School, which officially kicked off with International Walk to School Day in October 2007, is currently operating at Howell and Whittier Elementary schools. A coalition supports the program, providing the opportunity to work with schools, city officials, local physicians, parents, the county health department, the local YMCA, Lawton Police Department, and other organizations. The program’s initial goals were to increase the number of children safely walking and/or biking to school, and to reduce traffic congestion during drop-off and pick-up times. Both goals have been achieved. Since the program began, the number of children walking to and from school has doubled. Meanwhile, Lawton’s Walking School Bus (WSB) program has increased the number of children walking to school with adult supervision. Parents can drop off (and pick up) their children at designated points, where children can proceed to school together with the WSB. As an extra safety measure, the program has specified safe houses along the WSB routes where students are taught they can go if they feel threatened or if bad weather arises.

Key Resources: Get Kids Moving With Programs

- **Steps to Creating a Safe Routes to School Program**, developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School, walks through the steps of how to create a Safe Routes to School program.

- **School Route Maps and the Tools to Create Them**, developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School, includes general information, school route maps, neighborhood walkabout and bike-about plans, walk/bike audits, and school traffic control plans.

Safe Routes to School in rural communities

- **Rural Communities: Making Safe Routes Work**, a fact sheet from the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, is an introduction to Safe Routes to School, highlighting why Safe Routes to School programs benefit rural communities.

- **Rural Communities: Best Practices and Promising Approaches for Safe Routes**, a fact sheet from the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, describes the challenges of Safe Routes to School in rural areas. This fact sheet also highlights successful rural programs and the innovative approaches they’ve used to overcome hurdles.

- **Rural Communities: A Two-Pronged Approach for Improving Walking and Bicycling**, a fact sheet from the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, outlines an approach for how rural communities can support walking and bicycling.
Get Out & Get Moving: Opportunities to Walk to School through Remote Drop-Off Programs, a fact sheet developed by ChangeLab Solutions, describes remote drop-off programs, which designate one or more sites within walking distance of a school where parents (and sometimes school buses) drop off students in the morning so they can walk the rest of the way.

Examples of local governments with Safe Routes to School programs

- Safe Routes to School in Solano County, created by the Solano Transportation Authority in California (a rural/suburban county), includes general information, route maps, educational materials, and survey tally sheets.

- Portland Safe Routes to School includes general information, route maps, educational materials, and survey results. Developed by the Portland Bureau of Transportation, the Safe Routes to School program has been tracking student travel modes since 2006.

- Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s Safe Routes to School Program, discusses the history of Safe Routes to School in Oklahoma, and includes useful resources for managing Safe Routes to School programs (e.g. parent survey, student tally, walkability checklist, bikeability checklist, etc.).
Adopt a Safe Routes to School policy to increase walking and biking to school.

While schools are often the leaders in supporting and implementing Safe Routes to School, cities and local governments also have a role to play. City or county Safe Routes to School policies can range from simple statements of support for Safe Routes to School, to prioritizing infrastructure improvements near schools or along designated “safe routes.” Cities and counties with strong Safe Routes to School policies should have regular, ongoing coordination between their public works departments, police departments, school districts, and community development or planning. Community partners can help with outreach, organizing coalition meetings, data collection, and evaluation.
Community Example

**Denver, CO:** In 2007, Denver City Council unanimously approved a proclamation to establish the Denver Safe Routes to School (DSRTS) Coalition. The Coalition was charged with developing a Denver Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan, which envisions that every child has safe access to school. The development of the strategic plan took one year and involved more than 45 organizations, including Denver Environmental Health, Denver Public Schools, Denver Public Health, Denver Public Works, Bicycle Colorado, BikeDenver, Safe Routes to Schools National Partnership, Walk Denver, and Livewell Colorado. The Coalition works to develop systematic programming so that all Denver communities can achieve state and regional Safe Routes to Schools goals. The Strategic Plan explains the SRTS program and includes short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations for education, enforcement, and engineering.

Key Resources: Get Kids Moving With Policies

“Build your own” Safe Routes to School Policy

- The Safe Routes to School Policy Workbook by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership and ChangeLab Solutions provides basic information on Safe Routes to School policies, as well as model policy language (beginner, intermediate, and advanced) for school districts. Note that this model is intended for use by school districts and can be adapted as a resolution for cities and counties.

- On the Move: Safe Routes to School Policies in Rural School Districts, from ChangeLab Solutions, describes approaches and tools that may be of particular assistance to rural schools.

- Model Comprehensive Plan Language Supporting Safe Routes to School, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, is a natural place to begin developing goals, policies, and actions that promote Safe Routes to School. Comprehensive plans commonly cover the core elements of Safe Routes to School policies, including transportation, land use, and collaboration and coordination with school districts. Communities can adapt model language to their needs. (Learn more about comprehensive plans on p. 32.)

TIP

Safe Routes to School policies can be included in comprehensive plans (see p. 32 for more information) or adopted as stand-alone resolutions. A Safe Routes to School policy should also be linked to and incorporated into school wellness policies.
Communities across Oklahoma want safe and accessible places for children and their families to exercise and play. Public schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations have a variety of recreational facilities – gymnasiums, playgrounds, multipurpose rooms, and walking trails – where people can engage in physical activity. Unfortunately, these spaces are often inaccessible to the general community due to concerns over costs, maintenance, security, and liability.

Adopt Shared Use policies to create safe, accessible places for physical activity and play.
Shared use – also called joint use or community use – traditionally occurs when government entities (or sometimes private, nonprofit organizations) agree to allow public access to their facilities. Shared use can take place on a formal basis (e.g., based on a written agreement or policy) or on an informal basis (e.g., based on historical practice). A shared use agreement is a formal arrangement between two entities – often a school district and a city or county – that sets forth the terms and conditions for the shared use of the facility. Shared use agreements can cover everything from scheduling and staffing to insurance and indemnification. Community partners can help with community outreach, organizing coalition meetings, data collection, and evaluation. Community partners can also assist in identifying both areas with the greatest need for access to recreational space and recreational facilities that may be appropriate for shared use.

**Community Examples**

**Springdale, AR:** Jones Elementary School serves a largely low-income community. The school applied for and received a Joint Use Agreement (JUA) grant from the Arkansas Department of Education in 2010 for materials to build a quarter-mile trail on school grounds. The City of Springdale provided the manpower and equipment needed to install the trail. The JUA trail at Jones Elementary is now available for use by students, faculty, and staff when school is in session, and by the community at other times. Meanwhile, the school’s Wellness Center leveraged part of the grant funding to provide a six-week physical training program for girls (known as Girls on the Run) that includes bonding exercises, self-esteem-building activities, anti-bullying curricula, and art projects.

**Hamilton County, TN:** The Hamilton County school district covers more than 542 square miles, encompassing urban and rural areas. Most residents in this area live closer to a school than a park. Even while the county struggles with high rates of adult overweight and obesity, the majority of schools kept their outdoor spaces fenced off, with No Trespassing signs posted at the gates. In February 2014, Hamilton County’s school board passed an open use policy for the district’s elementary schools. The policy is not as broad as was originally intended – schools agreed to community use of school grounds only on weekends and holidays – but it has proven to be an important step forward.
Key Resources: Share What’s There

Note: Shared use is also known as joint use.

- **Checklist for Developing a Joint Use Agreement**, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, is for parties who are considering joint use agreements as a means to share existing facilities.

- ChangeLab Solutions created **Four Model Joint Use Agreements**: opening outdoor school facilities for use during non-school hours; opening indoor and outdoor school facilities for use during non-school hours; opening school facilities for use during non-school hours and authorizing third parties to operate programs there; and joint use of district and city recreation facilities.

- **Playing Smart: Maximizing the Potential of School and Community Property Through Joint Use Agreements**, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, is a nuts and bolts guide to help school staff and other community leaders craft and implement joint use agreements. Complete with model agreement language and success stories from communities around the country, this guide provides a comprehensive overview of the most common ways to finance joint use arrangements, and guidance on how to overcome obstacles that may arise in negotiating and enforcing a joint use agreement.
Many of our streets are designed primarily for cars, with few features that support safe travel for people walking and bicycling. “Complete Streets” policies change how decisions about street design are made, ensuring that people of all ages and abilities can get around safely and easily on foot, bicycle, or public transit, as well as by car. Decisions about street design and construction of streets are the responsibility of cities, towns, counties, and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. Community partners can assist with community outreach, organizing coalition meetings, community walk audits, data collection, and evaluation.
For Complete Streets, context is key. Each street does not require the same features to be “complete” or safe for active travel. A road designed for slow speeds or a wide paved shoulder may be enough to make it safe for walking or bicycling. Other streets may require elements such as painted crosswalks, accessible transit stops, pedestrian signals, median islands, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. Incorporating Complete Streets features when streets are being built or resurfaced decreases their cost, as those costs are folded into budgeted transportation project expenses.

**Community Examples**

**Edmond, OK:** Edmond’s City Council unanimously passed a **resolution in support of Complete Streets** in 2010, becoming the first city in Oklahoma with a Complete Streets policy.

**Sand Springs, OK:** The Sand Springs City Council unanimously passed a **resolution in support of Complete Streets** in 2013. This effort included the collaboration of the City of Sand Springs, Tulsa Health Department, Tulsa County Wellness Partnership, and Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG).

**RURAL COMMUNITIES**

Complete Streets are not just for urban areas. In fact, 46 percent of Complete Streets policies have been passed in rural communities, small towns, and small suburbs. Widening main streets, which are also state highways, compromise pedestrian safety, and can have a negative impact on small-town economies. Complete Streets policies at the local level help communicate the town’s goals and priorities to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), which may be responsible for maintaining roads. Complete Streets may look different in rural communities than they do in urban centers. For example, roads surrounded by agricultural lands may be “complete” simply by providing wide shoulders for safe bicycling and walking. In rural environments, it is especially important to allow design flexibility so that solutions can be context sensitive.
Key Resources: Complete Our Streets

- ChangeLab Solutions has developed a library of Complete Streets resources, including a model policy and model language for comprehensive plans, fact sheets, and webinars.

- The Complete Streets Local Policy Workbook from Smart Growth America can serve as a starting point for mapping out a Complete Streets policy. This introductory Workbook includes an overview of the types of Complete Streets policies, the elements of policies, and guidelines for creating a community vision. The Workbook also includes recommendations for how to commit to a community vision, detailed explanations of best practices, and a step-by-step guide for getting policies from paper into practice.

- The City of Tulsa Complete Streets Procedural Manual provides an overview of Complete Streets, guidance on the process for corridor planning, conceptual design, engineering design, as well as best practice guidelines for city departments, design professionals, private developers, and community groups for street improvements.

- The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2014, developed by the National Complete Streets Coalition and Smart Growth America, examines and scores Complete Streets policies each year, comparing adopted policy language to the ideal. Different types of policy statements are included in this analysis, including legislation, resolutions, executive orders, departmental policies, and policies adopted by an elected board.

- Montana Complete Streets Toolkit: For Cities, Small Towns and Tribal Communities describes the Complete Streets approach to designing and building a transportation network, outlines the benefits of Complete Streets, and provides case studies.

- Rethinking Streets – An Evidence-Based Guide to 25 Complete Streets Transformations uses examples from Complete Streets projects around the United States to help communities imagine alternative futures for their own streets. The book also shows how various communities changed their streets, and what resulted from the changes.
Design plays a big role in making places safe, inviting and pleasant to walk or bike. Many communities that want to promote safer, more active communities use zoning, subdivision codes, and design guidelines to shape streets as well as commercial and residential areas. Local governments adopt these policy documents, and community partners can help with outreach, organizing coalition meetings, community walk audits, gathering community health data, data collection, and evaluation.

**DESIGN FOR ALL**

Adopt design standards that support active streets and neighborhoods.

Design plays a big role in making places safe, inviting and pleasant to walk or bike. Many communities that want to promote safer, more active communities use zoning, subdivision codes, and design guidelines to shape streets as well as commercial and residential areas. Local governments adopt these policy documents, and community partners can help with outreach, organizing coalition meetings, community walk audits, gathering community health data, data collection, and evaluation.
Several key design elements can support walkability, such as building orientation, building design, street furniture, traffic calming, and street connectivity:

- Pedestrian-oriented buildings support walkability by requiring building entrances to open to the sidewalk and not to a parking lot.

- Building façades with windows and interesting architectural details, as well as active street-level uses (e.g., cafes), increase safety and comfort, and enhance community character.

- Street furniture (including benches), pedestrian-oriented lighting, and trees, supports walkability by creating a comfortable environment in which to walk.

- High street connectivity (the density of connections in path or road networks and the directness of links) and traffic calming (street design elements that reduce vehicle speeds) support both walkability and bikeability of a community by providing safe, easy, and navigable ways for people to travel by foot and bicycle.

- Mixed-use development supports active living and transportation by encouraging a mix of destinations (homes, shops, employment areas, etc.) in close proximity to one another.

Local governments use zoning to regulate how parcels of land can be developed – both the types of uses allowed and the features of the physical structures that can be built. In Oklahoma, zoning has significant legal weight, and often serves as the primary mechanism by which local governments shape their growth and development. Zoning divides a jurisdiction (a city or county) into separate geographic districts or “zones” and then applies different rules or regulations that govern development within each zone. Zoning codes generally determine what types of structures can be located in each zoning district (e.g., how large or small a structure can be, how tall, etc.) and how structures within the district can be used (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, mixed use, etc.).

Subdivision codes regulate how a parcel of land is divided and the types of infrastructure required for new plots. For example, subdivision codes can require residential lots to have a minimum level of access to public roads and utilities, and can regulate how many residential or commercial units may be sited on one parcel. Subdivision codes can also govern how land is developed; for example, they can require buildings to be placed a certain distance from the street or can regulate the amount of space between buildings. This can determine the type of development a subdivision can be used for (e.g., as a shopping area, a tract of single family homes, mixed use, office buildings, etc.).
Road design guidelines and standards are documents that cover a variety of technical specifications, such as street width, grade, overpasses, roundabouts, bikeways, and sidewalks. State and local governments can set policy that encourages or requires road designs that increase safety and convenience for people walking and biking. Some communities choose to designate “pedestrian corridors” where these guidelines apply; others focus on their downtowns or areas near schools.

Local governments can update zoning, subdivision codes, and road design guidelines to include policy elements that encourage and support active transportation.

Community Examples

Charlottesville, VA: During an update of the master plan for West Main Street in downtown Charlottesville, the city developed a Streetscape Toolkit that identifies “streetscape zones,” which correspond to different types of uses, including pedestrian realms, pedestrian and bicycle connections, curb extensions, and bicycle lanes, among others.

Georgia: The Georgia Department of Transportation developed and published a Pedestrian and Streetscape Guide in 2003 for transportation engineers, emphasizing pedestrian-friendly design. The guidelines address sidewalk size and placement, curb ramps, walkways and trails, grade separations, shoulder width in rural areas, traffic control devices, and other furnishings that encourage walking. The Guide also contains information about making streets and walkways surrounding school areas and work zones accessible to people of all abilities.

Adopting changes to zoning codes may be a key strategy for increasing physical activity. The most common zoning code elements that increase physical activity are: sidewalks, bike lanes, street furniture, bike parking, pedestrian access, and mixed use.43

TIP

Parklets, Better Block projects, and Open Street events can help communities imagine how better design can support active living (see p. 7). Design guidelines are also a crucial piece of implementing Complete Streets policies.

Key Resources: Design for All

- The Urban Street Design Guide, produced by the National Association of City Transportation Officials, is the perfect primer for anyone who wants to learn about better, safer street design. Through words, diagrams, and images, it describes better street design principles for different types of streets (downtown, neighborhood, commercial, etc.), street design elements, interim design strategies, intersection design, and design controls. The web-based version of the guide is free.

- Urban Street Design Guidelines, from the Department of Transportation, of Charlotte, NC, may be useful in helping your community create its own street design guide.
**Toolkits on streetscape design for small towns**

- **The Streetscape Design Toolkit** from St. Helens, OR, has four sections: Traffic Calming Features, Pedestrian Amenities, Civic Identity and Wayfinding, and Green Street Strategies. Each of these sections includes descriptions and photos of physical elements that, when used together, can make a great street.

- **Design Manual for Small Towns: Transportation and Land Use Strategies for Preserving Small Town Character**, was developed by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

**Walkable and bikeable zoning and subdivision codes**

- **Move This Way: Making Neighborhoods More Walkable and Bikeable**, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, explains how to use zoning and subdivision codes to make a community more walkable and bikeable. It was designed to assist public health professionals and advocates in their efforts to revise local codes.

- **Getting the Wheels Rolling: A Guide to Using Policy to Create Bicycle Friendly Communities**, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, provides a roadmap for making all types of communities bicycle-friendly through effective policies such as bicycle parking requirements.

- The **Pedestrian Friendly Code Database** developed by ChangeLab Solutions, contains examples of zoning and subdivision codes that create streets and neighborhoods that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for people walking, biking, and using public transit.

- The **Model Bicycle Parking Ordinance**, and accompanying fact sheet, **Making a Place for Bicycles**, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, are resources designed to increase the availability and quality of bicycle parking, and create a more bike-friendly environment.
When communities create plans, they establish a blueprint for future development, laying out goals and policies that shape how a community will grow over time. Plans provide an important opportunity for local governments to state their commitment to supporting physical activity. Comprehensive plans can include language that prioritizes safety and roadway improvements for people biking and walking, supports traffic calming projects around schools, reinforces Complete Streets approaches, and more. Community partners can help with community outreach, organizing coalition meetings, and presenting or sharing relevant health data.

Adopt plans that include bike- and walk-friendly policies.
A comprehensive plan is a policy guide for the future development of a city or county. Comprehensive plans contain both broad goals (for example, to increase opportunities for children’s physical activity) as well as specific steps to implement those goals. Oklahoma law requires that municipal zoning regulations be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan. This requirement applies to any incorporated city or town. There are no specifically required plan elements; however, many municipal plans include at least one of the following objectives: promoting health and the general welfare, providing adequate light and air, promoting historical preservation, and facilitating the provision of transportation, water, sewer, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

Bicycle/pedestrian/trail plans are policy documents that focus on active transportation, and may be stand-alone documents or incorporated into a comprehensive plan. These plans detail a process in which communities evaluate their overall walking and bicycling needs, identify which policies will help address those needs, and lay out a strategy for implementation and enforcement. Plans can vary considerably, but they typically include specific goals (e.g., to install a certain number of miles of bike pathways or double the percentage of walking trips); maps that show where trails, walking and bicycling routes, and infrastructure are needed; funding strategies; and procedures for evaluating the plan’s effectiveness. Safe Routes to School goals should be integrated into these plans.

Community Examples

Edmond, OK: Edmond adopted a bicycle master plan in 2012. The plan makes recommendations for future bicycle network developments, provides design guidelines for bicycle facilities and infrastructure, and sets out action steps for implementation.

Northwest Arkansas (NWA): The NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan of 2014 provides the blueprint for the creation of 32 great communities in Benton and Washington Counties. The vision for this Plan states: “Northwest Arkansas’ trail and roadway system will comfortably, safely, and efficiently accommodate people walking and biking. The linking of local and regional attractions will make the area a world-class bicycle and pedestrian destination. Walking and bicycling will become a common, enjoyable, and viable transportation and recreation choice that promotes active living and a high quality of life in Northwest Arkansas.” The plan is built around “Six E’s” – engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation, and equity – and provides a region-based framework for local policies, projects, and programs. The plan recognizes both the shared vision of a world-class region, and the differences in readiness between individual municipalities. A detailed action plan is provided for each community.
along with a series of 20 regional catalyst projects and seven context-based planning scenarios. The plans, projects, and scenarios are linked to best practices, design guidelines, and case studies.

Key Resources: Plan for Activity

- **Model Comprehensive Plan Language on Complete Streets**, developed by ChangeLab Solutions, provides specific policies for transportation, land use, housing, open space, and health.

- **Creating Walkable + Bikeable Communities: A user guide to developing pedestrian and bicycle master plans**, a project of Portland State University, walks through the basics of what a bicycle and pedestrian master plan is and what it does.
Adopt a Vision Zero policy to support safety for all people using streets.

Vision Zero began in Sweden in the 1990s as a way to decrease traffic fatalities through safer, better design. Even though this initiative began in a country with different transportation and land use patterns from those in the United States, its general concepts are highly beneficial to any community – large or small – that wants to increase safety for everyone.

People (especially children and older adults) often report that fear of getting hit by a vehicle is one of their biggest barriers to walking or bicycling. Vision Zero puts safety at the center of every transportation planning decision, and has proved to be very effective. Pedestrian fatalities have decreased by 50 percent over the last eight years in Sweden.
At the beginning of 2014, New York City instituted Vision Zero. The city increased citations for unsafe driving, decreased the default speed limit to 25, built 400 speed bumps, and incorporated a variety of other safety mechanisms. As a result, 2014 was the safest year for people walking and one of the safest years for people using all modes of transportation in New York City since record-keeping began in 1910.47

Vision Zero acknowledges that people make mistakes, but that mistakes should not result in death. Though Vision Zero is concerned with safety for everyone, but most initiatives prioritize the most vulnerable users of the road, including young children, older adults, and people walking, bicycling, and taking transit. Vision Zero’s goal is to increase safety and prevent fatalities and serious injury by calming traffic, enhancing visibility, and improving street design. Community partners can help with community outreach, organizing coalition meetings, and providing data on community health indicators.

A Vision Zero policy can apply to all departments and agencies within government, although the most relevant agencies and offices are usually: the mayor or city manager, planning, transportation, law enforcement, and the public health department. The policy typically states that the community is setting a goal for zero traffic fatalities on their streets by a certain date. Vision Zero policies include comprehensive and coordinated actions that involve engineering, enforcement, and education. A successful Vision Zero policy also should include a city-wide or county-wide committee to track and facilitate the policy’s progress, and to provide regular (e.g., yearly) updates to the community decision-making body (e.g., city council or board of supervisors).

Community Example

San Francisco, CA: One of the key tenets of Vision Zero SF is that “traffic deaths and injuries are preventable and unacceptable.” San Francisco has taken a holistic approach to Vision Zero, which includes agency and department level policy, an ongoing committee, data collection, and yearly reports to city leaders. Community-based organizations are also involved with the program. The Vision Zero policy has a ten-year goal of zero traffic deaths by 2024. Vision Zero SF utilizes data from public health (e.g., hospital data, and cost of injuries and fatalities), transportation (e.g., street projects, and cost of projects), and police (e.g., traffic violation and traffic collision data). The policy’s educational campaign, Safe Streets SF, raises awareness about pedestrian right-of-way and helps drivers understand that all intersections are considered crosswalks. Vision Zero SF has also produced a video that specifically educates truck drivers about the city’s new bike lanes.

TIP
Traffic safety is a bridging value that can unite people, no matter what form of transportation they use.
and promotes awareness of people biking. This educational effort is critical because large vehicles account for 17 percent of fatal collisions with people walking and biking in the city.

**Key Resources: Safety for All**

- **Vision Zero Network** connects communities to news, resources, and examples of Vision Zero.

- **Vision Zero San Francisco**, describes a two-year action strategy, focusing on improvements in low-income communities and communities of color, as well as for seniors and people who rely on walking and transit as their primary means of transportation. The site also provides other pertinent information on safety, design, and how to get involved.

- **TransBASE, Linking Transportation Systems to our Health** shows some of the data that is collected and managed through the San Francisco Vision Zero program.

- **Seattle’s Vision Zero Plan** describes its vision for the city, short-term actions, and evaluation procedures.
REFERENCES


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44. 11 Okla. Stat, § 4-102(5).


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