

NM Complete Streets



...for all ages and abilities

► What is a Complete Street?

Complete Streets are designed to enable safe and convenient access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation and assistive device users of all ages and abilities are able to move

► Complete Streets save lives.

Pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, and persons with disabilities are often forced to use roads that are unsafe for their travel. Designing Complete Streets that include, for example, sidewalks, raised medians, better bus stop placement and traffic calming measures encourages more physically active travel and, most importantly, save lives.

Vision for Complete Streets in New Mexico

There are convenient networks of streets in New Mexico that are planned, designed, built, operated and maintained to ensure safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit and assistive device users. People of all ages and abilities are able to move safely along and across streets and experience the health benefits of walking, biking and taking transit.

Why support Complete Streets?

Providing safe and affordable travel for all users is fundamental to ensuring that New Mexicans enjoy a high quality of life. In 2009, New Mexico ranked among the worst in the nation for traffic crash fatalities per capita:

- 7th for pedestrian fatalities (39 deaths)
- 29th for bicyclist fatalities (3 deaths)
- 12th for motor vehicle fatalities (319 deaths)

State statistics ranked by Pedestrian Danger Index (PDI)

Rank	State Name	Total Traffic Fatalities (2000–2009)	Total Ped Fatalities (2000–2009)	Ped Fatalities as % of all Fatalities (2000–2009)	Avg Ped Fatalities per 100,000	State PDI
1	Florida	31,186	5,163	16.6%	3.0	182.8
2	South Carolina	10,244	981	9.6%	2.3	124.1
3	Louisiana	9,344	1,040	11.1%	2.3	122.2
4	New Mexico	4,417	548	12.4%	2.9	121.1
5	Alabama	10,465	696	6.7%	1.5	116.7

Benefits of Complete Streets:

- Increased safety and fewer fatalities
- Enhanced mobility
- More livable communities and less traffic congestion
- Improved public health and engagement in healthier activities
- Reduced transportation costs
- Economic growth

Complete Streets improve safety and health.

From 2000 through 2009, more than 47,700 pedestrians were killed in the United States. On top of that, more than 688,000 pedestrians were injured over the same decade, a number equivalent to a pedestrian being struck by a car or truck every seven minutes. Consequently, pedestrian injury is the third leading cause of death by unintentional injury for children 15 years and younger. Complete Streets will help prevent these deaths and injuries.

Research has determined the health benefits of Complete Streets. People in walkable neighborhoods will complete 35 to 45 more minutes of physical activity per week and are therefore less likely to be overweight or obese, decreasing the likelihood of health problems and chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Of those without safe places to walk, only 27 percent meet recommended activity levels, compared with 43 percent that have access to safe streets.

Complete Streets save money.

When state and local transportation planners and engineers take into account all users of the transportation system at the onset of a project, they can save money on retrofits needed at later dates. Complete Streets are particularly prudent when more communities are tightening their budgets and are looking to ensure long-term benefits from investments made today.

Getting around in our state is also very expensive. In 2010, residents in the Albuquerque metro area spent an average of 24.8 percent of their household income on transportation (second only to housing for household budget cost). Most of these costs were related to owning and operating motor vehicles.

Complete Streets create jobs and support local economies.

A 2010 study conducted by the Political Economy Research Institute found that for each \$1 million spent on bike lanes, approximately 14 jobs are created. Compare that to \$1 million spent on road repair work that generated approximately seven jobs.

What will make our streets more complete?

- Wide sidewalks (with curb strips)
- Bike lanes or wide shoulders
- Protected mid-block crossings
- Bus shelters
- Pedestrian median refuges
- Transit priority features (i.e. dedicated bus lanes)
- Raised crosswalks
- Sidewalk bulb-outs
- Audible pedestrian signals
- ADA compliance
- Separated Trails
- Shade trees
- Traffic calming features



Pedestrian refuge: an easy and cheap way to increase crossing safety. Providing an accessible place to wait in the median can make a major street crossing less intimidating and safer.

Location: Central Ave. Albuquerque, NM



A Complete Street: this street includes a shaded, landscape buffered sidewalk, providing a flat, protected place to walk. The bike lane allows for safe bicycle access while the single lane in each direction allows the prudent driver to set the speed.

Location: MLK Jr. Blvd, Albuquerque, NM



Bulb out + textured crosswalk: bulb outs help to visually and physically narrow the street. This creates a) a shorter crossing for pedestrians and b) reduced vehicle speeds. The textured crosswalk defines pedestrian space, commanding more respect from automobile drivers.

Location: Bernalillo, NM.

Federal, state and local policies

Across the country and at the federal level, Complete Streets policies have been gaining support as more places realize the benefits of having safe and healthy streets in their communities. On Capitol Hill, Complete Streets legislation has been introduced in both the House and Senate, and a Complete Streets measure that would require the safe accommodation of all users in federally-funded street projects has also been proposed for inclusion in the federal transportation authorization bill.

Many states and local jurisdictions are taking action. In total, 610 local and regional jurisdictions, including 27 states, have adopted policies or have made a commitment to do so. In New Mexico this includes Santa Fe, Las Cruces, Dona Ana County, the Town of Mesilla, Farmington and the Albuquerque metro area. Policies and initiatives will ensure that local, regional, tribal and state levels are working together.