



## City of Austin Complete Streets Policy

4.8.2014

CREATED FOR THE URBAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING



Austin Mobility

Making mobility better, together.

# City of Austin Complete Streets Policy

## GOAL

**POLICY TO COUNCIL - MAY 22**

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT

**CROSS DEPARTMENTAL INPUT**

**STEERING COMMITTEE + TECHNICAL ADVISORY TEAM**

**ADDRESS KNOWN ISSUES**

## FOCUS

**IMPLEMENTATION = CROSS DEPARTMENTAL**

**BUILDING ON SUCCESS + CHALLENGING OURSELVES**

# What are Complete Streets?



Complete Streets are streets for everyone, no matter who they are or how they travel.



# What are Complete Streets?

Safe    Comfortable    Convenient



# What are Complete Streets?

Safe    Comfortable    Convenient





# Complete Streets policies



**Goal: Ensure that the **entire right-of-way** is planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained to provide safe access for all users**



**Smart Growth America**  
Making Neighborhoods Great Together



**National Complete  
Streets Coalition**

# Americans want choices

**66%** of Americans want more options for transportation

**73%** feel they have no choice but to drive as much as they do.

**57%** would like to spend less time in the car.

Future of Transportation National Survey (2010)

# The tremendous potential

Of all trips:

**39%**

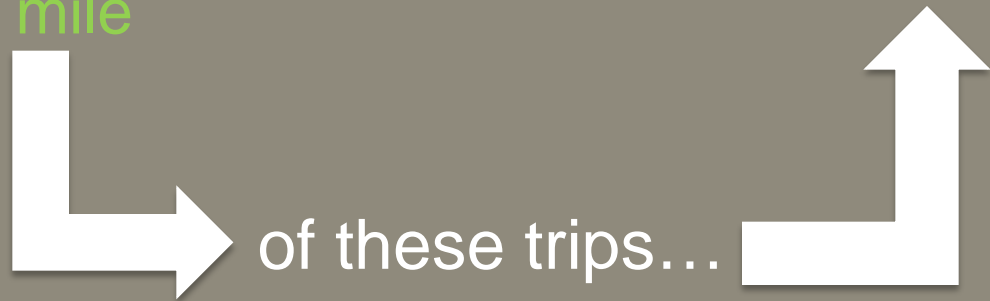
are less than  
3 miles

**17%**

are less than  
1 mile

**47%**

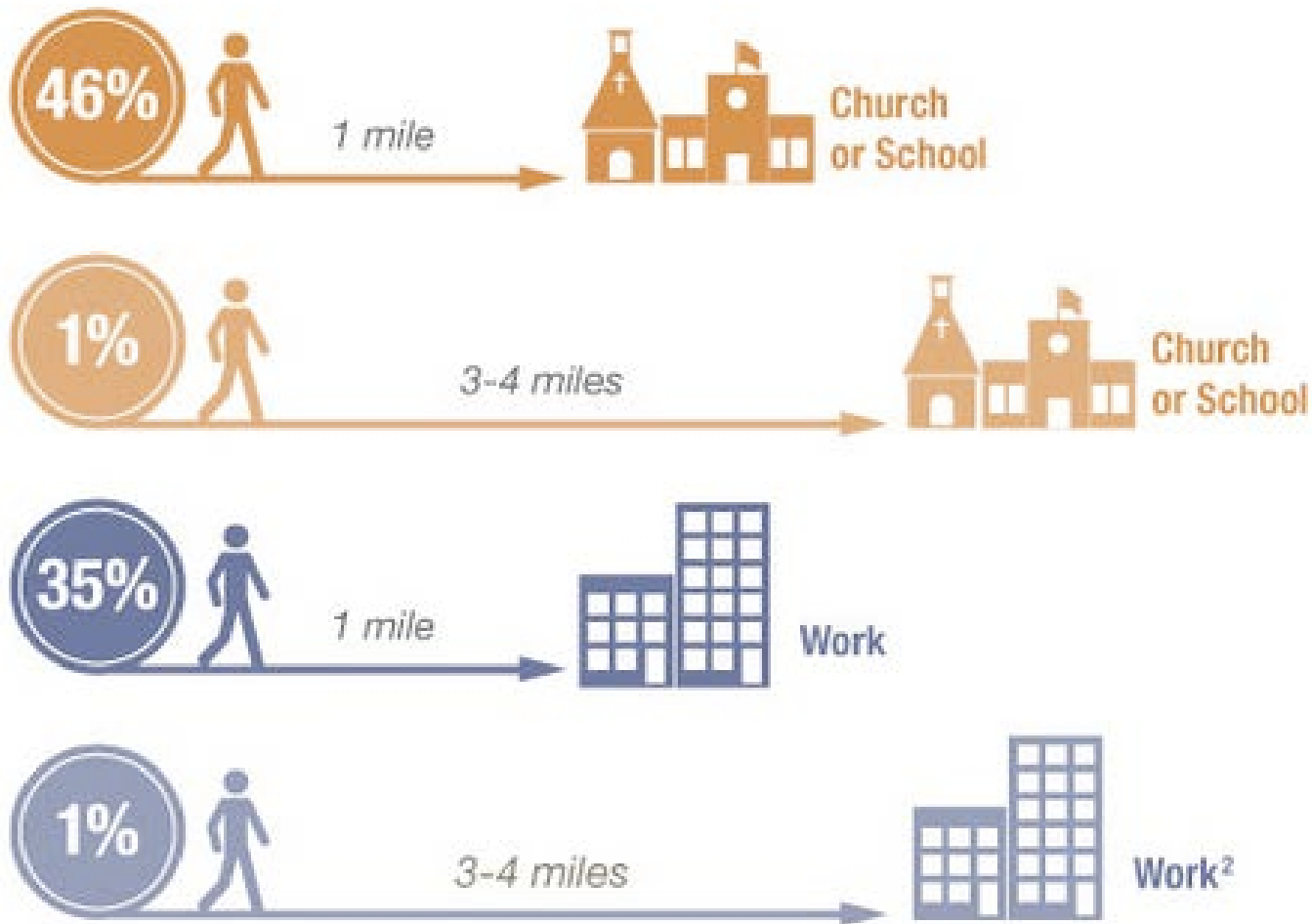
are driven



National Household Travel Survey (2009)



## STUDIES SHOW PEOPLE WILL WALK TO DESTINATIONS:



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012, [newpublichealth.org](http://newpublichealth.org)

# Who Benefits?



# Complete Streets benefits all users



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# Older Adults

Many no longer drive –  
Or no longer should.

1 in 5 Americans



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# Children & Teens

17% are obese.

Kids need more

Active daily lives.

**Safe bicycling and walking helps kids be active and gain independence.**



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# People with Disabilities

Nearly 1 in 5  
Americans

Complete Streets  
can reduce  
isolation and  
dependence.



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# Transit Riders



# Everyone who walks

More than 40% of pedestrian fatalities occur where there is no available crosswalk.



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# Benefits: Safety

Pedestrian crashes **reduced**

↓ **88%** with sidewalks

↓ **69%** with hybrid beacon

↓ **39%** with medians

↓ **29%** with road conversions





# Benefits: Health

Women who walk or bike 30 minutes a day have a lower risk of breast cancer.

Men with a 30-minute round-trip bicycle commute enjoy better mental health.



# Benefits: Economy

After 2007 C.S. redesign:

49% ↑

in retail  
sales  
9<sup>th</sup> Ave in  
Manhattan.

49% ↓

in commercial  
vacancies in  
Union Square.





# Benefits: Economy

**Millennials** want to work in places with great transportation choices.

Businesses that encourage active transportation attract young professionals.

Plan for the **FUTURE**





# Benefits: Economy

“Young people do not want to work in office parks anymore... We’re seeing this big change in this country. It’s **generational**...

This is where we need to **think very differently, because if you don’t, you will be left behind.**”

*-Mitchell Silver, Chief Planner, Raleigh, N.C.*

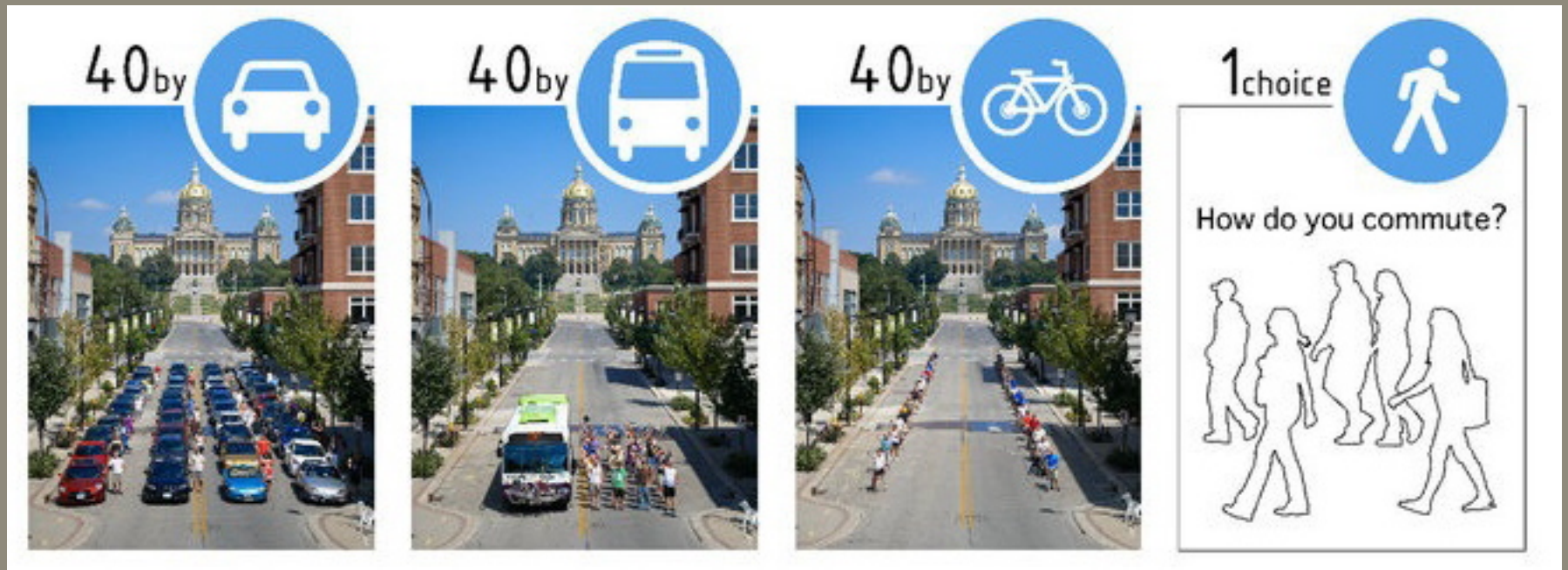
# Benefits: Reduce Project Costs

“The advantage of inserting a dialogue about all users at the earliest stages of project development is that it provides the designers and engineers the best opportunity to create solutions at the best price.”

- James Simpson, Commissioner, NJDOT



# Benefits: Increase Capacity





# Benefits: Provide Choices

Adding bike lanes in  
Marin County, CA =

↑ 366% bicyclists  
on weekdays

↑ 540% bicyclists  
on weekends



# Benefit: Affordability

Transportation ~18% of family budgets

Low income households can spend up to 55% of budget on transportation.

Complete Streets create real lower-cost choices.



# Benefit: Health & Happiness

People who live in

walkable communities

- are more socially engaged and trusting
- report being in good health and happy more often



Shannon H. Rogers, et al. Examining Walkability and Social Capital as Indicators of Quality of Life at the Municipal and Neighborhood Scales. (2010)



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# Benefits: Cleaner Air

+ Climate Protection:

Transportation = 1/3 of greenhouse gas emissions.



# Green Streets



# Green Streets

**Make Complete Streets ‘Green Streets’ that improve environmental sustainability.**



# Who Benefits? **Everyone.**



# City of Austin Complete Streets Policy

POLICY 1<sup>ST</sup> DRAFT 3-27-14

## VISION AND INTENT

Complete Streets are a tool to advance **multiple long-term community goals** defined by the vision and policies of the **Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan**.

The intent of this Complete Streets policy is to **enhance Austin's quality of life** by advancing mobility, public health and safety, livability, sustainability, equity, affordability, economic activity, climate resilience, green infrastructure, excellence in urban design and community character.

# City of Austin Complete Streets Policy

POLICY 1<sup>ST</sup> DRAFT 3-27-14

Specifically, this Complete Streets Policy is a tool to implement a core Imagine Austin Priority Program: “Invest in a **compact and connected** Austin.”

As part of this program, the City of Austin commits to making improvements within the right of way that support **making pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel as safe and convenient as vehicle travel.**

**Complete Streets support compact development patterns and expand everyone’s mobility choices** for safe and convenient travel by different modes between destinations throughout Austin. They are designed to **balance safety and convenience** for everyone using the road.



# City of Austin Complete Streets Policy

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To **improve community health**, Austin seeks to transform its street network from a barrier to an asset for more active lifestyles.

**Complete Streets encourage active transportation choices associated with improved health outcomes** for people at all stages of life.

**Safety, including reducing injuries and deaths for pedestrians and bicyclists on Austin roadways**, is a fundamental goal of this Complete Streets policy. The City recognizes the multiple public health benefits of reducing the air and climate pollution caused by vehicles.

# Complete Streets Principles (1/2)

POLICY 1<sup>ST</sup> DRAFT 3-27-14

- Complete Streets serve all users and modes
- Complete Streets require connected travel networks
- Complete Streets enhance community character
- Complete Streets protect Austin's sustainability and environment

# Complete Streets Principles (2/2)

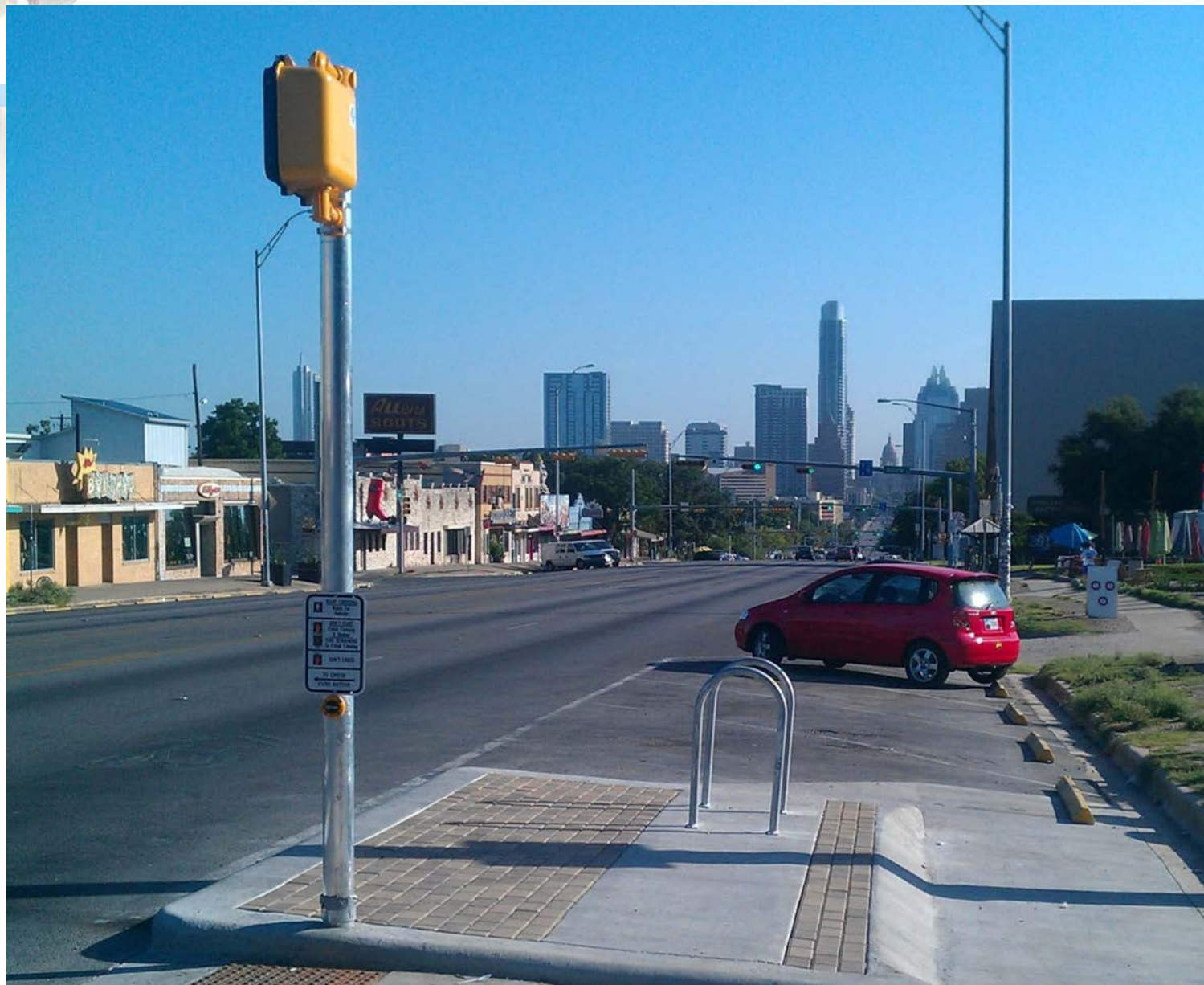
- Complete Streets are the work of all City departments
- Complete Streets include all elements of the transportation system and all projects and phases
- Complete Streets require best-practice design criteria and context- sensitive approaches
- Complete Streets require appropriate performance measures





# Complete Streets Success Stories in Austin



























AUSTIN MOBILITY

Making mobility better, together.

8.5.2013 Comprehensive Transportation & Planning  
Subcommittee of the Austin City Council









# The Policy Opportunity

- One Citywide Vision & Mission
- More Complete Projects
- More Complete Collaboration
- A Better Austin

# Great Cities Do Great + Complete Streets Austin Can Too!



Barcelona – Spain



Austin – USA