

Complete Streets Policy Success in Indiana



SUMMARY

Indiana, similar to many states across America, faces numerous challenges in the need to plan, design and maintain streets that are able to accommodate a wide range of users. Stakeholders across Indiana decided to address these issues by promoting the adoption of local and regional Complete Streets policies that define procedures and processes to implement this approach. Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation users of all ages, abilities, incomes, races or ethnicities. Staff from the Indiana State Department of Health Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity (DNPA) assisted with the effort to provide technical assistance to promote the adoption of local and regional Complete Streets policies across the state.



CHALLENGE

Many communities across Indiana lack an overall, coordinated approach to consistently consider all users in the planning, design and maintenance of local roadways. The unintended consequence is that many Indiana communities lack basic infrastructure to accommodate walking, bicycling and access to transit. Approximately 32.5% of Indiana adults experienced obesity and 26.8% of adult Indiana residents reported no leisure-time physical activity in the past month, according to the 2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Physical activity can help prevent and manage heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and other chronic diseases, and it can lower the risk of early death. Still, states like Indiana struggle with educating residents and putting environmental changes, such as those that result from Complete Streets policies, into action to support physical activity such as biking or walking.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

For more information about INDOT's Complete Streets Policy, visit the INDOT website at <http://www.in.gov/indot/3284.htm>.

For more information about the Indiana Complete Streets Campaign, visit Health by Design's website at <http://healthybydesignonline.org/IndianaCompleteStreetsCampaign.html>.

More information about DNPA can be found at <http://www.dnpa.isdh.in.gov>.

"The adoption and implementation of a Complete Streets policy is among the single most important actions a community can take to achieve long-term success in improving its built environment. We're proud to have assisted in the development of so many strong policies over the last nine years. They have resulted in significant environmental changes to cities and towns throughout Indiana and improved the health, safety and accessibility of countless residents and visitors"

- Kim Irwin, MPH
Executive Director
Health by Design

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SOLUTION

The campaign to increase the number of Complete Streets policies in Indiana began in June 2009, with a one-and-a-half-day statewide workshop co-sponsored by National Complete Streets Coalition, AARP Indiana and Health by Design (a statewide active living coalition). In January 2010, AARP Indiana and Health by Design launched the Indiana Complete Streets Coalition, which has grown to include more than 75 organizations and 250 individuals, including staff from DNPA. In 2013, Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) funded and helped facilitate seven Complete Streets workshops with communities in Indiana that are were considering enacting policies. Those workshops resulted in a number of communities drafting and adopting local policies supporting Complete Streets.

RESULTS

Between 2009 and 2017, 23 Indiana communities and regional planning agencies formally adopted Complete Streets policies. Those policies now cover 52.6% of the population of the state—a population of more than 3.4 million people.

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) also has adopted an internal Complete Streets policy that applies to all state highway corridors in Indiana. In 2016 and 2017, INDOT conducted more than 20 trainings in an effort to educate district engineering staff and local government representatives about implementing Complete Streets policies.

U.S. Department of Health and Human
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Contact CDC

<http://www.cdc.gov/cdc-info/requestform.html>

Website

<http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/>

The findings and conclusions in this success story are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the funding agencies or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

The Indiana Complete Streets Coalition continues to monitor and support the activities of communities across Indiana in promoting policy change. The group also is providing assistance to local communities across the state who are drafting Complete Streets policies.

The Complete Streets Coalition in Indiana has learned that a transformative movement can begin with outreach activities to individual communities, building support from the ground up. The group has had its greatest success working with cities, towns and regional planning agencies to address policy change with local leaders. State-level policy change has been more challenging due to entrenched agency practices and complex procedures for adoption of new statewide policies.



Indiana State
Department of Health