



Smart Growth America
Making Neighborhoods Great Together

Blazing a Trail: A Collaborative Model for Complete Streets in Rural Towns

**New Partners for Smart Growth
Annual Conference**

February 15, 2014

Overview

- Smart Growth
- Rural is different
- Complete Streets Policies
- Questions



Smart Growth

Smart growth means building urban, suburban and rural communities with **housing and transportation choices near jobs, shops and schools.**

These strategies **support thriving local economies** and protect the environment.



What I hear about smart growth



Wengen, Switzerland



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Smart growth is ugly.



Riomaggiore, Italy



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We have no history with it.



Mesa Verde, CO



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Nobody would want to live there.



Aspen, CO



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It just doesn't work here.



Pearl District, Portland, OR



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Shut up and drive!



The way we **design** and **build** our communities has enormous consequences



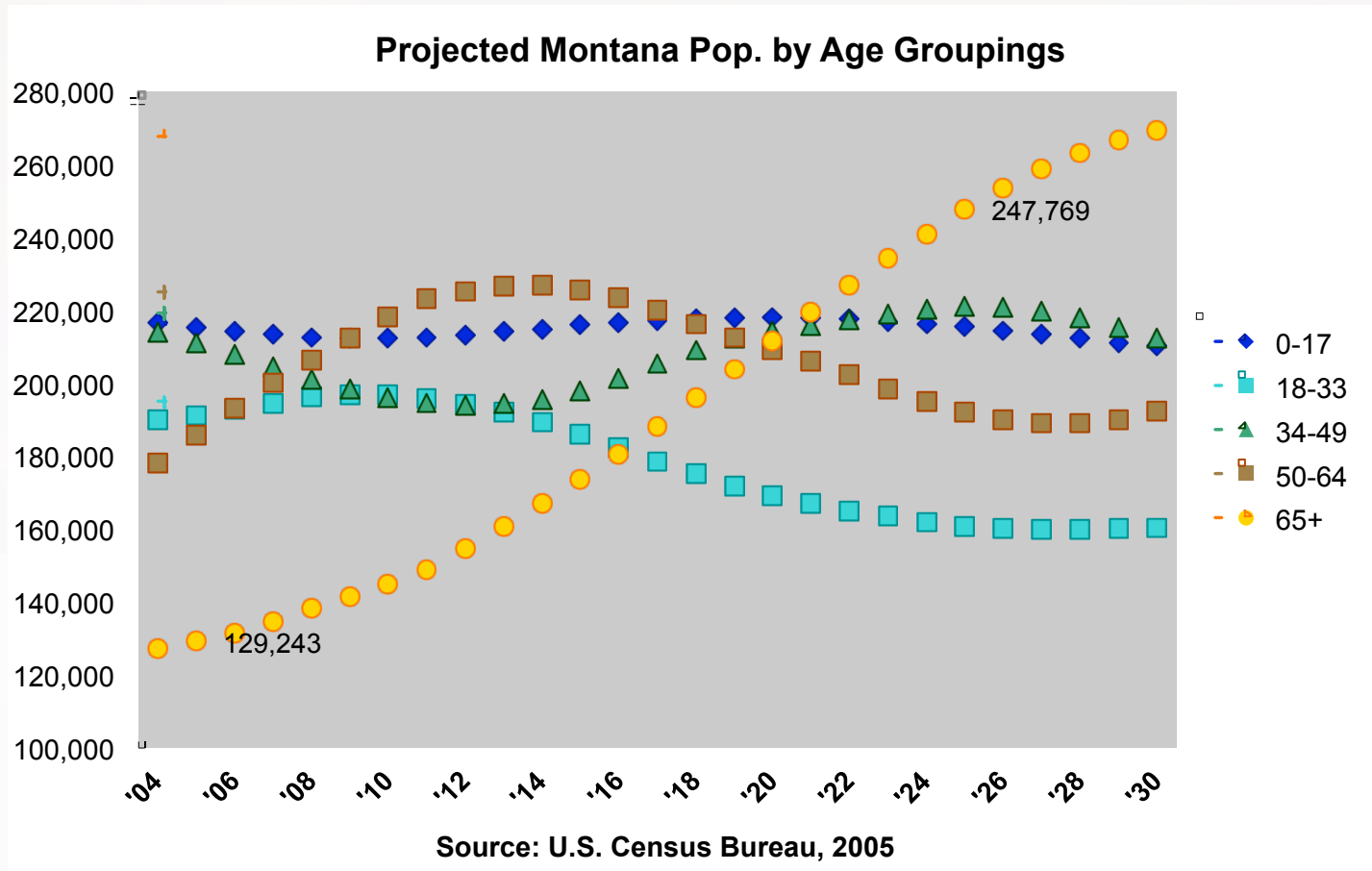
Rural/small town communities are different



The state we live in



Rural demographics



Graph courtesy of Dr. Larry Swanson, O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West, U. of Montana

Urban levels of traffic



Lack of transportation choice



Lack of housing for workers



Lack of housing for families



Infrastructure capacity



Environmental issues



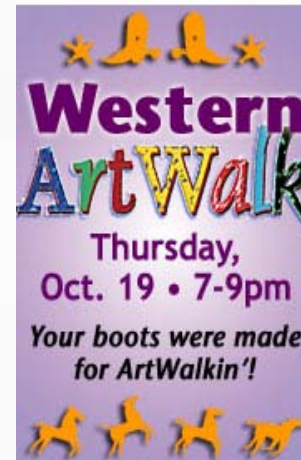
Economic viability of downtowns



Workforce development



A desire for a vibrant cultural community



A need for lifelong learning and civic involvement



Remember why you live here...



Shaping the future you want



Complete Streets



Wilksburg, PA



We know how to build right



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**National Complete
Streets Coalition**

We know how to build right



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**National Complete
Streets Coalition**

Yet too many roads still turn out like this:



or this:



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**National Complete
Streets Coalition**

or this:



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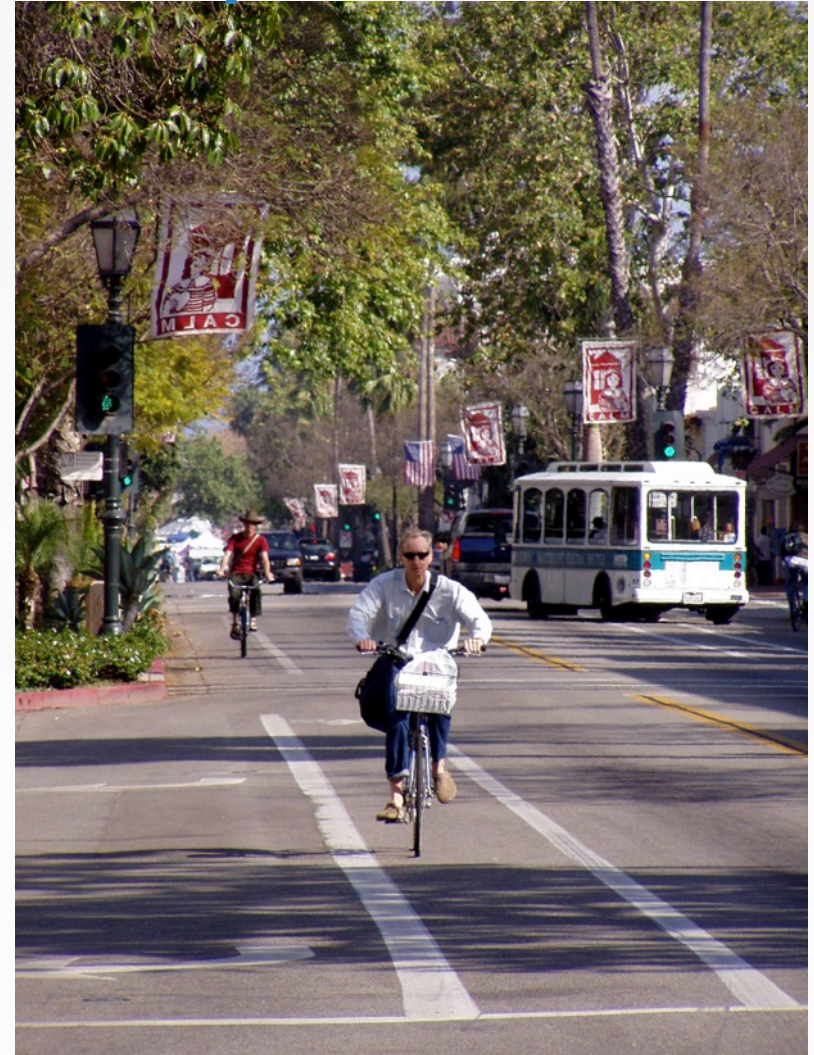
National Complete
Streets Coalition



The Solution: Complete Streets Policies

Complete Streets policies

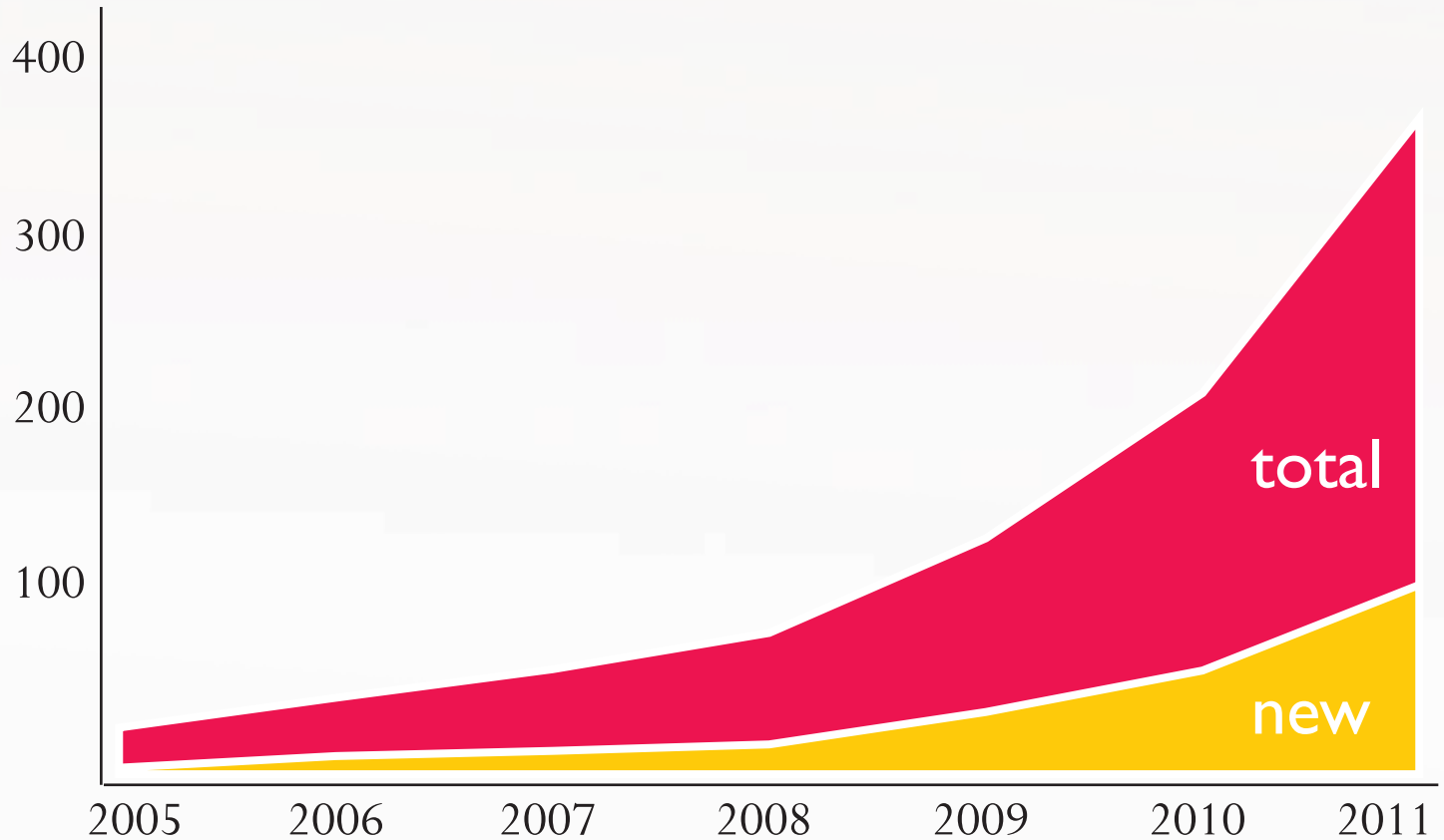
A Complete Streets policy ensures that the entire right of way is planned, designed, operated and maintained to provide safe access for all users.



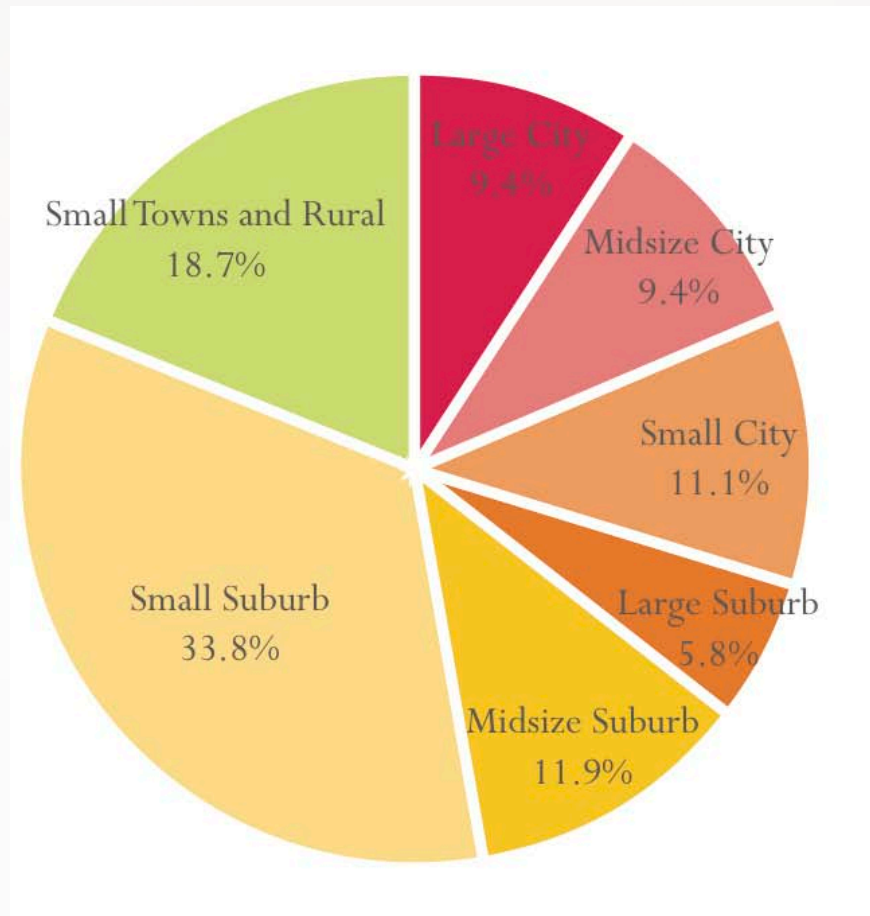
Many Types: Rural to Urban



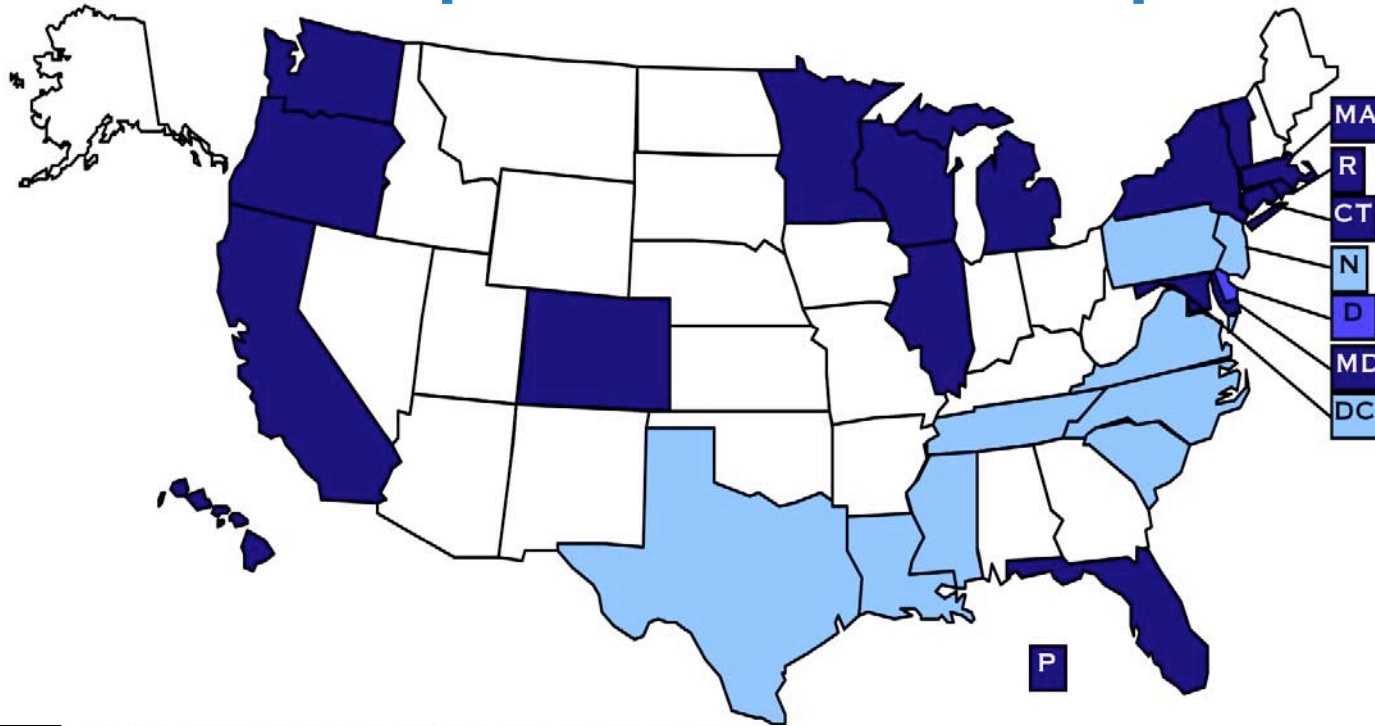
Policy adoption accelerates







Policies adopted in all types of communities



State Complete Streets policies



- Legislative Policy  CA, CO, CT, FL, HI, IL, MD, MA, MI, MN, NY, OR, RI, VT, WA, WI, PR
- Executive Order  DE
- DOT Policy  LA, MS, NJ, NC, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, DC
- No State Policy  AL, AK, AZ, AR, GA, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, ME, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NM, ND, OH, OK, SD, UT, WV, WY

www.completestreets.org/atlas

Streets Can Benefit Communities

- Improve safety
- Provide choices
- Better health
- Support economic dev.
- Reduce costs
- Manage congestion
- Smarter growth
- Conserve resources



Complete Streets means:

- A policy approach
- A change to the everyday decision-making processes and systems
- Long-term changes to built environment



Complete Streets doesn't mean:

- One 'special' street project
- A design prescription
- A mandate for immediate retrofit
- A silver bullet; other issues must be addressed:
 - Land use (proximity, mixed-use)
 - Environmental concerns
 - Transportation Demand Management



What about funding?

- Complete streets is about using existing resources differently
- While retrofit funding is important, it is not necessary to get started
- Additional funding is not needed



Think Ahead, Think Smart

- Complete Streets can save money
- Narrower travel lanes require less land, less pavement
- Provide more options = reduce need for widening some intersections
- Do it right the first time, not when forced to later – at a higher price

“If we think we don’t have the time and money to do it right, what makes you think we have the time and money to do it over?”
– *Dr. Mark Nicholson*



Complete Streets Resources

- Fact sheets, photos, brochures
- Policy tracking & examples
- Information on technical assistance & workshops
- Complete Streets blog and monthly newsletter
- Links to research & publications
- Complete Streets Best Practices



We have the freedom to make informed, humane, and intelligent choices about the kind of world we want to leave for our children and grandchildren. We also have the freedom to make uninformed, selfish, and stupid choices. Which will it be?

- Greg Pahl



Thank you!

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