Complete Streets
Jamesville Action Plan

Goal 3: Transportation and Accessibility

“People drive too fast, heavy traffic, continuous bike lanes, long waits for the bus, scramble crosswalks, confusing streets, more bike lanes, traffic calming. Increase route of the shuttle bus, secure bike lock ups, change one way streets to two way.”
1913
King & James
2010
In the beginning streets were for people
Cheers The Jamesville Hub
What are “Complete Streets”?  

**Complete Streets are streets for everyone.** They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, goods movement operators and motorists of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Complete Streets deliver an acceptable level of service for all modes of transportation using the roadway and does not favour one mode over the other in terms of delivering that service.

What does a “Complete street” look like?  

There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique. A complete street may be designed using a variety of design techniques. This Complete Streets design “toolbox” includes:

- Bike lanes, bike boulevards, segregated bike lanes (cycle tracks) or wide paved shoulders;
- Special bus lanes, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, transit only lanes;
- Comfortable and accessible public transportation stops;
- Traffic calming measures;
- 1-way and 2-way street designs;
- Street trees, median gardens, bio swales for storm water mitigation.

Why do we need Complete Streets policies and design guidelines?  

Incomplete streets limit transportation choices by making walking, bicycling, and taking public transportation inconvenient, unattractive, and, potentially unsafe. Changing policy and designs so that our transportation system routinely takes into account the needs of people on foot, transit, and bicycles means that walking, riding bikes, and riding buses and trains will be safer and easier.
Complete Streets improve the efficiency of roads through re-thinking roadway level-of-service to incorporate all road users, by measuring the quality and not just the quantity of service that a roadway provides. This can:

• provide more transportation choices for a person to select from
• improve the quality of a person's trip
• improve the perception of safety and comfort for all trips

Health and Environmental Impacts:

• Research has demonstrated direct health impacts between the level of physical activity, obesity, and the amount of time one spends in an automobile.
• Walking and biking for short trips can help improve health impacts related to physical activity and contributes to lower levels of heart disease and mental illnesses; while also improving air quality.
• Recent studies on transportation, health and the built environment consistently suggest that complete streets strategies are a necessity when planning for liveable, sustainable cities that improve quality of life and citizen health.

Economic Development Impacts:

Complete streets designs also help improve financial outcomes for the City and for citizens including reducing personal transportation costs by reducing household automobile needs (Cost of car ownership ranges from $8000 to $11,000 per vehicle annually).

Some North American cities and research have shown that existing transportation budgets can incorporate Complete Streets projects with little to no additional funding, depending on the application. This has been accomplished through re-prioritizing projects and allocating funds to projects that improve overall mobility. Many of the techniques used to create more complete roadways are low cost, fast to implement, and have a high impact. Hamilton can learn from these jurisdictions as it moves forward with Complete Street designs.

What are the overall benefits of Complete Streets designs?

» Improve community and traffic safety
» Enhance mobility for those who have mobility challenges
» Encourage walking and bicycling for health
» Lower transportation costs for families and potential lower infrastructure costs for the City
» Improve goods movement
» Improve environment outcomes associated with green house gas emissions, air quality and health related impacts of poor air quality
» Foster strong communities and improve access to community services
» Improve access to jobs, programs and commercial areas across the city
Reduce issues with first and last mile commutes

Current Level of Implementation

City Staff already have the capacity and training required to build Complete Streets and understand the “toolbox” of items necessary to improve mobility for all road users. Hamilton has already incorporated some of the elements of complete streets designs in certain sections of the following streets:

- York Boulevard
- King Street East
- Wilson Street (Ancaster)
- Stonechurch Road
- Dundurn Street South of Main and North of King

Case Study: York Blvd, Hamilton: Before road diet

- 5 lanes of one-way traffic
- No cycling facilities
- No bike parking
- Hard to cross the street

York Blvd, after road diet

- Wider sidewalks and new store frontage
- Green Streets & landscaping improvements
- Cycling lanes & bike parking
- Accessible streets crossings
- Two-way Traffic

What is Hamilton doing about Complete Streets?

As the new City Urban Official Plan recognizes, Complete Streets are necessary for the development of complete communities which provide convenient access to a mix of jobs, local services and shops, a full range of housing and community facilities. Complete communities enable residents to meet most of their daily needs within a short distance from their homes, facilitating ease of access and use of public transit and active modes of transportation.
Other supportive City Policy documents provide the direction and tools necessary to implement complete streets include:

- Pedestrian Mobility Plan
- Cycling Master Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- City of Hamilton Strategic Plan
- Public Works Business Plan
- Hamilton as the Best Place to Raise a Child

The City-wide Transportation Master Plan 5-year Review will have a Complete Street focus to support multi-modal complete street and complete community designs. This plan will provide an approach to 1-way and 2-way street configurations, pedestrian amenities, and the completion of cycling infrastructure projects. It will also provide a plan for how all these modes integrate with higher order transit and local transit and ultimately serve the needs of all residents and business that have various and sometimes competing mobility needs.