America Walks

A municipal perspective: Ogdensburg, NY

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BACKGROUND

Demographics: 2010 U.S. Census
• 11,128
• 65 years and over – 12.9%

Health Trends: March 2016
• St. Lawrence County ranked 57 out of 62 in overall poor health outcomes
• High Obesity Rates
  • 32.7% of adults
  • 46.4% of middle/high school students
  • 37.2% of elementary students
• 25% of residents are statistically categorized as inactive

Transportation
• 87% people drive to work
  • 72% drive alone
• 53% travel <10 minutes to work
  • 22% 10 – 14 minutes
• 44% - 2 vehicles per household
  • 6.5% no vehicle
• 5.6% walk to work
• 1.3% biking to work
Developing Complete Streets

WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?
A complete street is a safe, accessible, and convenient street for all users regardless of transportation mode, age, or physical ability.

Complete streets adequately provide for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists.

Complete streets promote healthy communities and reductions in traffic congestion by offering viable alternatives to driving.

Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work.

“Linking trails emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community”

COMPLETE STREETS ARE FOR EVERYONE

Pedestrian Safety. Communities with complete streets policies protect travelers from cars. Walkways should provide secure footing, pedestrian pathways should be clearly indicated, and signaling must consider the rights of all users of the road. Designing the street with pedestrians in mind—sidewalks, raised medians, better bus stop placement, traffic-calming measures—all improve pedestrian safety. One study found that designing for pedestrian travel by installing raised medians and redesigning intersections and sidewalks reduced pedestrian risk by 28%.

Public Health. Public health officials are calling for Americans to increase their physical activity. Officials argue that increasing walking and bicycling will help to combat the current obesity epidemic. A 2002 report issued by the National Conference of State Legislators noted that the most effective policy for encouraging bicycling and walking is complete streets.

Vulnerable Populations. Truly complete streets go beyond accommodating bicycling and walking to consider children, the elderly, and people with a disability. More often than not, the elderly and people with disabilities rely on the pedestrian and transit infrastructure for access and mobility. Complete streets policies make it possible for vulnerable populations to better use transportation systems by equipping streets with the necessary infrastructure, including curb ramps, textured and varied pavement, audible crossing signals, countdown signals, and high-visibility crosswalks.

DEVELOPING WITH COMPLETE STREETS

Economic Development. Complete streets can increase the economic viability of a city district by improving access for more people, thus increasing the potential number of customers to businesses.
COMPLETE STREETS

- Established “Active Living Task Force”
  - Citizen task force
  - Drafted Policy
- Adoption of Complete Streets Policy, February 13, 2015
- Policy recognized as #1 policy adopted in 2014 by Smart Growth America and the National Complete Streets Coalition.

VISION: “The City shall develop a safe, reliable, efficient, integrated and connected multimodal transportation system that will promote access, mobility and health for all users, and will ensure that the safety and convenience of all users of the transportation system are accommodated, including pedestrian, bicyclists, users of public transit, people of all ages and abilities, motorists, emergency responders, freight providers, and adjacent land users.”
THREE PRONG APPROACH

1. PROMOTE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
2. FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS
3. EFFECT POLICY CHANGE
“...connected multimodal transportation system...”

RESOURCES:
- NYS Regional Economic Development Program
- EPA Area-Wide Plan
- St. Lawrence Health Initiative
OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO WALKABILITY

• Existing traffic patterns
• Ownership
• Travel speed
• Education
NEXT STEPS
Making Connections

• Implementing designated Bike infrastructure
• Connecting schools with parks & the Boys & Girls Club
• Education & Public Outreach
LESSONS LEARNED

• Identify community CHAMPIONS
• Partner with community organizations
• Develop small project with BIG impact & celebrate success