



National Complete Streets Coalition

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California Passes Complete Streets Law

Major Victory for National Complete Streets Movement

Governor Schwarzenegger signed into law on September 30th [Assembly Bill 1358](#), the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 authored by Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco).

The new law requires cities and counties to include complete streets policies as part of their general plans so that roadways are designed to safely accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, children, older people, and disabled people, as well as motorists.

“Streets aren’t just for cars, they’re for people and with the Complete Streets Act local governments will plan for and build roadways that are safe and convenient for everyone— young or old, riding a bike or on foot, in a car or on a bus,” said Assemblyman Leno. “Getting people out of their cars and riding bicycles or the bus improves public health, air quality, eases congestion and reduces greenhouse emissions.”

Introduced in 2007 and cosponsored by the California Bicycle Coalition and AARP California, the bill passed the Senate on August 27, with the Assembly concurring with the Senate’s amendments on August 29. The new law will complement an existing policy, which directs Caltrans to “fully consider the needs of non-motorized travelers (including pedestrians, bicyclists and persons with disabilities) in all programming, planning, maintenance, construction, operations and project development

AARP • Active Living by Design • America Bikes • America Walks • American Council of the Blind • American Planning Association • American Public Transportation Association • American Society of Landscape Architects • Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals • City of Boulder • Institute of Transportation Engineers • League of American Bicyclists • National Center for Bicycling and Walking • Safe Routes to School National Partnership • Smart Growth America • Thunderhead Alliance

activities and products.” Furthermore, by enacting this law, the State of California continues its groundbreaking commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

To date, more than 70 jurisdictions have adopted complete streets measures, and many others are considering them. In addition to California, five other states have complete streets legislation.

Beginning January 2011, any substantive revision of the circulation element in the general plan of a California local government will include complete streets provisions.

“California has taken a big step forward in helping make sure that streets are designed so that anyone can travel safely, whether by foot, bicycle, bus or car,” said David P. Sloane, AARP Senior Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy. “More people are leaving their cars at home and walking since the gas crisis. They need their streets to be user friendly. AARP commends Governor Schwarzenegger and the California legislature for their foresight in adopting Complete Streets.”

Groups supporting complete streets have formed the National Complete Streets Coalition, with active participation from groups representing older persons, transit users, pedestrians, bicyclists, and disabled people, as well as smart growth proponents and professional organizations such as the American Planning Association and the Institute of Transportation Engineers. For more information, visit www.completestreets.org or call 202-207-3355.