

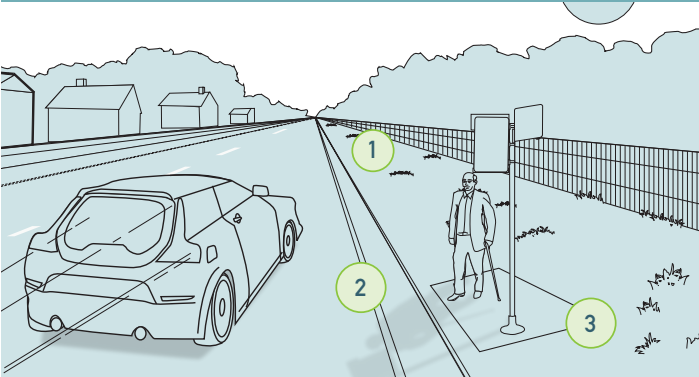
# COMPLETE STREETS

## *benefit older adults & people with disabilities*

Complete Streets ensure that all people can get around, regardless of age or ability. However, gaps in transit service, missing sidewalks, and incomplete intersections all limit the mobility of seniors and people with disabilities. Roadways are often not designed to accommodate older adults.



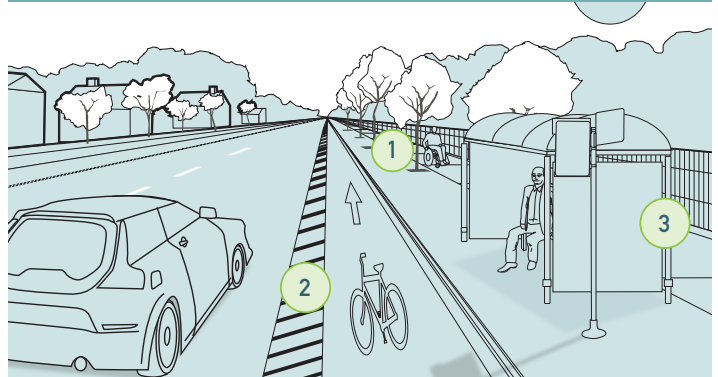
### Incomplete Street



#### Among adults over 50:

1. 40% believe their neighborhood lacks adequate sidewalks.
2. 55% have inadequate places to bike.
3. 48% have no comfortable place to wait for the bus.

### Complete Street



#### Positive improvements:

1. Sidewalks provide more people with access to transit and local businesses.
2. Bike lanes provide a more comfortable place for cyclists of all ages.
3. Shade & shelter at transit stops vastly improves the transit experience for those with health or mobility challenges.

### CHALLENGING ROUTES

Roadways and transit systems are often inaccessible, confusing, and dangerous for people with disabilities:

- Visually impaired pedestrians wait three times longer to cross the street and make many more dangerous crossings than pedestrians with no visual impairments.<sup>1</sup>
- Even with reliable bus service within a few blocks of home, many seniors and people with disabilities cannot reach it because local streets lack accessible curb ramps and sidewalks.



Seniors and people with disabilities need neighborhoods with sidewalks and safe crossings to support their basic mobility.

PHOTO: DAN BURDEN

## NON-DRIVERS FACE HURDLES

The lack of safe roadways forces many seniors to either leave their communities or live in isolation:

- Seniors who do not drive make 65 percent fewer trips to visit family, see friends, or go to church; many report they do not like to ask for rides.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 50 percent of seniors who do not drive stay home due to a lack of transportation options.<sup>3</sup>



As people age, walkability and accessibility to transit increasingly influence on their housing options and their ability to age in place.

PHOTO: DAN BURDEN

## COMPLETE STREETS CAN HELP

Complete Streets keep older adults active and help them age in place:

- More than half of seniors who report an inhospitable walking, bicycling, and transit environment outside their homes would walk, bike, and take transit more if those problems were fixed.<sup>4</sup>
- Eight out of 10 of older adults consider using public transportation a better option than driving alone.<sup>5</sup>

Complete Streets are accessible to people with disabilities and encourage mobility:

- Roughly 9 percent of people with disabilities under age 25, 14 percent of those age 25 to 64, and 32 percent of those 65 or older have mobility problems. The most frequent reasons reported for those problems are having no car, having no or limited transportation, and having no one on whom to depend.<sup>6</sup>
- Roughly 14 percent of people with disabilities age 25 to 64 and 7 percent of those 65 or older says that they don't want to ask for help; a somewhat smaller percentage of these people reported that their equipment doesn't fit transportation or their disability makes it hard to use.<sup>7</sup>

## *Healthy HotSpot Initiative*

The places we live, work, learn, worship, and play matter to our healthy and can have an impact on how long and how well we live. Healthy HotSpots are places in suburban Cook County that have implemented one or more proven strategies to encourage positive behaviors, or to protect the public's well-being. Learn more at [cookcountypublichealth.org/healthy-hotspot](http://cookcountypublichealth.org/healthy-hotspot).

<sup>1</sup> Ashmead, D. H., et al. (2005). "Street Crossing by Sighted and Blind Pedestrians at a Modern Roundabout." *Journal of Transportation Engineering*, 131(11): 812-821.

<sup>2</sup> Surface Transportation Policy Project. (2004). *Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options*.

<sup>3</sup> Pucher, John, and Lewis Dijkstra. (2003). "Promoting Safe Walking and Cycling to Improve Public Health: Lessons from the Netherlands and Germany." *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(9).

<sup>4</sup> Lynott, Jana. (2009).

<sup>5</sup> American Public Transportation Association. (2005). *The Attitudes of Older Americans Toward Mobility and Transportation*. Retrieved from [http://www.apta.com/mediacenter/pressreleases/2005/Documents/051206harris\\_interactive.pdf](http://www.apta.com/mediacenter/pressreleases/2005/Documents/051206harris_interactive.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. (2003). *Transportation Availability and Use Study for Persons with Disabilities*. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.