



Improving Mobility Access through Complete Streets and Mobility Management



The National Center for Mobility
Management

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Contents

About the National Center for Mobility Management	2
Introduction	3
Defining Mobility Management and Complete Streets	4
Why Integrating Mobility Management and Complete Streets Makes Sense	6
The Role of a Mobility Management Professionals and Opportunities to Integrate Complete Streets Perspectives	7
Field Examples of Integrated Mobility Management and Complete Streets Policies and Practices.....	8
Resources	15
Summary	16

About the National Center for Mobility Management

The National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) is supported through a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration. The mission of the Center is to facilitate communities to adopt transportation strategies and mobility options that empower people to live independently, and advance health, economic vitality, self-sufficiency, and community.

The Center’s primary activities support Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grantees, mobility managers, and partners in adopting proven, sustainable, and replicable transportation coordination, mobility management, and one call–one click transportation information practices. NCMM provides assistance to communities through NCMM Regional Liaisons, a peer-to-peer network, short-term technical assistance, web resources, and one-on-one phone and e-mail support. NCMM staff deliver in-person and virtual trainings, a monthly e-newsletter, webinars, and conference calls while also disseminating descriptions of relevant promising practices, including “snapshots” of a particular topic or trend as well as a more in-depth database of practices. NCMM staff continuously collaborates with mobility management practitioners across the country and align and support the goals and activities of the Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) and the Federal Transit Administration.

NCMM is operated through a consortium of three national organizations—the American Public Transportation Association, the Community Transportation Association of America, and Easterseals.



Introduction

Never before has there been such a focus on integrating mobility practices and transportation services to ensure a seamless continuum of safe, reliable, and efficient options. Policy initiatives related to Mobility Management and Complete Streets result in changing the design and delivery of community infrastructure and services so that community opportunities are equitable and accessible to all residents. This is an exciting and important time to ensure that national, regional, or local work focusing on mobility management and Complete Streets is connected and interwoven. A deliberate focus on integration does not minimize the importance, strategic direction, or potential impact of either of these initiatives; rather, cross-fertilization of policies and practices that are associated with each other yield sustainable and comprehensive supports in a community that result in improved accessibility, navigability, and livability.

In this brief, the National Center for Mobility Management takes a look at mobility management and Complete Streets concepts and then identifies examples of communities where the initiatives — including the people and organizations that lead these efforts— collaborate to establish connected programs. We identify opportunities for mobility management professionals to consider a focus on Complete Streets projects in their work. The philosophy and operations of mobility management and Complete Streets are more similar than not. Both have the purpose of enhancing access, mobility, and equity in communities. Professionals in each of these sectors have opportunities to leverage resources and build sustainable and vibrant projects that ultimately affect the well-being of our communities.

Defining Mobility Management and Complete Streets

In short: **Mobility management** means helping communities and individuals manage their mobility options.

A bit longer explanation: Mobility management is an approach to designing and delivering transportation services that starts and ends with the customer. It begins with a community vision in which the entire transportation network—public transit, private operators, cycling and walking, volunteer drivers, and others—works together with customers, planners, and stakeholders to deliver the transportation options that best meet the community's needs.

Mobility management

- encourages innovation and flexibility to reach the "right fit" solution for customer
- plans for sustainability
- strives for easy information and referral to assist customers in learning about and using services
- continually incorporates customer feedback as services are evaluated and adjusted

At its core, mobility management is about integration:

- Integration of different transportation modes to create a seamless journey
- Integration of technology into transportation to improve its efficiency and effectiveness
- Integration of transportation into other community services, such as housing, healthcare and employment And, above all, integration of individuals into their community by giving them flexible mobility options



The National Complete Streets Coalition indicates that *Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.*

When transportation options are considered and when communities implement Complete Streets policies, communities also consider ways that make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Complete Streets help create livable communities where everyone can have safe and equitable access to community services and resources.

A Complete Streets policy:

- Includes a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets
- Specifies that **all users** includes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles
- Applies to both new and retrofit projects for the entire right-of-way, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations Make any exceptions specific and set a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions
- Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes
- Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads
- Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs
- Directs that Complete Streets solutions will complement the context of the community
- Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes
- Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy

“The idea of making streets more accessible to walkers, bikers, wheelchairs, bus riders, and everyone else isn’t about service to ‘special interests.’ Complete Streets is about being inclusive—recognizing that quality of life requires more than four-lane arterials and chip sealed avenues.”

- *Billings Gazette Editorial Board, July 25, 2011*

Why Integrating Mobility Management and Complete Streets Makes Sense

Mobility management and Complete Streets initiatives have **common goals** related to safety, livability, customized solutions, equity, and accessibility. Both seek to create opportunities for community residents through design and practice of how we move about, how we get from point A to point B, and how we access community resources. With the same end goals and the same intended outcomes - it is important to use a common approach or framework to realize these goals. By integrating work related to mobility management and Complete Streets, there is alignment from the very onset of the programs. This results in enhanced common goals.



There is a national **emphasis on public health** and how our communities and where we live contribute to public health outcomes. Both mobility management and Complete Streets share this emphasis. Mobility management seeks to facilitate connections between transit and health care to minimize access to transportation challenges that may impede the ability of patients to access medical care. Bike programs, paths of travel, and active

transportation are typically part of the mobility service continuum that mobility managers support. Similarly, Complete Streets focus on health and safety by designing communities that are safe to walk, bike, and navigate in accessible ways.

Not surprisingly, both mobility management and Complete Streets rely on **data** to drive implementation and continuous improvement. Data about rider use of transportation services, mobility patterns in a community, or accident rates at a city intersection are important to both mobility managers and Complete Streets officials. These initiatives create an opportunity to work together on collecting data, use synergistic analyses tools, and develop integrated communication and reporting formats. Shared practice regarding data collection, management, and reporting is efficient and enables a community to paint a more comprehensive picture of safety, mobility, and livability.

It seems that to implement policies, regardless of industry, there is never enough money or time. When the administrators of mobility management and Complete Streets initiatives come together in their work it may enable them to reach out to a **broader potential funding base**. In mobility management, traditional sources of support come from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, whereas, funding for Complete Streets Initiatives can come from state and local community development grants, public works dollars, tax programs, and also federal funding. For both sectors, it is important to identify the “right message” that is targeted to the “right audience.” Stories, profiles, and data across mobility management and Complete Streets could be important to provide a rationale to funders regarding why this work is important.

The Role of a Mobility Management Professionals and Opportunities to Integrate Complete Streets Perspectives

Mobility management professionals perform a variety of duties to ensure a comprehensive system of accessible mobility services. Every position is different and based on the needs of the individuals and services in a community. The following represents some examples of the role and function of a mobility management professional. The section describes where it can be appropriate to invite the thinking and perspective of Complete Streets and the professionals who work on these initiatives into the process.

- Creating and coordinating new mobility options, such as vanpools, carpools, ride hailing services, and volunteer driving services.
 - ✓ Consider the implications of these services on walkways and community design. What impact will the service have on safety design and access for pedestrians? Will existing Complete Streets work be compromised by the addition or alteration of service?
- Promoting coordination between and among transportation systems (such as transit and bike share) to increase mobility and efficiency.
 - ✓ When mobility management professionals identify key stakeholders in their mobility management network, those professionals who address Complete Streets initiatives should be at the table. These professionals can be afforded opportunities to describe their work at mobility management and coordination forums. When considering new or changed service as part of an integrated mobility continuum, it is important to get the opinion of Complete Streets professionals regarding how the mobility service may affect existing or planned Complete Streets projects.
- Connecting people with centralized information sources on transportation.
 - ✓ Mobility management professionals often use a database of resources to identify mobility services and make the match between transportation services and the needs of diverse riders in their community. It may be worthy to consider whether any data or information about Complete Streets initiatives could also be included in these data repositories. Could there be descriptions of Complete Streets projects that could complement the descriptions of mobility services so that mobility managers have a more robust picture of the accessibility and safety characteristics of travel in a community?



- Promoting and fostering public engagement in transportation planning.
 - ✓ Most mobility management professionals are skilled at reaching out and engaging diverse audiences, especially individuals with disabilities and older adults. The input and perspective of the public is a critical component of the ability of mobility manager to align transportation service in a community with the needs of riders. These public forums and the messages that reach community members also could be an important forum to share and/or obtain perspective regarding Complete Streets initiatives. When mobility managers organize or host public engagement meetings, they may also want to invite those professionals who address Complete Streets.
- Improving physical infrastructure, such as sidewalks, to ensure individuals can access transportation and local destinations.
 - ✓ Ensuring the accessibility of paths of travel, wayfinding, and navigation in and around a community is often an important role of mobility management professionals. These duties directly align with Complete Streets policies and those professionals who address Complete Streets could be valuable informants to this work. Complete Streets administrators may readily know who to contact and how to bring about change to the physical infrastructure and the built environment—this knowledge could assist mobility management professional in identifying key partners at the local level.

Field Examples of Integrated Mobility Management and Complete Streets Policies and Practices

A consortium of organizations and professionals from North Central Massachusetts shared their work through an [NCMM Webinar](#). Tricia Pistone, Vice President of Planning, Policy and Development, Montachusett Opportunity Council, Jenna David, Environmental Programs Director, Montachusett Opportunity Council, and Sheri Bean, Principal Planner, Montachusett, Regional Planning Commission work collaboratively to integrate mobility management and Complete Streets policies and practices. The following is an overview of their work and suggestions that can enable other communities to undertake similar efforts.

Overall Recommendations

- Involve multiple stakeholders: Ensure there is diversity and your stakeholders represent the broad needs and perspectives of community.
- Engage the public advocacy works: Create a message about the work (mobility management and Complete Streets) that appeals to broad stakeholders. Identify ways to enhance their participation in planning and carrying out projects.
- Asset based approach: Take stock of existing resources – leverage what you have – money, people, and infrastructure.

- Map your resources: Identify and understand how you will use existing and new resources in an efficient and mission-driven way.
- Be adaptive: This takes flexibility and continuous redesign of projects to ensure that the work is aligned with community needs.
- Use your data: At the beginning, middle, and end--and continuously!

Considerations when Planning Integrated Initiatives

It is important to be able to describe the demographics and geography of the communities impacted by mobility management and Complete Streets initiatives. Data such as Census, health conditions, school enrollment, poverty rates, population density, mobility patterns, and age distributions are important to understand and explain how these factors influence mobility and accessibility. Mobility managers and Complete Streets professionals may traditionally rely on different data sources; however, in this work, it is important to consider data in a holistic way to get a comprehensive picture of the needs, conditions, and patterns of the community

Specific Mobility Management and Streets Projects

- Sheri Bean, Principal Planner, Montachusett, Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) described how mobility management projects can inform and influence Complete Streets policies and practices. The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission conducted a sidewalk inventory for the City of Fitchburg that focused on the major bus routes of the local transit authority. This project focused on the area within ¼ mile of the bus routes. Mobility managers mapped the bus routes with a ¼ mile buffer around them. This buffer was the realistic distance that someone might walk to the bus line. Next the team mapped all the major points of interest such as shopping plazas, schools, major employers and medical facilities to see if the bus route met the needs of these key locations. In most cases, the services did fall within the mapped route. The team then inventoried the sidewalks and overlaid elderly and disabled population census block group data. This data was chosen as priority populations because it was assumed that these people would have the highest need for the sidewalks. MRPC prioritized areas for improvements based on the sidewalk condition, special populations, bus ridership, and areas near major facilities. It is the hope that the City can use this information to address the need for sidewalks in these high priority areas and integrate the results in Complete Streets initiatives.
- Tricia Pistone, from the Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC) provided an overview of other Complete Streets projects. As was described earlier, Complete Streets refers to a set of design features that support safe roads for people of all ages and abilities. In 2016, Massachusetts created a robust Complete Streets Program as a result of a concerted effort by the Baker/Polito Administration and MassDOT. Through the program, a municipality is eligible for up to \$50,000 for technical assistance, and up to \$400,000 for construction funding.

As of today, 188 municipalities have registered to participate, 146 cities and towns have approved Complete Streets policies, and 90 have approved Prioritization Plans. Sixty-eight (68) Complete Streets projects have been approved statewide over the past 2 years.

In 2016, Fitchburg approved its Complete Streets Policy using feedback from community members and organizations including transit authority, disability commission, and seniors. This included walk-audits and park audits that were conducted with a lens on ADA requirements and the interconnection with transit/bus stops. Led by community input, Fitchburg applied for and received funding to support a Complete Streets Prioritization Planning process that led to a final submission in the summer 2017. This plan included almost 40 projects that were ranked by safety, ADA accessibility, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, transit access and vehicle/freight operations.

Most if not all of these rankings fit into the earlier slide of making sure the built environment supports an integrated mobility service as a system. It is also important to note that our agency's involvement in the work was to advocate for projects that tied to creating a healthy community- addressing access, population health priorities, and social determinants of health.

The majority of the projects were focused in the downtown area of Fitchburg, as priority to creating hubs and connections between these projects, where there is a number of other modes of transit- intermodal center, new five-mile bike path, main bus line/bus shelters, and pilot effort to reduce the lanes of traffic on Main Street to increase walkability. It also has the densest population with high poverty statistics, including senior and college students and houses some of the City's greatest assets, including the Senior Center, public library, and City Hall.

- Jenna David, Environmental Programs Director, Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC), highlighted connections between mobility management and Complete Streets. Mobility management is a strategic approach to service coordination and customer service. It focuses on creating partnerships among transportation providers to expand the range of viable options that communities have for transportation. In partnership with MART (Regional Transit Authority), MOC, and approximately four other local human service agencies received introductory and intermediate training from the Kennedy Center of Connecticut on how to become a travel trainer, this essentially being "train the trainer." The funding was made available by MassDOT. Each participating organization provides travel training services to targeted populations (e.g., seniors, students, individuals with physical or cognitive disabilities) through a referral system. MART offers bus orientations and travel training sessions for large groups and launched a regional travel training program.
- David shared her observations as someone who has learned how to train others to use our regional transit system. In David's own words, a few things really stood out:
 - My own lack of knowledge about all the different services that MART offers.

- Realization that streets and some sidewalks weren't designed with mobility in mind--width of streets, telephone poles in middle of sidewalks, missing curb cuts. In my mind this really reinforced the need for Complete Streets.
 - How important transportation access is to a person's health and well-being: work, healthcare, food, and socialization.
- In addition to travel training, the Regional Coordinating Council (which operates under our RTA) is in the process of filming videos in English and Spanish that will show potential riders how to use the bus system. This effort is also supported by the recent installation of bilingual English/Spanish signage in several bus shelters. Having linguistically and culturally appropriate signage, maps, and videos shows how we are making the bus system more accessible to limited English speakers.
- For mobility management initiatives in our region, MOC has served as a student, advocate, and connector. There are so many entities throughout the region working on transit and active transportation related projects. MOC has been in a unique position where we have been able to sit at several different tables to glean and share information that has resulted in improved coordination.

How Integrating Mobility Management and Complete Streets affects Access and Mobility

Tricia Pistone explained...

It's a mind shift change. I believe it all goes back to sharing a common vision of creating a healthy community for all residents. Once that vision is broadly shared- it's then identifying those customized goals, related to safety, livability, equity and accessibility, and aligning to all the work being done. F

From transit to road infrastructure to housing development and zoning, I will borrow the term "complete trip" from the info sheet by the same name published by the National Complete Streets Association. We need to think about the trip from the moment you leave your door to when you arrive at your destination. The sheet does a good job of framing that concept. I believe we can make that available to everyone listening today.

This is also where the use of data can be most significant. It allows connections to be made that otherwise may be overlooked. The role of data in identifying where your pockets of vulnerable populations live and how data/GIS mapping can be used to demonstrate equitable distribution of funds/projects can be achieved.

Sheri Bean added that different types of data can be used for different types of projects. For a Safe Routes to School project, you will not be using elderly data but possibly low income and disability information instead. Each type of need can result in different data sets and projects. Knowing your challenges and target populations will help steer the data gathering process.

What Words of Wisdom can you Offer to others who may be Considering Similar Work?

Jenna David suggested....

- Be prepared and open to working with many stakeholders including planning commissions, human service organizations, municipal departments and leaders, resident/neighborhood groups, health coalitions, and colleges/universities. Involve the public. The voice of residents is powerful. Use advocacy/community engagement as a tool. Use it from beginning to end.
- Find your friends- build off existing groups- disability commission, senior groups, bike/pedestrian groups- find those cheerleaders and influencers!



- Highlight both the assets and challenges in your community. What is already working well and what could use some improvement? It's important to have a balanced conversation--- if not your discussion can really go "off the rails."
- Present concrete and realistic ideas to your community. Although hypotheticals and abstract ideas might be good for internal planning, the public needs something that they can sink their teeth into.
- Perform a scan of other organizations that are taking on similar work. Ask yourself if there is an opportunity to collaborate? No one wants to reinvent the wheel!
- Be adaptive in your approach and use data to guide your work-. A lot of times we think we know the problem or solution ahead of looking at data- Data can be enlightening.
- This is especially important when looking at equitable distribution of resources

Tricia Pistone offered....

- Transit and infrastructure costs are expensive and typically connected to limited state and federal funds. As you think about local partners, I encourage you to talk to your local hospitals if they are not already at the table.
- Not to be too health focused, but research shows that 40 percent of a person's health is attributed to access to health food, housing status, education attainment and access to transportation. These "social determinants of health" should and do matter to your local health industry. Transportation in particular, also has a direct impact on access to health care services and therefore a strong business case can be made for hospitals to support transportation efforts.
- In our region, the hospitals coordinated on the development of a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) – required by all public hospitals nationally (an IRS requirement). Transportation was among the top five areas prioritized in the report and has allowed some limited funding to support coordination of services. There is a committee of various nonprofit, community, transit and health care organizations that have developed a rider survey, developed a resource guide of area transit options and are identifying strategies that could be successfully rolled out in both rural/urban communities.
- I would also offer another example of how residents can be engaged in this work. In downtown Fitchburg, we have a neighborhood that has a concentrated population of individuals with low incomes and people with disabilities. While many of the streets are arterial roads to Main Street, they lack or have substandard sidewalks and also lack curb cuts, wayfinding, speed limit signage, etc. While transit is available in close proximity to the vast amount of housing, safety is

an issue for pedestrians. There are a number of other social determinants that exist in this neighborhood, including age of housing stock and crime.

- Residents in the neighborhood, both families and seniors, have recently come together, with the help of a community organizing nonprofit, to advocate for road/sidewalk and speed improvements. They have met with the police chief and mayor as well as have jointly submitted an application to the City for \$43,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to make those repairs. They are now advocating to the city council for this project. While it is infrastructure, the importance of this project to transit is significant.

Resources

The [National Center for Mobility Management](#), a national technical assistance center funded by the Federal Transit Administration, supports states, regions, and communities to develop mobility management networks and implement strategies. Webinars, products, and training available through NCMM are free and can be customized to the needs of communities. NCMM supports the implementation of innovative and integrated mobility strategies that improve access to a continuum of mobility options for individuals with disabilities and older adults.

The [National Complete Streets Coalition](#), a program of Smart Growth America, brings together public interest groups and practitioner organizations to work for the adoption and effective implementation of Complete Streets policies at the local, state and federal levels. Complete Streets is a planning and design process that ensures most roads are planned, designed, constructed, operated, and maintained for the safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for and leading coalitions to bring smart growth practices to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods. For additional information, visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org

[Montachusett Regional Planning Commission](#), MRPC's mission is to deliver superior planning services to its municipal clients within the boundaries of the Massachusetts Regional Planning Law, consistent with sound planning principles, and in cooperation with its partners.

[Montachusett Opportunity Council](#), (MOC) is the designated community action agency for the North Central MA region. MOC provides a wide range of services that help families create an environment that allows children to thrive. Services focus on children and families, teens and youth, emergency situations, health and wellness, healthy homes, financial education, elder services, and behavioral health services.

Summary

As a professional who is involved in projects that integrate mobility management and Complete Streets, Tricia Pistone explained, “It’s a mind shift change. I believe it all goes back to sharing a common vision of creating a healthy community for all residents.”

This brief highlighted this common vision and described ways in which mobility management professionals could integrate Complete Streets activities within their role. This work is not intended to add responsibilities or change the already abundantly full positions of mobility management professionals. Rather, the integration of these two highly visible philosophical and operational approaches has the purpose of facilitating access, mobility, and equity for our communities. Importantly, this integration is intended to capitalize on the expertise of community planners and mobility managers in ways that maximize resources and leverage capacity. Too often, seemingly great and important federal, state, or local initiatives go by the wayside because there is not consideration of how new initiatives may affect or be affected by existing practices or programs. As mobility management and Complete Streets projects grow, the field can take advantage of this growth to ensure that there is integration, shared resources and knowledge, and commit to building on proven strategies that promote community access, mobility, and equity. Only then will all of these projects be sustainable and have a long lasting impact on community well-being.



The National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM), www.nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org, is a national technical assistance center created to facilitate communities in adopting mobility management strategies. The NCMM is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration and is operated through a consortium of three national organizations – the American Public Transportation Association, the Community Transportation Association of America, and Easterseals. Content in this document is disseminated by NCMM in the interest of information exchange. Neither the NCMM nor the U.S. DOT, FTA assumes liability for its contents or use. This publication was prepared by National Center for Mobility Management staff. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the federal government.