Safer Streets, Stronger Economies: Measuring Complete Streets Performance

Presenters:
Roxanne Blackwell, Hon. ASLA, Director of Federal Government Affairs, American Society of Landscape Architects
Erin Evenhouse, Outreach Manager, Transportation for America
Hannah Higgins, ASLA, Project Manager, Site Design Group / Chicago Department of Transportation
Aaron Zahm, ASLA, LEED AP – Landscape Architect / Senior Associate, Morrow Reardon Wilkinson Miller

What do communities implementing Complete Streets achieve with these investments? This session shares data-driven analysis of 30+ built Complete Streets projects and their transportation and economic performance in diverse communities. It then examines the connection between natural and built design to support this performance. It concludes by proposing a comprehensive performance-based approach for transportation decision making.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will be able to explain the transportation performance of built Complete Streets projects (e.g., mode shifts, safety, cost, etc.).
- Participants will be able to discuss the economic performance of built Complete Streets projects (e.g., total private investment and real estate and employment trends).
- Participants will learn practical lessons about integrating the natural and built environment as part of Complete Streets.
- Participants will explore recommendations and resources for better data collection and analysis of Complete Streets projects.

Outline:
Introduction
- Welcome
- The Complete Streets Movement
- Landscape architects: Leading Through Design
- ASLA Advocacy: Completing the Streets

Evaluating Complete Streets Projects
- Why does performance-based transportation decision making increasingly matter?
- Methods to assess projects
- Meeting transportation goals: Results from 35+ Complete Streets projects
- Defining performance measures
• Best Practices in measuring Complete Streets’ performance at the project level
• Review of publicly available tools and resources to jump-start project evaluation

Lessons Learned from Chicago: The role of the landscape architect from design to evaluation
• Implementing Complete Streets policy
• “Tricks” of the landscape trade
• Modal hierarchy, with pedestrians as priority
• Sustainability
• Placemaking
  a. Public progress / education
  b. Agency coordination / resources

Lessons Learned from Albuquerque: The role of the landscape architect from design to evaluation
• Overview of Complete Streets projects from design to implementation
• Lead & Coal Streetscape Improvements
  Project goals
  Public involvement strategies
  Challenges faced during design and construction
  Public response/results
  Missed opportunities/lessons learned
• Applying lessons learned to future projects (West Central Ave./San Pedro Dr./Zuni Rd.)
  Evaluation component
  Performance measures
  Results
• Filling gaps in project evaluation
• Landscape architects’ role in developing measurement goals

Bios:

Roxanne Blackwell, Hon. ASLA, Moderator
American Society of Landscape Architects
Washington, D.C.

Roxanne joined ASLA in 2007, where she directs and implements all federal government affairs programs and is the lead advocate for the Society before the U.S. Congress and federal agencies. She has extensive experience in transportation and infrastructure issues, including federal transit, bicycle, and pedestrian policies. Roxanne received her bachelor of arts in political science from Howard University and her Juris Doctor from the Howard University School of Law. She is admitted to the Maryland Bar.

Erin Evenhouse, MUP, Panelist
Transportation for America
Chicago

Erin is the Midwest Outreach Manager for Transportation for America, a program of Smart Growth America. In this role, she coordinates cross-disciplinary partnerships and guides organizational strategy through network-based evaluation of emerging practices and on-the-ground realities. Her
recent work includes creation of an arts & culture guide for transportation practitioners, grassroots organizing for federal policy reform, and spearheading an iterative collaboration to improve state-level transportation performance measurement. Erin's previous hats include grant administration for the City of Chicago and communications for the University of Michigan.

**Hannah Higgins, ASLA, Panelist**  
Site Design Group/Chicago Department of Transportation  
Chicago

Hannah Higgins is a project manager with Site Design Group contracted full-time to the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Streetscape and Sustainable Design Program. She implements Complete Streets initiatives that support Chicago's modal hierarchy with pedestrians first. Hannah's duties include overseeing streetscape and public plaza projects from the start of the design process through construction, and coordinating CDOT's annual landscape maintenance seminar. Hannah is a registered landscape architect with experience working on urban design, parks and recreation, education, real estate, health care, and transportation sectors. She holds a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from Ball State University.

**Aaron Zahm, PLA, ASLA, LEED AP, Panelist**  
MRWM Landscape Architects  
Albuquerque, NM

Aaron is a landscape architect and senior associate at MRWM Landscape Architects in Albuquerque, New Mexico. His recent work includes public plazas, parks, and streetscape projects throughout the Southwest. The firm has completed more than 4,000 projects in 40 years of professional practice, many of which have involved work in the public right-of-way for governmental clients. Aaron's service with the New Mexico Chapter of ASLA focused on educating the public and professional sectors about the positive influence multi modal transportation has on the safety, aesthetics, and economic vitality of communities throughout the state.

**References:**

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2) Chicago Complete Streets—Design Guidelines, Chicago Department of Transportation  
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5) Evaluating Complete Streets Projects: A guide for practitioners,, AARP, Smart Growth America, National Complete Streets Coalition, April, 2015.  
8) National Complete Streets Coalition,: Smart Growth America  
9) Safer Streets, Stronger Economies, Smart Growth America, National...
Complete Streets Coalition, March 2015.

10) Urban Street Design Guide.; (National Association of City Transportation Officials)