

## Rural Perspective

# MISSOURI LIVABLE STREETS



## WHAT IS LIVABLE STREETS?

Livable or Complete Streets is a design approach that supports active living. It makes our communities more connected and open to people regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation. Livable Streets promotes healthy, vibrant communities that businesses want to invest in, people want to live in, and tourists want to visit.

**Sidewalks**, crosswalks, paved shoulders, **assistive devices** and bike lanes are **potential elements** of a Livable Street.



## Why is Livable Streets important?

More and more people want to feel like they're part of a community – one that promotes a healthy, active lifestyle. That's why programs such as walking school buses and features such as bike lanes are gaining popularity across the state. And Missouri's smaller communities are in a unique position to make these changes.

## Livable Streets works for small towns and rural areas!

More than 30 Missouri communities have adopted Livable Streets policies. **Noel, Warsaw, Caruthersville, and Eldon** are just a few towns that have passed policies.



For more information visit [livablestreets.missouri.edu](http://livablestreets.missouri.edu)



## | LOCAL PERSPECTIVE |

Small towns across Missouri are looking for ways to preserve their culture by revitalizing foot traffic in downtown shopping areas, or building new memories by creating new activity features such as recreational trails. Towns like Warsaw have done a great job amplifying some of their treasured qualities through a Livable Streets policy and other active transportation planning.

### Livable Streets Success in Warsaw

Warsaw (population 2,127) has worked to integrate bicycling, walking, trails, parks, and components of a healthy lifestyle into its city and region-wide economic development plan. The city has developed a mountain bike park, a system of trails and bicycle routes in and around the city, an improved, walkable downtown area, a system of parks connected by trails, a beautiful riverfront harbor and park connected to downtown, and much more. The city has recently adopted an ambitious regional trails and bike-way plan. The Complete Streets Policy is an essential part of the city's planning to make the entire city and region walkable and bike friendly. The Complete Streets elements allow every neighborhood, school, and commercial area of the city to make the "last mile" connection to the city's trails and bike-ways system.

The result is that people can--and do--regularly bike to destinations around the city, including downtown, parks, and schools. People from all around the county and region come to Warsaw to use the trail and bike-way system.

- Written by Brent Hugh, Director, Missouri Bicycle and Pedestrian Federation



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### McDonald County's Perspective



Brandy Smith  
Health Educator  
McDonald County  
Health Department

"Where do you want to see your community in 20 years? Do you want it to be abandoned, or do you want to improve it? That's where Livable Streets comes in. You want to prepare for the future growth of your community. People [and funders] want to see that you are doing things like Livable Streets policy because it all starts with policy. [Our goal] is to finish the walking trail that's in Anderson around our ball parks and then eventually build nice trails that connect Anderson to Pineville."

McDonald County has passed Livable Streets policies in four of its towns: Anderson, Pineville, Noel, and Southwest City. While passing the policy was a two year process, it's already at work across the county. The McDonald County Health Department outlined resources they used and steps they took to successfully pass policy, which you can access at:

<http://bit.ly/mcdonaldcounty>



## | LIVABLE STREETS IN RURAL MISSOURI |

### Caruthersville's Perspective



Dawn Jordan, Caruthersville Healthy Communities Coordinator Pemiscot County Initiative Network

"We want to be able to redo the sidewalks and streets, but like a lot of rural communities, we do not have a budget for that. If you want grants to help with redevelopment, you have to have something in place to say that it is an important issue to your community— 'our streets are important and the sidewalks are important.' Now that [Livable] Streets has passed, we can say we have a [Livable] Streets Ordinance and we need help."

### Livable Streets can help attract young adults

Many young adults appreciate smaller town culture and want to settle in areas where they know their neighbors, their kids can safely walk to school, and they have easy access to outdoor recreation. Rural towns already have these assets and many are capitalizing on them by opening businesses for visitors who in turn put money back into the town for residents and visitors to use.

Rural places are as diverse as America. However, poverty, health disparities and rates of fatal car crashes are higher in rural areas, which is why many rural towns are stepping up to identify strategies that can help reverse these trends and revitalize their communities.

#### How can Livable Streets help my community?

- **Mobility:** Not everyone is able to drive. It's important to provide a variety of transportation options so people are not restricted to their homes and can safely travel to work, school, doctor appointments or other places around town.
- **Health:** Obesity rates are higher in rural areas than urban areas. Livable Streets policies support the simplest remedy: safe sidewalks and paths for walking and biking. After Eldon, Missouri implemented a Complete Streets policy, it saw obesity rates drop five percent in five years among school-aged children.
- **Safety:** Missouri is the 17th most dangerous state for people walking (Dangerous by Design 2019). Rural areas in Missouri have twice the number of fatal car accidents as urban areas. Adding shoulders or traffic calming measures (i.e. speed bumps, curb extensions) can reduce speed, making roads safer for drivers and pedestrians.
- **Economy:** Active transportation infrastructure like bike trails/paths and sidewalks are important community assets that can make a community more appealing to businesses and funders, resulting in more activities, jobs, and an increase in property values.





## | LIVABLE STREETS POLICY BASICS |

### Building Support for Livable Streets

- **Get key stakeholders and community leaders on board** by using economic or health disparities data to help illustrate why a Livable Streets policy is an appropriate strategy.
- **Attend city council meetings** where you can bring up Livable Streets.
- **Get youth organizations involved in coming up with ideas and planning.**
- **Speak with residents and businesses** in the community to hear their concerns or ideas about improving roads and sidewalks.
- **Highlight what Livable Streets policy can do for the future of your community.** Some communities have used temporary pop-up demonstrations to illustrate their vision for a specific project (i.e. using traffic cones to mark out a new median). Then invite stakeholders to see and give their feedback.
- **Share success stories from other communities.**
- **Be persistent!**

If you're planning for the future growth of your community, having a Livable Streets policy in place shows that you are taking the efforts seriously. Grantors like to see that you have policy in place that support development projects (i.e. sidewalks, cross walks, bike lanes/trails), and already having policy in place can help increase your chances of receiving funding for these projects.

### What goes into a good Livable Streets policy?

A policy that works in a more urban area, may not be suitable for a rural community. That's why it's important to understand the needs of your community when drafting a policy. Here are some tips to get started.

- Highlight what's great about your community or areas for opportunity and how Livable Streets can support it.
- Include relevant findings that focus on neighborhood issues.
- Clearly state how the policy will be implemented and evaluated for success.
- Specific policy language is needed to demonstrate how the policy will be effective for all residents.

Take a look at Missouri Livable Streets Advocacy Manual for a policy example at [livablestreets.missouri.edu/advocate/mls-advocacy-manual/](http://livablestreets.missouri.edu/advocate/mls-advocacy-manual/)

### Livable Streets supports ADA compliance

In 2010, the Department of Justice amended the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by revising accessibility standards in the "[2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#)". Revisions now require newly designed, constructed, or altered state and local government facilities, public accommodations, and commercial facilities to be readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Livable Streets policies embody this approach, which is why communities across the state are working to adopt and implement Livable Streets policies in their transportation design.





# | FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES |

There are a variety of ways to fund Livable Streets projects. Federal, local and private sources can be used from anything like higher cost infrastructure projects such as sidewalks to paint for shared-lane markings. Crowdfunding on sites like GoFundMe have also been used to raise funds.

## Federal funding opportunities

- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-Aside- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

## Federal funding opportunities administered by state and federal agencies

- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program (Section 402)
- Recreation Trails Program (RTP)
- The Environmental Protection Agency offers a variety of grants that address community health

## Local funding sources

- Set aside a percentage of capital improvement budgets to fund projects
- Community Foundation of the Ozarks and affiliates in 50 Missouri counties (cfozarks.org)
- Crowdfunding: using platforms like Gofundme or CauseMomentum.org to raise funds

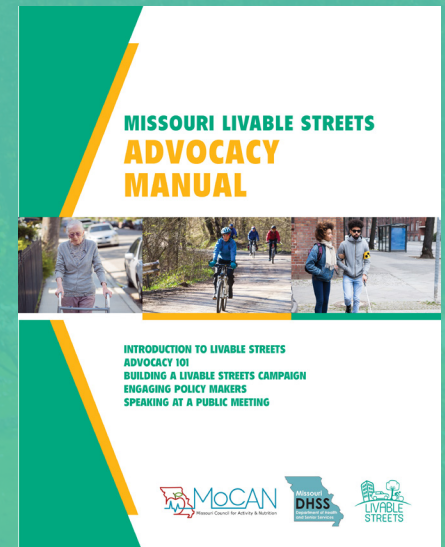
## Private sources

- People for Bikes Grant Program
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)

Learn more about the funding resources at [livablestreets.missouri.org](http://livablestreets.missouri.org).

For questions about Livable Streets contact Kathy Craig at [Kathy.Craig@health.mo.gov](mailto:Kathy.Craig@health.mo.gov)

Learn more about Livable Streets policies, tips and how to get started by downloading the free Advocacy Manual from [livablestreets.missouri.edu/advocate/mls-advocacy-manual/](http://livablestreets.missouri.edu/advocate/mls-advocacy-manual/)







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