

# Plan4Health Nashua

A collaborative project integrating planning and public health

## About Nashua's Plan4Health Project

National collaboration between American Planning Association (APA) and American Public Health Association (APHA) that awarded grants in 18 U.S. communities, including the City of Nashua, and is supported by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

- 15-month program began in early 2015 with a national Plan4Health grant award of \$125,000
- Supports a healthy, economically vibrant community with roads that provide safe access for all users
- Focuses on Complete Streets philosophy and guidelines to encourage bicycle and pedestrian transportation in Nashua
- A priority strategy of the 2015-2018 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), supported by the Greater Nashua Public Health Advisory Council

## Activities

- Identify and convene partners
- Conduct street mapping and data analysis
- Audit current regulations and ordinances
- Develop Complete Streets training guide
- Educate about Complete Streets strategies
- Engage partners and community through strategic communications



Nashua has already made several improvements to street designs to make them safer and more attractive for walkers and bicyclists

## Goals

- Build on strong multi-agency efforts to reduce chronic disease in Nashua through the Greater Nashua Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)
- Grow coalition by engaging more partners with a wide range of expertise and influence
- Improve perceptions about physical activity within the community
- Establish support and tools for a Complete Streets way of thinking
- Make it more convenient for people to be physically active by increasing access to safe active transportation
- Decrease the burden of obesity and chronic disease in the City of Nashua
- Support a healthy, economically vibrant community

## Partners

- Nashua Regional Planning Commission
- Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL NH)
- New Hampshire Public Health Association
- City of Nashua Community Development
- City of Nashua Public Health & Community Services
- Renaissance Downtowns
- NeighborWorks of Southern New Hampshire
- Great American Downtown
- YMCA of Greater Nashua
- Nashua Police Athletic League
- Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua
- Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association (NNECAPA)

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# Plan4Health Nashua Complete Streets Project

A sound investment for a healthier, more economically vibrant Nashua

## Benefits of Complete Streets

- More choices to get to work, school, or local businesses
- Promotes healthy activity and independence
- Well-lit streets and more trees can help make the neighborhood safer, more attractive, and more livable
- Supports local economy with easier access to businesses
- Sidewalks and bike lanes make it easier and safer to travel
- Increased economic activity and a rise in property values

## What Makes a Complete Street?

Complete Streets is a planning and design process that ensures roads provide safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Here are some examples:

- Wide sidewalks and “tip downs” at crosswalks for strollers and people with disabilities
- Well-marked bike lanes and crosswalks
- Bus stops that are easy to get to
- Trees and plantings on sidewalks and medians to make a more attractive and pleasant neighborhood

## Complete Streets Economics

By considering Complete Streets early in the planning process, an existing transportation budget can often incorporate Complete Streets projects without requiring additional funding by re-prioritizing capital improvements and allocating funds to consider overall community mobility.

Benefits include:

- Preventing costly delays and retrofits
- Discovering effective measures at little or no extra cost
- Saving money through better design
- Supporting long-term savings for public transportation

## Communities throughout NH are Adopting Complete Streets

Across NH, cities and towns are using Complete Streets policies to create healthier communities that attract residents and businesses, and allow people to age in place. Five NH municipalities have adopted Complete Streets policies or resolutions: Portsmouth, Concord, Dover, Keene, Swanzey. Many other NH communities are in the process of developing policies or guidelines, and each community has chosen its own path toward implementation.

Statewide Complete Streets policy is also being considered. Bike-Walk Alliance of NH, Transport NH, and Healthy Eating Active Living NH lead a growing coalition of organizations that worked with the Senate to create SB 364 which would establish a committee to study the feasibility of incorporating Complete Streets into the 10-year transportation improvement plan. The bill has passed in the Senate and is currently assigned to the House Public Works and Highways Committee with a hearing expected to be held in March.

## What People are Saying about the Project

“We are very excited to be partnering with this team of organizations who are focused on improving healthier options for area residents. The Y is committed to strengthening the Greater Nashua region with a focus on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.”

– Mike LaChance, CEO, YMCA of Greater Nashua

“Affordable housing and transportation choices are directly connected to community revitalization and public health. Providing transportation choices and affordable housing near jobs, shops and schools supports the local economy and provides residents with the opportunity to live in a community that is safe, affordable and easy to get around and be active.”

– Robert Tourigny, Executive Director, of NeighborWorks Southern New Hampshire  
Letter published 12/23/15 in The Nashua Telegraph

“Monday morning, 18 community members from a wide range of groups met at City Hall and walked along the Nashua Heritage Rail Trail and discussed Plan4Health Nashua’s Complete Streets Project and improvement of the area’s walkability.”

– From “Groups seek to improve Nashua’s walkability in Complete Streets Project for pedestrians”  
Published 10/21/15 in The Nashua Telegraph

“There are many other community initiatives in Nashua that are working to support more options for healthy eating and safe physical activity. The Greater Nashua Public Health Advisory Council is leading several projects on this front under their 2015-2018 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). One such project called Plan4Health Nashua supports safer street design to make it easier for people to walk and bike to school, work, or anywhere they choose to go here in Nashua.”

– Robin Abodeely, R.N.  
School nurse at Dr. Crisp Elementary and Chairperson for the Nashua School District Wellness Team  
Letter published on 10/3/15 in The Nashua Telegraph