



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

New Mexico Chapter

November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2104

To: Albuquerque City Council

From: New Mexico Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

**Re: Albuquerque Complete Streets Ordinance (O-14-27)**

Dear Councilor:

The New Mexico Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (NMASLA) asks that you support the Complete Streets Ordinance (O-14-27) recently introduced by Councilor Isaac Benton. This ordinance will have a positive influence on the aesthetics and economic vitality of our City and the health, safety and welfare of our citizens.

Complete Streets policies ensure that the needs of all transportation users are planned for when developing a project. With over six hundred complete streets policies currently enacted nationwide, these are established techniques that have been carefully studied and successfully implemented across the country. Benefits of Complete Streets include, but are not limited to:

- Communities with walkable streets and sidewalks have higher real estate values. A recent study, *Walking the Walk: How Walkability Raises Home Values in U.S. Cities*, showed that houses with above average levels of walkability command a premium of about \$4,000 - \$34,000 over houses with just average levels.
- Complete Streets save money. When state and local transportation planners take into account all users at the onset of a project they can save on expensive retrofits.
- Complete Streets help small businesses: Unlike large highway projects that are designed and built by large firms, often active transportation projects are designed and built by small businesses.
- Active transportation projects help address public health concerns. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guide to Community Preventive Services notes that street-scale improvements such as sidewalks, safer street crossing configurations, multi-use pathways, and bike lanes can dramatically increase rates of physical activity by a median of 35 percent. Increased physical activity like walking and bicycling help address obesity, which is becoming a national epidemic, and other chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, asthma, and others.
- Active transportation projects save lives. Pedestrians, bicyclists, children, seniors, and persons with disabilities are often forced to use roads and arterials that are unsafe for their travel. Designing Complete Streets that include sidewalks, raised medians, better bus stop placement, traffic calming measures, and treatments for disabled users, save lives.
- Active transportation saves families money. The cost of traditional single vehicle transportation is burdensome and families are in dire need of low-cost

transportation options that also provide a myriad of other benefits. Vehicle-dependent households devote 20 percent more income to transportation than households in communities with accessible bicycling and walking networks that connect them to transit, work, school, shopping, and entertainment.

New Mexico has an abysmal record of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and better transportation planning could significantly reduce the number of injuries and deaths that occur on our streets. A Complete Streets Ordinance that provides for the comprehensive planning for *all* transportation users is long overdue. Please support the Complete Streets Ordinance (O-14-27).

Thank you for your leadership and hard work on behalf of our City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Loftis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert Loftis, ASLA  
NMASLA Advocacy Chair