

Great Streets

In a Nutshell

The St. Louis Great Streets Initiative was created in early 2006 to expand the use of multi-modal streets, also known as [Complete Streets](#). The goal of the program is to trigger economic and social growth with the aid of lively and attractive multi-modal streets.

The “How To”

[Great Streets](#) is local effort to encourage and promote the ideals behind Complete Streets. Through the Great Streets program, East-West Gateway Council of Governments offers educational opportunities for community leaders. Great Streets also provides funding opportunities for communities interested in diversifying the design and use of public streets.

East-West Gateway launched the St. Louis Great Streets Initiative in early 2006. The goal of the initiative is to trigger economic and social benefits by centering communities around lively and attractive streets accessible by multiple modes of transportation. Great Streets has gone through [two rounds of projects](#). These projects incorporated the Great Streets design principles in the development of a plan for a specific community.

[The 8 Great Characteristics of Great Streets](#) can be incorporated into any street design. The basic idea behind Great Streets is for the streets to be sustainable and accessible by multiple forms of transportation. Communities interested in learning more about how they can use Great Streets should visit the initiative’s website. There are webpages for the various kinds of places where Great Streets can be used including mixed-use development and residential neighborhoods.

The [report](#) from ITE discusses the concept of context sensitive solutions (CSS) for the “planning and design of major urban thoroughfares for walkable communities.” CSS principles can be applied to transportation projects, and that is the main focus of the report.

[Charlotte, North Carolina](#) is another good example of a community that has applied the principles of Complete Streets. Their approach has been to design and build streets that improve neighborhood safety and livability, promote transportation choices and create long-lasting value.

[Maryland’s State Highway Administration](#) published a handbook that provides “a step-by-step, comprehensive process that will allow them to identify and achieve community goals.: The document is in the form of a slide presentation. While some of the steps are specific to Maryland, the general concepts are applicable in Missouri and Illinois.

Planning & Zoning

East-West Gateway encourages all communities to incorporate the Great Streets principles into their roadway projects. As communities complete the [TIP application process](#), they are encouraged to include a discussion of how their project incorporates the [principles of Great Streets](#).

Dollars & Cents

The costs and benefits Great Streets are similar to those of Complete Streets. Smart Growth America has published "[Costs of Complete Streets - What We Are Learning from State and Local Governments](#)" which discusses the costs and benefits of Complete Streets. The report was compiled through the reporting done by state and local governments who have implemented Complete Street principles. While Smart Growth America promotes the benefits of the Complete Streets it is also honest and up front about the program's drawbacks.

Measuring Success

New York City published the report "[Measuring the Street: New Metrics for 21st Century Streets](#)" which details several metrics that can be used to measure the effects of multi-modal streets. Smart Growth for America published a short pamphlet "[Complete Streets Stimulate the Local Economy](#)", advertising the success of Complete Street programs from across the county. Both of these documents are excellent resources for developing measurements of multi-modal streets.

Discover More

The main source for information about this Initiative can be found at: St. Louis Great Streets Initiative: [Digital Design Guide](#).

East-West Gateway also maintains information at <http://www.ewgateway.org/GreatStreets/greatstreets.htm>

Case Studies

South Grand Boulevard Great Streets Initiative

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Description



as a model “Great Street” for the City of St. Louis, as the Master Plan set new standards for the relationship between transportation and community. The city has the highest aspirations for the safety and aesthetics of the street, while setting a new standard for local street design practices. The South Grand district is the first project in the Great Streets Initiative and construction.

Lessons Learned

An important lesson gleaned from this project was the importance of getting feedback from all of the relevant stakeholders. The stakeholders need to be engaged early and often. This allows for better and more complete planning.