



# CREATING COMPLETE STREETS IN LANCASTER

Building streets to accommodate all uses ends up providing economic and environmental benefits

## PROJECT GOALS

The City of Lancaster sought to encourage the use of other methods of transportation, while providing safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. In response, the city is creating complete streets—an interconnected network of streets, sidewalks, trails and transportation facilities, which also integrates stormwater management into community plans.

## COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Planting trees and vegetation beautifies the area, attracting consumers and visitors.
- Public health is improved through increased emphasis on walking and bicycling.
- Adding high-visibility crosswalks and traffic signals, and reducing lane widths, slows traffic, making residents and visitors safer.
- Building walkable streets increases foot traffic, which improves the economic viability of local businesses.
- Safer, walkable communities increase property values for residents and businesses.
- Conducting outreach, including educational signage, informs the community about complete streets and other green infrastructure practices, while maintaining local support for projects.

## ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Native trees and vegetation planted in rain gardens and vegetated curb extensions reduce stormwater runoff, improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat.
- Building complete streets can reduce automobile usage which can lead to fewer greenhouse gases, less traffic, better air quality and improved public health.
- Permeable parking areas and infiltration trenches capture and filter stormwater, which reduces contaminants entering local waterways.



*Photos by Will Parson/Chesapeake Bay Program*

“ Streets are for people – people walking, people in wheelchairs, people riding bikes, people taking transit, and people driving.”

**- Karl Graybill**

*City of Lancaster Department of Public Works*

## CONSERVATION PROJECTS INSTALLED

- Rain gardens.
- Vegetated curb extensions.
- Street trees and forest patios.
- Infiltration trenches.
- Permeable parking areas/lots.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Historically, streets have been designed to create more space for automobiles while overlooking the comfort, safety and convenience of other modes of transportation (e.g., bicycles, transit, pedestrian). As perspectives begin to shift, people are choosing to live in safer, healthier, walkable communities. Communities are responding to these changes by creating plans for complete streets that serve multiple functions, including stormwater management. Complete streets are designed to meet the needs of different modes of transportation and types of users. The elements needed to make a street complete depend on the location (the characteristics of the surrounding area) and type of street (ranging from local to regional). The Lancaster County Planning Commission defined seven different zones that varied in intensity of development, from natural areas to high-density urban areas. Each zone has a particular pattern and character of development that can be matched with specific complete street solutions.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Build partnerships every step of the way.
- Integrate plans with capital improvement projects to find cost-effective solutions.
- Be proactive when seeking funding as several options are available.

## THE PARTNERS AND FUNDING SOURCES

- National Fish and Wildlife Federation.
- City of Lancaster.
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.
- PennVest.
- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.
- Chesapeake Bay Trust.
- Lancaster County.

## CONTACTS

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Curb extension captures and filters stormwater while calming (slowing) traffic.



A vegetated curb extension filters stormwater while calming traffic and protecting a crosswalk.



A rain garden installed in front of Covenant United Methodist Church on Mulberry Street includes a young tree.