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PACIFIC RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP

# INSIGHTS

COMPLETE STREETS



**INSIDE:**

COMPLETE STREETS PAVE THE WAY  
TO WALKABLE COMMUNITIES



# What are COMPLETE STREETS?

**COMPLETE STREETS** are designed so people who walk, ride bikes, drive cars and use public transit can move easily and safely from one place to another no matter their age or ability. Studies have shown that complete streets encourage walking and biking, lower driving speeds while shortening travel time, and strengthen the local economy.



**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION** is more reliable (and popular) with special bus lanes and convenient rail access.



**"BULB OUT"** curb extensions extend the sidewalk at intersections, shortening crossing distance for people on foot and increasing visibility.



**RESIDENTS CAN BIKE** more safely with a **DEDICATED LANE**.



**BIKE BOXES** at the front of the queue at a traffic signal increase visibility for people on bikes.



**MULTI-MODAL STREETS** provide a safe and usable road for all forms of transportation.



**CROSSWALKS, SIDEWALKS** and well-marked **WALKWAYS** help kids and seniors be seen.

## Why We Need Complete Streets



Hawaii is the most unsafe state for pedestrians age 65 and over, according to AARP.



Among kids 5 to 14 years old, pedestrian injury is one of the most common causes of injury-related, unintentional death.



People in walkable communities are more likely to be socially engaged and trusting and report being happier and healthier.



Walkable properties are worth more, sometimes as much as 40 percent, according to some studies.

## Complete Streets are Coming to Hawaii

There are several complete streets initiatives in motion throughout the state.

On Kauai, nearly 10 of 16 miles of the Kauai Coastal Path have been completed. This scenic path on the isle's east side separates residents who are walking and cycling from vehicle traffic from Nawiliwili to Anahola.

Lihue will also reconfigure Hardy Street with a bevy of complete street elements: two travel lanes split by a landscaped median and a roundabout at Umi Street, planter strips, bike lanes, turn lanes, street-level parking, drainage, roadway lighting, underground utilities, crosswalks, curb ramps, improved bus infrastructure and a sidewalk stretching the entire length.



Ulune Street, Aiea



King Street, Honolulu

On Oahu, bright new road lines and signs were placed in a high-traffic section near Aiea High School. These improvements slowed vehicle traffic and increased the distance between people and the roadway. In Honolulu, a whole lane of traffic has been designated and protected for residents biking on King Street.

Efforts on Maui and the Big Island are also taking off to bring complete streets to more communities. And as they benefit from complete streets, our communities have a chance to become more integrated.





Expert Q&A

DAN BURDEN

BLUE ZONES, LLC

COMPLETING THE STORY OF COMPLETE STREETS

Across the nation as we make an important discovery about traffic and human health, we're making big changes in how we view traffic. We're completing our streets, putting in protected bike lanes, building light rail, changing our intersections and taking away traffic lanes. But folks who drive are skeptical: how can taking away lanes make our streets move traffic as well, or better?



Photo courtesy of Samantha Thomas, Built Environment Manager, Blue Zones, LLC.

Dan Burden was recognized by the White House in 2014 as a Champion of Change for his efforts to make places more walkable, and he was named one of the Top 100 Urban Thinkers of all time in a 2009 Planetizen poll. He is co-founder of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute and Director of Innovation and Inspiration at Blue Zones, LLC.



Photos courtesy of Dan Burden, Director of Innovation and Inspiration, Blue Zones, LLC.

La Jolla Boulevard, San Diego

I've sat through plenty of conversations about this, listening to complaints, keeping my fingers crossed as the changes go in, and no matter how much math and "what if" scenarios we applied beforehand, it always seemed uncertain if it would be worth it until these systems were in place. But in the end our experience is proving that we are better off completing our streets.

For example take La Jolla Boulevard, in San Diego. We took a five-lane road down to two lanes, took out traffic signals and put in roundabouts. People who drive understandably dreaded this change before it was made. But they found that instead of waiting 24 seconds for someone walking to cross 72 feet of road, they now only wait 3-4 seconds, or don't have to wait at all. Businesses that feared the loss of customers arriving in cars actually improved their trade about 35 percent, new stores were built, noise levels were reduced 77 percent and the value of land within walking distance climbed. Instead of driving 12 miles to a pharmacist, residents drove a mile, or walked. Far more people started walking and bicycling. But, most interestingly, people driving started going 19 mph on 2.5 miles of La Jolla Boulevard, instead of 40-45 mph, then stopping and stopping again. Today

people who drive are getting to their destinations in less time, because they aren't stopping.

Or consider a series of U.S. Federal Aid state and local roads in West Palm Beach, Florida. We took out 17 travel lanes and traffic — as well as the regional economic picture — improved. Many people moved back to town, so the traffic improved on streets serving the greater outlying areas.

We now know that instead of growing our traffic with bigger, wider roadways, we should do the inverse — shorten the distance some people drive, make it possible to have integrated communities where residents can safely walk and bicycle, and provide more places for shopping closer to where we live, work and play.

You don't have to trust me — a little doubt is good — but be patient, give this approach some time and you may just learn what people in cities across America have learned: that we can get more by having less. ●



Integrated Communities

BEYOND TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

What makes a good neighborhood? Proximity to a grocery store and dining options. Space for people young and old to be active. Nearby jobs. Streets that are safe for everyone.

When we talk about tomorrow's Hawaii that we're building today, it's important to focus on these tangible aspects of a community, rather than the intangible planner speak of developments. While transit-oriented development (TOD) is central to successful urban designs, it doesn't do much to inspire the public imagination.

Instead of advancing jargon like TOD, we want residents to envision what it can lead to on a more personally impactful level. We talk about *integrated communities* because we want Hawaii's people to understand that we're not just putting up new developments and housing units, we're building good neighborhoods and homes and we're doing it in a way that

will alleviate so many of the problems Hawaii faces.

So, for instance, integrated communities take TOD one step beyond mass transit by adopting complete streets, the hallmark of which are features for transit commuters as well as people walking, bicycling and driving. Restaurants, schools and doctors are nearby or easy to get to. Movement in these communities becomes seamless from one place to another — no matter which way you travel.

And traveling will be safer. Collisions with people are a too familiar tragedy in Hawaii. The AARP rated Hawaii's roadways the most unsafe in the nation for seniors. A recent study found that 71 percent of adults walked or biked to school when they were kids, but only 17 percent of today's kids do now. Complete streets will make integrated communities safer for seniors, children and everyone who uses our roadways.

With integrated communities built on complete streets, we can turn our money spent on gas into savings for bigger dreams, like affordable homeownership, and we'll trade hours wasted on the road for meaningful time with family and friends. Integrated communities emphasize the better quality of life that we can all realize if we build around transportation the right way. ●



Learn more about Integrated Communities

We'd like to visit your office, trade association or other group to share a short, powerful presentation by John White about integrated communities and their importance for the future of Hawaii. Please email info@prp-hawaii.com for more information or to schedule a visit.





*“I found two restaurants on the way from my office to the job site just riding on the street. You’re going a little slower on the bike... so you see things...things in the environment that you don’t get when you’re in your automobile.”*



Contractor Profile

**JUSTIN MCCUTCHEON**

dck pacific construction, LLC

*Justin McCutcheon, a project engineer, lives in Punchbowl and bikes back and forth to his downtown office, Makiki worksite and Ala Moana Beach Park to meet his wife for pau hana frisbee.*

For Justin, bicycling means freedom from owning a second car. He doesn’t struggle to find street parking at home and saves on gas, maintenance and parking at work. He says it’s good for his health, less stressful than driving and quicker. “I guarantee if someone drives from my house to the office and I bike, I’m at my desk first.”

And he looks forward to a day when complete streets make it easier to ride safely.

Complete streets promote safer cycling with bicycle-friendly infrastructure. Currently, Justin rides in bike lanes where he can, but notes that “people park in the bike lane occasionally and you have to go around a car while worrying if there’s someone coming up behind you.” The protected bike lane on King Street mitigates his biggest safety concern when he’s cycling. “You won’t have to worry about people in cars not paying attention. It’s just other people on bikes, and they’re usually going at the same pace.”

Being able to move through an area at a slower pace also opens up new possibilities. “I found two restaurants on the way from my office to the job site just riding on the street. You’re going a little slower on the bike (or you’re a lot slower on foot) so you see things, or you smell them, or whatever – there’s other things in the environment that you don’t get when you’re in your automobile.”

While he knows change won’t be effortless in Hawaii, he does think it will be worth it. “It does require a shift in how everyone thinks of city living. But you’re definitely more connected to where you are.” ●

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# Afterword

JOHN WHITE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PRP

## COMMUNITIES HAVE A RIGHT TO TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY



If we want to build a better future, a great place to start is at the street level. We all have a basic need for transportation, and I think everyone has a right to transportation that’s easy, accessible and doesn’t waste hours of our lives sitting in traffic. That’s not currently available to everyone in Hawaii, and the reason is that we don’t have complete streets.

Complete streets are built with consideration for all modes of transportation, putting residents who bike, drive, walk and use mass transit like light rail and buses on equal footing. Complete streets have sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes too commonly missing from our communities today. They make it easy to cross the street and bike safely, they allow buses to run on time and they make our communities a better place to live.

But complete streets aren’t enough. They work because they’re at the heart of integrated communities that put transportation, work, play and a variety of housing types within close proximity to each other. To do that, we need to convince policy makers and developers to consider the long-term benefits of integrated communities, like less reliance on fossil fuels, reduced impact on our natural resources and the preservation of our open spaces. We need advocates, like you. So I hope you’ll return to these pages with each quarterly edition to learn more about how we can build a better future with integrated communities.

### About this Publication



I hope you enjoyed this first edition of *PRP Insights* — and to readers of our former newsletter, *HO’OKŪ*, welcome back. We’re publishing *PRP Insights* at a turning point in Hawaii’s history, with more at stake for Hawaii’s residents now than at any time since statehood. We need more homes and jobs, but our natural resources are finite. We have a chance to transform communities across the Islands in a way that benefits everyone and improves our quality of life. But if we fail, homes will be unaffordable, the scourge of traffic will worsen and our open spaces will disappear. We’ve found a solution, and we need your help.

The solution is to create integrated communities, a topic we’ll turn to again and again in these pages, from many angles, sharing lots of different perspectives. If we get this right, our industry will have jobs for three generations, and we’ll all share in an affordable, sustainable, recognizable Hawaii that we all want to live in. A Hawaii with opportunity for all. But first we need to build understanding, then support, resulting in effective action.



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