



For immediate release - Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Contact: Nadine Lemmon, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, (917) 767-7698

New York Communities Recognized as National Leaders in Creating Streets that Work for Everyone

Ogdensburg and Troy get #1 and #2 spots as "best in the nation"

Albany, NY — Two New York communities brought home the highest rankings in the nation for their efforts to make our streets safer and more convenient for everyone who uses them. Only three years after passage of a statewide law on Complete Streets, Ogdensburg and Troy are being recognized by the National Complete Streets Coalition as the nation's best.

The two Complete Streets policies, adopted in 2014, are included in The Best Complete Streets Policies of 2014, released today. These policies direct transportation planners and engineers to design and build streets that provide everyone, regardless of age, ability, income, or ethnicity, and no matter how they travel, with safe, convenient access to community destinations.

The National Complete Streets Coalition reviewed every policy passed in the United States in 2014 and scored each according to the 10 elements of an ideal Complete Streets policy. The ten jurisdictions with the highest-scoring policies adopted in the last year are:

1. Ogdensburg, NY

2. Troy, NY

3. Lakemoor, IL (tie)
3. Dawson County, MT (tie)
3. Austin, TX (tie)
6. Acton, MA (tie)
6. Middleton, MA (tie)
6. Salem, MA (tie)
9. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, CA (tie)
9. Stoughton, MA (tie)

Ogdensburg NY, located on the northern border of the state and home to 11,000 people, had the highest scoring policy of the year, with 92.8 points out of 100. Troy, located in the Capital District and home to 50,000 people, had the second-highest scoring policy, with 91.2 points.

"As a former resident of Ogdensburg, I'd like to congratulate the City Council for adopting a strong Complete Streets policy in 2014," says Josh Wilson, executive director of New York Bicycling Coalition. "What makes this

policy particularly effective is that allows for the establishment of a resident task force which will review all new public and private construction projects with an aim at incorporating improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access. Giving concerned citizens a voice in the project planning process is absolutely crucial. NYBC would also like to commend the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative, which provided a \$7,500 grant to kick-start the program."

Safety issues and accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists continue to plague communities across the state. New York State continues to rank the worst in the nation for pedestrian and bicycling safety, with pedestrians and bicyclists accounting for 29 percent of roadway fatalities—14 percent higher than the national average. New Yorkers for Active Transportation has been calling on state legislators to dedicate additional money in the state budget to improve the safety for these vulnerable users of the road.

"Improving these statistics requires two steps—better planning and designing of our streets, and better funding options for communities that are eager to move forward," says Veronica Vanterpool, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. "Hats off to Ogdensburg and Troy for setting the bar high. Now it is time for New York's legislators to also set a standard for dedicated funding for pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure in the 2015-2016 NYS budget."

"Congratulations to Ogdensburg and Troy. Your leadership should inspire our lawmakers, transportation officials, and every person who uses our roadways or walks or bikes. With committed local officials and dedicated bike-ped funding support from the state, we can work together to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to safe, complete streets," said Robin Dropkin, executive director of Parks & Trails New York.

Nationwide, a total of 712 jurisdictions in 48 states have Complete Streets policies in place.

See more information about the winning policies and evaluation criteria at <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets-2014-analysis>.

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NY4AT is a coalition of nonprofits and local governments led by the New York Bicycling Coalition, Parks & Trails New York, and Tri-State Transportation Campaign. NY4AT is dedicated to ensuring that all New Yorkers have access to safer and an increased number of opportunities for bicycling and walking in the state's cities, villages, and towns through the development of sidewalks, bike lanes, complete streets and multi-use trails.

The National Complete Streets Coalition, a program of Smart Growth America, is a non-profit, non-partisan alliance of public interest organizations and transportation professionals committed to the development and implementation of Complete Streets policies and practices. A nationwide movement launched by the Coalition in 2004, Complete Streets is the integration of people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of transportation networks. To date, over 700 agencies have adopted Complete Streets policies.

Smart Growth America is the only national organization dedicated to researching, advocating for, and leading coalitions to bring better development to more communities nationwide. From providing more sidewalks to ensuring more homes are built near public transportation or that productive farms remain a part of our communities, smart growth helps make sure people across the nation can live in great neighborhoods.

For additional information, visit <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/completestreets>.