An Economic Summary on the Benefits of Complete Streets

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For 45 years, the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) has been conducting applied and data driven research to assist business, government, and the community at large. CBER is a public resource that seeks to extend the benefits of UNLV's expertise through the State of Nevada and the United States.

This white paper briefly highlights the academic research on complete streets judged on three variables: safety, mobility, and economic impacts. CBER reviewed and summarized the academic literature into three sections: One, what makes a "complete street?" Two, what are the findings in academic literature when it comes to the three variables mentioned above? Three, what are the limitations of those findings? Our references and acknowledgments appear on the last page.

What are "Complete Streets"?

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), "Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable sage use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and ability, regardless of whether they are traveling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient."

The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (2012) mentions that Complete Streets include the following design elements:

> Promote walking, bicycling, and transit riding
> Provide multiple travel options for those with limited access to cars
> Reduce harmful emissions by encouraging non-motorized transportation
> Improve safety of multiple modes, especially for pedestrians and cyclists
> Improve health conditions with increased physical activity such as walking and cycling
> Improve the economic situation for communities with a possible increase in private investment

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