

Complete Streets Workshop

Complete Streets focuses on making streets accessible and safe for everyone; when implemented they create more livable communities. On February 28, Greater Mercer TMA and the American Heart Association sponsored a Complete Streets Workshop in Ocean County. Close to 50 people attended the workshop featuring panelists from the American Heart Association, AARP, AAA Northeast, NJDOT, Sustainable Jersey, and more. The panelists provided compelling information on why complete streets are needed, how to design and fund complete streets and local examples where work is already being done.



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The American Heart Association is a great supporter of complete streets because they facilitate increased physical activity. AHA stated that neighborhood design is associated with health outcomes, including prevalence of obesity. According to AHA, people living in walkable neighborhoods get 35-45 more minutes of physical activity a week. The need for walkable communities holds regardless of age, and is critically important for older adults, noted AARP's Brian McGuire, so that seniors are able to age in place.

Cathleen Lewis from AAA Northeast also talked about the importance of incorporating walking in our lives, the perception of what we see as walkable or not, and how walking can make a big difference in our lives and our health. Lewis pointed out that complete streets improve safety and reduce congestion for drivers along with improving conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.

Mayor Bill Curtis of Bay Head talked about the planning and implementation process,

community outreach, creating a steering committee to guide the development of the plan. Mayor Curtis shared lessons learned during the process and his advice is to “start small, build support and consensus, get expert assistance such as Greater Mercer TMA, work closely with public works and town engineer, go for low hanging fruit, and build on success.” The plans are available at bayheadnj.org.

Tara Paxton from Brick Township talked about the importance of having sidewalks when trying to get parents to walk their children to school and shared all the steps taken and the people involved to get that done.

Walking and bicycling can become a bigger part of our lives if we have access to safe streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks. The [Federal Highway Administration](#) and [New Jersey Department of Transportation](#) are also on board and offer many resources and funding for projects like these.

Attendees participating in the [Sustainable Jersey](#) program can receive training credit through their attendance at the workshop. Visit Sustainable Jersey to learn more about the program and actions for [Complete Streets](#).

Complete Streets questions? [Contact us](#) for assistance.

Time to Schedule your Earth Day Event



Hosting an event? We'd love to participate but please [let us know as soon as possible](#) as our dates fill up quickly this time of the year.

GMTMA is available to attend events and discuss employee commute options and how everyday travel choices affect the environment.

Even if you are not holding a specific Earth Day event, GMTMA can hold a lunchtime information session where we help employees find less expensive, smarter, and greener commute options.

Earth Day is Friday, April 22nd.

Photo source: http://www.freepik.com/free-vector/earth-day-2014-clip-art-vector_384785.htm

Take a Walk on Your Creative Side

Greater Mercer TMA's (GMTMA) fourth annual Safe Routes to School Bookmark Design contest is now underway. Mercer County and Ocean County students in third through fifth grade are eligible to show their love of walking by creating a bookmark with the theme "***I like to walk to ... with....***"

The winning bookmark designs will be printed and distributed to area schools and local libraries.

Each winner will also receive a \$50 gift card. For more information about the contest and entry forms, go to gmtma.org.

Submission deadline is March 24, 2017.

ZLine on Google Transit

Greater Mercer TMA through the Google Transit Partner Program recently added the ZLine shuttle to [Google Transit](#). People using public transit to get the Amazon Fulfillment Center and other companies at the Matrix Business Park will be able to see connections between NJ Transit and the ZLine schedule.

Don't Forget to Spring Forward



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