
HEALTHY, ACTIVE & VIBRANT COMMUNITY

2009
TOOLKIT



SOLUTIONS FOR:

COMMUNITIES

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

POLICY MAKERS

DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

AND MORE...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Healthy, Active & Vibrant Community Toolkit has been developed with the support, input, ideas, and inspiration of many individuals, organizations, and institutions.

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In recent years, community gardens have gained popularity as a means of increasing local access to fruits and vegetables.



ABOUT TRAILNET

MISSION

To lead in fostering healthy and active communities through innovative programs, planning, and policy that promote walking and bicycling throughout the St. Louis bi-state region.

VISION

The St. Louis bi-state region will be known throughout the country as a model community for healthy, active living and broad-based acceptance of alternative modes of transportation. New attitudes will prevail across the region that recognize the need for more bike/pedestrian facilities to support healthy communities. Opportunities for individual and group recreation and exercise will be abundant. Municipalities and developers will give priority to making neighborhoods walkable and bikable and to connecting with the broader network of transportation corridors. Residents will experience that walking and biking are easy, safe and desirable alternatives to driving a car. Regional planners and health officials will welcome and encourage new opportunities to incorporate Active Living strategies for people of all ages and abilities.

As the region's acknowledged leading advocate for Active Living, Trailnet will drive these changes in both the region's mindset and its policy development. Trailnet will be at the planning table from conception to design and programming. We will be a strong and effective advocate at the municipal, regional, state and federal levels. We will create partnerships and social networks to help educate and inform residents about Active Living options and to develop plans and programs that provide new opportunities for people to embrace a more active lifestyle. Trailnet's endorsement of projects and programs will be an important and much-desired stamp of approval that lends credibility and generates awareness.

As we look to the future, we share an excitement for what can be and a passion for doing what is necessary to achieve our goals. As a result of our efforts, the St. Louis region will be safer, healthier and more active, and a model for others.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our core values guide the development and delivery of our programs and services and provide a framework for our daily activities.

Activity	We demonstrate, encourage and facilitate healthy lifestyles through our programs and activities.
Sustainability	We organize, promote and model environmentally friendly practices and behaviors throughout the region.
Vision	We embrace a leadership role in generating and implementing creative ideas and strategies to accomplish our mission and engage individuals, families and organizations in new and more effective ways.
Collaboration	We serve as a galvanizing force in the region to identify and bring together resources, organizations and ideas. We seek partnerships to achieve our goals.
Professionalism	We are accountable, ethical, respectful and financially sound. We set high standards for ourselves and our programs, deliver on our promises, and measure outcomes as a means of continuing to improve in all areas.



Trailnet is a St. Louis based non-profit organization with a 20-year history of **PROMOTING ACTIVE LIVING**—a way of life that encourages people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Healthy, Active & Vibrant Community Toolkit is a resource to provide key community decision-makers with innovative ideas, policy suggestions, and resources that can be implemented to improve the health of their communities. At its core, the Toolkit is focused on creating long-term solutions to address the obesity epidemic. However, we built on this core focus to provide you with a series of recommendations that go well beyond combating obesity and focus on creating communities that foster the highest quality of life and independence for residents young, old, and in between. We believe that the following recommendations, if implemented in a way that is sensitive to the social and physical character and context of your community, will strengthen social bonds, increase sense of safety, help define your community's identity, attract new local businesses, and of course, lead to healthier individuals.

The Healthy, Active & Vibrant Community Toolkit consists of eight sets of recommendations that have been tailored to key decision-making individuals and institutions in an effort to provide recommendations that are highly actionable. The obesity epidemic is a complex problem with many root causes that transcend traditional disciplines. As a result, public health studies are finding that the most effective interventions at creating lasting change are multi-component efforts that seek to address multiple pieces of the puzzle at the same time. To reflect this, the recommendations were developed by a highly multi-disciplinary team that includes healthcare providers, urban planners, architects, green building professionals, public health researchers, dietitians, educators, community organizers, and bicycle and pedestrian advocates. The recommendations are intended to lead to long-term, institutionalized change by focusing on solutions that address policies, environments, and social networks.

THE TOOLKIT INCLUDES RECOMMENDATIONS FOR:

- **Schools, Childcare, and After-Care**
- **Community Residents**
- **Design Practitioners**
- **Faith-Based Organizations and Institutions**
- **Healthcare Providers**
- **Local Governments & Community Organizations**
- **State and Federal Governments**
- **Workplaces**

Mini-articles, resources, and real world case studies accompany the recommendations to provide additional ideas and inspiration for your efforts. We hope that you find this Toolkit useful, and we encourage you to reach outside of your discipline to engage other key leaders in your community to work together towards the creation of a healthy, active, and vibrant community that supports resident health from cradle to cane.

Madison Wisconsin has developed a weekly farmers' market that wraps around the state capital building, creating a truly healthy, active and vibrant atmosphere.



Trailnet's Safe Routes to Schools program is a volunteer-driven program designed to resurrect walking and biking to school.



INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

AMERICA IS LOSING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE.

Each year, we let out our collective belts a little more. In 1990, approximately 1 out of 9 American adults were obese. Sixteen short years later, the obesity epidemic is literally spilling over the Corn Belt and impacting the health and quality of life of Americans from coast to coast with 1 out of 4 adults now obese, and an estimated 2 out of 3 of adults overweight or obese, leaving only one-third of Americans of “healthy weights.”¹ Even more startling, American children are carrying the brunt of the weight of this epidemic—childhood obesity rates **tripled** in the last 25 years. Since the time that the US Surgeon General first declared obesity a national epidemic in 1999, the number of obese American adults and children has continued to climb at an alarming rate.

Although the United States has experienced and successfully addressed several major health epidemics throughout the last century, including influenza and polio, the obesity epidemic is, in many regards, very different from the other health epidemics our country has experienced. The majority of health epidemics are caused by pathogens, bacteria or viruses, which spread from person to person—that is to say, the diseases are transmittable or contagious. Obesity, on the other hand, is wholly different. It is not caused by bacterial or viral pathogens and it is not something that can be “caught” from others. Obesity is an individual-level phenomenon that is driven by behaviors: eating too much or eating unhealthy foods and not getting adequate physical activity to burn off the consumed calories.

So how is it that a disease that is caused by individual behavior has “spread” to nearly every corner of the country?

The answer lies in the fact that people’s behaviors are strongly influenced by a variety of factors—factors that now exist in communities throughout the nation, including auto-centric infrastructure and community design, a national food system bursting with calorie-dense fast foods, social norms/trends that have shifted towards unhealthy behaviors, decreasing cultural knowledge regarding healthy options, and access (or lack of access) to preventive healthcare. As individuals, we like to believe that we have control over our decisions and our choices in life; however, the reality is that ***the choices we make are driven by the choices we have***. Throughout the past 50 years, Americans from coast to coast have had fewer and fewer healthy choices and more and more unhealthy choices. Simply put, it is often easier, more convenient, and less expensive for us to make unhealthy choices—and people tend to take the path of least resistance.

IT’S BIGGER THAN OBESITY – LONG-TERM HEALTH IMPACTS

This is more than an obesity epidemic. ***America is experiencing a broader health epidemic*** and obesity is the most visible manifestation of the epidemic. By focusing on obesity, we miss the bigger issues: the root causes mentioned above and the long-term health implications. The long-term health implications of obesity are frightening: obesity significantly increases the risk of heart disease, respiratory disease, type II diabetes, osteoarthritis, depression, pregnancy complications and other serious diseases. Yet, the media has focused primarily on obesity at the individual-level through television shows like the Biggest Loser. This focus has kept the public’s attention on short-term treatments, such as diets and exercise regimes, instead of systemic cures that are critical in order to effectively address the root of the problem. We developed this Toolkit to place the focus on the root causes and to provide actionable steps individuals and communities can take to address the problem locally.

A CHANGING WORLD

The obesity epidemic is caused by a myriad of factors and influences that begin at birth and carry through our lives. A child born today will experience a world that is dramatically different than the world his or her grandparents experienced. Take, for example, a child named Will who was born in early 2008. Will’s grandparents like to tell stories about their childhoods—one grew up in a mid-sized Wisconsin town and one in a Chicago

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/trend/index.htm>

suburb—where they both spent their summer days outside riding bicycles, climbing trees, playing games in their local parks, and exploring every corner of their neighborhoods. When Will reaches that same age, his parents probably won't feel comfortable sending him to play in the park unsupervised. Depending on where he grows up, there may not even be a park to play in or sidewalks to safely ride his bike on. In the absence of safe outdoor places to play, it is likely that high-tech, sedentary games will take the place of bike riding and tree climbing.

Will's grandparents grew up eating unprocessed fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat, most of which were grown/produced within 100 miles of home, and they both remember taking regular trips to fruit and vegetable stands in the country. Since that time, many of the farms that produced grandma and grandpa's food have been developed into subdivisions and strip malls or have been bought out by large agri-business companies that only grow corn and soybeans—because those are the crops that the US Department of Agriculture subsidizes. The US Department of Agriculture offers no subsidies for farmers to produce the high-nutrient fruits and vegetables that are strongly recommended in the Food Pyramid, which, ironically, is published by the US Department of Agriculture.

Baby Will was born into a food environment that is saturated with cheap high-fructose corn syrup and trans-fats, two products of food science that did not even exist when his grandparents were kids and which possess nearly no nutritional value, yet many calories. High-fructose corn syrup and trans-fats, are made from corn and soybeans, and were developed as a means to make creative use of the tremendous corn and soy surplus that exists due to the government subsidies. As Will gets older, he will have to make a very conscious decision to eat healthy foods because the unhealthy, processed foods will greatly outnumber fresh foods.

Will was born into a world where walking or biking to school is a rarity. In his grandparents' generation, it was the norm. If young Will does try to walk to school, he will face significant obstacles. Many of the streets in town have been widened and the speed limits have increased to accommodate more traffic. With these changes, there were few new accommodations to help pedestrians safely cross these wider, faster streets; therefore, if Will does walk to school, his journey will be significantly more treacherous than it ever was for his grandparents.

To make matters worse, the schools his grandparents attended were closed in order to combine three community schools into one large elementary school that is now located on the outskirts of town along a busy road. Since so few students and parents now walk to school or work, the neighborhood streets are nearly vacant, with few eyes-on-the street to look out for Will on his walk. With all these obstacles, it seems less and less likely that Will's parents will allow him to walk or bike to school, causing Will to lose out on an important 20 minutes or more of daily exercise that would have helped shape healthy life-long habits.

The same vehicle-centered transportation system that will make Will's walk to school difficult has also led to the demise of many of the small businesses that enlivened his community's downtown in past decades. As bigger and bigger roads were built at the edges of his grandparents' towns, the local city government created zoning codes that allowed for a new style of retail development—strip malls—which facilitated fast, convenient shopping. Over the course of decades, the strip mall model continued to develop and now includes mega stores whose parking lots and building footprints occupy more land area than the entirety of the old downtown. No longer able to compete with the convenience, product-offerings, and prices of the mega stores, the small downtown retailers were forced to go out of business, leaving the old town center—the former hub of community events, celebrations, and the local economy—a ghost town. With the gradual loss of businesses in the pedestrian-oriented downtown and the growth of the car-centric mega store economy, the overall community culture shifted towards a car-focused existence. This created a self-propagating feedback loop as resident behaviors and city planning continued to shift towards greater car dependence: as new suburbs were designed and built, they no longer included walkable town centers or even basic pedestrian or bicycle accommodations, such as sidewalks.

INTRODUCTION

AN EPIDEMIC BY DESIGN, AN ISSUE OF ACCESS

As Will's story illustrates, we have literally engineered the obesity epidemic into our communities by creating environments that promote sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy dietary habits. A staggering number of communities throughout the country from the urban core to rural areas face these and other significant obstacles to improving resident health. In order to effectively address the obesity epidemic, we need to remove these obstacles and ensure that people have greater access to healthy foods and opportunities to live active lifestyles. At its core, the obesity epidemic is about choices; we need to ensure people have more healthy choices than unhealthy choices, and we need to ensure that the healthy choices are accessible, affordable, and appealing. We need to transform the places we spend time—our community, school, work, and home environments—to promote healthy behaviors.

OUR EFFORTS HAVE NOT BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL.

For years, we have tried to address rising obesity rates with intervention programs, such as nutrition education programs in schools. Despite all of our hard work with these programs, the obesity rate has continued to rise, seemingly unaffected by our efforts. Why? Are the programs ineffective? If you look at short-term results, these sorts of programs seem to be successful; however, most fail to sustain their impact. For example, a traditional school nutrition education program will introduce children to healthy foods and teach them nutrition education. Throughout the course of the program, the children will demonstrate increased nutrition knowledge, as well as enjoyment of healthy foods that they previously never ate. However, when the funding runs out and the program ends, the children's daily environment is unchanged: the school food service still serves the same unhealthy foods, their families' buying habits have not changed, and the food environment in their communities is the same. Thus, the children fairly quickly revert to their former eating habits.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS THAT ADDRESS POLICY, ENVIRONMENTS, AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

To create long-term change, we need to focus on impacting policy, environments, and social networks.

POLICY

Policy is simply a deliberate plan or statement of values that guides decisions and leads to a desired outcome. Policy can be formal, such as federal, state, or city legislation, or it can be informal, such as a workplace making a commitment to not buy soda for meetings or events. Building on the example of the school nutrition program, schools can help ensure long-term impact of their efforts by developing a School Wellness Policy that sets nutritional guidelines for all school foods and beverages and requires the school to upgrade its kitchen facilities to allow for preparation of fresh foods.

ENVIRONMENTS

"Environments" refers to our daily surroundings. It includes workplace environments, school environments, and the built environment in our communities—streets, sidewalks, buildings, and parks. It is the details of these environments that influence our behavior. For example, a school environment with soda machines in the cafeteria and limited drinking water options encourages students to consume high-calorie beverages. Our environments need to be altered to remove the unhealthy options and highlight the healthy options.

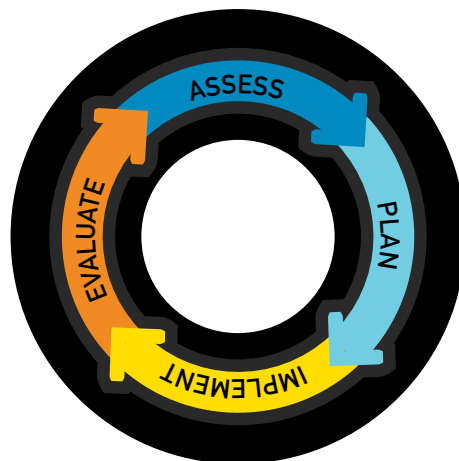
SOCIAL NETWORKS and SOCIAL NORMS

Humans are social creatures. We strongly influence one another's knowledge and behaviors, including our eating habits and our activity levels. Recent studies have found that obesity actually spreads through social networks (see the sidebar on page 28 for more information). In the example of school nutrition education, teachers can significantly influence students' food knowledge and dietary habits by modeling healthy dietary habits in the cafeteria and encouraging students to adopt healthy habits.

WHERE TO BEGIN—DEVELOP A LOCAL TASKFORCE

In this Toolkit, we present eight sets of recommendations targeted at key decision-making groups: schools, faith-based organizations, community residents, healthcare providers, local employers, design professionals, local governments, and state/federal governments. We believe that each set of recommendations, if implemented, will positively impact the health of a subset of community members. However, we want to emphasize the importance of coordinating efforts at a community-wide level in order to have the greatest impact on overall community health. We recommend communities assemble a taskforce of key local stakeholders and decision-makers to develop a community-wide initiative to improve community health. The most effective community-wide initiatives will be highly visible and will work to address community health through a variety of means. For example, two Missouri communities, De Soto and Ferguson, created multi-disciplinary taskforces and named their initiatives *Get Healthy De Soto* and *Live Well Ferguson!* They also developed logos as a means of creating branded identities that help promote their efforts and provide a context for all their multi-disciplinary efforts. For more on community-wide campaigns see page 48.

Below, we outline a basic process your community taskforce can follow to get started.



Think of this process as a wheel rolling in the direction of your long-term goals—although it cycles around, it is always moving forward.

Solutions That Have Been Proven Effective

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention assembled a team of experts in research, practice, and policy to identify public health interventions that have been proven effective. The team reviewed over 200 types of interventions and indicated whether each intervention is recommended, not recommended, or there is insufficient evidence to say. Three of the topic areas—physical activity, nutrition, and obesity—relate to the obesity epidemic. The findings are published online in the **Guide to Community Preventive Services**. This is an excellent place to begin designing interventions in your community. The recommendations in this Toolkit have been developed with these findings in mind.

To access the **Guide to Community Preventive Services** online, visit: www.thecommunityguide.org

INTRODUCTION



ASSESS

Initial assessments will help get all your taskforce members on the same page and provide important baseline information to help you develop an action plan that will work for your community's needs. Consider conducting two initial assessments:

A Community Readiness Assessment is an innovative method for assessing the level of readiness of a community to develop and implement prevention programming. It consists of 4–6 interviews with “key respondents” in your community who are familiar with the issue. It will prove to be a very useful tool to guide your early efforts.

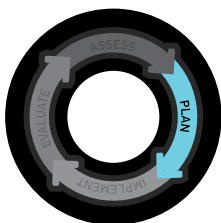
You can access this tool online:

<http://www.triethniccenter.colostate.edu/CRhandbook.shtml>

A Community Needs Assessment can be conducted as a survey of community members that seeks to identify knowledge, perceptions, and obstacles people face to living healthy lives.

You can access an example needs assessment online:

http://www.trailnet.org/documents/Ferguson_Needs_Assessment.pdf



PLAN

Based on the results from your assessments, brainstorm a list of potential projects that will move your initiative forward—use the recommendations in this Toolkit as a guide. Create an action plan by prioritizing the list of projects based on community need and available resources. We recommend beginning with the low-hanging fruit—projects that are visible and have a high-likelihood of success. Early successes will encourage taskforce members to stay involved and build the momentum of your initiative.



IMPLEMENT

Assign responsibilities, break into workgroups, and get to work! Make sure that your workgroups set SMART objectives for their projects. SMART is an acronym for:

Specific – Objectives should specify what they want to achieve.

Measurable – You should be able to measure whether you are meeting the objectives or not.

Achievable – Are the objectives you set, achievable and attainable?

Relevant – Objectives should be relevant to your overall goals.

Time-Bound – When will you achieve the set objectives?



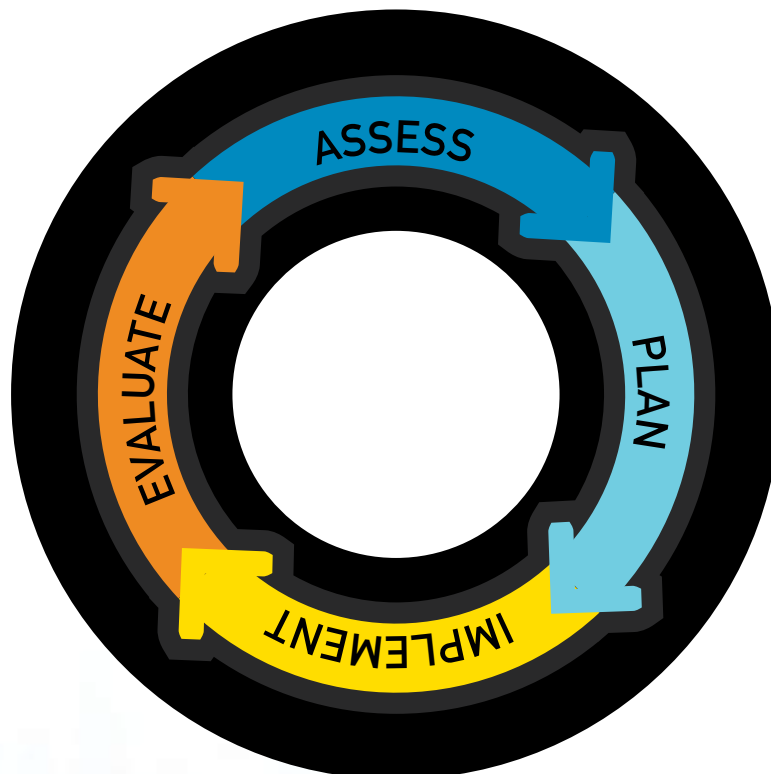
EVALUATE

As your taskforce implements projects, be sure to evaluate whether or not the projects are producing the desired outcomes. Evaluations can be simple or complex; however, the best evaluations will provide you with information that can be used to improve your projects. Evaluate your taskforce development by tracking attendance at meetings. Evaluate events by surveying attendees and tracking attendance. Evaluate policies by tracking the number, type, and strength of new policies, as well as the steps taken to implement the policies.



ASSESS

Back to the top. Creating long-term change is an ongoing process. As your taskforce works to improve community health, you will periodically need to re-assess, adjust your plans, implement additional elements, and once again evaluate your results.



Public plazas and open-air markets encourage walkability and create opportunities for residents of all ages to meet and explore.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Best-Practices to Improve the Health of Your Community

WORKPLACES

STATE AND FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
AND COMMUNITY ORGS

HEALTHCARE
PROVIDERS

FAITH-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS
& INSTITUTIONS

DESIGN
PRACTITIONERS

COMMUNITY
RESIDENTS

SCHOOLS, CHILDCARE
& AFTERCARE

RECOMMENDATIONS:

SCHOOLS, CHILDCARE & AFTER-CARE

CREATE A HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT!

INTRODUCTION

With childhood obesity rates tripling in the last 25 years, it has become increasingly clear that schools, childcare providers, and after-school programs play a significant role in the health and well-being of our nation's children. Children are eating an increasing number of school meals and spending more time away from home than ever before. Yet the quality of school foods has decreased, and Physical Education and supervised recess time has been cut as schools are under increasing budgetary restrictions while they struggle to meet federal mandates.

In many communities, school facilities including lunchrooms, gymnasiums, and playgrounds have fallen into disrepair, while in other communities these facilities are simply underutilized. Many schools have outsourced food services to for-profit companies resulting in increased sales and marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools through cafeteria, a la carte offerings, and vending machines.

As childhood obesity rates continue to climb each year, schools, childcare providers, and after-school programs have come under increasing pressure from federal, state, and local legislators to help shift the tide towards fostering improved student health.



Students stretch during a physical education class focused on teaching life-long skills, knowledge, and habits.

New federal policy requires all local education agencies participating in the National School Lunch Program to develop and implement wellness policies that address nutrition and physical activity. Fortunately, this increased focus has resulted in the creation of valuable tools, resources, and networks of support to help schools, after-school providers and childcare providers better support child health.

Ensure lasting change through policies that support health, an environment of healthy options, and social networks that support physical activity and healthy eating.

Is your school a healthy school?



The Alliance for a Healthier Generation's *Healthy Schools Program* is an excellent resource for district administrators, teachers, parents, and students working to improve the health of their school environment.

The goal of the Healthy Schools Program is to create a nation where a healthy school environment is the norm and not the exception. The Healthy Schools Program provides resources for school communities to assess current conditions in the school, create an action plan, implement the plan, and evaluate the results. Schools receive recognition for their accomplishments and can achieve bronze, silver, gold and platinum level awards based on their successes in creating a healthy school environment and healthy school policies.

For more information, visit: www.healthiergeneration.org or 1-888-KID-HLTH



SCHOOLS—PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

- **Establish a school wellness committee** consisting of parents, students, members of the school board, school administration, representatives from the school food authority, teachers, health professionals, and key community leaders. Recruit individuals committed and invested in improving school health. The Wellness Committee oversees all aspects of school wellness including drafting and improving the wellness policy, creating a plan to improve student health, monitoring progress by assessing Body Mass Index and other health indicator data, and ensuring that the school meets or exceeds state requirements for physical activity and healthy eating. The Wellness Committee will also work to ensure access to high quality recreational facilities.
- **Start a district-wide or a school-wide initiative** with leadership from the Wellness Committee focused on health and wellness, including increased physical education, improved facilities, and healthier school lunch offerings.
- **Collect student BMIs and monitor BMI trends** to assess progress. Ensure reliable data by training staff and providing accurate scales. As parents become aware of district wellness efforts, consider including BMI on home mailers or report cards.
- **Build health into the curriculum.** Make PE a core component of school curriculum. Physical health is strongly linked to academic performance. By putting greater emphasis on PE, you help ensure students' overall success. Address multiple things at the same time and build health/wellness/nutrition information into the curriculum for other subjects.
- **Meet or exceed PE recommendations.** The American Heart Association recommends providing elementary students with 30 minutes/day and middle and high school students with 45 minutes/day of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- **Recruit the expertise of trained PE teachers,** or provide training to existing staff to lead high quality physical education classes.
- **Provide various physical activity options** that reflect the interests and diversity of your student population (from team sports to dancing and in-between).
- **Provide supervised recess.** Provide daily supervised recess that allows children to engage in physical activity. Engage community parents/grandparents to supervise recess to allow teachers duty-free time.
- **Improve recreation facilities.** Invest in the school's resources by improving school yards, playgrounds, fields, and gyms for physical activity. Allow PE classes to fully access these resources.
- **Engage families and the community.** Increase the number of physical activity themed programs in the evenings, and on the weekends in order to get the entire family involved.
- **Become a community school.** Allow the local community to use school facilities and school grounds after-school and during weekends. This will increase local access to recreation amenities, foster a greater sense of community around the school and build social networks around physical activity.
- **Adopt a Safe Routes to Schools program** to identify and address barriers to walking and biking to school.
 - Hold an annual Walk to School Day to encourage students to walk or bike to school.
 - Engage parents to lead "walking school buses."
 - Conduct walking safety audits and work with local government to address concerns (see page 68 for walkability and bikability checklists).
 - Hold a Bike Rodeo to teach students bicycle safety.
 - To sustain efforts, work with the PTA to create a Safe Routes to Schools committee.
- **Extend the school day.** If you can't fit it all in, extend the school day and be creative with schedule planning and parent/teacher volunteers to allow teachers duty-free time to plan and grade work.

SCHOOLS—PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

- **Develop a food and beverage policy** including standards that exceed federal/state guidelines, and that applies to all foods and beverages served on school grounds, including a la carte options and vending machines. Involve the entire school community in the decision-making process, ensuring that parents and school officials—not companies—have the final say in what students have access to. See sidebar on the next page for suggestions.
- **Focus on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption** by improving the nutritional quality and appeal of school meals.*
- **Plan recess before lunch.**
- **Provide enough time and space to eat in a relaxed environment.***
- **Improve kitchen facilities** to allow for preparation of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Provide training and support to foodservice staff** and other relevant staff to meet nutrition standards and prepare healthier meals.*
- **Ensure all students have access to healthy breakfast.** Focus on the most important meal of the day by providing breakfast for students through the federal School Breakfast program.
- **Start a Farm-to-School program,** utilizing fresh and locally produced foods in school cafeterias. (see Garden to Table case study on p. 24)
- **Build nutrition education into the curriculum.** Integrate healthy eating knowledge into the school curriculum and incorporate the family for maximum effectiveness.
 - » Use the free nutrition curriculum provided by the state of Missouri at: http://www.dhss.mo.gov/Nutrition_School/Curriculum.html.
- **Serve water to drink.** Have clean sources of tap water, e.g. water fountains, readily available to students.*
- **Eliminate marketing of unhealthy foods on school grounds,** including through vending machines, posters, and other print materials.*
- **Encourage students to develop a positive relationship with food.** Do not use food as an incentive, a reward, or a form of punishment (withholding food).
- **Break the habit of using sweets and unhealthy foods for celebrations, fundraising, and classroom rewards.** Substitute healthy options such as fresh fruits or celery and peanut butter.

CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

- **Let them play!** Provide regular opportunities for physical activity and play.*
- **Provide safe places for physical activity,** whether that means upgrading existing facilities, walking children to a local playground, or partnering with a local school, church, etc.
- **Adopt nutrition standards** for healthy meals, snacks, and beverages.*
- **Introduce children to healthy foods.** Use snack/mealtimes to introduce a variety of different healthy food options.*
- **Set meal times and family-style meals.** Adopt policies establishing family-style meals and meal times as part of the preschool curriculum.*
- **Adopt consistent educational materials** (e.g., storybooks, coloring books) that contain positive references to healthy food and physical activity and avoid educational/play materials that endorse products such as fast food or cookies.*
- **Provide training to staff** to lead activity sessions, prepare healthy food options and model positive eating and activity behaviors.*
- **Serve water to drink.** Have clean sources of tap water and/or working water fountains for children.*
- **Adopt a healthy celebration policy** that emphasizes the use of healthy foods for parties and educates parents about how to celebrate.
- **Upgrade kitchen facilities.** Where applicable, upgrade kitchen facilities to allow for the preparation of fresh foods, including space for cutting and serving fruits and vegetables.
- **Encourage breastfeeding.**
 - » Encourage mothers to extend breastfeeding to at least one year.
 - » Allow and encourage breastfeeding onsite.
 - » Provide facilities for pumping and storing breast milk and teach staff safe practices for handling breast milk.



AFTER-SCHOOL PROVIDERS

- **Provide time to engage in a variety of physical activity options.***
- **Provide safe places for physical activity**, whether that means upgrading existing facilities, walking children to a local playground, or partnering with a local school, church, etc.
- **Adopt nutrition standards** for healthy meals, snacks, and beverages.*
- **Use snack/mealtimes to introduce a variety of different healthy food options.***
- **Eliminate marketing of unhealthy foods on site**, including through vending machines, posters, and other print materials.*
- **Provide training to staff** to lead activity sessions, select healthy foods and model positive eating and activity behaviors.*
- **Serve water to drink.** Have clean sources of tap water and/or working water fountains. *

* Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact

Beverages in Schools

High-sugar, caffeinated beverages have no place in schools. Just as adults experience energy spikes and troughs due to caffeine consumption, students also experience bursts of high energy followed by an energy crash. For adults, caffeine-induced energy fluctuations may result in heavy eyelids during a meeting. However, in children and teens, these energy fluctuations result in behavioral issues and reduced academic performance.

School wellness committees and even state legislatures across the country have developed beverage policies limiting the types of beverages sold on school grounds. Consider developing a beverage policy and beverage contracts that limit beverage sales to:

- Water
- Minimum of 50% fruit juices, without additional sweeteners
- Dairy and non-dairy milks: 2% or lower milk, soy-milk, rice-milk, or similar
- Electrolyte replacement beverages with less than forty-two grams of sweetener per 20-ounce serving

Tips for Negotiating Beverage Contracts

- Retain full control over the length of the contract
- Negotiate higher commissions
- Negotiate for all schools in the district or form coalitions with other districts to strengthen purchasing power
- Require the beverage company to provide the district or school with readily understandable financial reports at regular intervals

Before you negotiate your next contract, read *The Raw Deal*, available at:
<http://www.cspinet.org/beveragecontracts.pdf>

CASE STUDY CASE STUDY CASE

Gardens to Tables

For 17 years, Saint Louis University (SLU) dietetic interns have been teaching lessons on farming and nutrition to elementary school children while getting them directly involved in the process of growing fruits and vegetables at their schools. Funded by a USDA grant, the Gardens to Tables Consortium is made up of teachers, registered dietitians, dietetic interns, chefs, local farmers, and families. Gardens to Tables seeks to increase the availability of nutritious foods, provide sound nutrition education, increase physical activity, support sustainable food systems, and improve food preparation and food preservation abilities of the families of two St. Louis Public Schools, L'Ouverture Middle and Sigel Elementary, and Maplewood-Richmond Heights schools.

The seed for this program was planted years ago when Dr. Mattfeldt-Beman, Chair of the SLU Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, and several colleagues recognized a

continued to flow from the community, including additional donations from the Missouri Botanical Garden and Slow Food St. Louis, a non-profit that was founded to counteract the fast-food culture and the disappearance of local food traditions. Eventually, 20 raised beds were built and installed as part of a larger plan for growth of the program.

As all gardeners quickly learn, every garden comes with challenges. For SLU, the two greatest challenges were 1) getting parents actively involved in the gardening curriculum and 2) accommodating important gardening activities within the children's busy class schedules—the problem was that the crops were growing according to the rain and sun without being mindful of class schedules. To address these challenges, a mixture of teachers, interns, students, parents, and volunteers were enlisted to help with the maintenance of the gardens. Gardening curriculum responsibilities were left in the hands

As dietitians and educators, they felt it was important to be at the forefront of promoting local food systems and recognized the importance of teaching children about food.

common passion for sustainable food systems. As dietitians and educators, they felt it was important to be at the forefront of promoting local food systems and recognized the importance of teaching children about food. As they fleshed out the concept for the Gardens to Tables program, they realized that many of the key pieces were already in place: Mattfeldt-Beman already had a relationship with the Clayton Farmer's Market and was continually meeting local farmers and growers. She also had access to SLU dietetic interns and saw the need for these students to gain hands-on knowledge and experience with sustainable farming, organic foods, local growers, and gardening.

Mattfeldt-Beman's idea slowly began to sprout. SLU bought land near the university and agreed to let the nutrition department have the space to build a garden. An initial barrier was garnering adequate funding, so they started small. Through conferences and bake sales they raised money for an irrigation system. The Missouri Botanical Garden donated garden soil and worm-castings, and nurseries donated other needed materials. The group continued to expand their partnerships, and support

of SLU students and dietetic interns as a means of positively challenging them to not only learn the information, but teach it, as well.

Each year, the SLU students and dietetic interns begin planning in August to fully integrate the curriculum according to school, grade level, and academic needs. The early planning also allows time to consult with the SLU faculty and work out the gardening logistics. Each intern conducts between three and five classes each semester at the participating schools. The curriculum is tailored according to grade level so that the 3rd grade tends the garden, 4th grade participates in recycling and composting programs, and 5th grade is in charge of advocacy and influencing their younger peers to eat more fruits and vegetables.

In May, the children's efforts culminate with the preparation of a meal created from the produce grown in the gardens. Supplemented with produce from local growers, the older children prepare and serve the meal to their younger peers. However, the participating schools are still running into

A student takes a minute to admire his work—he and his classmates harvested the produce and helped set up this market stand at New Roots Urban Farm in St. Louis.
Photo courtesy of Matt Diller

problems when trying to get their school-grown food into the cafeteria for children to eat. Many food vendor requirements do not allow schools to use food from any source other than a licensed vendor. Since the gardens are not licensed, serving the food to children through cafeteria service has been off limits. However, there are ways to overcome this hurdle. First of all, school districts that use third party vendors for food service can include clauses in their contracts that allow for pilot programs or supplemental nutrition programs up to a set percent of total foods served. Secondly, school districts can internally ease food procurement regulations and work with their state legislators to do the same.

Although the school cafeteria tables have been off limits for the Gardens to Tables program, the produce grown in the gardens has other outlets: Gardens to Tables developed a business plan and established a mini-market at Sigel Elementary and encouraged

neighborhood gardeners to participate. The proceeds from the Sigel Market fund future garden related activities and projects.

Gardens to Tables measures their success through USDA tracking and reporting activities. The program reports the amount of food donated and the number of students reached. In 2006, 100 lbs. of produce was distributed through after-school programs such as Latchkey. Additionally, 125 lbs. of produce grown in the school gardens was donated to Saint Louis University's Campus Kitchen program. Working with local farmers, students also harvested and used 242 lbs. of what would otherwise have been un-harvested crops. The Gardens to Tables program continues to develop and grow with each season. Its impact is felt throughout the communities it serves as more and more students and families each year learn the importance of healthy eating and are empowered to grow their own food.



RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

WORK TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF YOUR COMMUNITY

A CRITICAL ROLE

Community residents play a critical role in the creation of healthy, active, and vibrant communities. As a community resident, there are countless avenues through which you can work to improve your health, the health of your family, and the overall health of your community, including voicing concerns to elected officials, participating on the school PTA, volunteering to clean up a local park, or inviting neighbors over for a healthy dinner.

The following recommendations aim to increase the health of community residents, build stronger relationships between neighbors by activating public spaces, enhance the vibrancy of communities, and support a strong local sense of place and a strong local economy.

Your goal should be a healthy, active, and vibrant community that supports resident well-being from cradle to cane.

Whether you run for City Council or invite your neighbor to go for a walk, the most important thing you can do is roll up your sleeves and get involved locally.



This crosswalk in Madison WI easily accommodates four people walking next to each other.

“But I don’t know anything about gardening!”



The American Community Gardening Association can solve that problem! This association recognizes that community gardens improve people’s quality of life, stimulate social interaction, encourage self-reliance, beautify neighborhoods, produce nutritious food, reduce family food budgets, conserve resources, and create opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy and education. They provide extensive gardening instruction and training as well as a database of community gardens in your area.

To find your “green thumb”, visit:
<http://www.communitygarden.org/learn/starting-a-community-garden.php>



PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

- **Break the car habit.** Walk or bike to nearby destinations instead of driving.
- **Get involved with your neighborhood or community group.** Become active in clean-ups, neighborhood gardens, tree plantings, and neighborhood watch groups.
- **Get involved with your local government.** Attend city council meetings to let local leaders know your needs and concerns.
- **Beautify your front yard and your block.** Work with your neighbors to create an attractive and welcoming streetscape.
- **Keep the sidewalk in front of your home clear of obstacles** such as branches, garbage bins, leaves, snow, parked cars, etc. to allow safe and easy pedestrian travel.
- **Activate public spaces in your community** by going for a walk or bike ride, taking advantage of your local parks, or spending time on your front porch or in your front yard.
- **Identify physical obstacles to walking and biking in your community**, such as deteriorated sidewalks and dangerous intersections, and communicate them to local decision-makers.
- **Encourage local leaders to adopt a Complete Streets Policy** that ensures streets will allow residents of all ages and abilities to safely travel on foot, on bike, or in a wheelchair. (See the Complete Streets case study on page 53)
- **Research your local street design standards** to see if they support walking & biking. (See the Columbia, MO case study on page 54)
- **Develop a plan.** Work with neighbors and city officials to develop a plan for improvement of public spaces in your community. Visuals such as drawings and renderings are very important tools for enlisting support for your plan.
- **Coordinate with the local parks department or recreation facilities** (e.g., the YMCA) to create or promote recreation opportunities such as sports leagues and fitness classes, to meet the needs of community residents of all ages.
- **Consider organizing community walking groups or bike rides.**

PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

- **Encourage local restaurants** to provide healthier food options and support those that do.
- **Grow food!** Create a plot in your yard or get involved in a community garden in order to increase local knowledge of and access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Identify obstacles to healthy eating in your community** such as lack of retailers that sell produce or an over-abundance of fast food outlets, and communicate them to local decision-makers.
- **Farmers' markets.** Help start or support existing farmers' markets.
- **Community classes.** Encourage local community organizations or institutions to offer nutrition education, gardening and cooking classes.

Top photo by: Project for Public Spaces, www.pps.org; Left circle: Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

Obesity Spreads through Social Networks



The people around us influence our interests, our beliefs, our taste in music and our waistlines. That's right, our waistlines. Humans are social creatures. We eat together. We play sports on teams. We watch TV together. We do almost everything with other people. So it should come as no surprise that when a close friend stops exercising, starts eating less healthy foods, and ultimately gains weight, your chances of gaining weight increase significantly.

The Harvard Medical School released a study in July 2007 documenting this phenomenon. The 32-year study of 12,067 people found that if a person's close friend becomes obese, that person's chance of becoming obese increases by 57%; for siblings the increase is 40%; and for spouses the increase is 37%. The study also found that two close friends or sibling living far apart, still influence each other's weight. Nicholas Christakis, MD, PhD, a professor in Harvard Medical School's Department of Health Care Policy suggests that this influence across great distances may be caused by "a change of norms about what counts as an appropriate body size. People come to think that it is okay to be bigger since those around them are bigger, and this sensibility spreads."

The good news is that our social networks can also work in the opposite direction, having positive influences on our health.

Christakis highlights the following three points from this study:

- Obesity is not just an individual phenomenon, but also a collective social phenomenon.
- Interventions should target groups of people rather than individuals. People losing weight together is likely to be more effective than people losing weight on their own.
- Prevention or treatment of weight gain in one individual will likely have ripple effects through social networks impacting others.

These findings underscore the importance of community-wide health interventions with components that influence social networks. Healthy, Active and Vibrant Communities include strong social networks of support, such as walking clubs, youth sports teams, and farmers' markets.

How can you put this information to use? Next time, instead of asking "Do you want another slice of pizza?", try saying "Let's go for a walk."

The full study can be found in the New England Journal of Medicine, July 26, Vol. 357, No. 4

Close family members strongly influence our health. Parents, in particular, can shape life-long behaviors, as with this mother walking her daughter to school.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

DESIGN PRACTITIONERS:

URBAN PLANNERS & DESIGNERS, DEVELOPERS, BUILDERS,
TRAFFIC ENGINEERS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, AND ARCHITECTS

DESIGN HEALTHY, ACTIVE, AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

There is a deep connection between places and people. The places we live in and travel through strongly influence our behaviors. Design professionals play a critical role in shaping the built environment, from streetscapes to transportation systems, which then in turn influence social interactions, transportation choices, sense of community, sense of safety, and health.

During the last 60 years, design trends have focused increasingly on the automobile. Garages have come to be prominent architectural “features” of homes; walkable town-centers and other public spaces that encourage social interaction have all but disappeared; auto-centric strip malls have become the centers of commerce; and sidewalks have narrowed or disappeared altogether as streets have widened. All of this has made it virtually impossible for most Americans to safely walk to the store or walk their children to school.

In recent years, a sea change has begun. More and more Americans are looking for vibrant communities bustling with activity, safe inviting places to walk or sit and chat, and local businesses and restaurants to enjoy. Design professionals, including urban planners, urban designers, developers, builders, traffic engineers, landscape architects,



Portland, Oregon has done such a great job designing for and promoting bike commuting that it now experiences bike traffic—a great problem to have. Photo courtesy of BikePortland.org

and architects in all sectors play a critical role in creating such communities. We encourage you to read through all of the recommendations and consider how you can incorporate these elements into the work you do. The end goal is the design and creation of streetscapes, communities, and transportation systems that encourage people to be physically active, eat healthy, and develop strong bonds within their community.

Fine-Grained Development



Fine-grained development looks a whole lot like the downtown of your favorite city or town: many shops, storefronts, and doorways on a single block, compared to many blocks for a single shop in coarse-grained development.

Fine-grained developments are designed to the human-scale and can be excellent for promoting vibrant streetscapes, local economies, and pedestrian activity. There is a lot to see and a lot to interact with as a pedestrian in a fine-grained development. Whereas, in coarse-grained development, it may take you five minutes to walk past a single windowless storefront, such as a Wal-Mart or a Target, that was designed and built around automobiles with little regard for the quality of the human experience or its impact on local sense of community.

Photo by “Lanterna” on Flickr



FUNDAMENTALS

Design practitioners have the opportunity to help neighborhoods articulate their vision for their community. A community's vision is the manifestation of many factors including community values, community identity, and community history. Design practitioners can help communities realize their vision through land-use, zoning, architecture and landscaping. Below are fundamental principles for creating healthy communities with opportunities for physical activity and healthy food choices, that can be tailored to any community.

EMPHASIZE FORM

- Adopt form-based zoning codes, such as the SmartCode, or reform existing codes in other ways to promote place-making and active living, including the following elements:
 - » built-to lines, maximum setbacks
 - » mixed-use zoning
 - » minimum / maximum building heights (consider a 1:1 building height to street width ratio)
 - » locate parking and garages at the rear of buildings
- Promote and encourage the implementation of form-based codes and other zoning reforms through your professional groups.

CREATE NEIGHBORHOODS WITH A VARIETY OF DESTINATIONS

- Design neighborhoods with a mix of shops, offices, apartments and homes.
- Include grocery and drug stores, churches, schools, banks, cleaners, libraries, and other neighborhood institutions within walking distance of homes and workplaces.
- Structure land use, transportation systems and parcel size to create fine-grained multi-use development (see sidebar on the previous page) that will lower automobile trip generation and increase foot traffic locally.
- Build up to the edge of sidewalks to create a consistent street front that encourages walking in mixed-use districts and neighborhood centers.
- Encourage density.

CREATE NEIGHBORHOODS FOR EVERYONE

- Encourage and design for a diversity of people – of all ages, income levels, cultures, and ethnicities.
- Design for a range of housing types, sizes, and prices within close proximity of each other.
- Preserve existing housing stock and seek out existing programs to keep current residents in their homes and apartments.
- Encourage intergenerational neighborhoods and interactions.
- Encourage independent living and nursing homes located near main streets and town centers.
- Help communities articulate their community identity to use in your designs.

TAKE A CUE FROM MOTHER NATURE

Use designs and materials that work in concert with the environment. This will additionally provide benefits for economies and promote equity. Below are just a few options.

- Incorporate sun-sensitive timers into porch lighting.
- Purchase street lights that run on solar energy.
- Use native and drought-tolerant landscaping.
- Enhance stormwater management by using porous parking spots and planting strips that allow for infiltration and biofiltration.
- Use LEED for Neighborhood Development as a sustainable redevelopment benchmarking tool.

Left Circle: Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

PUBLIC SPACE

Public space is space that belongs to the public. It includes parks, sidewalks, streets and plazas. In implementing a community's vision it is important to pay attention to how public space is designed to encourage inviting and well-used space. Below are the principles to follow when designing public space.

DESIGN TO THE HUMAN-SCALE

- Limit street width.
- Set minimum and maximum building height to create outdoor rooms.
- Allow on-street parking.
- Before widening roads, look into implementing road diets on streets with less than 20,000 auto trips per day as a way of improving efficiency and providing more space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and public space.
- Look into implementing road diets on existing wide streets.

PAINT THE TOWN GREEN

- Design for street trees and greenspace.
- Encourage attractive landscaping in all new developments.
- Design roofs to include gardens and other green spaces.
- Look for opportunities to include vegetable gardens and edible landscaping in plans and designs.
- Ensure the availability and safety of public parks, greenways, trails, playgrounds, playing fields, and public recreation centers that are accessible by foot and inviting.
- Design parks with outdoor exercise equipment and sports facilities such as pull-up bars, sit-up stools, basketball courts, and playing fields in safe, highly visible locations.
- Include parks of a variety of sizes to serve street, neighborhood, and community-wide needs.

ADDRESS PEDESTRIAN-SPECIFIC NEEDS

- Design for wide sidewalks and increase sidewalk distance from street as traffic speed and number of lanes increase.
- Assure that walkways are visually interesting at a walking pace.
- Include amenities such as benches, attractive pedestrian-scale street lighting, and trash receptacles.
- Design for street-level comfort and experience, including shade and impervious surfaces to minimize heat island effect. (See Creative Solutions sidebar on the next page)



The most successful public spaces have a number of attractions.

ADDRESS CYCLIST-SPECIFIC NEEDS

- Include appropriate facilities. Possibilities include bicycle boulevards, signage leading cyclists to other bicycle facilities, bike lanes, bike paths, and sharrows.
- Consider back-in angled street parking. Because drivers can easily see approaching cyclists, the safety of cyclists is enhanced.
- Select and orient drainage grates to run perpendicular to traffic directions to provide for safe bicycle travel.

PROVIDE SAFETY

- Pay extreme attention to people's needs and desires in order to design spaces attractive to them. Their continual presence is the foundation for creating a safe place.
- Include CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) elements in designs.

CONSIDER PLAZAS AND CIVIC SPACES

- Locate civic institutions such as buildings for local governments, religious institutions, and libraries in the heart of communities to provide greater access to the institutions and help create a sense of community.
- Consider designing plazas, which can serve as flexible gathering places for concerts, lunchtime breaks, theater, and other uses.



BUILDINGS

Alone, buildings impact those who inhabit them and their immediate neighbors. As a collective, buildings shape streets, blocks, neighborhoods, and entire communities. For this reason it is important to consider the following principles for building design.

- Put more eyes on the street with porches, balconies and windows.
- Design in ways that encourage neighbor interaction e.g., garage entry from alleys, front porches, etc.
- Abstain from designing blank walls and try to include large windows on the first floor of buildings.
- Always consider the solar orientation of a structure and design with passive solar techniques.
- Incorporate green space into the design of commercial and institutional buildings to ensure that employees and visitors have places to walk or sit outdoors.
- Where possible, design roofs with gardens or green space.

Creative Solutions—Address multiple things at the same time.



Elements of your stormwater management system can be used to create inviting and active spaces.

- Storm water drainage channels can be designed to double as greenways or as corridors along which greenways can be planned.
- Reducing impervious surfaces in streetscape design can mitigate stormwater, create inviting streetscapes, reduce intense summer heat, and lower cooling bills.
- Rain gardens can be used as buffers between streets and sidewalks to reduce stormwater runoff and provide an important physical separation between cars and pedestrians that will enhance pedestrian sense of safety and comfort.
- Preserve or restore wetlands to help mitigate flooding. Create natural areas with trails along the perimeter that tie into regional greenways.

Be Creative!

Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

MOVING PEOPLE

The interactions between neighbors make up the social fabric of communities. These interactions are only possible because people can move to meet with others, shop for necessities, and access resources. Consequently, assuring that people can move safely and efficiently is extremely important. Below are guiding principles for improving the way we move people.

DESIGN COMPLETE AND INTERCONNECTED STREETS

- Design complete streets—streets designed for people of all ages and abilities, including viable choices to walk, bike, or take public transit to their destinations. (see case study on page 53)
- Design using an interconnected street grid that allows for multiple vehicular travel paths rather than curvilinear streets that funnel traffic to major roadways. If major roadways are designed, assure that they do not exclude space for pedestrians and cyclists.

CALM TRAFFIC

- Construct traffic calming measures that reduce automobile traffic and speeds both at intersections and throughout blocks. This will increase safety and appeal for pedestrian activity.
- Reduce speed limits to 25 mph or less in residential areas.

ENCOURAGE FEET FIRST CHOICES

- Build, repair, and maintain networks of sidewalks, pathways, bikeways, and trails that allow people to safely walk or bike to public spaces.
- Require and design sidewalks for all new development and create pedestrian connections between development projects.
- Provide connections to local shops, services, parks, and trails.
- Consider using a higher than average pedestrian capture rate in mixed-use, pedestrian friendly areas when appropriate pedestrian amenities and facilities are provided.
- Design overlay districts to create focus areas for de-emphasizing the automobile, e.g., locate parking lots and garages behind buildings.
- Design for on-street parking to create a buffer for pedestrians and provide access to street-front businesses.
- Provide pedestrian-scale lighting on streets.
- Develop comprehensive, context-appropriate parking policies that include reducing minimum parking requirements, establishing maximum parking requirements, unbundled and shared parking.
- Get creative about encouraging transit use through marketing and special programs.

ENSURE SAFE CROSSINGS

- Provide attractive, usable, and accessible crosswalks and pedestrian signals at busy intersections.
- Construct curb bump-outs to reduce pedestrian crossing distance, visually narrow streets, provide opportunities for mid-block pedestrian crossings, and slow traffic.
- Assure that pedestrian push buttons are provided when needed and are in convenient locations.
 - » Adjust the timing of traffic signals to allow ample time for pedestrian crossing.
 - » Provide for bicycle activation at all traffic signals.
- Enhance crossings that are particularly dangerous for cyclists.
- Construct intersections to operate at context appropriate speeds, discourage through-traffic and function safely for non-motorized users.
- Assure that all designs are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant.

ENSURE SAFE TRAVEL

- Prioritize the safety needs of non-motorized users first, as they are most vulnerable to injury.
 - Increase the sidewalk distance from the street as traffic volume and speed increase
 - Remove sight obstructions
 - Provide adequate lighting
- Put more “eyes on the street” by building mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Identify existing safety obstacles to pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Develop a set of recommendations to address the obstacles and deliver to the appropriate decision-makers.

Big roads = Big Obstacles



Arterial roads, highways, and interstates are often cited as major obstacles for pedestrians and cyclists. Designed to move high volumes of traffic at high speeds, these roadways slice through cities with limited crossings, essentially dividing parts of town. As a result, the crossings that do exist, often in the form of over-passes and under-passes, are critical for integrating the regional pedestrian and bicycle system. This is especially true in highly trafficked urban and suburban areas where a 2-mile walk or bike ride can include a series of major crossings.

COMMON PROBLEMS:

These major crossings are often built without sidewalks, cross walks, bike lanes, or widened outer lanes for bicyclists. Crosswalks that do exist are often poorly marked or improperly placed. As a result they are very dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists and impede movement throughout a city.

BEST PRACTICES:

For over-passes and under-passes, always include sidewalks in the design of such facilities, sufficiently separating pedestrians from traffic. Include marked bike lanes, widened 14ft outer lanes, or separated lanes to accommodate cyclists. The best projects go beyond providing basic access by including human-scale design features such as lighting and landscaping that increase the sense of safety and create an enjoyable experience for pedestrians and cyclists.

CASE STUDY CASE STUDY

Portland Bike Boulevards

SE Lincoln Boulevard in Portland, Oregon, is a residential street that had become a major thoroughfare with quite a bit of auto traffic. The City of Portland, with pressure from local residents, turned the street into a bicycle boulevard, part of a larger network of bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets, by adding traffic calming elements to reduce speeds and limit through-traffic. Mia Birk, Portland's Bike Coordinator from 1993-1999 talks about some of the challenges and successes of this project:

"People are very concerned about diverting traffic off of a street: How are they going to get to their houses and it might cause traffic

on other streets to go up. That happened here. There was a lot of fight. It was a difficult project. But, what happened as a result is also very similar to what happens in many other cities: it's so pleasant afterwards that property values have gone up. It became a wonderful thoroughfare for people walking their dogs and jogging. It's a very popular street for people bicycling, for people walking, for kids to be out and about. It's just become this wonderful community street."

Other cities that have established bicycle boulevard networks: Vancouver, Palo Alto, Berkely, San Luis Obispo, and Eugene.

Human-Scale Design



It is hard to express exactly what it is that makes a public space a great space, yet if we spend time in such a space, we feel it immediately. Human-scale design is important because it creates spaces that are inviting, feel safe, and are well used, thereby strengthening communities and encouraging active lifestyles. When we have friends visit us in St. Louis we like to take them to places like the Delmar Loop, Euclid St. in the Central West End, and the Soulard neighborhood. We are compelled to stroll the tree-lined streets of Soulard, explore the shops of the Delmar Loop, or sit at a sidewalk café on Euclid Street to chat, read a book, or people-watch. The principles of human-scale design that make these places great can be implemented in nearly every context, from small towns to huge cities and from bustling commercial areas to sleepy neighborhood streets. Human-scale design is about creating places for people.

Here are some key elements to consider when designing to the human-scale:

- **Create “outdoor rooms.”** Provide the sense of enclosure necessary for pedestrians to feel safe and comfortable while out of doors—buildings can serve as the “walls” and trees can serve as the “ceiling”. Delineate spaces with planters and low-fences. Provide seating and gathering spaces. Include visually stimulating elements including sculptures and colorful facades. All of these things will create safe spaces with a warmth and comfort not unlike the living rooms in our homes.
- **Appeal to the senses.** Our five senses shape our experience of the world around us. Landscape with fragrant and colorful trees, shrubs, and flowers. Include green buffers between streets and pedestrian spaces. In vibrant commercial areas, design sidewalks or other spaces to accommodate live music and public art. Design wide sidewalks with plenty of space to accommodate all users. Encourage fine-grained development. (see sidebar on page 30)
- **Provide pedestrian infrastructure.** Pedestrians require more than sidewalks. Additional elements, such as landscaping, benches, cross walks, and trash receptacles all work together to make the pedestrian experience of the built environment more pleasant and safe. In higher density areas, additional infrastructure and services such as streetcars and street vendors encourage pedestrian activity and create local vibrancy.

Do real planning

The Director of Planning for the City of Los Angeles, Gail Goldberg, AICP, gave a presentation at a recent International Making Cities Livable Conference that was striking. If you've ever been to Los Angeles, you might be struck by the fact that Los Angeles even has a city planner. Despite the fact that "Los Angeles" and "urban planning" are rarely used in the same sentence, we are confident that Goldberg's philosophy has the potential to completely transform LA and the rest of the country if it catches on.

Goldberg was formerly the Planning Director for San Diego where she and her team focused on creating a series of interconnected "urban villages." This strategy focuses on:

- Targeting compact growth in existing centers and corridors
- Creating a network of walkable, mixed-use village centers connected by transit
- Providing vibrant, engaging and playful public spaces
- Providing a diversity of housing options (income-levels and sizes)

Goldberg stressed the importance of adopting a policy plan to help guide planning and development. The policy plan is basically just a set of values and rules that helps ensure development activity creates the types of communities envisioned. For example, the policy plan could include form-based zoning or street design standards.

Goldberg also stressed that the policy plan is useless without an action plan to go with it. Don't just outline the policy, but create and execute a plan to make it reality.

To this end, Los Angeles has adopted:

- Citywide urban design principles
- Neighborhood design principles (different from one neighborhood to the next to help keep the historic and distinct sense of place that exists)
- A walkability checklist
- New street design standards
- Streetscape requirements that help to create pleasant, human-scale streets

- A focus on reducing parking and promoting alternatives transportation

With leadership from the Planning Department, Los Angeles has adopted a new mantra: DO REAL PLANNING

DO REAL PLANNING is an acronym that outlines LA's urban design principles. It has become more than just a saying within the planning department—it is a community value. The city broadcasts this mantra far and wide, and now, community members hold the city accountable to these principles at public planning meetings. Goldberg believes the whole community is better for it because the quality of planning is greatly elevated as a result. This mantra has really helped educate the public and create a foundation of planning values for the City of LA. It has strengthened the community's understanding of and engagement in the creation of quality spaces. We believe that every community should consider these elements when planning. Does your city DO REAL PLANNING?

- Demand a walkable city
- Offer basic design standards
- Require density and transit
- Eliminate department bottlenecks
- Advance homes for every income
- Locate jobs near housing
- Produce green buildings
- Landscape in abundance
- Arrest visual blight
- Neutralize mansionization
- Nurture planning leadership
- Identify smart parking requirements
- Narrow road widenings
- Get project input early

For more detail on these 14 points, download the full pdf of DO REAL PLANNING: http://cityplanning.lacity.org/forms_Procedures/do-real-planning-final_1.pdf

CASE STUDY CASE STUDY CASE

Examples of traffic calming measures



Street trees visually narrow roadways causing traffic to naturally slow down¹



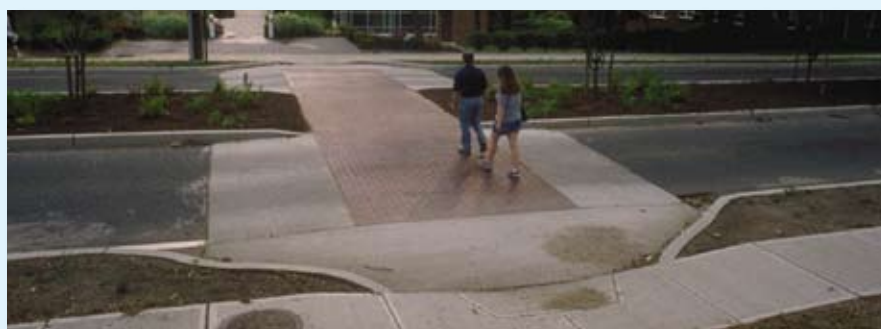
Street before a road diet²



Street after a road diet³



Street after a road diet with important pedestrian accommodations⁴



Speed table that doubles as a pedestrian crossing⁵



Speed Bump⁶

Photos 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden
Photos 2, 3, 4 courtesy of www.saferoutesinfo.org / Michael Ronkin

STUDY CASE STUDY CASE STUDY



Chicane⁷



Mid-block Choker and Pedestrian Crossing⁸



Median⁹



On-street Parking¹⁰



Well-marked crosswalk with pedestrian island¹¹



Crosswalk designated by change in color, material and texture¹²



Narrow roadway with wide sidewalks¹³



Roundabout¹⁴



Raised Intersection¹⁵



Corner Bulb-out¹⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS:

FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS & INSTITUTIONS

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & HEALTHY EATING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

MIND, BODY, and SPIRIT

It is essential to not only take care of your body but also your spirit. Faith-based organizations play an important role in health promotion efforts due to their role of spiritual guidance and the development of strong social networks. In many communities, faith-based organizations are the greatest influencers of community beliefs, knowledge, and behavior. As a result, they have great potential to improve community health by rallying community members toward the goal of increasing physical activity and healthy eating. Additionally, faith-based communities often do extensive service work facilitating and providing social services and health services to underserved populations.

The following recommendations provide a guide for faith communities desiring to promote healthy minds, bodies, and spirits.



A walking group from a rural church

PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

- **Organize a wellness committee** to provide health and wellness services and education to members. Hire a community health coordinator or appoint a volunteer coordinator.
- **Improve and maintain existing on-site recreation facilities** such as playgrounds for children, gyms, sports fields, and walking paths.
- **Make health a component of your organization/institution's mission statement.**
- **Include health and wellness in your bulletin or newsletter.** Designate a section that announces events, provides healthy tips, and other information to increase health awareness among members.
- **Lead by example.** It's critical that leaders within your faith community model healthy behaviors, educate community members, participate in wellness activities, and support implementation of healthy changes.
- **Implement activity breaks** if meetings last longer than one hour.★
- **Provide activity logs** for members to self-monitor physical activity, and offer incentives to meet certain goals.
- **Offer incentives for members to walk, bike, or take public transit** to meetings and/or gatherings.
- **Provide shower facilities, changing areas, bike storage, and bike racks at your facility.**
- **Partner with local health centers** to provide on-site health screenings, nutrition education, and physical activity counseling.
- **Develop strong social networks centered around physical activity.** Start walking clubs or host a 5k run or bike ride, hold softball tournaments, canoe trips, etc. Exercise is always more fun when done with others!

★ Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact

Photo by: Ed Stuart

PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

- **Adopt a healthy food policy and guidelines** that outline the types of foods and beverages that will be purchased with organization money. This will ensure healthy food and beverage options are served at all organization-sponsored events and in on-site vending machines.
- **Educate organization/institution members about the benefits of fresh, local produce.**
- **Avoid using food as rewards** for children involved in organization activities. Doing so will build unhealthy long-term relationships with food. It is, however, a wonderful community tradition to come together and celebrate with food. Food has always been used as a great way to bring people together, you just don't want unhealthy foods to be seen as rewards.
- **Offer classes to members.** Partner with local health centers and organizations to offer healthy eating classes, cooking classes, and nutrition counseling services to members.
- **Grow a garden at your facility.** This provides an excellent way for members to get involved with the organization and take ownership of their hard work.
- **Create healthy eating logs** for members to self-monitor and offer incentives for members who meet their goals.
- **Provide a kitchen facility** where foods can be prepared and members can store healthy foods for meetings and events.
- **Provide water to drink.** Provide clean sources of water: tap water, water coolers, drinking fountain, etc.

Body & Soul – Resources for African-American Churches



African Americans are at high risk for many serious and fatal diseases that are related to poor eating habits and lack of physical activity. “Body & Soul” is a health program developed specifically for African American churches. The program focuses on encouraging church members to eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables. Through pastoral leadership, educational activities, peer counseling, and a supporting church environment, Body and Soul helps church members take care of their bodies as well as their spirits. For the past 10 years, African American churches around the country have successfully adopted the Body and Soul Program and have seen amazing results.

For more information about the Body and Soul program and to obtain resources that can be used in your own faith-based organization visit the website at:
<http://bodyandsoul.nih.gov/what.shtml>

How healthy is your congregation?



Visit the Walk by Faith Website to find out! The Walk by Faith Website is the faith-based component of the “Michigan Steps Up Healthy Lifestyles” Campaign and aims to support good health among faith leaders and congregations. The website not only provides resources and information about a variety of health topics, but it also contains an online assessment tool that helps faith organizations identify ways they can support better health practices for their members.

Visit <http://www.mihealthtools.org/faith/default.asp?tab=home> to access these great resources

RECOMMENDATIONS: HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

LEAD BY EXAMPLE: MODEL PREVENTION IN ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR WORK

AN INTRODUCTORY LETTER

As healthcare providers, both as institutions and individuals, we have key roles to play in shaping the public's perception of wellness. We are uniquely situated to have a profound impact on our patients' eating and physical activity habits during our everyday encounters with patients, as well as through our participation in community advocacy, healthcare policy formulation, and political activism. Yet, it often seems overwhelming to balance these important activities with caring for patients, caring for families, and caring for our own personal health and well-being. Indeed research demonstrates that while healthcare providers want to discuss better eating, smoking cessation, weight control, and exercise promotion with their patients, a lack of sufficient time is the most common reason cited for not doing so.

Our patients look to us as experts in the areas of health and wellness. Yet, many of us in the healthcare field lament the lack of sufficient training in health promotion during our educations as physicians, nurses, and other providers. Numerous studies have documented that physicians do not receive routine training in health promotion during their medical education and residency training. Similar studies show that nurse practitioners, physicians, and even registered dietitians feel unprepared to address treatment of weight-related disorders due to lack of knowledge, poor reimbursement for services, and lack of support services.

Those of us entrusted with the care of children, often feel that we have a long list of important safety and developmental topics to discuss with families and may not take the time to assess risk factors for poor eating and lack of exercise. As the number of overweight children increases, a greater percentage of adults are experiencing the complications of being overweight at younger ages. Thus, adult care providers are spending more time treating conditions such as hypertension and diabetes, leaving less time to engage in prevention-oriented activities.

To shift the tide, a collective effort at many levels of the healthcare education and delivery spectrum is needed to address these and other barriers to providing good quality preventive services. The opportunities we have to promote wellness are numerous, spanning the entire spectrum of healthcare services. From prenatal care to pediatric services, continuing into adolescent healthcare and on through the care of the most elderly members of our society, we must continually strive to fulfill our roles as trusted educators to promote healthy and active lifestyles for patients of all ages.

We have developed the following set of recommendations to provide guidance on how healthcare institutions and healthcare providers can best serve the long-term health needs of patients. The recommendations are driven by the following premises:

1. healthcare institutions and providers should participate in prevention as well as treatment of disease
2. there are some very real constraints within which we must work
3. we have an obligation to lead the charge by walking the walk
4. long-term change happens through social change, policy change, and environment change

Whether you are the CEO of a large health management organization or a nurse in a local public school, each of us has a crucial role to play in this process of change. We hope that this document can be a tool to empower you in this process.

Dr. Nadim Kanafani, MD



INSTITUTIONS—GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Walk the walk.** Initiate a worksite wellness program that includes the development of policies and programs to support the health of employees. If done right, this will save you money! Such programs typically have a Return On Investment (ROI) greater than 3 to 1. (For additional details, refer to the sidebar on page 62)
- **Participate in the public policy process.** Highlight the need for community-wide interventions to support healthy lifestyles of physical activity and healthy eating.*
- **Participate in the public dialogue.** Respond to news stories offering a healthcare provider perspective and participate in educational forums.*
- **Advocate for system change.** Partner with local coalitions working for policy/system change.
- **Support Prevention.** Work with insurance companies to offer coverage for prevention services including nutritionists and exercise specialists.*
- **Build it into your curriculum.** Incorporate health promotion, wellness counseling, and behavioral management into the training of your future healthcare providers. Provide opportunities for students to be involved in community advocacy activities.
- **Train your staff:**
 - » Adopt standards of practice for staff that include routine screening of all patients regarding physical activity and eating behavior.*
 - » Offer training to providers to conduct screening and counseling in both a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.*
 - » Provide incentives to obtain continuing education credits related to health promotion and prevention.
- **Develop a referral system** to help patients access further nutrition and physical activity resources.*
- **Develop necessary research infrastructure** to support research in areas of health promotion, prevention, and community advocacy.

* **Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT)** www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact



INSTITUTIONS—PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

Create a workplace environment that increases the likelihood that employees will move more during the course of a day.

- **Design facilities that encourage on-site physical activity** including green space, accessible and welcoming staircases, walking paths, exercise equipment, showers, lockers, bike racks, and changing rooms.
- **Support Active Transportation.** Work with local governments to integrate the institution facilities into the local multi-modal transportation system, emphasizing the need for safe and inviting pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation options: sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic control measures, bike lanes, safe bike parking, inviting bus stops, etc.
- **Remind people to move more.** Create point-of-decision prompts, such as a “Take the Stairs” sign on elevators, to encourage employees and patients.
- **Provide financial incentives for non-automobile commuters.**
 - » Work with a local bike shop to obtain discounts for staff
 - » Subsidize employee public transportation and receive tax benefits through section 132(f) of the IRS code
- **Provide free employee workshops** on exercise, flexibility, stress management, and nutrition, as well as access to counselors.
- **Create a culture of physical activity** by having executive staff model and encourage healthy behaviors.

INSTITUTIONS—PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

Create a workplace environment that increases the likelihood that employees will eat healthy foods during the course of a day.

- **Establish healthy nutrition standards** for all foods and beverages sold on-site, including cafeterias, contractors, and vending machines:
 - » Invest in making healthy foods available to staff, patients and surrounding community as part of your worksite wellness program.
 - » Remove high-sugar beverages from facility vending machines in favor of 100% fruit juices, water, and other natural sugar and low-sugar beverages.
 - » Ban unhealthy fast foods sales in your facility.
 - » Require nutritional information to be posted with all items sold.
- **Provide free, easily accessible water to drink;** have clean sources of tap water and/or working water fountains.*
- **Provide discounts to employees on healthy food items** such as salad bars and fruit.
- **Provide kitchen facilities for employees** to prepare their own food and to provide classes on healthy cooking.
- **Create a culture of healthy eating** by having executive staff model and encourage healthy behaviors.

Support Breastfeeding!

Breastfeeding has many benefits for both mother and baby. There is now increasing evidence that breastfeeding also reduces the risk of children being overweight and obese. Studies have indicated that the longer the duration of breastfeeding, the greater the risk reduction. How and why breastfeeding is protective against childhood weight gain is not known, but supporting breastfeeding can be an important part of a larger strategy to promote healthy dietary habits for mothers and their babies.

CITATION: Effect of Infant Feeding on the Risk of Obesity Across the Life Course: A Quantitative Review of Published Evidence, PEDIATRICS Vol. 115 No. 5 May 2005, pp. 1367-1377



INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

- **Counsel patients** regarding the linkage between physical activity, eating habits, and long-term health.*
- **Track the BMI of your patients at each visit.** Healthcare providers should use the most recent BMI charts released by the CDC. (See sidebar “BMI and Kids” on next page)
- **Promote and support breastfeeding.** Provide mothers with the information and resources they need to breastfeed their children, and link breastfeeding mothers with lactation consultants.
- **Treat obesity as a family disease.** Discuss the eating and exercise habits of parents and other family members.
- **Identify families at risk of being overweight or obese.** Pay attention to parents or children previously overweight. Begin discussions regarding healthy eating and physical activity promotion as early as possible, including prenatal stages. (See obesity and social networks sidebar on page 28)
- **Participate in the public dialogue.** Respond to news stories providing a healthcare provider perspective and participate in educational forums.*
- **Be a leader and walk the walk!** Studies have correlated a provider’s own health habits with their willingness and ability to counsel patients about health and wellness.
- **Make prevention through healthy eating and physical activity part of every visit.** Starting in infancy, provide developmentally appropriate recommendations for physical activity. (See <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=toddlers.html>)
- **Link patients to outside programs.** Collect and disseminate resources for culturally relevant, community-based health and wellness programs.
- **Volunteer your expertise** to local schools, community centers, or nursing homes. You will be surprised how receptive these agencies are to your willingness to promote health and wellness.

* **Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact**

Upper Right: Photo by “buzz.bishop” on Flickr

A Pediatrician Makes a Difference



It began with one patient and developed into a comprehensive, effective, and culturally sensitive program targeted toward overweight children and their families: “Several years ago, a parent asked Dr. Joyce Johnson, a pediatrician in private practice since 1985, to come up with a weight reduction program for her son. Dr. Johnson designed a child-safe weight loss plan to help her patient, and Dr. J’s Family Weight Loss Program was born. With the assistance of a dietitian, personal trainer, and sports physiologist, Dr. J created a program aimed at helping kids learn about healthy meals and the benefits of physical activity.”

In addition to working with individual families, Dr. Johnson has also worked with schools, faith-based organizations and other community groups to implement her programs and provide education about health and wellness.

Her motto: “Let’s Work it Out!”

For more information, go to www.drjjmd.com

BMI and Kids



Keep a BMI (Body Mass Index) growth chart in your patients' files. See the sample chart on the next page. Plot BMI at each visit to assess obesity risk. Watch for movement between percentiles to identify if a child is trending towards overweight or obese. Be sure to use the correct chart—the CDC publishes BMI growth charts for infants-36 months and for children 2-20 years. There are also different BMI growth charts for boys and girls.

For children, use the following definitions:

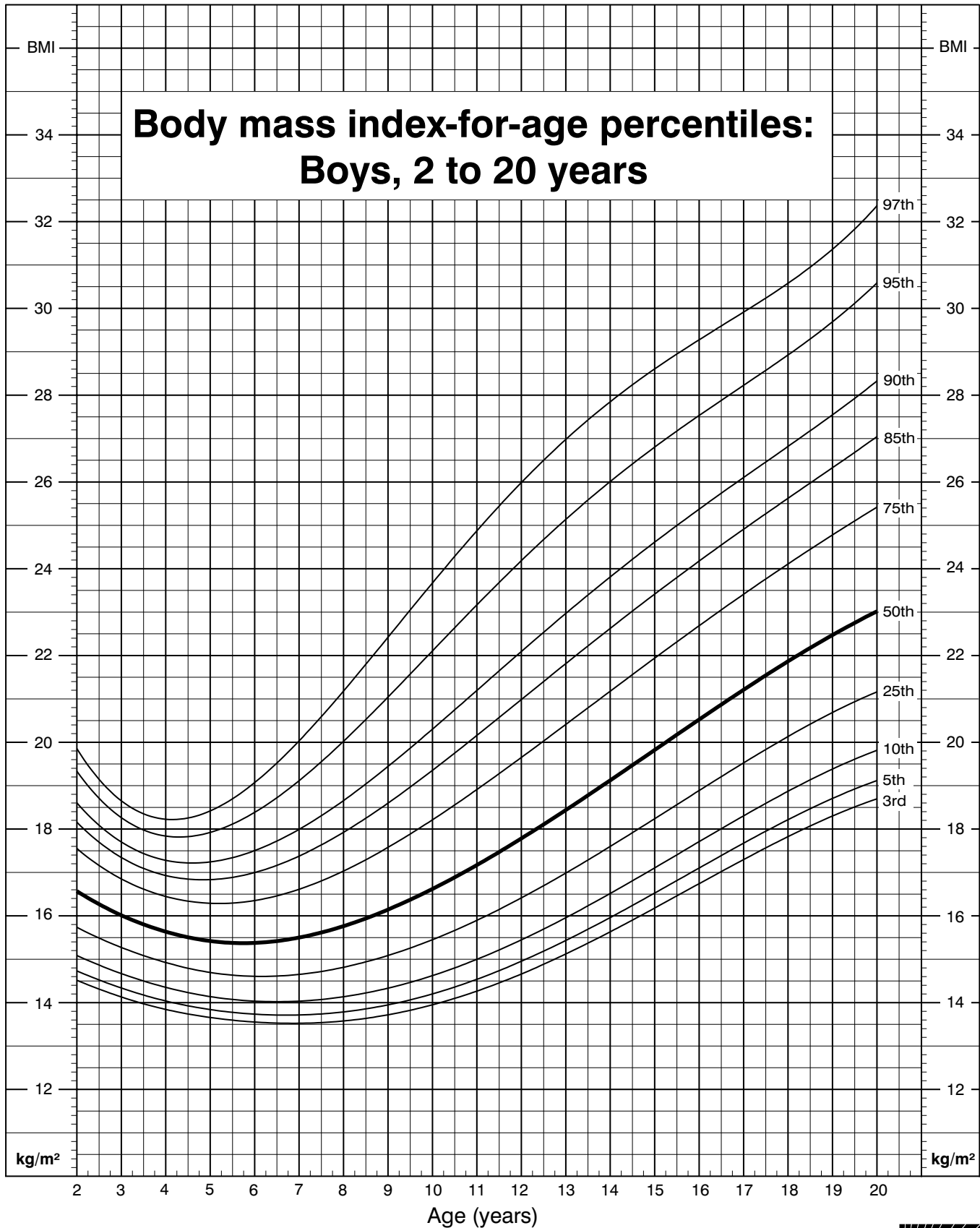
- Underweight – below 5th percentile
- Normal Weight – 5th - 85th percentiles
- Overweight – 85th - 95th percentiles
- Obese – 95th percentile and above

Download the BMI growth charts at: <http://www.cdc.gov/growthcharts/>

Top: Photo by Oswaldo Ordóñez; Bottom: Photo by "something.from.nancy" on Flickr



EXAMPLE CDC GROWTH CHART



SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™

RECOMMENDATIONS:

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS, METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS, AND HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY-WIDE CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE HEALTHY AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, cities throughout the country have initiated community-wide campaigns to encourage residents to become more physically active and eat healthier. These campaigns have been found to be highly successful at improving the health of community residents. They also often result in increased sense of community, more vibrant local streetscapes, increased sense of safety, and a reinvigorated local economy.

The key is collaboration. Integral to carrying out a successful community-wide campaign is the formation of a taskforce. The taskforce should be made up of community leaders including decision-makers from local government, schools, organizations, and businesses. Each of these institutions plays a critical role: the local government designs and builds the streets we walk, the director of parks and recreation is involved in facilities and programming, the schools teach our children physical education and feed them lunch and sometimes breakfast, and the local healthcare providers teach us about health and wellness. The taskforce should meet monthly to discuss and collaborate on efforts to improve the health and wellness of the community. Begin by identifying community obstacles to active living and healthy eating and then work to address the obstacles. (For additional information and resources see pages 15–17)

The most successful campaigns are multi-component campaigns that focus on:

- the built environment
- increasing access to resources such as healthy food
- community education and public awareness
- fun social components such as a 5K run/walk to build social networks of support
- coordination with key local institutions such as schools, the YMCA, and healthcare providers



Support local vibrancy by accommodating people of all abilities.

- a well-defined *focus area* such as a neighborhood or a *focal point* such as a park or school
- institutionalizing successes through policy

Include some or all of the following policy and program recommendations into your community-wide initiative. Keep the big picture in mind: the goal of your efforts should be to create an environment that encourages residents of your community to be physically active and eat healthy. Make it easy for them to make healthy choices by providing access to healthy foods and safe walkable and bikeable streets, inviting public parks and recreation areas.

Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden



PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

REVAMP LAND USE

- **Develop zoning overlays and design standards that encourage pedestrian and transit-oriented development**, i.e. build-to lines, garages on alleys, on-street parking, mixed uses, minimum building height, etc. This can be achieved by adopting form-based zoning codes. (See case study on page 37)
- **Offer training and incentives for developers** to use form-based codes.

FOCUS ON MOVING PEOPLE

- **Create a comprehensive mobility plan** for all modes of transportation, including a focus on shifting single-occupancy car travel towards walking, biking, and transit use.
- **Complete the Streets**—Revise local street design standards to ensure that new streets and major renovations are designed for people of all ages and abilities, including viable choices to walk, bike, or take public transit to their destinations. (See case study on page 53)
- **Plan for multimodal transportation**—Strong multimodal transportation networks include amenities that allow people to easily switch transportation modes.
 - » Create pedestrian networks that integrate with cycling amenities (bike lanes, bike racks), public transit and streets infrastructure.
 - » Provide bicycle parking at transit stations, bus stops, and important community destinations.
 - » Consider building bikestations that provide secure long-term parking at hub transit stations.
- **Make Connections**—Ensure that people can get there.
 - » Work towards greater connectedness *within* neighborhoods, developments, and municipalities: create a network of sidewalks, bikeways, trails and transit reconnecting neighborhoods.
 - » Work towards greater connectedness *between* neighborhoods, developments, and municipalities:
 - » Create greenways, bikeways, trails, or paths between developments to forge overall connectivity not related to streets.
 - » Implement zoning overlays that require new developments and major revitalization efforts to make these connections or build it into your street design standards.
- **Create a comprehensive parking policy** including reducing minimum requirements, creating maximum requirements near transit stations, unbundling parking costs, creating shared parking, and expanding or creating car-sharing facilities.
- **Support new parking policies by promoting walking, biking, and public transportation** facilities and their use.
- **Require employers** with a specified amount of employees to provide on-site facilities such as bike parking, showers, and lockers for bike commuters.
- **Increase Access**
 - » Increase access to places for physical activity and let people know about it! Improve existing facilities or create new facilities such as parks, walking trails, sports fields, and community centers. Work with local institutions, such as schools, to open recreation facilities to the public.
 - » Develop joint-use facilities pairing schools, libraries, parks and other community institutions.

Right circle: Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Michael King

RECOMMENDATIONS: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

(PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING CONT.)

CREATE SAFE AND INVITING NEIGHBORHOODS

- **Create inviting streets that are pleasant to walk and bike,** as well as, an overall community aesthetic to encourage outdoor physical activity and recreation.
 - » Encourage tree-lined streets, pocket parks, playgrounds, sidewalk planters, community gardens, walking paths, and greenways. Capitalize on your natural resources such as rivers, creeks, topography, and forested areas for these amenities. Plan to meet or exceed NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) guidelines.
 - » Identify local artists to enrich the local streetscape through their art.
 - » Preserve agriculturally and ecologically important sites from development while being sure to set aside patches of countryside, parks, and greenways in developing areas.
- **Increase safety and sense of safety in neighborhoods.** Sense of safety is absolutely critical for your success.
 - » Construct traffic calming measures such as road diets, bottlenecks, speed bumps, and roundabouts that reduce automobile traffic and increase safety and appeal for pedestrian activity. Reduce speed limits to 25 mph or less in residential areas. (See examples on pages 38-39)
 - » Alert drivers of pedestrian and cyclist presence: mark crosswalks and post accompanying signs.
 - » Adjust traffic signal timing to ensure seniors, children, and individuals with disabilities have adequate time to cross.
 - » Reduce or eliminate mid-block curb-cuts, such as drive-thrus, that endanger pedestrians.
 - » Focus on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
 - » Increase police patrols on foot and on bike.
 - » Enhance street-level pedestrian lighting.
 - » Encourage homeowners to use porch lights—preferably with sun-sensitive timers.



- **Create a culture of healthy lifestyles and social networks of support.**
 - » Develop a branded community-wide campaign to raise local awareness and enlist resident buy-in, for example *Get Healthy De Soto*.
 - » Provide social opportunities for residents to be active, including walking groups, bike rides, community sports games, and other events through the Parks and Recreation department or partnerships with groups such as the YMCA.
 - » Activate existing public spaces, greenways, and trails for community events.
 - » Institute a Safe Routes to School program to improve safety and promote walking and biking to school.*
 - » Create small neighborhood schools at all levels (pre K-12). Re-district school catchment areas to meet Safe Routes to School guidelines and promote walking and biking to school.
 - » Think of design choices as educational opportunities for local students. Examples include: using sustainable designs that can be tools for student education and creating on-site school gardens where healthy foods are grown.

Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Cynecki



- **Provide Incentives**

- » Work with state elected officials to create a state tax credit for the development and improvement of physical activity facilities, and improved walkability and bikeability.
- » Create a grant program to fund local efforts.
- » Allocate a percentage of sports arena proceeds to support development of public physical activity facilities and programs in surrounding communities.
- » Encourage neighborhood sustainability.
- » Discourage property vacancy by implementing a revenue neutral property tax shift off of improvements and onto land values, thereby discouraging speculation and encouraging lot use.

- » **Bolster your local economy**

- » Decrease car dependence while promoting community revitalization by investing in local shops, services, parks, and trails as attractive destinations for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users.*
- » Provide tax and other incentives for businesses to offer physical activity, healthy food options, and child-nursing accommodations to employees.*
- » Provide worksite wellness programs for county and city employees. (see workplace recommendations on page 62)

Upper Left: Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Patrick David Barber

Great Streets Initiative



East-West Gateway launched the St. Louis Great Streets Initiative in early 2006 to expand the way communities think of their streets. Rather than viewing a roadway project as solely a way to move more cars and trucks faster, the goal of the St. Louis Great Streets Initiative is to trigger economic and social benefits by centering communities around interesting, lively and attractive streets that serve all modes of transportation.

As part of this initiative, East-West Gateway launched a St. Louis Great Streets Initiative website that is chock-full of great resources, including: a design tutorial, design recommendations, and real world examples of great streets in action.

Be sure to explore this resource: www.greatstreets-stl.org

Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

ATTRACT HEALTHY FOOD RETAILERS

- **Attract grocers and other retail outlets** offering healthy foods to underserved areas through financial and regulatory incentives. Provide support by promoting their business.
- **Encourage small store owners to provide healthier food** options, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, by creating specific incentives through tax incentives, zoning laws, and training.
- **Locate markets or grocers** within convenient walking and cycling distance of most residents (1/4-1/2 mile).

SUPPORT HEALTHY EATING

- **Establish accessible farmers' markets or farm stand programs in underserved areas.*** Provide programs to bridge the gap between farmers' market prices and low-cost supermarket prices.
- **Work with neighborhood food stores and supermarkets** to limit displays of unhealthy foods aimed at children.*
- **Encourage residents to support local CSAs** (Community Supported Agriculture), farmers' markets, and grocers that sell healthy foods.
- **Establish and promote community gardens** and organize events to activate the gardens as public spaces.
- **Improve transportation options to supermarkets** and other large food outlets.*

REIGN IN RESTAURANTS

- **Require fast food restaurants to provide nutrition information** on menu boards in large type and in readily visible positions.
- **Encourage other restaurants to provide nutrition information** on their menus as well.
- **Create local zoning ordinances that restrict marketing of fast foods** near schools or within neighborhoods.
- **Promote fast food restaurants that provide healthy options** in neighborhoods with few options for healthy eating. **
- **Create legislation to ban the use of artificial trans fats** in restaurants.
- **Implement a municipal fast-food tax** to help fund parks and recreation or health initiatives.

INSTITUTIONALIZE SUCCESSES

- **Create a regional food policy council** to encourage local politicians, businesses, and community groups to create policies and support access to healthy foods.**
- **Require all food and snacks purchased with government funds to be local and/or organic** as well as meet high nutrition standards through the creation of a local food policy.

* Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact

** Recommendation from St. Louis University Prevention Research Center

CASE STUDY CASE STUDY

Complete Streets

Complete Streets policies are an explicit commitment to design, build, and maintain streets in a manner that accommodates safe and contiguous travel for all users regardless of age/ability and mode of transportation (feet, wheelchair, strollers, bikes, transit, and vehicles). Complete Streets policies have been adopted throughout the United States at various levels of government (local, regional, and state) and are often cited as the beginning of a more comprehensive commitment to building healthier communities. When fully implemented, Complete Streets means more walkers and bikers, therefore healthier individuals; more walkers and bikers means more neighbor-to-neighbor interaction, resulting in stronger communities; and less driving means less pollution, resulting in a healthier environment. NOTE: “streets” refers to all components of the transportation network, including sidewalks, paths, intersections, and signage.

In the Fall of 2008, Trailnet worked with the Cities of De Soto and Ferguson, Missouri to develop local Complete Streets policies.

Consider some or all of the following key elements for a strong policy:

- Include details about when the policy goes into effect (e.g., “effective immediately for planning and training purposes and effective for all aspects of projects in 6 months, including construction.”)
- Specify who is accountable to ensure the policy is implemented.
- State that your city will support staff professional development specific to improving non-motorized transportation options through trainings, seminars, workshops, or conferences and include registration fees in your annual budget.
- Set a deadline for reviewing and updating existing planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operations standards to ensure they are consistent with the Complete Streets policy. For example, street design standards that do not require sidewalks will result in obstacles for pedestrians and should be updated to require sidewalks that are wide enough to comfortably accommodate pedestrians.
- Specify that all development and redevelopment in the public domain (building to building) will be subject to this policy, i.e., this policy applies to the infrastructure improvements of all new retailers or new home builders—no one is exempt unless extenuating circumstances exist.



A creative bike lane marking in Portland. Photo courtesy of BikePortland.org

- Explicitly state that pedestrian and bicycle accommodations will be designed with the goal of being appealing and pleasant to users in an effort to encourage use (for example, separating sidewalks from busy roads at a sufficient distance that pedestrians feel safe and planting appropriate landscaping to create an inviting public domain).

Links to Full Text of Example Complete Streets Policies:

- **City of Seattle**
<http://tinyurl.com/seattlecompletestreets>
- **City of Ferguson**
<http://www.completestreets.org/documents/MOFergusonOrdinance.pdf>
- **State of Illinois**
<http://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=095-0665>
- **Federal Government – A Bill Introduced in 2008**
<http://www.completestreets.org/documents/s2686.pdf>

Additional online resources

<http://www.completestreets.org>

Technical Assistance

Trailnet staff members are available to provide a presentation on Complete Streets and other infrastructure policies that promote healthy, active, and vibrant communities to local decision-makers in your community. Staff are also available to answer any questions you may have to help you draft or implement such local policies.

If you would like to learn more about Complete Streets contact Phil Valko, Trailnet’s Active Living Program Manager: phil@trailnet.org, 314-436-1324 x119.

CASE STUDY CASE STUDY CASE

Revised Street Design Standards Improve Walkability and Bikeability: Columbia, Missouri

If your community is like most American communities, it's likely that cars now take top priority. Over the last several decades, American sidewalks have steadily been shrinking and in some cases disappearing altogether while street lanes have widened and more lanes have been added. As a result, it can be nearly impossible to safely walk or bike to school, the store, or work.

Frustrated by this trend, a group of folks in Columbia, MO known as the PedNet Coalition came up with a radical idea: They believed that all Columbia residents should be able to safely walk, bike, or wheel(chair) their way all around town, from any location to any location, and the experience should be enjoyable. With sidewalks on less than half of their streets, the idea *was* radical.

In addition to lacking sidewalks, they noticed that the oldest parts of the city were the most pleasant and easiest to navigate on foot, bike, or wheelchair, with narrow streets and wide sidewalks. In contrast, the newest neighborhoods had unnecessarily wide streets and narrow sidewalks. They began to ask "why?" What they learned is that nearly every city in America has a set of street design standards that specify such things as street widths, sidewalk widths, and distance between the sidewalk and the curb. It turns out that Columbia's street standards had been changed throughout the past few decades, putting less emphasis on pedestrians and greater emphasis on automobiles.

The PedNet Coalition's individual and organizational members, which included residents, businesses, and non-profits rallied around their idea. They did extensive research into the street standards in other cities and began proposing that Columbia revise its standards to ensure safe walking, biking, and wheeling. PedNet successfully advocated for the City to establish an advisory committee to look into the pros and cons of adopting new street standards. After a 15-month process involving local homebuilders and developers, key city departments and volunteer commissions, and local health groups, the advisory committee published a set of recommendations for revising the existing street standards.

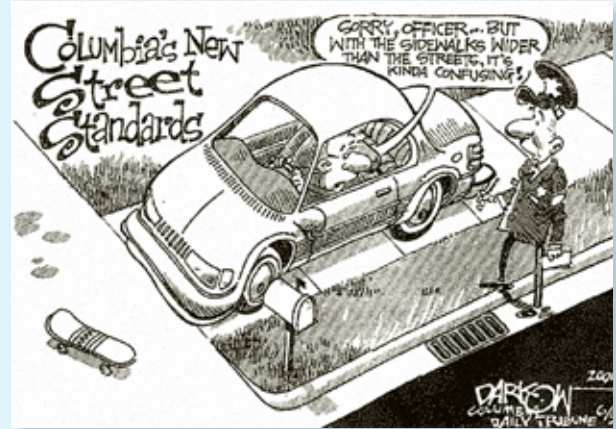


Image Courtesy of John Darkow, Columbia Daily Tribune

Columbia Mayor Darwin Hindman supported the suggested revisions and pointed to the many benefits of the proposed design changes:

- Economic benefits including enhanced recruitment and retention of University of Missouri employees because of the desirable community amenities and higher real-estate values
- Health benefits including reduced rates of obesity and related health issues – diabetes, stroke and heart disease, among others
- Community benefits including more cohesive neighborhoods with lower crime rates.
- Enhanced transportation system
- Increased outdoor recreation opportunities

Some developers contended that the new design standards would be more expensive to build, raising the cost of housing. To address these concerns, PedNet brought in national experts to testify that the new residential street standards could be built at little or no additional cost.

After a 3-year process, members of the Columbia City Council adopted the new standards:

- narrow residential street widths from 32 to 28 feet
- widen all residential sidewalks from 4 to 5 feet and install 5-foot sidewalks on ALL streets
- include 6-foot bike lanes on all arterials and major collectors
- include an 8-foot shared-use path on one side of arterials and major collectors

The resulting new standards will better accommodate more bicyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users and will slow automobile traffic through neighborhoods. The standards apply to all new construction and major repairs (when feasible) on existing streets. Columbia city officials feel confident that the new standards will enhance the lives of residents and help Columbia better compete with other college towns, such as Madison, WI, Boulder, CO, and Davis, CA, towns that draw prospective university students and faculty away from Columbia.

Local street design standards can be a highly effective tool for ensuring bicycle/pedestrian friendly environments, increased safety, and a bolstered economy.

THE PROCESS

The process began with initial meetings of interested parties. This turned into regular meetings and an unofficial Street Design Standards Working Group. The working group started a dialog with the city council, and as a result, the city council formed an official “Street Design Standards Advisory Committee” that did extensive research on street standards across the country. The Advisory Committee kept the Planning/Zoning Commission and the City Council in the loop throughout the process and finally put forth their official recommendations. Proponents of the new standards wrote Op Ed articles in the local newspaper to keep the public informed about the proposed changes. The city held a series of public meetings to gather resident and business input. These meetings were heavily attended by supporters of the new standards—residents and businesses alike that saw the new standards as important for quality of life and the local economy. At the end of a three year process, the City Council voted to approve the new standards which were adopted June 7, 2004.

Ask Yourself: Can children in your community safely walk to school? Are the sidewalks in your community wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs? What are your obstacles to walking to the store?

If the newer streets in your community are nearly wide enough to land a jumbo jet, yet the sidewalks force you to walk single file with your sweetheart, it might be time to re-examine your local street design standards, too. A great place to start is by attending local city council meetings to learn about your current standards.

For more information, contact the PedNet Coalition:
pednet@pednet.org and visit their website
www.pednet.org.

RECOMMENDATIONS: STATE & FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

CREATE AND IMPLEMENT POLICIES THAT PROMOTE COMMUNITY HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

Historically, states and the federal government have been key players in coordinating solutions to important public health crises. Obesity is now considered a national epidemic and truly requires coordinated action and leadership from state and federal governments to address the root causes of the problem. The obesity epidemic is impacting all 50 states—rural, suburban, and urban areas alike. This health epidemic is costing state and federal governments tens of billions of dollars a year in healthcare costs and taking a significant toll on the health, well-being, and productivity of Americans. Through policy formulation and budget allocation, state and federal governments have powerful tools at their disposal to begin addressing some of the root causes of the obesity epidemic. There is a growing evidence-base of research that can be used to inform effective interventions. As states begin to take action, resources of best-practice policy models for other states and the federal government are being developed. The following set of recommendations should serve as a starting point for the development of policy interventions to address this pressing epidemic.



State and federal policy can support local walkability.

GENERAL

- **Make prevention a top priority in state and federal health departments.***
- **Establish an Obesity Prevention Council** of key state or federal experts and leaders to develop a plan for addressing obesity. Provide adequate funding and political support to implement the recommendations developed by the council.
- **Allocate funds to support public education and awareness** regarding obesity and related diseases.
- **Require insurance companies to cover obesity prevention services.**
- **Monitor the problem.** Require schools and the health department to collect and monitor Body Mass Index (BMI) data. Allocate funds to standardize data collection and processing.
- **Provide tax and other incentives** for the development of physical activity facilities, improved walkability, grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other retail outlets for healthy foods, particularly in low-income communities.*
- **Provide tax and other incentives for businesses** to offer physical activity, healthy food options, and lactation accommodations to employees.*
- **Promote, adopt, and disseminate model worksite policies** that provide access to options for healthy eating and physical activity.*
- **Leverage public/private partnerships** to lower healthcare costs for workplaces that invest in comprehensive worksite wellness programs.

Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden



PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

- **Establish Physical Education standards for grades K-12 that include:**
 - » A daily time requirement. The American Heart Association recommends:
 - » 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week for grades K-5 and child development centers.
 - » 225 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week for Grades 6-12
 - » Twenty minutes of recess per day for grades K-5
 - » Important definitions, including: moderate physical activity, vigorous physical activity, physical education, and recess
 - » A limit on PE waivers
 - » Certified physical education teacher requirement
- **Adopt and implement a Complete Streets policy** to ensure transportation infrastructure is designed, built, and maintained to accommodate all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel. (See case study on page 53)
- **Develop a state or federal transportation plan** that integrates all modes of transportation and focuses on encouraging a shift to alternative modes of transportation.
- **Develop land-use policies that encourage transit-oriented development** and public transportation access to supermarkets, farmers' markets, parks, and recreation facilities.
- **Allocate transportation funds proportionate to population mode split** and focus investment into the development of high-quality multi-modal systems.
- **Allocate funds to create and maintain regional/statewide trail systems.**
- **Develop state or federal land use guidelines that incorporate smart-growth principles** to encourage the development of walkable, bikeable mixed-use districts and traditional neighborhood/town centers.
- **Require that each general plan contain a recreation element** that includes access to, and availability of, facilities and park land to encourage physical activity.*
- **Develop a permanent state fund to provide matching dollars** for the maintenance, rehabilitation, and development of parks and recreation facilities in all neighborhoods.*

PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

- **Establish a Food Policy Council** of key state or federal experts and leaders to develop a plan for addressing issues of access to healthy foods, including geographic access and cost access. Provide adequate funding and political support to implement the recommendations developed by the council.
- **Ensure federal and state farm policy, programs, and subsidies support the production and distribution of fresh, healthy foods.** (see Federal Farm Bill recommendations on page 60)
- **Provide assistance for schools to improve and implement School Wellness Policies.** Schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to have such policies.
- **Regulate the types of beverages and foods** available on school grounds: require schools to adhere to certain nutritional standards, for example, the Missouri "Advanced Eat Smart Guidelines."

* Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact

Top: Photo courtesy of www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden

RECOMMENDATIONS: STATE & FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

(PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING CONT.)

- **Regulate marketing of food and beverage products in schools** and in the immediate environment.
- **Allocate funds to support school extracurricular activities**, such as sports and arts programs, to offset the lost income resulting from the removal of unhealthy vending machines.
- **Build nutrition education into core school curriculum.**
- **Initiate a Farm-to-School program** that links local producers to school buyers. Consider the following critical elements:
 - » Creation of 1-2 full-time staff positions to link farmers and schools for food procurement.
 - » Development of a website to link farmers and schools for food procurement.
 - » Ease federal, state, and school procurement restrictions, including limits on geographic-preferencing.
 - » Provide grant funds to elementary schools with high populations of low-income students to provide locally grown snacks.
- **Create or increase state or federal tax on unhealthy food products** to fund obesity prevention and health promotion efforts.
- **Require major franchise restaurant chains to post calorie counts** of offerings in large type and in readily visible positions.
- **Regulate food products that are known to be significant contributors to obesity**, such as trans fats and high-fructose corn syrup.
- **Assure that food assistance programs provide healthy foods.***

* Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact

A Healthy Community State Legislation Database



The National Conference of State Legislators maintains the Healthy Community Design and Access to Healthy Food Legislation Database. This database collects, tracks, and summarizes state legislation that either seeks to increase access to healthy food or opportunities for physical activity in one's daily routine. Examples of such policies include farm-to-school and farmers' market programs, bicycle and walking paths, grocery store development, and transit-oriented development, as well as many others.

This database can serve as an invaluable resource for state and federal legislators interested in learning about the various legislative tools that states throughout the country have enacted to combat obesity. The database can also serve as a great resource for community advocates who work with state legislators. It is an excellent starting point for the development of a statewide vision for addressing obesity and serves as a portal to access model legislation to inform policy formulation.

The database can be searched using state, topic area, year, bill type, text search, bill status, and bill type to craft your search. This database is typically updated bi-monthly January through May, and monthly the remainder of the year.

You can access the database online:

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/envirom/healthyCommunity/healthycommunitydb.htm>

Students from the College School smelling fresh basil at New Roots Urban Farm in St. Louis. Photo courtesy of Matt Diller.



Farm Bill Recommendations



The Farm Bill is a multi-billion dollar piece of legislation written by Congress every 5 years that affects the food our country grows, processes, and ultimately ends up on our tables and in our schools. Farm policy is food policy and food policy is health policy.

The Farm Bill currently includes tremendous subsidies for the production of four main food crops: corn, soy, wheat, and rice. The Farm bill includes few incentives for the production and distribution of healthy fruits and vegetables. It is because of this current incentive structure, in large part, that the American food system is flooded with low-cost high-fructose corn syrup, fats, and oils, yet a limited supply of higher-cost fresh foods. In fact, between 1985 and 2000, the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables increased by nearly 40 percent while the cost of soft drinks decreased by over 20% and the cost of fats and oils decreased by nearly 15% (USDA ERS Food Review, Vol. 25, Issue 3. converted to real dollars).

The following recommendations are focused on increasing the health of Americans through improving access to healthy foods. The Farm Bill is divided into ten Titles. The recommendations are listed by Title and are followed by a brief explanation in italics. Explanations are omitted when the recommendation is self-explanatory.

I. Commodity Programs

- Support greater diversity and increased production of crops and farm products in line with needs of Americans to meet recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The Farm Bill subsidizes the production of five main crops: corn, soybeans, wheat, rice, and cotton. By including subsidies for more nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables in the Farm Bill, we would increase the production of these crops and reduce their market price.

- Remove penalties and instead offer incentives for farmers converting agricultural land to fruit and vegetable production from commodity crop production.

Currently, farmers producing commodity crops, such as corn and soy, are financially penalized if they convert part of their acreage to grow non-commodity crops, such as spinach or carrots.

IV. Nutrition Programs

- Pilot programs in the Food Stamp Program to encourage purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Expand the school Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program to all states and territories.

This program allocates \$0.50/day/student to provide free fruits and vegetables in schools. This successful and popular program was piloted in a small number of schools in a small number of states.

- Assure commodity purchases align with Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Many of the commodity purchases end up in school foods. Simply stated, commodity purchases should be healthy foods.

- Increase funding for Community Food Projects to create new and expanded food system programs to help communities develop retail food markets, urban agriculture projects, and marketing networks to address the needs of underserved neighborhoods.
- Support institutional local food procurement such as farm-to-school programs.

Currently, USDA tells schools that they can't choose where they buy their food based on geographical preference. Schools are required to go with the lowest bidder among food producers. Even if a school wanted to purchase all local produce, they could not get the federal reimbursement for it unless the local producer was the lowest bidder. Schools should have the ability to consider multiple factors in their food purchases, beyond the lowest price.

- Support nutrition education in schools with an emphasis on healthy food systems in conjunction with farm-to-school programs providing locally grown food for children.
- Fund incentives for schools and child/adult daycare institutions to purchase regionally produced foods that are consistent with Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Expand both WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs.

VII. Research and Related Matters

- Explore critical issues related to health impacts of food production, marketing systems, and opportunities to improve public health through food and agricultural systems change.

The vast majority of research funds relate to increasing the amount of food produced, not the quality of food produced. Recent non-governmental studies have found that there are significant health benefits to organic and local food production and consumption (e.g., higher vitamin/mineral content and fewer pesticides in our bodies). This point encourages Congress to allocate research funding to expand our understanding of the health implications of various methods of food production.

X. Miscellaneous

- Support the increased use of Section 32 funds (Department of Defense Fresh Program) to purchase fruits and vegetables for USDA's domestic nutrition programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS: WORKPLACES

INITIATE A WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM

A CRITICAL ROLE

The goal of your program is to promote prevention by creating an environment that encourages employees to be physically active and eat healthy. Include some or all of the following programs and incentives into a workplace wellness program. Make it easy for employees to make healthy choices and support their efforts with incentives. Healthier employees are more engaged, have lower health insurance costs, and miss less days of work due to illness.

A successful workplace wellness program is flexible to the needs of employees and the resources of employers. Consider time (e.g. when activities will be most useful to employees), location (e.g. consider an on-site location), and people involved (e.g. consider using familiar people). Small businesses may prefer incentives that allow individuals flexibility in picking new wellness activities.

Investing in Employee Health Will Save You Money



For years now, many studies have been published showing that when businesses are willing to invest money to implement workplace wellness programs, they save money in the long-term. Healthy employees cost their employers less money—they miss less days of work, are more productive, and cost less in health-care fees.

Ron Goetzel, the founding Director of Cornell University's Institute for Health and Productivity Studies, is a prominent researcher who has studied the economics of workplace wellness programs – his research has found that strong workplace wellness programs often have a return on investment (ROI) of greater than 3 to 1. That means that for every \$1 dollar companies spend on wellness programs, they will likely save \$3, for a net profit of \$2. Goetzel has also found that the ROI fluctuates based on how comprehensive the wellness program is, with more comprehensive programs consistently producing higher ROI's.

In one recently published example, Citibank reported a savings of \$8.9 million in medical expenditures from their health promotion program, which only cost Citibank \$1.9 million to implement, for an ROI of \$4.56 for every \$1 spent. Goetzel has also pointed to a review conducted by Larry Chapman of 42 financial-impact studies that concluded that workplace wellness programs achieve a 25-30% reduction in “medical and absenteeism costs in an average period of about 3.6 years.”

2006: Goetzel Ron Z; Ozminikowski Ronald J

What's holding you back: why should (or shouldn't) employers invest in health promotion programs for their workers? North Carolina Medical Journal 2006;67(6):428-30.

Photo by Jennifer Rensel



PROMOTE ACTIVE LIVING

- **Reimburse employees for preventive health and wellness activities**, including fitness/yoga classes, fitness center membership, and chiropractic care.*
- **Provide onsite exercise facilities or partner with a local facility to offer reduced rates.** Be creative! Can your company or organization exchange services with a local facility to reduce the cost for your employees?
- **Create flexible work times** that allow activity in between meetings.
- **Implement activity breaks** for meetings that are longer than one hour.*
- **Provide activity logs** for employees to self-monitor physical activity, and offer incentives for employees who meet certain goals.
- **Offer incentives** for employees who walk, bike, or take public transit to work. (See case study on page 65)
- **Provide shower facilities, changing areas, bike storage, and bike racks** for employees who bike to work.
- **Provide a company vehicle** for bicycle, pedestrian, or transit

commuters to use for travel to day-time meetings.

- **Provide bike safety courses** or reimbursement to encourage employees to commute by bike.
- **Provide an emergency taxi fund** for bike commuters and public transit users so they can get home quickly in the event of an emergency.
- **Provide inviting outdoor spaces**, such as walking paths or sitting areas, to encourage movement outside of the office.
- **Partner with local health centers** to provide on-site health screenings and physical activity counseling.
- **Encourage activity outside the office**, such as bicycling clubs and 5K runs/walks.
- **Encourage stair usage.** Design building environments that make stairs equally or more accessible than elevators. Design stairwells as interesting architectural features of the building.

* Recommendation adapted from the Strategic Alliance Environmental Nutrition and Activity Community Tool (ENACT) www.preventioninstitute.org/sa/enact

PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING

- **Adopt food and beverage guidelines** for foods served at meetings/events or purchased with workplace funds.
- **Provide healthy food options** for employees during the workday and at all meetings.*
- **Establish healthy nutrition standards for all cafeteria meals and vending machines.**
- **Educate employees about the benefits of fresh, local produce.**
- **Support breastfeeding** by providing a comfortable, private space to do so for employees without private offices. Research

has shown that breastfeeding has preventative impacts on childhood obesity and helps new mothers lose pregnancy weight.

- **Partner with local health centers** to provide on-site healthy eating and nutrition counseling.
- **Create healthy eating logs for employees** to self-monitor and offer incentives for employees who meet their goals.
- **Provide a kitchen facility** to allow employees to store food and prepare their own meals instead of eating out.
- **Provide water to drink.** Provide clean sources of water: tap water, water cooler, drinking fountain, etc.

Top Photo by: Graham Ballantyne; Left Circle: Photo by Emilie Hardman; Center Circle: Photo by "keynash" on Flickr; Right Circle: Photo by "Office Now" on Flickr

Encourage and support employees who take alternative transportation to work.



A Small Business Committed to Employee Health

Wind Engineering is a professional civil engineering firm located in St. Louis, MO, that has taken some very progressive steps to promote employee health. When principal Dan Wind realized his office was expanding and would need more space, he saw it as an opportunity to build an office building that would support both his employees' health and environmental health.

Dan decided to build Wind Engineering's new offices along Grant's Trail, an 8-mile long bicycle and pedestrian greenway in south St. Louis County, to serve as a thoroughfare for his employees to bike commute to work. To further support bike commuting, Dan designed Wind Engineering's new building to include showers, lockers, and secure bike parking. To promote alternative transportation among employees, Dan instituted an alternative transportation bonus that rewards those who ride, walk, or take public transportation to work. The bonus is a maximum of \$500/year and is pro-rated for how often employees go car free. Dan also instituted a \$300/year proximity bonus for employees who live within 5 miles of the office to offer an incentive for those who choose to live close to work. Dan did receive some pushback from employees who lived further away that argued that their higher travel costs better qualified them for the extra compensation. Dan asserted that the bonuses were not compensation for expenses, but rather incentives for employees to manifest Wind Engineering's company values of sustainability and healthy living. Dan has written both bonuses into the company policy manual, and Dan says he has already observed employees shift their homes into the 5-mile radius.



Wind Engineering has taken strides to improve both employee health and environmental health, including the green roof shown above.

In an effort to limit parking requirements and maximize green space, Wind Engineering's parking lot was connected to an adjacent condo development parking lot in order to share spaces between the office, the condos and trail riders. An access path connects Wind Engineering's parking lot to Grant's Trail.

Dan also included health into the design of his new building. The building includes a significant amount of windows that allow for day lighting and are operable for ventilation. Verandas peak out from both ends of the building. A large, inviting staircase is located on the exterior of the building and is the first thing visitors see when they approach the building, increasing the likelihood of stair usage, instead of the elevator. Dan believes that in addition to promoting employee health, his extra investments and incentives will also help his bottom-line by leading to better recruitment and retention of employees. We commend Dan and Wind Engineering for all they are doing to create a healthy small business.

Two young riders participate in one of Trailnet's Pedal Series Rides. Trailnet offers bike rides, walking events, and more for all ages and abilities throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Learn more at www.trailnet.org



RESOURCES

USEFUL TOOLS TO MOVE YOUR EFFORTS FORWARD

Bikeability Checklist

How bikeable is your community?

Riding a bike is fun!

Bicycling is a great way to get around and to get your daily dose of physical activity. It's good for the environment, and it can save you money. No wonder many communities are encouraging people to ride their bikes more often!



Can you get to where you want to go by bike?

Some communities are more bikeable than others: how does yours rate? Read over the questions in this checklist and then take a ride in your community, perhaps to the local shops, to visit a friend, or even to work. See if you can get where you want to go by bicycle, even if you are just riding around the neighborhood to get some exercise.

At the end of your ride, answer each question and, based on your opinion, circle an overall rating for each question. You can also note any problems you encountered by checking the appropriate box(es). Be sure to make a careful note of any specific locations that need improvement.

Add up the numbers to see how you rated your ride. Then, turn to the pages that show you how to begin to improve those areas where you gave your community a low score.

Before you ride, make sure your bike is in good working order, put on a helmet, and be sure you can manage the ride or route you've chosen. Enjoy the ride!



National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration



Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Go for a ride and use this checklist
to rate your neighborhood's bikeability.



How bikeable is your community?

Location of bike ride (be specific):

Rating Scale:



1. Did you have a place to bicycle safely?

a) On the road, sharing the road with motor vehicles?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems (please note locations):
- ☐ No space for bicyclists to ride
 - ☐ Bicycle lane or paved shoulder disappeared
 - ☐ Heavy and/or fast-moving traffic
 - ☐ Too many trucks or buses
 - ☐ No space for bicyclists on bridges or in tunnels
 - ☐ Poorly lighted roadways
- Other problems: _____

b) On an off-road path or trail, where motor vehicles were not allowed?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Path ended abruptly
 - ☐ Path didn't go where I wanted to go
 - ☐ Path intersected with roads that were difficult to cross
 - ☐ Path was crowded
 - ☐ Path was unsafe because of sharp turns or dangerous downhill
 - ☐ Path was uncomfortable because of too many hills
 - ☐ Path was poorly lighted
- Other problems: _____

Overall "Safe Place To Ride" Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

2. How was the surface that you rode on?

- ☐ Good ☐ Some problems, the road or path had:

- ☐ Potholes
 - ☐ Cracked or broken pavement
 - ☐ Debris (e.g. broken glass, sand, gravel, etc.)
 - ☐ Dangerous drain grates, utility covers, or metal plates
 - ☐ Uneven surface or gaps
 - ☐ Slippery surfaces when wet (e.g. bridge decks, construction plates, road markings)
 - ☐ Bumpy or angled railroad tracks
 - ☐ Rumble strips
- Other problems: _____

Overall Surface Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. How were the intersections you rode through?

- ☐ Good ☐ Some problems:

- ☐ Had to wait too long to cross intersection
 - ☐ Couldn't see crossing traffic
 - ☐ Signal didn't give me enough time to cross the road
 - ☐ Signal didn't change for a bicycle
 - ☐ Unsure where or how to ride through intersection
- Other problems: _____

Overall Intersection Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Continue the checklist on the next page...

RESOURCES: BIKEABILITY CHECKLIST

COURTESY OF THE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFORMATION CENTER

4. Did drivers behave well?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems, drivers:
- ☐ Drove too fast
 - ☐ Passed me too close
 - ☐ Did not signal
 - ☐ Harassed me
 - ☐ Cut me off
 - ☐ Ran red lights or stop sign
- Other problems: _____

Overall Driver Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Was it easy for you to use your bike?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ No maps, signs, or road markings to help me find my way
 - ☐ No safe or secure place to leave my bicycle at my destination
 - ☐ No way to take my bicycle with me on the bus or train
 - ☐ Scary dogs
 - ☐ Hard to find a direct route I liked
 - ☐ Route was too hilly
- Other problems: _____

Overall Ease of Use Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

6. What did you do to make your ride safer?

Your behavior contributes to the bikeability of your community. Check all that apply:

- ☐ Wore a bicycle helmet
- ☐ Obeyed traffic signal and signs
- ☐ Rode in a straight line (didn't weave)
- ☐ Signaled my turns
- ☐ Rode with (not against) traffic
- ☐ Used lights, if riding at night
- ☐ Wore reflective and/or retroreflective materials and bright clothing
- ☐ Was courteous to other travelers (motorist, skaters, pedestrians, etc.)

7. Tell us a little about yourself.

In good weather months, about how many days a month do you ride your bike?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Occasionally (one or two)
- ☐ Frequently (5-10)
- ☐ Most (more than 15)
- ☐ Every day

Which of these phrases best describes you?

- ☐ An advanced, confident rider who is comfortable riding in most traffic situations
- ☐ An intermediate rider who is not really comfortable riding in most traffic situations
- ☐ A beginner rider who prefers to stick to the bike path or trail

How does your community rate? Add up your ratings and decide.

(Questions 6 and 7 do not contribute to your community's score)

1. _____	26-30	Celebrate! You live in a bicycle-friendly community.
2. _____	21-25	Your community is pretty good, but there's always room for improvement.
3. _____	16-20	Conditions for riding are okay, but not ideal. Plenty of opportunity for improvements.
4. _____	11-15	Conditions are poor and you deserve better than this! Call the mayor and the newspaper right away.
5. _____		
Total _____	5-10	Oh dear. Consider wearing body armor and Christmas tree lights before venturing out again.

Did you find something that needs to be changed?

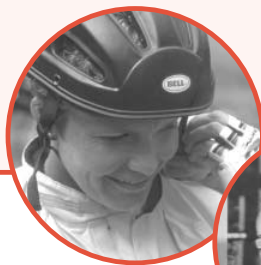
On the next page, you'll find suggestions for improving the bikeability of your community based on the problems you identified. Take a look at both the short- and long-term solutions and commit to seeing at least one of each through to the end. If you don't, then who will?

During your bike ride, how did you feel physically? Could you go as far or as fast as you wanted to? Were you short of breath, tired, or were your muscles sore? The next page also has some suggestions to improve the enjoyment of your ride.

Bicycling, whether for transportation or recreation, is a great way to get 30 minutes of physical activity into your day. Riding, just like any other activity, should be something you enjoy doing. The more you enjoy it, the more likely you'll stick with it. Choose routes that match your skill level and physical activities. If a route is too long or hilly, find a new one. Start slowly and work up to your potential.

Now that you know the problems,
you can find the answers.

Improving your community's score...



1. Did you have a place to bicycle safely?

a) On the road?

No space for bicyclists to ride (e.g. no bike lane or shoulder; narrow lanes)
Bicycle lane or paved shoulder disappeared
Heavy and/or fast-moving traffic
Too many trucks or buses
No space for bicyclists on bridges or in tunnels
Poorly lighted roadways

What you can do immediately

- pick another route for now
- tell local transportation engineers or public works department about specific problems; provide a copy of your checklist
- find a class to boost your confidence about riding in traffic

What you and your community can do with more time

- participate in local planning meetings
- encourage your community to adopt a plan to improve conditions, including a network of bike lanes on major roads
- ask your public works department to consider "Share the Road" signs at specific locations
- ask your state department of transportation to include paved shoulders on all their rural highways
- establish or join a local bicycle advocacy group

b) On an off-road path or trail?

Path ended abruptly
Path didn't go where I wanted to go
Path intersected with roads that were difficult to cross
Path was crowded
Path was unsafe because of sharp turns or dangerous downhill
Path was uncomfortable because of too many hills
Path was poorly lighted

- slow down and take care when using the path
- find an on-street route
- use the path at less crowded times
- tell the trail manager or agency about specific problems

- ask the trail manager or agency to improve directional and warning signs
- petition your local transportation agency to improve path/roadway crossings
- ask for more trails in your community
- establish or join a "Friends of the Trail" advocacy group

2. How was the surface you rode on?

Potholes
Cracked or broken pavement
Debris (e.g. broken glass, sand, gravel, etc.)
Dangerous drain grates, utility covers, or metal plates
Uneven surface or gaps
Slippery surfaces when wet (e.g. bridge decks, construction plates, road markings)
Bumpy or angled railroad tracks
Rumble strips

- report problems immediately to public works department or appropriate agency
- keep your eye on the road/path
- pick another route until the problem is fixed (and check to see that the problems are fixed)
- organize a community effort to clean up the path

- work with your public works and parks department to develop a pothole or hazard report card or online link to warn the agency of potential hazards
- ask your public works department to gradually replace all dangerous drainage grates with more bicycle-friendly designs, and improve railroad crossings so cyclists can cross them at 90 degrees
- petition your state DOT to adopt a bicycle-friendly rumble-strip policy

3. How were the intersections you rode through?

Had to wait too long to cross intersection
Couldn't see crossing traffic
Signal didn't give me enough time to cross the road
The signal didn't change for a bicycle
Unsure where or how to ride through intersection

- pick another route for now
- tell local transportation engineers or public works department about specific problems
- take a class to improve your riding confidence and skills

- ask the public works department to look at the timing of the specific traffic signals
- ask the public works department to install loop-detectors that detect bicyclists
- suggest improvements to sightlines that include cutting back vegetation; building out the path crossing; and moving parked cars that obstruct your view
- organize community-wide, on-bike training on how to safely ride through intersections

Improving your community's score...

(continued)

What you can do immediately

What you and your community can do with more time

4. Did drivers behave well?

Drivers:
Drove too fast
Passed me too close
Did not signal
Harassed me
Cut me off
Ran red lights or stop signs

- report unsafe drivers to the police
- set an example by riding responsibly; obey traffic laws; don't antagonize drivers
- always expect the unexpected
- work with your community to raise awareness to share the road

- ask the police department to enforce speed limits and safe driving
- encourage your department of motor vehicles to include "Share the Road" messages in driver tests and correspondence with drivers
- ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas
- encourage your community to use cameras to catch speeders and red light runners

5. Was it easy for you to use your bike?

No maps, signs, or road markings to help me find my way
No safe or secure place to leave my bicycle at my destination
No way to take my bicycle with me on the bus or train
Scary dogs
Hard to find a direct route I liked
Route was too hilly

- plan your route ahead of time
- find somewhere close by to lock your bike; never leave it unlocked
- report scary dogs to the animal control department
- learn to use all of your gears!

- ask your community to publish a local bike map
- ask your public works department to install bike parking racks at key destinations; work with them to identify locations
- petition your transit agency to install bike racks on all their buses
- plan your local route network to minimize the impact of steep hills
- establish or join a bicycle user group (BUG) at your workplace

6. What did you do to make your ride safer?

Wore a bicycle helmet
Obeyed traffic signals and signs
Rode in a straight line (didn't weave)
Signaled my turns
Rode with (not against) traffic
Used lights, if riding at night
Wore reflective materials and bright clothing
Was courteous to other travelers (motorists, skaters, pedestrians, etc.)

- go to your local bike shop and buy a helmet; get lights and reflectors if you are expecting to ride at night
- always follow the rules of the road and set a good example
- take a class to improve your riding skills and knowledge

- ask the police to enforce bicycle laws
- encourage your school or youth agencies to teach bicycle safety (on-bike)
- start or join a local bicycle club
- become a bicycle safety instructor



Need some guidance?
These resources might help...

Great Resources

STREET DESIGN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 249
Washington, DC 20001
Tel: (202) 624-5800
www.aashto.org

Institute of Transportation Engineers
1099 14th Street, NW, Suite 300 West
Washington, DC 20005-3438
Tel: (202) 289-0222
www.ite.org

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)
P.O. Box 23576
Washington, DC 20026
Tel: (202) 366-4071
www.apbp.org

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC)
UNC Highway Safety Research Center
730 Airport Road, Suite 300
Campus Box 3430
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3430
Tel: (919) 962-2202
www.pedbikeinfo.org
www.bicyclinginfo.org

Federal Highway Administration
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm

EDUCATION AND SAFETY

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20590
Tel: (202) 366-1739
www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/

League of American Bicyclists
1612 K Street NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 822-1333
www.bikeleague.org

National Bicycle Safety Network
www.cdc.gov/ncipc/bike/default.htm

National Safe Kids Campaign
1301 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004
Tel: (202) 662-0600
www.safekids.org

PATHS AND TRAILS

Rails to Trails Conservancy
1100 17th Street SW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 331-9696
www.railtrails.org

National Park Service
Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
1849 C Street, NW, MS-3622
Washington, DC 20240
www.ncrc.nps.gov/rtca/rtca-ofh.htm

HEALTH

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, GA 30341-3724
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa
Tel: (770) 488-5692

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Childhood Injury Prevention
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, GA 30341
www.cdc.gov/ncipc

ADVOCACY AND USER GROUPS

Thunderhead Alliance
1612 K Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 822-1333
www.thunderheadalliance.org

League of American Bicyclists
1612 K Street, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 822-1333
www.bikeleague.org

National Center for Bicycling and Walking
1506 21st Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 463-6622
www.bikewalk.org

Surface Transportation Policy Project
1100 17th Street, NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 466-2636
www.transact.org

OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

Bikes and transit: www.bikemap.com

Bicycle information: www.bicyclinginfo.org

Bicycle-related research:
www.tfhrc.gov/safety/pedbike/pedbike.htm

Bicycling Magazine: www.bicycling.com/

Bicycle touring:
Adventure Cycling Association
P.O. Box 8308
Missoula, MT 59807
(800) 755-2453
(406) 721-8754
www.adv-cycling.org

Walkability Checklist

How walkable is your community?

Take a walk with a child and decide for yourselves.

Everyone benefits from walking. These benefits include: improved fitness, cleaner air, reduced risks of certain health problems, and a greater sense of community. But walking needs to be safe and easy. Take a walk with your child and use this checklist to decide if your neighborhood is a friendly place to walk. Take heart if you find problems, there are ways you can make things better.

Getting started:

First, you'll need to pick a place to walk, like the route to school, a friend's house or just somewhere fun to go.

The second step involves the checklist. Read over the checklist before you go, and as you walk, note the locations of things you would like to change. At the end of your walk, give each question a rating. Then add up the numbers to see how you rated your walk overall.

After you've rated your walk and identified any problem areas, the next step is to figure out what you can do to improve your community's score. You'll find both immediate answers and long-term solutions under "Improving Your Community's Score..." on the third page.



Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability.

How walkable is your community?

Location of walk _____

Rating Scale: 

1. Did you have room to walk?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
 - ☐ Sidewalks were broken or cracked
 - ☐ Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
 - ☐ No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
 - ☐ Too much traffic
 - ☐ Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
- ☐ Road was too wide
 - ☐ Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
 - ☐ Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
 - ☐ Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
 - ☐ Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
 - ☐ Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
 - ☐ Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Did drivers behave well?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some problems: Drivers...
- ☐ Backed out of driveways without looking
 - ☐ Did not yield to people crossing the street
 - ☐ Turned into people crossing the street
 - ☐ Drove too fast
 - ☐ Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights?
 - ☐ Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules?

Could you and your child...

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Cross with the light?
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. Was your walk pleasant?

- ☐ Yes ☐ Some unpleasant things:
- ☐ Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
 - ☐ Scary dogs
 - ☐ Scary people
 - ☐ Not well lighted
 - ☐ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
 - ☐ Dirty air due to automobile exhaust
 - ☐ Something else _____
- Locations of problems: _____

Rating: (circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6

How does your neighborhood stack up? Add up your ratings and decide.

- | | | |
|----------|--------------|---|
| 1. _____ | 26-30 | Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking. |
| 2. _____ | | |
| 3. _____ | 21-25 | Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good. |
| 4. _____ | | |
| 5. _____ | 16-20 | Okay, but it needs work. |
| | 11-15 | It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that. |
| | 5-10 | It's a disaster for walking! |

Total _____

Now that you've identified the problems,
go to the next page to find out how to fix them.

RESOURCES: WALKABILITY CHECKLIST

COURTESY OF THE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFORMATION CENTER

Now that you know the problems,
you can find the answers.

Improving your community's score...



1. Did you have room to walk?

Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
Sidewalks broken or cracked
Sidewalks blocked
No sidewalks, paths or shoulders
Too much traffic

What you and your child can do immediately

- pick another route for now
- tell local traffic engineering or public works department about specific problems and provide a copy of the checklist

What you and your community can do with more time

- speak up at board meetings
- write or petition city for walkways and gather neighborhood signatures
- make media aware of problem
- work with a local transportation engineer to develop a plan for a safe walking route

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

Road too wide
Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
Crosswalks/traffic signals needed
View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants
Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair

- pick another route for now
- share problems and checklist with local traffic engineering or public works department
- trim your trees or bushes that block the street and ask your neighbors to do the same
- leave nice notes on problem cars asking owners not to park there

- push for crosswalks/signals/parking changes/curb ramps at city meetings
- report to traffic engineer where parked cars are safety hazards
- report illegally parked cars to the police
- request that the public works department trim trees or plants
- make media aware of problem

3. Did drivers behave well?

Backed without looking
Did not yield
Turned into walkers
Drove too fast
Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights

- pick another route for now
- set an example: slow down and be considerate of others
- encourage your neighbors to do the same
- report unsafe driving to the police

- petition for more enforcement
- request protected turns
- ask city planners and traffic engineers for traffic calming ideas
- ask schools about getting crossing guards at key locations
- organize a neighborhood speed watch program

4. Could you follow safety rules?

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen
Stop and look left, right, left before crossing
Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic
Cross with the light

- educate yourself and your child about safe walking
- organize parents in your neighborhood to walk children to school

- encourage schools to teach walking safely
- help schools start safe walking programs
- encourage corporate support for flex schedules so parents can walk children to school

5. Was your walk pleasant?

Needs grass, flowers, trees
Scary dogs
Scary people
Not well lit
Dirty, litter
Lots of traffic



- point out areas to avoid to your child; agree on safe routes
- ask neighbors to keep dogs leashed or fenced
- report scary dogs to the animal control department
- report scary people to the police
- report lighting needs to the police or appropriate public works department
- take a walk with a trash bag
- plant trees, flowers in your yard
- select alternative route with less traffic

- request increased police enforcement
- start a crime watch program in your neighborhood
- organize a community clean-up day
- sponsor a neighborhood beautification or tree-planting day
- begin an adopt-a-street program
- initiate support to provide routes with less traffic to schools in your community (reduced traffic during am and pm school commute times)

A Quick Health Check

Could not go as far or as fast as we wanted
Were tired, short of breath or had sore feet or muscles
Was the sun really hot?
Was it hot and hazy?

- start with short walks and work up to 30 minutes of walking most days
- invite a friend or child along
- walk along shaded routes where possible
- use sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher, wear a hat and sunglasses
- try not to walk during the hottest time of day

- get media to do a story about the health benefits of walking
- call parks and recreation department about community walks
- encourage corporate support for employee walking programs
- plant shade trees along routes
- have a sun safety seminar for kids
- have kids learn about unhealthy ozone days and the Air Quality Index (AQI)

Need some guidance?
These resources might help...

Great Resources

WALKING INFORMATION

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC)
UNC Highway Safety Research Center
730 Airport Road, Suite 300
Campus Box 3430
Chapel Hill, NC
27599-3430
Phone: (919) 962-2202
www.pedbikeinfo.org
www.walkinginfo.org

National Center for
Safe Routes to School
730 Martin Luther
King, Jr. Blvd., Suite 300
Campus Box 3430
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3430
Toll-free 1-866-610-SR TS
www.saferoutesinfo.org

National Center for Bicycling and Walking
Campaign to Make America Walkable
1506 21st Street, NW
Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (800) 760-NBPC
www.bikefed.org

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY WEB SITES

USA event: www.walktoschool-usa.org
International: www.iwalktoschool.org

STREET DESIGN AND TRAFFIC CALMING

Federal Highway Administration
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Research Program
HSR - 20
6300 Georgetown Pike
McLean, VA 22101
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm

Institute of Transportation Engineers
www.ite.org

Surface Transportation Policy Project
www.transact.org

Transportation for Livable Communities
www.tlcnetwork.org

WALKING COALITIONS

America Walks
P.O. Box 29103
Portland, Oregon 97210
Phone: (503) 222-1077
www.americawalks.org



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Traffic Safety Programs
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: (202) 662-0600
www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/ped

SAFE KIDS Worldwide
1301 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: (202) 662-0600
Fax: (202) 393-2072
www.safekids.org

WALKING AND HEALTH

US Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Children's Health Protection (MC 1107A)
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: 202-564-2188
Fax: 202-564-2733
www.epa.gov/children/
www.epa.gov/airnow/
www.epa.gov/air/urbanair/ozone/what.html
www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html
www.epa.gov/otaq/transp/comchoic/ccweb.htm

President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and
Safety Risks to Children
www.childrenshealth.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
Phone: (888) 232-4674
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/readysset
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/index.htm

Prevention Magazine
33 East Minor Street
Emmaus, PA 18098
www.itsallaboutprevention.com

Shape Up America!
6707 Democracy Boulevard
Suite 306
Bethesda, MD 20817
www.shapeup.org

ACCESSIBLE SIDEWALKS

US Access Board
1331 F Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004-1111
Phone: (800) 872-2253;
(800) 993-2822 (TTY)
www.access-board.gov



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

TOOLS TO HELP YOU FUND YOUR PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

There are a variety of funding sources available to support your community's projects. Potential funding sources include individuals, foundations, corporations, local, state, and federal governments, and Federated Funds, such as the United Way. Many of these sources are only available to non-profit organizations, classified as 501(c)(3) organizations by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

If you are not currently a non-profit organization, there are two ways that you can still access these funds:

1. form a new 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
2. partner with an existing 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

Forming a new non-profit is a process that involves two distinct steps: filing articles of incorporation with the appropriate state agency (usually the Secretary of State) and filing the appropriate forms with the IRS.

For an overview of the process of forming a non-profit, visit:
<http://www.ezec.gov/Toolbox/501c3factsheet.html>

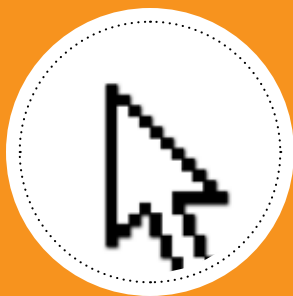
Another option is to partner with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in your local community. This alternative offers the following advantages:

- Forming a new nonprofit is not required
- Funds from sources listed above can be received by the nonprofit and used toward the partnership project or program
- Grant writing assistance may be available through the nonprofit partnership

We compiled the following list of potential funders to get you started. These private and corporate foundations have identified that they support programs that provide prevention, care and treatment strategies for obesity; building and maintaining trails, parks and playgrounds and urban/community development.



Prospect Research Tools



These tools may be used to identify additional funding sources for your community project or program:

1. **Directory of Missouri Grantmakers**
Foundation Center/Missouri Association of Philanthropy: 1-800-424-9836
2. **Foundation Directory**
<http://fdncenter.org>
3. **Guidestar**
www.guidestar.org
4. **Sorkins**
www.sorkinsonline.com
5. **Google**
www.google.com
6. **Newspapers**
St. Louis Business Journal—www.bizjournals.com/stlouis
St. Louis Post-Dispatch—www.stltoday.com

Grant Writing Basics



Grants to foundation and government sources typically require, at a minimum, all of the following sections:

1. **Summary**—describe the project/program, recap the request, limit to several paragraphs
2. **Organizational Background**—sell the grant maker on the organization, describe mission, goals, service area, target population, present accomplishments and achievements
3. **Need**—identify the problem to solve, document the need and focus on target population
4. **Project/Program Description**—What, When, How and Who will implement, address how your approach is different
5. **Evaluation**—how will the success of the project/program be measured, who will measure and when
6. **Budget Information**—total project/program cost, amount of request, amount raised to date, funding plan, significance of this gift
7. **Appendices**—include supporting material: Board of Directors list, tax-exempt letter, organizational budget, most recent audited statement

RESOURCES: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDER NAME	AREAS OF INTEREST	
Aetna Foundation	Healthy Community Grants Program Focus areas include depression, obesity and health professional training	
Allen Foundation	Priority Areas Include: To assist in the training of persons to work as educators and demonstrators of good nutritional practices To encourage the dissemination of information regarding healthful nutritional practices and habits	
American Hiking Society	Projects funded include building and maintaining trails which will result in visible and substantial ease of access, improved hiker safety, and/or avoidance of environmental damage	
Bikes Belong Coalition	Fundable projects include bike paths, lanes, and routes, as well as bike parks, mountain bike trails, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives	
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Foundation	Health and Human Services including serving disadvantaged communities	
Covidien (formerly TYCO/ Mallinckrodt)	Covidien Partnership for Neighborhood Wellness grants support programs that provide prevention, care and treatment strategies for obesity, particularly among children	
Dana Brown Charitable Trust	The primary purpose of the trust is to provide for the health, education and welfare of children in the St. Louis metropolitan area.	
Emerson Charitable Trust	Civic grant program contributes to organizations that protect our citizenry, further the economic health of our communities, and help build and maintain public assets such as parks and zoos	
Gateway Foundation	Recreation, parks/playgrounds, Urban/community development	
General Mills Foundation	Healthy Kids grant program for community-based groups that develop creative ways to help youth adopt a balanced diet and physically active lifestyle	

	GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS	ELIGIBILITY	GRANT RANGE (\$)	CONTACT INFO
	Specific funding areas include StL City & County	501(c)(3) organizations	25,000 – 50,000	www.aetna.com/foundation
	National	501(c)(3) organizations & in special cases hospitals or medical clinics, community organizations and K-12 schools	5,000 – 100,000	www.allenfoundation.org
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	500 – 5,000	www.americanhiking.org/alliance/fund.html
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	Up to 10,000	www.bikesbelong.org
	Includes MO	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 100,000	708/924-5615
	Specific funding areas include StL City & County	501 (c) (3) organization or an accredited educational institution	1,000 – 20,000	www.mallinckrodt.com/index.aspx
	St. Louis	501 (c) (3) organization	Avg = 10,000 – 100,000	David Diener c/o U.S. Bank P.O. Box 387 St. Louis, MO 63141-8695
	Specific funding areas include StL City & County	501(c)(3) organizations	10,000 – 1,000,000	www.gotoemerson.com/about_emerson/community.html
	St. Louis, MO	501(c)(3) organizations	10,000 – 200,000	www.gateway-foundation.org
	National	501(c)(3) and 509(a) status not-for-profit organizations and agencies	10,000	www.generalmills.com/corporate/commitment/champions.aspx

RESOURCES: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Allen P. & Josephine B. Green Foundation	Programs to bring health care services to people especially disadvantaged populations	
KaBOOM!	KaBOOM! Offers Challenge Grants and Community Partner Grants to communities that are interested in providing safe places for children to play	
W.K. Kellogg Foundation	Goal of health programming is to promote health among vulnerable individuals and communities through programming that empowers individuals, mobilizes communities, engages institutions, improves health care quality and access, and informs public and marketplace policy	
Kraft Foods Fund	Contributions programs focus on two main areas: hunger relief and healthy lifestyles	
Mattel	Health grants support the physical health and well-being of children, with particular emphasis on promoting healthy, active lifestyles	
Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.	Grants are directed toward national health promotion and education initiatives, with emphasis given to: Healthy Habits	
Missouri Foundation for Health	The Healthy and Active Communities (H&AC) initiative targets community-based organizations with the specific objective of reaching populations who are at increased risk of developing obesity, such as women and children, racial and ethnic groups, and low-income individuals or families; Note – Foundation only responds to specific calls for proposals	
Monsanto Fund	Improving Nutritional Well Being through Agriculture: Training families in sustainable agriculture techniques Improving education and good nutrition through school gardens, nutrition education, and agricultural training	
PepsiCo Foundation	PepsiCo Foundation's mission in Health and Wellness is to advance the knowledge about how to encourage healthy lifestyles and effect positive behavior change	
Retirement Research Foundation	The Foundation is interested in innovative projects that develop and/or demonstrate new approaches to the problems of older adults and have the potential for regional or national impact	
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	RWJF provides grants to projects that support their mission to improve the health and health care of all Americans. Childhood obesity and public health are two of their primary focus areas.	

	MO	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 50,000	www.greenfdn.org
	National	Non-profits, schools, parks, municipalities, neighborhood associations	Up to 5,000	www.kaboom.org
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	100,000 – 10,000,000	www.wkkf.org
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	25,000 – 100,000	www.kraft.com/About/community-involve-ment/rfp
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	Up to 25,000	www.mattel.com/about_us/philanthropy/default.asp
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 1,000,000	www.metlife.org
	MO	501(c)(3) organizations	Up to 350,000	www.mffh.org/healthy-activecomm.html
	National and International; based in St. Louis	501(c)(3) organizations & government agencies including public schools and municipalities	Up to 20,000	www.monsantofund.org
	National	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 100,000	www.pepsico.com/PEP_Citizenship/Contributions/index.cfm
	MO	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 250,000	www.rrf.org
	National	501(c)(3) organizations & collaborations	10,000's – 1,000,000's	www.rwjf.org

RESOURCES: FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Sensient Technologies Foundation, Inc.	Community/economic development; Food services; General charitable giving; Nutrition; Urban/community development	
Levis Strauss Foundation	Employee Community Involvement with focus on human services	
Sugar Lakes Foundation	Food services and human services	
Surdna Foundation	Environmental Program grants fund projects that ensure the implementation of policies and demonstration projects that will improve patterns of land use and transportation systems in metropolitan areas, enhance community sustainability, reduce fragmentation of large intact ecosystems and working landscapes, and enhance national and regional green infrastructure	
United States Steel Corp	Safety, Health and Human Services program focuses on areas for safe and healthy communities and includes a limited number of direct capital and operating grants to health and human service providers in U. S. Steel's operating areas	
UPS Foundation	In 2004, The UPS Foundation broadened their efforts to address how hunger relates to nutrition and obesity issues. The Foundation's new initiative is The National Collaboration to Reduce Hunger and Improve Nutrition.	
US Dept. of Agriculture	The Community Food Projects Program provides major funding for community-based food and agriculture projects; low-income food access, local food production, marketing local food system	
US Dept. of Health & Human Services	The Community Partnerships to Eliminate Health Disparities grant seeks to improve the health status of targeted minority populations by eliminating disparities. Focus on disease prevention.	
Wachovia Foundation	Community Development: Revitalize low- to moderate-income neighborhoods Health/Human Services: Ensure access to health education programs	
Tiger Woods Foundation	The Foundation empowers young people to reach their potential through community-based programs that promote the health, education and welfare of America's children; education grants include programs that enhance the learning process for youth	

	St. Louis, MO	501(c)(3) organizations	10,000 – 100,000	800-558-9892 Doug Arnold
	St. Louis, MO	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 5,000	www.levistrauss.com/ Citizenship/LeviS- traussFoundation.aspx
	MO	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 100,000	Roger M. Crouch c/o Neill Taylor, 30 Bear Creek Ln., Redstone, CO 81623-9853
	National	501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) organiza- tions	Avg = 15,000 – 100,000	www.surdna.org
	Granite City, IL	501(c)(3) organizations	1,000 – 200,000	www.ussteel.com/ corp/ussfoundation/ ussfound.htm
	National – NOTE con- tributes only to pre- selected organizations	501(c)(3) organizations	100 – 2,000,000	www.community.ups. com/philanthropy/ main.html
	National	501(c)(3) organizations preferred	10,000 – 300,000	www.foodsecurity.org/ funding.html
	National	Non-profit, for-profit, faith- based, tribal organization	200,000 – 250,000	www.grants.gov/
	National – NOTE, with Wachovia taking over AG Edwards in St. Louis, better chance for funding in St. Louis	501(c)(3) organizations	100 – 700,000	www.wacho- via.com/inside/
	Urban American cities	501(c)(3) organizations	2,500 - 25,000	www.twfound.org/ grants/default. sps?itype=7609



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