Active Community Environments (ACEs) Resource Kit to Prevent Obesity

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Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Division of Public Health
Nutrition, Physical Activity
and Obesity Program
2009

Department of Health Services
Division of Public Health
Wisconsin Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Program

For more information about this resource kit or to obtain a copy contact:

Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity Program
PO Box 2659
Madison, WI 53701-2659

Phone: **(608) 266-9781**
Fax: **(608) 266-3125**

E-mail: jonathon.morgan@wisconsin.gov
Visit our website at: **http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/index.htm**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

STEP 1: WHY HAVE AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE?

What Are Active Communities?
An activity-friendly environment is a place that makes it easy to be physically active on a routine basis. **Active Community Environments** (ACEs) are communities where it is easy for people of all ages and abilities to make the choice to be physically active, through planned exercise or routine daily activity. This means being able to easily walk or bike to nearby destinations such as stores, schools, parks, etc., as well as enjoy recreational opportunities within the community.

Why Do Active Community Environments Matter?
Chronic disease and obesity rates are high and healthcare costs are soaring. Wisconsin rates for several key health indicators are not good, as evidenced by Figure 1:
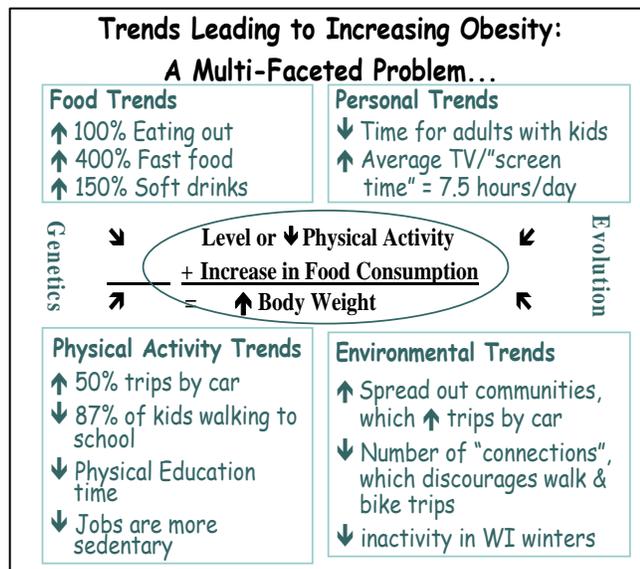
Figure 1: Percent of Adults with Lifestyle Health Risk Factors

Risk Factor	State of Wisconsin
Obese: Body Mass Index (BMI) $\geq$30	25%
Overweight (includes obese)(BMI $\geq$ 25)	62%
Diabetes	7%
Current smoker	20%
High blood pressure	26%
High cholesterol	35%
Lack of physical activity (Lack of exercise)	45%
Less than 5 servings of fruits or vegetables	76%

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2007

In the U.S., physical inactivity is a major contributing factor to the obesity epidemic.   There is now a body of evidence that connects higher physical activity levels and health status with key environmental factors such as the design of our cities, neighborhoods and transportation systems. The absence of environmental factors such as parks, trails and other recreational facilities serves as a barrier to physical activity. This is a particularly significant issue for residents of low-income neighborhoods and minorities.[1] Since the recent increase in obesity levels is a complex issue, the number of factors that are needed to fix the problem is also complex. This is illustrated in the figure to the right, showing many of the factors that affect weight gain and obesity.

Figure 2: Obesity Trends & Factors

Trends Leading to Increasing Obesity: A Multi-Faceted Problem...

Food Trends
↑ 100% Eating out
↑ 400% Fast food
↑ 150% Soft drinks

Personal Trends
↓ Time for adults with kids
↑ Average TV/"screen time" = 7.5 hours/day

Genetics

Level or ↓Physical Activity
+ Increase in Food Consumption
= ↑Body Weight

Evolution

Physical Activity Trends
↑ 50% trips by car
↓ 87% of kids walking to school
↓ Physical Education time
↓ Jobs are more sedentary

Environmental Trends
↑ Spread out communities, which ↑ trips by car
↓ Number of "connections", which discourages walk & bike trips
↓ inactivity in WI winters

Why Start an Active Community Environments Initiative?
There are a number of reasons to create active community environments. Number one is the growing evidence that environmental change can greatly affect health. A study of 448

metropolitan counties conducted in 2003 found that people who lived in compact, higher-density counties walked more and were less likely to be obese and hypertensive than people who lived in more sprawling counties. [2]

Need an example? The diagram below illustrates how planning can make a difference by making it easier to walk and bike.

Figure 3: Neighborhood Example:
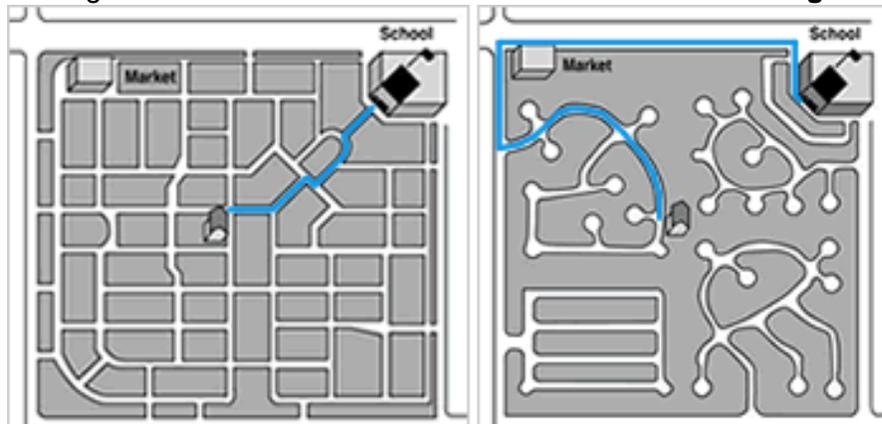
(Source: Transportation and Growth Management: Oregon Guide for Reducing Street Widths)

The diagram on the left illustrates a street layout based on a grid system, and the diagram on the right illustrates a layout which consists of many dead end streets with few exits or entrances. The diagram on the left provides a greater street connectivity than the diagram on the right. A trip from home to school for a child who lives in the neighborhood on the left is feasible on foot or by bicycle. It features a short distance using local streets with no major streets to navigate. For the child who lives in the neighborhood on the right, the trip is longer and takes place mostly on busy streets. As a result, many parents will choose to drive their child to school, which will overburden the arterial street system and create unnecessary traffic congestion at the school.

Many of the risk factors for chronic diseases are both preventable and modifiable. Step 2 will provide information on getting started and lay out what you can do in your community. Based on evidence to-date, the ideas and strategies in this kit will focus on the following important characteristics of the built environment that are critical to supporting physical activity. One research example has been listed with each strategy.

A – Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods with a Variety of Destinations
   56 percent of residents in traditional neighborhoods walked to nearby commercial areas, versus 33 percent of those living in suburban neighborhoods. [3]

B – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options
   More children walked to school where there were sidewalks.[4]

C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Accessible Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces
   The CDC determined that creating and improving places to be active can result in a 25 percent increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times a week. [5]

D – Create and Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan
   People who live in neighborhoods with a mix of shops and businesses within easy walking distance have a 35 percent lower risk of obesity. [6]

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment
   A Safe Routes to School program in Marin County, California, that included both safety improvements and encouragement, increased the number of children walking to school by 64 percent in two years. [7]

F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships

This resource guide will present information on a six step process to create active community environments …………. Let's Begin!

| **Step 1** | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Step 5 | Step 6 |
| **Why?** | ⇨ Starting Up | ⇨ Assessing | ⇨ Strategies | ⇨ Making Decisions | ⇨ Evaluation |

STEP 2: GETTING STARTED

Once a community decides they want to promote Active Community Environments (ACEs), the first question is often "What kinds of things should we do?"   Before you have that discussion, you should lay the groundwork and get more information. Working on changing the built environment will likely require new partnerships that might be outside of any existing alliances. As an example, local municipal planning organizations (MPOs) in Wisconsin play a key role in setting transportation policy and, ultimately, the use of transportation funding. A brief, background document on how to work with local MPOs is one example of why these new alliances are critical: Why Schools, Public Health, Local Officials & Other Healthy Living Advocates Should Get to Know Their MPO - An issue brief on how to work with Municipal Planning organizations to incorporate opportunities for alternative means of transportation in city planning. http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/pdf_files/mpo.pdf

A summary of three major assessment strategies would include the following items, all of which are very manageable if you take them one-step at a time and take advantage of work that has already been done.

How communities can get started
1. Convene a meeting of key stakeholders to have an initial discussion on possible individuals and community assets that could help further your mission.
   ☐ Use the Asset Mapping resources (Appendix A) to determine the types of assets that might be available. See the Asset Mapping page for more information on this step.
   ☐ Identify the list of groups that you want to approach to help with your initiative. Make a list of contact information for those groups and decide who will make an initial contact. Key players for environmental change would include:
   - Government leaders
   - City planners
   - Public works and transportation staff
   - Park & recreation staff
   - Business leaders
   - Public health staff
   - Neighborhood group leaders
   - School staff
     Active Living and City Planning: Why Schools, Public Health, Local Officials & Other Healthy Living Advocates Should Get to Know Their Municipal Planning Organization (PDF, 31 KB) - An issue brief on how to work with Municipal Planning organizations to incorporate opportunities for alternative means of transportation in city planning.
   ☐ Call contacts, make a preliminary inquiry about their interest, and ask if you can send them a quick survey to fill out or interview them in person. The purpose of the call is to provide them some background information on why you want to engage their organization and gauge their initial interest.
   ☐ Send out a survey or interview the groups and collect all the responses from those who agreed to participate. A sample survey can be found at the end of this document in Appendix A under Asset Mapping.
   ☐ Meet with the core group to discuss the results and determine what and who you want to involve further.

       ☐   Invite those group representatives to a meeting to discuss what you're thinking and give them the opportunity to provide input to help shape the initiative.

2. Create a committee that involves cross-sectional representation of your partner organizations to help with the development, implementation and assessment of your initiative. (Step Two – ACEs Committee)
3. Begin the Strategic Planning Process to lay out your plan.
4. Assess the needs of your community. Complete an environmental assessment of the community and conduct an interest survey of residents to collect information on the program, policy and environmental changes that would be of most interest to citizens in increasing physical activity levels. Gather other available data that might be helpful. (Step Three)
5. Look at the initiative strategies and resource needs in this kit. (Step Four)
6. Use the assessment, survey results and other data to prioritize your initiative components and to set goals and objectives. (Step Five)
7. Develop an Intervention Action Plan with appropriate strategies to address specified goals and objectives from the strategic plan. Include a timeline, a budget, and an evaluation plan. (Step Five)
8. Market and implement the plan. (Step Five)
9. Monitor progress and make necessary changes. (Step Six)
10. Evaluate the outcomes. (Step Six)
11. Continue to revise the plan to create and maintain a healthy environment for all residents and visitors.

ACEs COMMITTEE

DEVELOPING AN ACEs COMMITTEE

Gain Support from Key Leaders
Changing the local environment requires buy-in and support from the top level of leadership in order to be successful. To ensure the support of key leaders, inform them about the initiative early on and encourage them to participate. Communicate clearly and often the goals and benefits to the community and participants. You need to direct sufficient resources and staff time to developing and implementing an ACEs initiative if you want it to be successful.   Once your strategic plan is completed, share it with community, school, business and organizational leaders to see if they are supportive before proceeding.

Assembling Your Team – Forming an ACEs Committee
The ACEs Committee is responsible for developing, implementing and evaluating the ACEs initiative. The size and make-up of the committee will depend on the focus of your initiative and the scope of the initiative or activities. The committee should include staff from the key partners you identified in your Asset Mapping survey. There is no minimum or maximum size, but the committee should be large enough to represent all the key partners. If you already have a group doing similar work, consider merging efforts so you can benefit from their progress to-date and additional resources.

Designate a Coordinator or Leader
Management of the ACEs Committee should identify a coordinator or leader to manage the

initiative. Although the ACEs Committee and others can share some of the responsibilities, having the right person coordinating efforts increases the likelihood that the initiative will be well managed and successful. **The level of success for the ACEs initiative is often linked to the coordinator's time and ability. It is essential that some or all of the coordinator's time be dedicated to the ACEs initiative and that those responsibilities are included in their job description. If this isn't possible, then the community or lead organization should consider contracting with an outside party to provide help with planning and implementation.**

Committee Meetings
The ACEs Committee should meet regularly, at a minimum on a quarterly basis. The committee may meet more often during peak times when planning or implementing activities or strategies. The frequency of meetings will depend on what the committee plans to accomplish.

A Final Thought on Start-up
After you've laid the groundwork to develop an ACEs initiative, take the time to plan the components that will result in a quality initiative. Many people want to jump into programming at this point, but following all the steps will ultimately make your initiative more successful. By assuring that your programming is geared to your community needs and interests and that you are using proven strategies, you will greatly increase your likelihood for success. Walking through the Strategic Plan steps and the Intervention Action Plan steps will save time in the end.

STEP 3 - ASSESSING MY COMMUNITY

CHAPTER 3: ASSESSING YOUR COMMUNITY FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

There are a lot of personal and environmental factors that influence physical activity. Try and consider as many factors as possible in developing your Active Community Environments (ACEs) plan. Some of those factors for consideration are listed in Table 3.

Figure 3: Factors Influencing the Choice to Walk or Bicycle

Personal and subjective factors	Environmental Factors
Distance	Distance
Traffic safety	Traffic safety
Weather	Convenience
Topography	Cost
Infrastructural features:	Valuation of time
• Pedestrian/Bike facilities, traffic conditions	Valuation of exercise
	Physical condition
• Access and linkage of pedestrian / bicycle facilities to desirable destinations	Family circumstances
	Habits
• Existence of competitive transportation alternatives	Attitudes and Values
	Peer group acceptance

Source: Federal Highway Administration, *National Bicycling and Walking Study: Case Study No. , 1994*

One way to better understand how your community environment and personal preferences are influencing activity levels is to assess the current status of some factors in the community. There are many ways to do this, but here are three suggestions:
1. Do a community environmental assessment (Chapter 3, Part 1).
2. Look at related data and information from existing data sources that might be helpful in your decision-making. (Chapter 3, Part 2).
3. Do a community health habits and interest survey. (Chapter 3, Part 3).

HOW TO ASSESS THE ACTIVE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT?

Why do an assessment?
The purpose of completing the assessment is to identify your community's strengths and areas in need of improvement. The assessment will lead your committee to recommend actions for changes to make the community more supportive of healthy behaviors. You may find some of the actions for supporting healthy behaviors are easy to do and others may not be feasible or efficient in your community.

The assessment results can also be used as a baseline measure for evaluation. The initial assessment can later be compared with a follow-up assessment several months or years later to note progress.

Who should do the assessment?
Identify a workgroup (at least 4-5 people) who will be responsible for completing the assessment. This may be a subset of your ACEs committee. Forming a diverse group from all areas and levels of your community is important for meaningful assessment and successful planning and implementation. Suggested participants include: government leaders, city planners, public works and transportation staff, parks and recreation staff, business leaders, public health staff, neighborhood group leaders and school staff.

When should the assessment be done?
Use the assessment as a starting point for your wellness initiative. Once you have completed the assessment, determine which areas the committee will focus on (i.e. walkable neighborhoods, master plans, parks and recreation, etc.). Establish a time for the committee to meet and monitor the progress. Also determine a schedule for annual assessments, so that the assessment can serve as a tool for continuous improvement and accountability over time.

What do I need?
   ❖ An assessment workgroup
   ❖ The ACEs community assessment tool
   ❖ Knowledge of and access to other data that might be helpful
   ❖ The community physical activity survey tool
   ❖ Some time
   ❖ Someone to collate and summarize the results
   ❖ A way to share and publicize the results

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

PART 1: ACEs ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST
Complete the ACEs Assessment Checklist to determine what physical activity components you currently have in your community.   This can be done with the full committee or you may want a few key personnel (such as the ACEs Coordinator, Committee Chair, city planner, etc.) to do a preliminary scan based on information they gather and then let the full committee react to their findings.
A sample of an abridged completed checklist can be found on the next page.
A complete version of the checklist can be found in Appendix B.

Completion of the checklist provides a reference point of the community's policies, environmental supports and program activities that are currently in place to encourage and support physical activity.

CHECKLIST COMPONENTS:

(1)

Categories. There are six major categories:
        A – Provide walkable and bikeable neighborhoods with a variety of destinations
        B – Provide a variety of public transit options
        C – Provide accessible parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces
        D – Create and maintain a master land-use development plan
        E – Provide a safe and pleasant environment
        F – Develop coordinated partnerships

Each category has several associated indicators that address what your community currently has in place and what you might want to consider having in your community.

② **Points.** Point values are assigned to each strategy. When you do your assessment, you will circle the point value that best represents the status of the component for your community and then add up your points for each section. At the end of each category, sub-total the number in each column and then total all of the categories at the end of the checklist to get an overview of where your community environment currently rates (A sample can be found on the next page). You should also use this baseline measure as a benchmark for later evaluation. By evaluating where your community is on each component, you will be able to get a general idea of your status across each category and all of the items.

③ **Potential Priorities**.
After you have completed the assessment, the physical activity interest survey and reviewed available data, you can use the *potential priority* column to indicate what components you might want to focus on that are either currently in process or don't exist. This can serve as a first screening of possible areas to focus on as you develop your action plan, which is described in Step Five.

Example: **①** **②** **③**

B – Create And Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan	**Points**	**Potential Priority**
1. Smart Growth **B 1.1** Is there a "smart growth" policy in place? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 or 2**	☐
B 1.2 Do zoning regulations encourage compact community design with a higher population density and a tighter mixture of activities. **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 or 2**	☐

PART 2: USING AVAILABLE DATA
You may be able to access other key data that already exists for your community. Health data is probably available at a local or regional level and various entities involved in ACEs often survey their residents. Examples of existing data might include:

Data Sources:
❖ Demographic data about your community
❖ Health data such as the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/main/BRFS/BRFSHome.htm
❖ Health data such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/stats/s-behyouth.htm
❖ Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP) – Check with your local health department for information about this process and resulting plan.

Audit tools:
❖ Walkability checklist – A checklist to rate how friendly your community is for walking.
http://drusilla.hsrc.unc.edu/cms/downloads/walkabilitychecklist.pdf
❖ Bikeability checklist – A checklist to rate how friendly your community is for biking.
http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/library/details.cfm?id=3

- ❖ The Analytic and Checklist Audit Tools were developed to measure features of the street-scale environment related to recreational and transportation based physical activity such as walking and biking. http://www.activelivingresearch.org/node/10616
- ❖ Smart Growth Scorecard (Colorado) – A Community Self-Assessment Scorecard http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/scorecards/Colorado_Scorecard.pdf

Identifying this data will serve two purposes:
1) It will help you decide what the big health issues are for your community and it will allow you to better target those issues.
2) It will serve as "baseline" data to compare against later to see if your efforts have made a difference. Building this evaluation measure in at the beginning will help you prove the value of your ACEs initiative.

PART 3: HOW TO GET COMMUNITY INPUT

Why would you want to do a community survey?
The more you know about your target audience, the more likely you will design an initiative that meets their needs and interests. You can find additional information and resources about the use of Social Marketing at:
http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/Sites/Community/SocialMarketing.htm

Depending on how much information is already available in your community, you may want to conduct a community survey to get a better understanding of your target audience (your community's residents) and get an initial idea of two things: 1) their current health habits; and 2) their interest areas. The survey can be tailored to your community and can be done in paper form or through the use of survey instruments on the internet or that can be purchased. Using a computer survey instrument has the added advantage of being able to collect and analyze data automatically.
- ❖ An example of a health habits question would be: *On how many of the past 7 days did you exercise or participate in moderate or rigorous physical activity for at least 30 minutes total*? ☐ 0 days ☐ 1 day ☐ 2 days ☐ 3 days ☐ 4 days ☐ 5 days ☐ 6 days ☐ 7 days

- ❖ An example of an interest survey question would be: *If available, would you use maps of neighborhood walking routes?* ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

As was the case with the community environmental assessment, the community survey results can also be used as a baseline measure for later evaluation. The initial survey results can later be compared with a follow-up survey several months later to note progress.

You might also consider engaging residents in focus groups or informal interviews to gather information on their wants and needs. This can be done either before or after the survey, or if you don't have the resources to survey residents, you could use this method to gather information in place of the survey.

Whatever method you use to gather information, make it as easy as possible for residents to complete and submit the information so you get a high return rate. Consider offering an incentive or prize for people who complete the survey.

Listed in Appendix C are sample physical activity survey questions from a variety of sources. If you don't already have local data, selecting some of the national survey questions will allow you to compare your results with Wisconsin or United States data. You should pick and choose from the survey questions to meet your needs. If you don't need or want existing comparison data, you can also modify the questions for your specific purposes.

STEP 4 - STRATEGIES FOR AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY

CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT ACTIVE LIVING COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTS (ACES)

Strategies

Now that you've completed the community assessment, reviewed available data, completed a community survey and compiled the results, it's time to look at strategies that have been proven to work or are best practices from other communities. This chapter lists a number of strategies to consider for your ACEs initiative. You should be able to use the scorecard at the end of the ACEs Assessment Checklist to get an overview of your current ACEs programs or strategies.

There are a number of important characteristics of the built environment that can have a positive impact on physical activity. Making these changes can create healthier communities, which are often referred to as **Active Community Environments (ACES)**

Focus Areas

ACEs initiatives can include many components and activities. This resource kit focuses on policy and environmental changes to increase physical activity and reduce chronic diseases. The following areas are highlighted, using specific activities or strategies to address each area:

- **A – Provide walkable and bikeable neighborhoods**
- **B – Create and maintain a master land-use development plan**
- **C – Provide accessible parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces**
- **D – Provide a variety of public transit options**
- **E – Provide a safe and pleasant environment**
- **F – Develop coordinated partnerships**

Each focus area has its own distinct section that contains strategies and then references to additional resources for each strategy where they exist. The resources are highlighted in italics to distinguish them. By looking at each focus area you will get an overview of things that can be done to change the community built environment to make it easier to be active. If you need additional information or resources to implement a strategy, look to the text in italics for more details.

Factors most often cited and the strategies to implement them are listed below:

A – Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods
1. Complete Streets
2. Connect Roadways
3. Master Plans
4. School Location

B – Create and Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan
1. Smart Growth
2. Transit Oriented Development
3. Mixed Use Neighborhoods
4. Integrate with Bike and Pedestrian Plan

C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Accessible Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces
1. Locate Parks and Facilities to Serve all Populations
2. Offer Park & Recreation programming
3. Allow Public Access to Multi-Use Facilities

D – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options
1. Invest in Public Transit
2. Ensure the Ability to Walk & Bike to School

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment
1. Park and Neighborhood Design
2. Vehicle Speed and Police Enforcement
3. Neighborhood Association
4. Construction and Maintenance

F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships
1. Advocacy
2. Communications
3. Neighborhood Involvement

While each of these factors influences the relative convenience and likelihood of active transportation, it is the combination of these factors that is most critical to encourage pedestrian and bicycle trips. Increasing the levels of housing density won't result in much change if the neighborhood isn't safe. Similarly, if the neighborhood doesn't have sidewalks or nearby destinations to walk to, travel by car will always be the first choice.   Planning for active community environments requires consideration of all these key factors in order to have the greatest impact.

Figure 5: Interconnected Factors
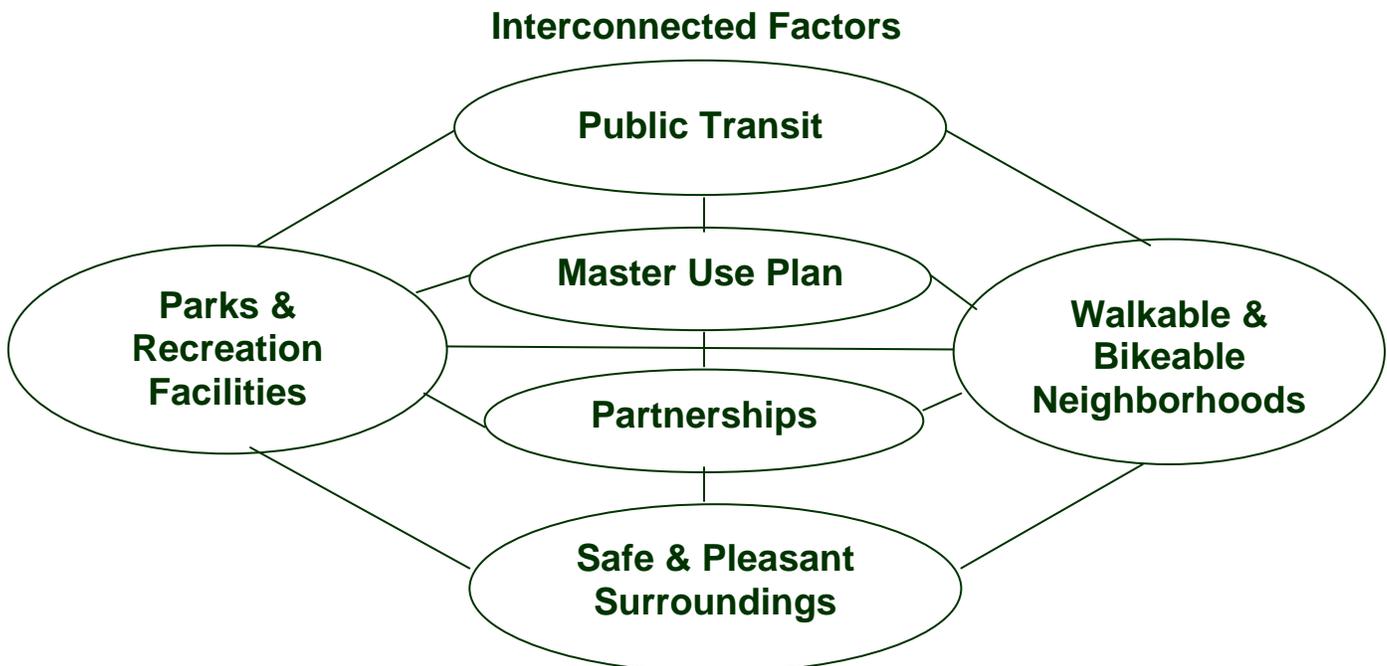
A- Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods

In most communities, walkable and bikeable neighborhoods don't just happen. Knowing what is needed for a "walkable" and "bikeable" community and who can influence those decisions is essential for making it happen. Here are key strategies for this component:

1. **Complete Streets**
2. **Connect Roadways**
3. **Master Plans**
4. **School Location**

1. Complete Streets

☐ **Implement complete streets policies** to provide for the safe and convenient travel of all users of the roadway, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, motorists, children, seniors, and people with disabilities. Complete streets is a regulatory strategy to ensure that all roads provide routine accommodation for all users, including bicyclists, transit users, and pedestrians of *all ages and abilities,* by including or enhancing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure during routine road maintenance and repair, new construction, and redesign. Comprehensive complete streets solutions include traffic-calming measures, such as:

- Requiring sidewalks in new development or widen existing sidewalks (5' wide and set back from the road),
- Creating and maintain bike lanes,
- Raising medians,
- Narrowing roadways to decrease car speed,
- Placing bus stops in a safe and convenient environment,
- Providing safe crosswalks (i.e. refuge medians, marked crosswalks, bulb outs, etc.)
- Creating and maintaining trails
- Providing accommodations for disabled travelers

The goal is to make alternative transportation choices (bicycling, walking, and public transit) more appealing and accessible.
For more information go to: *www.completestreets.org*

☐ **Conduct neighborhood assessments** to identify opportunities for and barriers to active living. For a walkability and bikeability assessment checklist, go to:
Walkability: http://www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf
Bikeability: http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/pdf/bikabilitychecklist.pdf
General: http://www.activelivingresearch.org/node/10616

☐ **Create and disseminate community-wide or neighborhood maps** of walking and biking routes.

2. Connect Roadways

☐ **Connect roadways** to complementary systems of trails and bicycle paths that provide safe places to walk and bicycle for children, seniors, and the general public.

☐ **Create trails, when possible**. Walking and bicycle paths, trails, and greenways that are separated from traffic will enable people, especially children and seniors, to walk or bicycle safely from one place to another.

☐ **Look for opportunities for Rails-to-Trails conversions.** Look to convert old railway lines into walking and biking trails. *Information and funding for Rails-to-Trails project can be found at: http://www.railstotrails.org/*

☐ **Provide safe connections to nearby community destinations** such as parks, schools, retail stores, and workplaces**.** These active transportation systems will result in more physical activity opportunities and trips.

3. **Master Plans (see Section B for more detailed information)**
  ☐ **Make traditional neighborhood development the standard** for residential areas. Align new streets and highways in a traditional grid pattern. This design offers more route choices, shortens the average trip distance, and reduces the speed of motor vehicles.
  ☐ **Encourage the adoption of pedestrian and bicycle plans,** which can be incorporated into city master plans and capital improvement programs. These plans will help increase trips by foot and bicycle by increasing transportation connections, options and safety. Examples of policies within plans:
    - Create **ordinances for new subdivisions** that require accommodations for walking and bicycling.
    - Use **traffic calming** measures to make walking and bicycling safer and more comfortable.
    - **Provide places for the disabled to travel** wherever pedestrians are permitted on the public right-of-way.
    - **Distribute transportation funds** to ensure that bicycling and walking friendly provisions are incorporated into new roads and are considered for retro fitting into existing roads.

4. **School Location**
  ☐ **Place schools in population dense areas**, if possible. Building or renovating schools in neighborhoods that are easy to walk or bike to will increase physical activity. If schools have to be built in less developed areas due to space or cost needs, provide trails or sidewalks to the school as an alternative transportation option. Consider
    - **Location:** Build schools within walking distance of the community population.
    - **Site Design:** Choose and develop bicycle and pedestrian-friendly school sites.
    - **Access:** Make it easy and safe for students to walk and bike to school.
    - **Multi-use Buildings:** Plan and manage schools as multipurpose community centers.
  ☐ **Encourage Safe Routes to School Programs.** As noted above, the location of schools affects the ability of students, parents, teachers, and administrators to walk or bicycle to school. If a school is in a walkable neighborhood, the development of a Safe Routes to School Program will increase the likelihood that students will walk or bike because of the safer and more structured opportunities that are provided. *Safe Routes to School (SRTS)* is a national effort (http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/) to ensure that children can walk and bicycle safely to school. F*or more Wisconsin information and resources to develop a Safe Routes to School program, go to: http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/aid/saferoutes.htm. For online descriptions and pictures of Safe Routes principles, go to: http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/index.cfm* Consider the following Safe Routes components and see the above websites for details:
    - **Engineering –** (ex: Control cars, designate school drop off zones for cars, speed bumps, etc.)
    - **Education –** (ex: Walkability checklist. What makes for a walkable route?)
    - **Evaluation** – (ex: participation counts, parent survey, etc.)
    - **Enforcement –** (ex: speed checks, crossing guards, etc.)
    - **Encouragement** – (ex: walking school buses, promotions, etc.)

B – Create and Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan

Land-use decisions have the potential to impact on public health.   A concept known as "Smart Growth" encourages community planning that will also enhance support for active living. Smart Growth controls urban sprawl, focuses on greater population density, and mixed use neighborhoods where residents are close to shopping, parks and commercial developments.

A master plan (also referred to as a city plan, comprehensive plan, or general plan) lays out how development occurs in a community. Policies contained in the master plan layout how renovations and new development take place and the parameters that decide how they are done. Having input on the master plan and incorporating healthy living concepts has the potential to have a widespread impact on the activity levels of citizens affected by the plan. Therefore, it's key that active living advocates have some way to influence the plan. Some possibilities include having active living community members on the planning commission or having partners such as the city planner who can represent the group's interest in any planning decisions.

The bottom line is that active living design considerations should address factors that people expect in order to be active. A 2005 list of the top five expectations about traditionally designed communities listed these items:
1. Allow kids to walk to school
2. Be safe for kids to play in neighborhood
3. Enable people to walk/bike to public transit
4. Enable people to walk/bike to shopping
5. Enable older adults to live independently
    (Handy, Sallis, et.al. J Am Planning Assoc, 2008)

Here are some of the planning strategies to meet those expectations:
1. **Smart Growth**
2. **Transit Oriented Development**
3. **Mixed Use Neighborhoods**
4. **Integrate with Bike and Pedestrian Plan**

1. <u>**Smart Growth**</u>
    Land use patterns that affect physical activity include population density, mixed-use development and site design. These factors affect travel choice in general, and the ability to walk and bike in a neighborhood. Some strategies for incorporating active living into smart growth discussions include:
    ☐ **Encourage compact community design** with a higher population density and a tighter mixture of activities that make it possible to work, play, shop and go to school within walking and bicycling distance of people's homes. By placing higher density housing near commercial centers, transit lines, parks, schools, and work sites, you reduce trip distances and increase the likelihood of walking and biking trips.
    ☐ **Mixed Use - Include provision for mixed use in area development.**
    Mixed-use areas promote physical activity because they locate residential buildings near retail stores, parks and other services industries. The close proximity encourages more pedestrian and bicycle trips.
    ☐ **Integrate health into smart growth considerations.**
    Smart growth concepts such as infill development; compact, transit oriented development; mixed-use buildings; and walkable, bikeable neighborhoods also encourage physical activity. These should be considered part of any master plan, neighborhood plans, and zoning decisions.

- ☐ **Establish the link between land use and transportation plans and priorities.** Approve local ordinances and other policies that are consistent with land use and transportation plans and that promote active living.
- ☐ **Consider the use of health impact assessments for development decisions.** A health impact assessment serves as a tool to evaluate the health impact of any development project or policy (e.g., general plan, school siting, etc.). Whether a health impact assessment is a general consideration step for plan approval or is a formal process is not as important as the fact that it is part of any decision. For more information on health impact assessments, go to:
  General Site for Health Impact Assessment Information:
  http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm

  Healthy Development Measurement Tool: This tool, created by San Francisco comprehensive evaluation metric to consider health needs in urban development plans and projects. http://www.thehdmt.org/

  Smart Growth: For more information, go to Smart Growth.org

2. **Transit Oriented Development**
   - ☐ **Consider multiple means of transit in development policies.**
     Development should accommodate and encourage multiple ways to travel within the development area. Some considerations that promote multimodal travel are:
     - **Consider "complete streets" in any development** plan, design or construction. Complete streets allow for transit choices and accommodate all users, including bicyclists, transit users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
     - **Develop around transit stops** (bus or rail). This encourages short walking or biking trips to use public transit to reach further destinations as well as access jobs, goods, and services that are near the public transit area.
   - ☐ **Street Network: align new streets and highways in a traditional grid pattern.** This design offers more route choices, shortens the average trip distance, and reduces the speed of motor vehicles. Design that increases connectivity and provides short trips to "destinations" such as retail stores and parks increases walking and biking trips.
   - ☐ **Create or update policies that affect funding**, street design and safety - all factors that increase active transportation. Specific examples of key policies would include:
     - **Require traditional neighborhood design** in new and subdivision development regulations.
     - **Require sidewalks** in new and subdivision regulations.

3. **Mixed Use Neighborhoods**
   - ☐ **Support mixed-use development.** Creating a mix of retail, housing, and transit improves walkability and bikeability by creating convenient locations within a short distance of where people live. Mixed-income housing will also provide access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities in traditionally underserved neighborhoods by providing close, convenient options.
   - ☐ **Promote focused development.** Concentrate commercial and retail development in town centers or in neighborhood locations at an appropriate scale to nearby residential housing.
   - ☐ **Establish enterprise zones** that enjoy favorable tax credits to attract businesses for mixed-use development.
   - ☐ **Support more population-dense housing** to increase potential pedestrian traffic to nearby destinations.

4. **Integrate with Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan**
   - ☐ **Develop a pedestrian and bicycle plan.** Local pedestrian and bicycle plans raise the visibility of alternative transportation methods and provide a way to incorporate the interests of pedestrians and bicyclists into community development discussions and decisions. By having a say in the community's master plan, consideration in given to connectivity of passages, accessibility, safety and other transportation issues relevant for pedestrians and bicyclists.
   - ☐ **Incorporate the pedestrian and bicycle plan into the community's master plan and capital improvement programs.** Once you have a pedestrian and bicycle plan, make sure it is incorporated with the community master plan so it's included in land use and funding decisions.
   - ☐ **Use your pedestrian and bicycle plan to advocate** the link between funding and regulations for active living environments that promote walking, bicycling, and public transit. Use the current issues of global warming and the price of gas to advocate for more alternative transportation options.

C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Accessible Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces

Parks, playgrounds, and open spaces provide opportunities for physical activity. However, the presence of facilities is not enough to make sure they are being used for the greatest benefit of all. Factors such as location, accessibility, programming, connectivity, safety and aesthetics all play in a role in the use of public facilities. Here are key factors for this component:
   1. **Locate Parks and Facilities to Serve all Populations**
   2. **Offer Park and Recreation Programming**
   3. **Allow Public Access to Multi-Use Facilities**

1. **Locate Parks and Facilities to Serve all Populations**
   - ☐ **Inventory facilities and parks** and make a resource guide available to the public.
   - ☐ **Site parks and recreation facilities in neighborhoods** so that most people can walk or bicycle to the facility.
   - ☐ **Create smaller, neighborhood parks** rather than large facilities that people have to drive to.
   - ☐ **Link parks, trails, and greenways to local destinations** of interest to ensure that walking and bicycling trips are as convenient as using a car. Create a network of walking and cycling trails that offer functional alternatives to automobile travel and opportunities for exercise, recreation, and community connectedness. Convert out-of-service rail corridors into trails.
   - ☐ **Establish parks in new subdivisions:** Include parks and playing fields in the plans for new subdivisions.
   - ☐ **Provide public transit to parks:** Encourage bus routes to access parks outside the city or neighborhood. Work with state transportation officials to secure funds for alternative transportation means to and through park and recreation facilities.
   - ☐ **Provide opportunities in underserved residential areas**.
   - ☐ **Work with community planners** to encourage urban redevelopment and infill as well as making sure new development provides connections between private and public lands and use.

2. <u>**Offer Park and Recreation Programming**</u>
   - ☐ **Offer active programming that encourages physical activity.** Parks and recreation programming (such as swimming, youth sports, etc.) will increase resident use. In addition to drawing more park users, a positive side effect will be a safer park due to the increased use and community ownership.
     - Develop strategies to increase physical activity levels for individuals currently utilizing parks and recreation resources in a passive way. Education & prompts (signage) help.
     - Install signage to highlight active transportation routes and places that support active living.
   - ☐ **Consider programming that links to other community initiatives.** Combine with or build off of other community initiatives, such as:
     - Programs
     - Media Campaigns
     - Resource Guides
     - Advocacy Efforts
     - Funding Requests
   - ☐ **Complete an assessment/audit** of your facility or park for "bikeability" and "walkability".

3. <u>**Allow Public Access to Multi Use Facilities**</u>
   - ☐ **Establish joint use agreements** that allow use of public schools and other facilities for recreation by the public. Examples would include community recreation programs using school facilities during off hours and schools using community parks and athletic facilities that they don't have on their campus.
   - ☐ **Develop public facilities with a broad audience in mind.** Construct school, senior centers and other facilities with a broader community use in mind. Look beyond school day use and develop in a way that will serve the recreation needs of a broad range of the community.

D – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options

Public transit options are dependent on a number of factors. Although many communities are too small for rail or bus transit options, that doesn't mean that they don't need to consider walking and biking as "public transit" and design options accordingly. Here are key strategies for this component:
   1. **Invest in Public Transit**
   2. **Ensure the Ability to Walk and Bike to Destinations**

1. <u>**Invest in Public Transit**</u>
   - ☐ **Inventory transit routes** and note their routes in relation to recreational facilities in the community.
   - ☐ **Provide funding** for infrastructure to support walking and biking.
     Enhancing America's Communities: A Guide to Transportation Enhancements
     The National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse's (NTEC) popular guidebook features information on federal and state Transportation Enhancement requirements, how to develop a project application, as well as 21 new case studies of TE projects that have successfully contributed to community revitalization.
     http://www.enhancements.org/misc/TEGuide2002.pdf
   - ☐ **Designate an assigned staff person** to be responsible for pedestrian and bicycle transportation.

- ☐ **Invest in public transit to provide affordable and reliable multimodal transportation** options for all neighborhoods. Multimodal transportation options increases activity levels.
- ☐ **Place transit stations within walking distance of population-dense areas** to provide the benefit of increased levels of daily walking along with decreased traffic congestion.
- ☐ **Create commuter choice or other workplace incentive programs** that promote the use of public transit, ridesharing and active forms of travel.

2. <u>**Ensure the Ability to Walk and Bike to Destinations**</u>
- ☐ **Locate schools within walking or biking distance** for many students will increase physical activity.
- ☐ **Promote formal and informal walking and biking programs.** Walking or biking to school builds a daily dose of physical activity into a student's day for about half the days of the year. Schools and parent organizations can help make that happen through formal (Safe Routes to School) or less formal (Walking School Bus) programs.
- ☐ **Encourage alternative transportation that involved walking or biking to work.**
- ☐ **Place public transit stations in key locations**. By increasing the availability of high quality transit service within walking distance of residential, work and shopping areas, you will also increase daily trips on foot.

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment

Although there is not as much evidence on the effect safety and aesthetics have on physical activity levels, it has been shown to be a factor. Steps to make the walking and biking environment safer and more attractive will have an impact on activity levels. Listed below are some strategies for this component.

1. **Park and Neighborhood Design**
2. **Vehicle Speed and Police Enforcement**
3. **Neighborhood Association**
4. **Construction and Maintenance**

1. <u>**Park and Neighborhood Design**</u>
- ☐ **Design parks, trails, and greenways to deter crime and enhance safety.** Areas that are clean, well lit and are policed on a regular basis will attract more users. More users will lead to safer environments as residents "self-police" the areas they are regularly using. Parents are more likely to allow their children to bicycle and walk in the neighborhood if they perceive it to be safe. In addition, greater pedestrian and bike traffic makes driver's more aware of these forms of transportation so they drive more carefully as a result.
- ☐ **Create or update community-gathering places** as additional "destinations" and to help create a safe, walking environment.
- ☐ **Create pleasant neighborhood settings.** Site design impacts travel patterns in much the same way as street design. Building design, orientation, and setback, along with other aesthetic considerations, will create environments that are either attractive or unattractive for non-motorized travel. Consider equipment safety, placement of benches, lighting and bike racks when designing public recreation spaces.

2. <u>**Vehicle Speed and Police Enforcement**</u>
- ☐ **Control Vehicle Speeds.** Control the speed of cars and other traffic in neighborhoods, around schools, and in commercial areas.
- ☐ **Enforce existing laws.** Improve policing and enforcement to help control speed of cars and stop crime. Use neighborhood watch programs to augment police efforts.

3. **Neighborhood Association**
   - ☐ **Design neighborhoods to be safe and aesthetically pleasing** to bring people together, encourage physical activity and decrease crime.
   - ☐ **Start neighborhood watch and safety walks** to create safe communities.
   - ☐ **Use the Neighborhood Association as a major advocate** for active living policies that affect the area.

4. **Construction & Maintenance**
   - ☐ **Ensure sufficient funding** to do regular maintenance, when required.
   - ☐ **Require sidewalks and cross walks** in new construction and considered in updates to existing roads
     - 5' wide sidewalks
     - Buffer strip between the road and sidewalk
   - ☐ **Maintain sidewalks and crosswalks** so that they are safe for year-round use.
     - Debris, leaf and snow removal is required or done by local government
     - Repairs are required or done by local government

F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships

Partnerships are key for changing the built environment because most communities don't have resources specifically dedicated to this purpose. As a result, unique partnerships have to be developed so that a variety of groups and organizations are working towards this effort. Listed below are key factors for this component.

1. **Advocacy**
2. **Communications**
3. **Neighborhood Involvement**

1. **Advocacy**
   - ☐ **Develop and maintain an active living partnership**, coalition, task force or advisory board.
   - ☐ **Form new partnerships or use existing partners in key positions to advocate for active living environments.** Key partners would include local elected officials, city and regional planners, health department officials, school personnel and others with local interest. The broader the group, the greater voice they will have in policy development.
   - ☐ **Sit on local planning committees** or make sure a key partner is on the committee to advocate for active community environments.
   - ☐ **Incorporate healthy community development.** Make sure health considerations are part of the discussion when making decisions about community development. Look at current master plans, ordinances and design guidelines to see how they affect active living.

2. **Communications**
   - ☐ **Collaborate with local organizations** to utilize their communications channels (e.g. newsletters, bulletin boards, websites and list serves) to promote active living. This increases your visibility and creates a greater buy-in to the partnership.
   - ☐ **Develop active living messages** and an awareness campaign based on targeted community research (focus groups, surveys, and testing).
   - ☐ **Become a resource for the media and community** on active living issues.

3. **Neighborhood Involvement**
   - ☐ **Start with neighborhood scale change,** which is sometimes easier because it's on a more limited scope. If the master plan already allows for better neighborhood design, start there for a more manageable and immediate impact.
   - ☐ **Conduct neighborhood assessments** to identify opportunities for and barriers to active living. *For a walkability and bikeability assessment checklist, go to:*
     Walkability: http://www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf
     Bikeability: http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/pdf/bikabilitychecklist.pdf
     General: http://www.activelivingresearch.org/node/10616

Acknowledgments and Key Resource Links:
Healthy Eating Active Living Convergence Partnership Resources:
   - ☐ Strategies for Enhancing the Built Environment to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living
   - ☐ Promising Strategies for Creating Healthy Eating and Active Living Environments

Prevention Institute http://www.preventioninstitute.org/nutrition.html
Active Living by Design http://www.activelivingbydesign.org/
Washington State http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/NutritionPA/our_communities/default.htm
North Carolina ACEs: http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/ACEs/ACEs.html

STEP 5 - MAKING DECISIONS

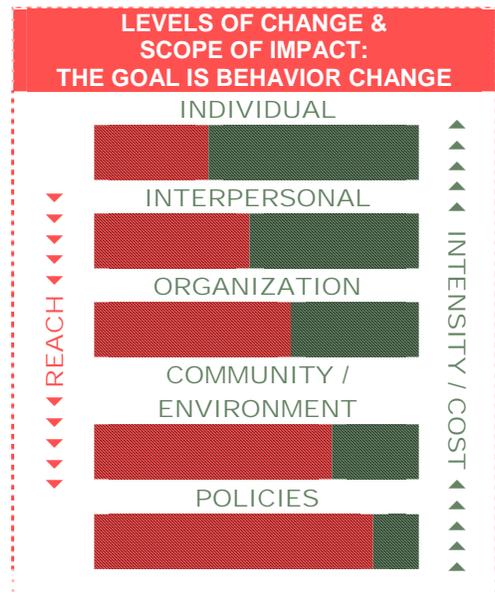## STEP 5: MAKING DECISIONS - WHERE TO FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS?

Now that you have completed the analysis of the community assessment checklist, community data and any community survey or other assessment information (Step 3) and looked at the array of strategies to be considered (Step 4), it's now time to narrow your focus. This can be a very simple process or can be done in a very structured manner – it's up to you.

Listed in the strategies section (Step Four) were a number of policy or environmental changes that you could make. You should use the planning tools in this section to determine which changes you want to make first. Think about addressing some of the easy changes first to get a taste of success and show that your efforts are working. As your ACEs initiative further develops, you can always tackle some of the more difficult issues.

Impact of Environmental and Policy Changes
Unlike trying to impact change at an individual level, environmental and policy changes have the ability to impact large groups of people and will likely provide the most "bang for the buck." The diagram illustrates why changes in the environment or changes in policy are so important.

What the diagram to the right illustrates is that initiatives that target individual behavior change take a great deal of resources and impact only one person at a time. Policy and higher level initiatives targeting communities and organizations have a much greater potential impact. Although your strategies should address as many levels as possible, it's also important to focus on areas where the greatest potential benefit could occur.

LEVELS OF CHANGE & SCOPE OF IMPACT: THE GOAL IS BEHAVIOR CHANGE

INDIVIDUAL
INTERPERSONAL
ORGANIZATION
COMMUNITY / ENVIRONMENT
POLICIES

REACH

INTENSITY / COST

Where to Start
Start with the ACEs Assessment Checklist (Appendix B) that you completed in Step 3. Do a "first cut" by looking at the strategies that you scored and determine ones that are potential priorities to improve or implement as new strategies. Now take what other information you've learned from the existing community data to see if there are some logical areas to focus on because of existing progress or available resources. Finally, if you have additional formative assessment information from surveys or interviews, use those sources as additional background in making your decisions.

At this point you might be able to decide where to focus your efforts. However, an additional step can help you decide where you'll get the most "bang for the buck". By considering factors such as importance, cost, time, effort and reach or number of residents likely to be affected by any changes, you can place a defined point value on each strategy and compare the relative value of implementing each strategy. This may be helpful in coming up with a manageable number of strategies. To summarize, the key steps at this point are listed in the box on the next page. An explanation of this recommendation scoring table is found later in this section and a blank form can be found in Appendix D.

Key Steps
Review Your Assessment Checklist
↓
Identify Potential Priority Strategies
↓
Check Your Existing Local Data to See if the Potential Priority Items
↓
Consider Other Data You've Collected to See If Residents' Interests and Habits are Consistent with Your Priorities
↓
Quantify & Compare Priority Strategies by Using the Recommendation Scoring Table
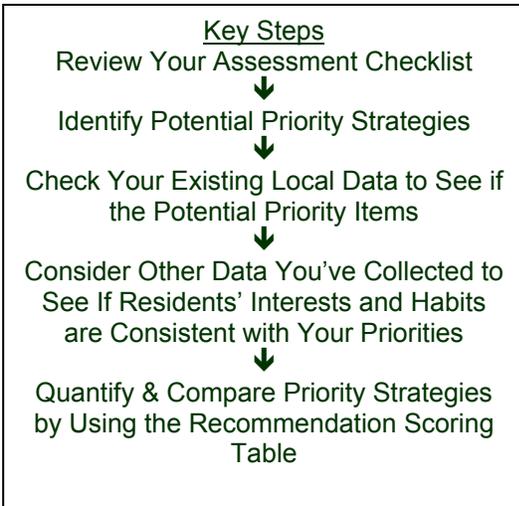
Developing Your ACEs Initiative Plan

One way to develop your ACEs plan is to take your Active Community Environment Assessment checklist and evaluate the areas where no policy or program exists or areas where some policy or program exists, but can be improved. For each of these items, ask the following questions:

- ❖ How important is the item?
- ❖ How much will it cost to implement the item?
- ❖ How much time and effort would be needed to implement the item?
- ❖ How great is the potential "reach" or how many people may be affected.
- ❖ How well does the item match community interests and other relevant data? Use the survey results to help answer this question.

You should also "package" your activities whenever possible so that they build off of each other, rather than pick a set of unrelated activities that are not connected. By providing the right mix of strategies, you can get a multiplier effect that is greater than the effect of adding up individual activities. "Packaging" related strategies will lead to greater participation and long term success. For instance, having a policy that encourages Safe Routes to School coupled with buy-in and enforcement of the speed limit by police in school zones will lead to greater success.

NARROWING THE SCOPE

RECOMMENDATIONS – NARROWING THE SCOPE

By looking at your current inventory of strategies, you should be able to see the gaps in areas where there are additional strategies that could be implemented. By identifying those gaps and comparing them with the identified community needs, you should be able to match high priority gaps with high priority needs. Finally, by answering questions about the importance, cost, time, effort and potential number of people that will be reached by your program strategies, you will be ready to select what will be included in your wellness initiative. A model to walk you through this process is included later in this chapter in the form of a Recommendation Table.

You can use the Recommendation Table below to help narrow the scope of your ACEs initiative. Once you've identified possible areas to focus on, asking the questions about importance, cost, time, effort and reach should get you to a very specific set of activities to implement.

RECOMMENDATION TABLE - SAMPLE						

Instructions: Rate each of the recommendations identified in the ACEs Assessment Checklist on the following aspects: importance, cost, time and commitment. Rate each on a scale of 1-5 (low-high) using the chart below. Higher scores should indicate priority items to implement.

Importance	How important is the recommendation? **1** = Not at all important **3** = Somewhat important **5** = Very important
Cost	How expensive would it be to plan and implement the recommendation? **1** = Very expensive **3** = Moderately expensive **5** = Not expensive
Time	How much time and effort would be needed to implement the recommendation? **1** = Extensive time & effort **3** = Moderate time & effort **5** = Low time & effort
Commitment	How enthusiastic would people be about implementing the recommendation? **1** = Not enthusiastic **3** = Moderately enthusiastic **5** = Very enthusiastic
Reach	How many people will likely be affected by this recommendation? **1** = Very few people **3** = Some people **5** = Most or all people

Item #	Recommendations	Importance	Cost	Time	Commitment	Reach	Points / Ranking
A3.1	Adopt an official plan for improving non-motorized transportation, including a timetable and a budget or a multimodal transportation plan	5	4	4	5	5	23
B2.4	Require new residential areas to have sidewalks.	4	2	3	4	4	17
C1.1	Complete an inventory of physical activity facilities and/or opportunities in the community and make it available to the public.	4	4	4	4	4	20
D1.8	Create a public transportation bus system for regular commuting that is both frequent enough and serves many destinations?	4	1	2	4	4	15
E2.7	Work with law enforcement on enforcing traffic regulations requiring cars to yield to pedestrians at crosswalks.	3	4	4	4	4	19
F1.3	Place an ACEs advocate on a municipal board or committees dealing with land use and transportation decisions?	5	5	4	5	5	24

(A blank Recommendation Table can be found in Appendix D)

What can you do with this information? – Some examples.
If you have limited resources and can't implement all of your community's recommendations, you should look at total score and category scores to help select priorities. The policy items (A3.1 & F1.3) have low cost and great reach so they might be the items to implement first. On the other end of the spectrum, a bus system (D1.8) might be problematic because of the ridership volume needed to support the cost and time necessary to develop a system for a smaller community. **Be realistic!**

Limit your initial set of activities so you can focus your efforts and have some early successes. You can always expand your initiative as it matures, but a realistic set of objectives to begin with will require fewer resources and will keep you from being overwhelmed.

PLANNING WORKSHEET

PLANNING WORKSHEET

Once you've decided on your priorities, you should develop a specific plan to implement the programming you've selected. The plan would include:
- ❖ The overall goals and objectives of your ACEs initiative.
- ❖ Specific recommendations on strategies to implement. These need to be clearly stated and measurable or your evaluation won't be meaningful;
- ❖ The chosen activities;
- ❖ The staff, resources and materials needed to make it happen;
- ❖ The time frame for completion;
- ❖ The evaluation plan to measure results.

The plan can also be used as part of a presentation to give to interested groups, potential funders or local government to sell them on your ACEs initiative and get buy-in for the specific strategies and activities you plan to implement. A sample planning worksheet is shown below.

PLANNING WORKSHEET - SAMPLE

Recommendations	Describe the strategies selected from the Recommendation Table
Activities	List the activities required to meet the recommendation
Materials, Resources and Personnel	List the individuals who will do the work; and the resources and tools they need to get the job done.
Time Frame	When will implementation begin? How long will it take to finish?
Evaluation	How will you measure your successes and/or misfortunes?

Recommendations: Strategies to Implement	Activities	Materials, Resources & Personnel	Time Frame	Evaluation Method
Develop a Local Complete Streets Policy	- Meet with local planners - Convince council member to introduce the policy	Draft policy language (Jim Jones)	6 months May-November	Policy in place
Implement a Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program in 2 schools	- Identify 2 schools - Get Principal buy-in - Find school champion - Complete SR2S planning - Implement kick-off event	*Sample* (Mary Smith)	6 months Oct - April	- SR2S program in place - Pre/post count of # of kids walking to school
Convert downtown railroad track into a trail	- Research cost & logistics - Pass City Council motion with funding - Build trail	(City Planner & Public Works)	18 months January 2009 – July 2010	- Trail done - # of users

(A blank Planning Worksheet can be found in Appendix E)

The purpose of the planning worksheet is to keep the initiative on track and clearly assign responsibilities. Part of ongoing partner meetings should be a review of the plan items to check their status and make any necessary modifications. The initiative will have a better chance for success by clearly assigning tasks and deadlines for completion.

| Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Step 5 | Step 6 |
| Why? ⇨ | Starting Up ⇨ | Assessing ⇨ | Strategies ⇨ | **Making Decisions** ⇨ | Evaluation |

25

STEP 6 - EVALUATION

STEP 6: EVALUATING MY INITIATIVE: IS IT DOING ANY GOOD?

At the beginning of this resource kit we listed reasons for having a Active Community Environments (ACEs) initiative. That list included higher physical activity levels, better physical health, a decreased number of chronic diseases and reduced health care costs. In setting up your ACEs initiative, you need to also think about how you are going to evaluate your initiative. Evaluation will provide you with information to modify your initiative to better meet your community's needs and to measure whether you are making any impact on behaviors and health indicators as a result of your initiative. Start thinking about evaluation measures as you do your initial assessment . Consider how you would measure results as you narrow your focus to specific initiative strategies based on your review of the 79 questions in the assessment checklist. Although you don't have to evaluate every aspect of your ACEs initiative, you do want to have some specific evaluation measures clearly defined so you can figure out if you initiative is making a difference.

Types of Evaluation

You can measure process and you can measure outcome (or impact). Both are important and should be used. Process indicators will be easier to measure and will give you quicker feedback on how well your initiative is being accepted and used by members of the community. Examples of process measures are:

❖ Number of citizens enrolled and participating (participation rates) in community events or programs.
❖ Web site hits.
❖ Observation or counts (ex. track number walking or biking on a trail)
❖ Participant satisfaction (via survey, focus groups, interviews, stakeholder survey, etc.)
❖ Number of new developments with sidewalks or existing neighborhoods that are retrofitted with sidewalks.
❖ Number of miles of new trails.
❖ Number of miles of roads with bike lanes.
❖ Other policy or environmental changes/tracking (compare list of policy or environmental changes from initial site assessment using the ACEs Assessment Checklist with later follow-up at 1 year, 2 years, etc.)
❖ Bus or mass transit ridership
❖ Number of schools with walk-to-school or Safe Routes programs.
❖ Number of students participating in walk-to-school or Safe Routes programs.
❖ Population density and mixed land use neighborhoods
❖ Park acres per capita.

Outcome evaluation can be more difficult and takes longer to show up in your data. However, outcome measures provide you with data on your ultimate goal: more active and healthier citizens. Examples of outcome measures are:

❖ Use of community survey data already collected (see Step 3 for existing data sources) tracked across multiple years.
❖ Pre/Post community surveys specific to your initiative – Can measure changes in attitude, knowledge and current physical activity and mental health status from an initial assessment to completion of a specified program or campaign
❖ Health Indicators / reduced risk factors.

Outcome or impact evaluation needs to clearly identify the marker being addressed and have the baseline data for comparison to determine the impact or outcome. One example would be to compare last year's self-reported physical activity levels with the level after the ACEs initiative is in place.

Illustrated below is a sample evaluation scorecard to illustrate one way to quantify your results for both process and outcome measures.

SAMPLE EVALUATION TOOL & MEASURES			
SAMPLE PROCESS OBJECTIVES	2008	2009	Change
Number of people enrolled and participating (participation rates).	200	220	↑10%
Active Community web site hits	10,620	22,000	↑ 107%
Observation or counts (ex. track number using a trail)	60	75	↑ 25%
Participant satisfaction (via survey, focus groups, interviews, stakeholder survey, etc.)	72%	80%	↑ 8%
Policy or environmental changes/tracking (Use the ACEs Assessment Checklist and compare the list of policy or environmental changes from initial site assessment with later follow-up at 1 year, 2 years, etc.)	10 in place	15 in place	↑ 50%
SAMPLE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES	2005	2006	Change
Pre/Post test surveys – Can measure changes in attitude, knowledge and current eating, physical activity and mental health status from an initial assessment to completion of a specified program or campaign.	Average score = 65	Average score = 80	↑ 15%
Vending items being chosen in public food settings i.e. parks, recreation facilities, etc. (arrange with vendor to track selections)	25% Healthy choice	35% Healthy choice	↑ 10%
Cafeteria menu options in public food settings i.e. parks, recreation facilities, etc.	35% Healthy choice	40% Healthy choice	↑ 5%
Health Indicators / reduced risk factors. Comparison of community aggregate screening measures such as blood pressure, cholesterol, body weight, BMI, etc. As an alternative, use any available self-reported data.	BP =140/100 Chol = 225 BMI = 30%	BP = 130/90 Chol = 212 BMI = 29%	↓ BP ↓ 6% ↓ 1%

No matter what or how you do evaluation, you should have some type of "scorecard" to regularly evaluate results.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Planning Resources
- ❖ **Asset Mapping**
- ❖ **Long-range Strategic Planning**
- ❖ **Intervention Action Planning**
- ❖ **Smart Growth**

Appendix B: Active Community Environment Assessment Checklist (blank sample)

Appendix C: Active Environment Survey (sample questions)

Appendix D: Recommendation Table (blank sample)

Appendix E: Planning Worksheet (blank sample)

APPENDIX A - PLANNING RESOURCES

There are many planning tools available if you want additional information about what to consider as you are planning your ACEs initiative. Appendix A provides you with additional information in four areas:

- ☐ Asset Mapping
- ☐ Long-term Strategic Plan
- ☐ Intervention Action Plan
- ☐ Smart Growth Principles

Asset Mapping

Asset Mapping is the process of cataloging the resources of a community. Asset mapping can serve a number of purposes:

1. Identify possible resources
2. Provide a foundation for strategic planning and implementation
3. Deepen understanding of key regional systems and linkages
4. Become a catalyst for new partnerships
5. Be an organizational and motivational tool for implementation

Go to http://dhs.wi.gov/health/physicalactivity/Sites/Community/AssetMapping for a detailed explanation and tools to do asset mapping.

Long-term Strategic Plan

A strategic plan provides overall direction for accomplishing a goal or set of goals over a period of several years. It is used to help a coalition or group focus its resources and energy, to ensure that members of the coalition are working toward the same goals, and to assess and adjust the coalition's direction in response to a changing environment.

Go to http://dhs.wi.gov/health/physicalactivity/sites/Community/StrategicPlan.htm
for a detailed explanation and tools to do strategic planning.

Intervention Action Plan

An intervention action plan utilizes a step-wise process for the development of an intervention or initiative. The plan, at a minimum, should contain the following components:

1. Expected outcomes (health outcomes and behaviors) of the target audience;
2. Evidence that the intervention design decisions can be linked to knowledge and understanding of the target audience; accomplished through the social marketing planning approach (includes a formative assessment component)
3. Clearly stated and measurable goals and objectives;
4. Components that specifically address environment and policy change;
5. Defined implementation strategies (including where, when, and how) that utilized the best available evidence and that accomplish the intervention's defined goals and objectives; and
6. Defined evaluation design and methodology.

Go to http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/Sites/Community/InterventionPlan.htm
for a detailed explanation and tools to do intervention planning.

Smart Growth Principles
Listed below are smart growth resources that might be helpful in the planning and implementation steps of your initiative. **Smart Growth Online http://www.smartgrowth.org/**
Smart Growth Scorecard (Colorado) – A Community Self-Assessment Scorecard
http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/scorecards/Colorado_Scorecard.pdf

Smart Growth Principles:
100 Policies for Implementation - 10 per principle
1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. **Create walkable neighborhoods (See detailed description below)**
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
8. **Provide a variety of transportation choices (See detailed description below)**
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions
From Getting to Smart Growth–100 policies for Implementation http://www.smartgrowth.org/pdf/gettosg.pdf

Here are two specific examples related to ACEs:
Chapter 4 – Create Walkable Communities (pages 25-32)
1. Provide grants or other financial assistance to local communities to retrofit existing streets and sidewalks to promote more walkable communities
2. Concentrate critical services near homes, jobs, and transit.
3. Require building design that makes commercial areas more walkable.
4. Adopt design standards for streets that ensure safety and mobility for pedestrian and nonmotorized modes of transport.
5. Adopt design standards for sidewalks.
6. Require traffic-calming techniques where traffic speed through residential and urban neighborhoods is excessive.
7. Beautify and maintain existing and future walkways.
8. Provide Americans with disabilities easy access to sidewalks, streets, parks, and other public and private services.
9. Connect walkways, parking lots, greenways, and developments.
10. Identify economic opportunities that stimulate pedestrian activity.

Chapter 8 - Provide a Variety of Transportation Options (pages 61-68)
1. Finance and provide incentives for multimodal transportation systems that include supportive land use and development.
2. Modify roadway level-of-service standards in areas served by transit.
3. Plan and permit road networks of neighborhood-scaled streets (generally two or four lanes) with high levels of connectivity and short blocks.
4. Connect transportation modes to one another.
5. Zone for concentrated activity centers around transit service.
6. Require sidewalks in all new developments.
7. Address parking needs and opportunities.
8. Collaborate with employers and provide information and incentives for programs to minimize or decrease rush-hour congestion impacts.
9. Adjust existing transit services to take full advantage of transit-supportive neighborhoods and developments.
10. Cluster freight facilities near ports, airports, and rail terminals.

APPENDIX B -
ACEs ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Factors most often cited and the strategies to implement them are listed below:

A – Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods
1. Complete Streets
2. Connect Roadways
3. Master Plans
4. School Location

B – Create and Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan
1. Smart Growth
2. Transit Oriented Development
3. Mixed Use Neighborhoods
4. Integrate with Bike and Pedestrian Plan

C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Accessible Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces
1. Locate Parks and Facilities to Serve all Populations
2. Offer Park and Recreation programming
3. Allow Public Access to Multi-Use Facilities

D – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options
1. Invest in Public Transit
2. Ensure the Ability to Walk and Bike to School

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment
1. Park and Neighborhood Design
2. Vehicle Speed and Police Enforcement
3. Neighborhood Association
4. Construction and Maintenance

F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships
1. Advocacy
2. Communications
3. Neighborhood Involvement

A - Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods

Walkable and bikeable communities are key in building activity into the daily routine of people in the community. As lack of time continues to be a major factor in people's lives, the more you can incorporate physical activity into their lifestyle, the more likely people are to meet the daily-recommended activity levels.

A - Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods	Points	Potential Priority
5. <u>Complete Streets</u> **A 1.1** Do you have a "complete streets" policy to provide for the safe and convenient travel of all users of the roadway, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, motorists, children, seniors, and people with disabilities. *Complete streets is a regulatory strategy to ensure that all roads provide routine accommodation for all users, including bicyclists, transit users, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, by including or enhancing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure during routine road maintenance and repair, new construction, and redesign.* Comprehensive complete streets solutions include traffic-calming measures, such as: ☐ Having sidewalks or widening existing sidewalks (5' wide and set back from the road) ☐ Bike lanes ☐ Raised medians ☐ Narrowing roadways ☐ Safe crosswalks (i.e. refuge medians, marked crosswalks, bulb outs, etc.) ☐ Placing bus stops in a safe and convenient environment ☐ Accommodations for disabled travelers **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
Are local or neighborhood walking or biking maps available? **A 1.2** Walking maps **A 1.3** Biking maps **No (0 pts), Some neighborhoods (1 pt), Most neighborhoods (2 pts), Community-wide (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3** **0 1 2 3**	☐ ☐
6. <u>Connect Roadways</u> **A 2.1** Are multi-use recreational trails available? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
A 2.2 Have abandoned railroad beds or utility corridors (where present) been converted to walking/bicycling trails or are they being considered for conversion to walking/bicycling trails? **No (0 pts), Considered for conversion (1 pt), Have been converted (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐

A 2.3 Is there a comprehensive system of routes connecting residential areas with shopping, dining, parks, entertainment areas and other "destinations"? For walkers and wheelchair users (sidewalks or greenways) **No (0 pts), Partial system (1 pt), Yes, full system (2 pts)**	**0 1 2** ☐
A 2.4 For bicyclists (bike lanes, wide outside lanes, wide shoulders or greenways) **No (0 pts), Partial system (1 pt), Yes, full system (2 pts)**	**0 1 2** ☐
7. **Master Plans** **A 3.1** Has the governing body adopted an official plan for improving non-motorized transportation, including a timetable and a budget or a multimodal transportation plan? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1** ☐
A 3.2 If so, is the plan being followed? Have some elements of the plan been implemented or are there contracts in place for implementation? 8. **No (0 pts), Somewhat (1 pt), Mostly (2 pts), Yes, fully (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3** ☐
9. **School Location** **A 4.1** Have schools conducted studies to determine if children can walk or bike safely to school? **No schools (0 pts), Some schools (1 pt), All schools (2 pts)**	**0 1 2** ☐
A 4.2 Are Elementary schools encouraging students to walk or bike to school? **No schools (0 pts), Some schools (1 pt), All schools (2 pts)**	**0 1 2** ☐
A 4.3 Are Middle schools encouraging students to walk or bike to school? **No schools (0 pts), Some schools (1 pt), All schools (2 pts)**	**0 1 2** ☐
A 4.4 Are High schools encouraging students to walk or bike to school? **No schools (0 pts), Some schools (1 pt), All schools (2 pts)**	**0 1 2** ☐
Total Points Section A: Walkable and bikeable neighborhoods (27 pts possible)	

B – Create And Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan

Land-use decisions have the potential to impact on public health.   A concept known as "Smart Growth" encourages community planning that will also enhance support for active living. Smart Growth controls urban sprawl, focuses on greater population density, and mixed use neighborhoods where residents are close to shopping, parks and commercial developments.

B – Create And Maintain a Master Land-Use Development Plan	Points	Potential Priority
2. Smart Growth **B 1.1** Is there a "smart growth" policy in place? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 or 2**	☐
B 1.2 Do zoning regulations encourage compact community design with a higher population density and a tighter mixture of activities. **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 or 2**	☐
3. Transit Oriented Development **B 2.1** When roads are built or repaired, are designated bicycle facilities (bike lanes, wide outside lanes, or wide shoulders) included where possible? **No (0 pts), Somewhat (1 pt), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
B 2.2 Is there a program to improve pedestrian access to transit? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
B 2.3 Are public buildings required to have bike racks or bike storage facilities? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), All (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
B 2.4 Are new residential areas required to have sidewalks? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
If yes, indicate the type of sidewalk requirement: **One side only (1 pt), Both sides of the street (2 pts)**	**NA 1 2**	☐
4. Mixed Use Neighborhoods **B 3.1** Do zoning regulations encourage mixed land use, with placement of retail establishments and community services within walking distance of residential areas? **No (0 pts), Yes, but within designated areas only (1 pt), Yes, within the entire planning jurisdiction (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
5. Integrate with Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan **B 4.1** Is there a plan in place for increasing opportunities for physical activity in the community such as a Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan, a Greenway Plan, a Parks & Recreation Plan, an Open Space Plan, etc.? **No (0 pts), Bicycle plan (1 pt), Pedestrian plan (1 pt), Greenway plan (1 pt)** **Other—please specify. (1 point each):** _____	**0 1 2** **+ ___**	☐
Total Points Section B: Master Planning **(19 pts possible + "other" points)**		

C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Accessible Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces

Parks, playgrounds, and open spaces provide opportunities for physical activity. However, the presence of facilities is not enough to make sure they are being used for the greatest benefit of all. Factors such as location, accessibility, programming, connectivity, safety and aesthetics all play in a role in the use of public facilities.

C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Accessible Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces	Points	Potential Priority
4. Locate Parks and Facilities to Serve all Populations **C 1.1** Has an inventory of physical activity facilities and/or opportunities been compiled for the community and is it available to the public? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt), Specify by whom** _____	**0 or 1**	☐
C 1.2 Of the exercise and recreation facilities available in your community, how many are accessible by walking, cycling, or rolling (wheelchair, scooter, etc.)? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), All (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
C 1.3 Of the exercise and recreation facilities available in your community, how many have bike racks or bike storage lockers? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), All (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
C 1.4 Do new subdivisions or housing developments require inclusion of recreational and/or open space? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
C 1.5 Is there public transit (bus or other mass transit) to parks and recreation facilities? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), All (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
C 1.6 Is park space evenly distributed through all neighborhoods, or are some areas underserved? **Wide disparity in distribution (0 pts), Somewhat evenly distributed (1 pt), Evenly distributed (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
C 1.7 In the community's current operating budget, are tax dollars allocated for parks and recreation facilities and activities, demonstrating a commitment to community recreation? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pts)** Amount allocated per person in community (Total allocation, including staff, facilities, and programs: $ _____ / _____Population of community **<$3/person (0 pts) $3-$50/person (1 pt), $51-$100 (2 pts), >$100/person (3 pts)**	**0 or 2** **0 1 2 3**	☐ ☐

C 1.8 Which of the following exercise and recreation facilities are available to the public?

	No (0 pts)	one (1 pt)	> one (2 pts)	Points	Potential Priority
Public Swimming Pool					
Indoor gymnasium				**0 1 2**	☐
Weight training/Aerobic Facility				**0 1 2**	☐
Local YMCA/YWCA				**0 1 2**	☐

	Trails/Greenways				**0 1 2**	☐
	Skateboard park				**0 1 2**	☐
	Roller skating/In-line skating rink				**0 1 2**	☐
	Community ice-skating rink				**0 1 2**	☐
	Other (please list): _____ _____				**0 1 2**	☐

5.	**Offer Park & Recreation Programming** Does the Community Education program or the community's Parks and Recreation Department offer classes and programs that provide opportunities for physical activity for: **C 2.1** School age children? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
	C 2.2 Adults? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
	C 2.3 Senior Citizens? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
	C 2.4 Are sports leagues available for children (over and above school athletic programs)? **No (0 pts), Available for a fee (1 pt), Available regardless of ability to pay (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
	C 2.5 Are Sports leagues available for adults? **No (0 pts), Available for a fee (1 pt), Available regardless of ability to pay (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
	C 2.6 Do senior citizen centers offer exercise programs on an ongoing basis? **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
	C 2.7 Does the community sponsor public walks, biking events, or other events that promote physical activity? **No (0 pts) One a year (1 pt) Two a year (2 pts) Three or more a year (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
	C 2.8 Has the community done "bikeability" and "walkability" audits for any community neighborhoods. **No (0 pts), A few (1 pt), Many (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
6.	**Allow Public Access to Multi Use Facilities** **C 3.1** Are outdoor school physical activity facilities (track, tennis courts, basketball courts, etc.) accessible to the public after school and during weekend hours? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most (2 pts), All (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
	C 3.2 Are indoor school physical activity facilities (gymnasium, pool, basketball courts, etc.) accessible to the public after school and during weekend hours? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most (2 pts), All (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
	C 3.3 Do shopping malls and strip malls have safe approaches for pedestrians and cyclists? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most or all (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
	C 3.4 Are shopping malls or other indoor community facilities open for community walkers? **No or NA (0 pts), Sometimes (1 pt), Most or all of the time (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
	Total Points Section C: Parks and Recreation Facilities **(54 pts possible)**		

D – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options

Public transit can increase physical activity levels in various ways. Walking and biking to the transit stop and decreasing car traffic allowing for more room for travel by bicycle are among the advantages to providing public transit options.

D – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options	Points	Potential Priority
3. Invest in Public Transit **D 1.1** Has the community mapped transit routes and their proximity to recreational facilities? **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
D 1.2 Has the community's governing body (e.g. city council, town board, etc.) assigned a staff person to be responsible for pedestrian and bicycle transportation? **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (2 pt) If yes, list the name _____**	**0 or 1**	☐
D 1.3 Does the community's operating budget include funding for non-motorized transportation facilities and activities? (This would include money for any improvements that would make walking and biking easier and safer.) **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)** Amount allocated per person in community (Total allocation, including staff, facilities, and programs: $ _____ / _____ Population of community **<$0/person (0 pts) $.01-$3/person (1 pt), $3-$6 (2 pts), >$6/person (3 pts)**	**0 or 2** **0 1 2 3**	☐ ☐
D 1.4 In the past 2 years has the community shown a commitment to creating opportunities for physical activity by passing bonds, levying taxes, or obtaining grants to finance trails, recreation facilities, sports complexes, sidewalks, bikeways, and/or greenways? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
D 1.5 Does the community work to reduce traffic congestion by actively facilitating ride sharing or car pooling for frequently used commuter routes (e.g., constructing commuter lots, creating ride share bulletin boards or ride share web pages)? **No (0 pts), Somewhat (1 pt), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
D 1.6 In designing the public transportation system, was the presence of sidewalks and safe walking connections a consideration in choosing transit stops? **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
D 1.7 Does the community have a system of public transportation? (For a small town, this could consist of a "Dial-A-Ride"-type program or a medical transportation system.) **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
If yes to D 1.7: **D 1.8** Is the public transportation system a realistic option for regular commuting in that it is both frequent enough and serves many destinations? **No (0 pts), Somewhat (1 pt), Yes (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐

D 1.9 Are park-and-ride lots available so that bicyclists and auto drivers can conveniently park vehicles while using public transportation or carpooling? **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
D 1.10 Is the system accessible by wheelchair users and individuals with limited walking ability? **No or NA (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1**	☐
D 1.11 Are public transportation vehicles (buses, trains) capable of carrying bicycles? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most (2 pts), All (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
4. Ensure the Ability to Walk & Bike to Destinations **D 2.1** If children who live within walking or biking distance cannot safely walk or bike to school, are steps are being taken to correct hazards? **No (0 pts), Some steps (1 pt), Significant steps or Already Safe (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
D 2.2 Are bike racks or bike storage lockers available in school business or commercial districts? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most or all (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
D 2.3 If so, are the bike racks designed in a way that enables users to secure both the frame and the rear wheel? **No (0 pts), 10-50% of the racks (1 pt), Most or all (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
D 2.4 Is there a program to improve pedestrian access to transit? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
Total Points Section D: Public Transit **(30 pts possible)**		

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment

Although there is not as much evidence on the effect safety and aesthetics have on physical activity levels, it has been shown to be a factor. Steps to make the walking and biking environment safer and more attractive will have an impact on activity levels. Listed below are some strategies for this influencing factor.

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment	Points	Potential Priority
5. Park and Neighborhood Design **E 1.1** Are the following aesthetic components in place at park and recreation facilities?		

	No (0 pts)	Some Sites (1 pt)	Most Sites (2 pts)	Points	Potential Priority
Bike racks				0 1 2	☐
Lights				0 1 2	☐
Safe Playgrounds				0 1 2	☐
Benches at regular intervals along trails				0 1 2	☐

E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment	Points	Potential Priority
E 1.2 Do sidewalks have up to date, ADA compliant, curb cuts (for wheel chairs and people with limitations in mobility) at all intersections? **No or a few (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Have a plan to retrofit (+1 pt), Most or all (2 pts)**	0 1 2	☐
E 1.3 Do municipal playgrounds meet safety standards set by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and does playground equipment meet safety specifications set by the American Society of Testing and Materials? **No (0 pts), Somewhat (1 pt), All (2 pts)**	0 1 2	☐
6. Vehicle Speed and Police Enforcement **E 2.1** In the past 2 years, has the community tracked the number of motor vehicle crashes in the community involving pedestrians and bicyclists? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	0 or 1	☐
E 2.2 Is there a mechanism in place to evaluate the causes of pedestrian and bicyclist injuries and are recommendations made for needed safety improvements? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	0 or 1	☐
E 2.3 Does a multidisciplinary pedestrian safety task force exist (members may include representatives from Public Safety, Public Health, Engineering, Design, Advocacy) to study, design, enforce and educate about safe pedestrian crossings? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	0 or 1	☐
E 2.4 In neighborhoods where speeding automobiles have consistently presented a risk to pedestrians and cyclists, have "traffic calming" measures been introduced to slow down the traffic (e.g., speed humps, trees planted close to the shoulder, trees or flowers planted in medians, converting auto lanes to bike	0 1 2 3	☐

Question	Points	
lanes, roundabouts, etc.)? **No (0 pts), 1-2 measures (1 pt), 3-4 measures (2 pts), 5 or more measures (3 pts)**		
E 2.5 Are crosswalks in school areas and other major pedestrian routes well-marked on the pavement (i.e., with zebra stripes and stop bars) and are they supported by clear signage and lighting? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most (2 pts), All (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
E 2.6 Are intersections designed with adequate "sight distance," so that drivers and bike riders can see all other road users in time to avoid potential crashes? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most (2 pts), All (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
E 2.7 Are traffic regulations requiring cars to yield to pedestrians at crosswalks vigorously enforced? **Never (0 pts), Rarely (1 pt), Usually (2 pts), Always (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
E 2.8 Does the community offer educational programs to encourage bicyclists and skaters to wear safety helmets and follow safe biking and skating practices? **No (0 pts), Yes, occasionally (1 pt), Yes, offered at least annually (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
E 2.9 Does the community offer educational programs for motorists on sharing the road legally and safely with bicyclists? **No (0 pts), Yes, occasionally (1 pt), Yes, offered at least annually (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
7. Neighborhood Association **E 3.1** Are there active neighborhood associations involved with ACEs? **No (0 pts), Some neighborhoods (1 pt), Most neighborhoods (2 pts), Community-wide (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
8. Construction & Maintenance Has responsibility for sidewalk maintenance been assumed by the community government for public areas and required by individual businesses and homeowners for their properties? **E 4.1** Snow and debris removal **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)** **E 4.2** Cracks/repairs **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)** **E 4.3** Does the local government do an effective job of removing debris, snow or ice from pedestrian and bike routes? **No (0 pts), Yes (1 pt)**	**0 or 1** **0 or 1** **0 or 1**	☐ ☐ ☐

E 4.4 Has municipal transportation planning, funding, and/or implementation addressed the following important safety concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians?

	No (0 pts)	Some Sites (1 pt)	Most Sites (2 pts)		
Pedestrian push buttons at intersections				**0 1 2**	☐
Designated crosswalks				**0 1 2**	☐
Designated bikeways				**0 1 2**	☐
Sewer grates at grade and placed so that					☐

bicycle tires hit perpendicularly				**0 1 2**	☐
Maintenance: street shoulders, transition areas between streets and bridge decks, around grates, between streets and gutters are clear and free of debris.				**0 1 2**	☐
Sidewalk spot improvement program				**0 1 2**	☐
Total Points Section E: Safe and Pleasant Environment (49 pts possible)					

F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships

If you want to change policies and the environment you need partners who can advocate for that change. Partnering spreads the workload and ensures greater buy-in as you work toward changing the environment to increase physical activity.

F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships	Points	Potential Priority
4. Advocacy **F 1.1** Has the local governing body created (or do they recognize) a citizens' advisory group dedicated to increasing and improving the opportunities for walking and biking in the community? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
F 1.2 Are groups in the community working together to encourage physical activity and create opportunities for activity (i.e., public health agencies, recreation agencies, the local American Heart Association affiliate, bicycle clubs, service clubsetc.)? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
F 1.3 Is an ACEs advocate (who may or may not be a public health practitioner) on a municipal board or committees dealing with land use and transportation decisions? **No (0 pts), Yes (2 pt)**	**0 or 2**	☐
5. Communications **F 2.1** How many press releases were there in the past six months to promote physical activity? **None (0 pts), 1-2 (1 pt), 3-5 (2 pts), 6 or more (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
F 2.2 How many special interest stories were there in the past six months about physical activity promoted by any unit of local government or health coalition/organization? **None (0 pts), 1-2 stories (1 pt), 3-5 stories (2 pts), 6 or more stories (3 pts)**	**0 1 2 3**	☐
6. Neighborhood Involvement **F 3.1** Have any of the neighborhood organizations done area walkability or bikeability assessments? **No (0 pts), Some (1 pt), Most or all (2 pts)**	**0 1 2**	☐
Total Points Section F: Coordinated Partnerships (14 pts possible)		

ASSESSMENT TOTALS	Max	Points	Priorities
A – Provide Walkable and Bikeable Neighborhoods - 13	(27)		
B – Create and Maintain a Master Land-use Development Plan - 8	(18)		
C – Provide Community Resources for Physical Activity: Parks, Facilities, & Open Spaces – 20	(54)		
D – Provide a Variety of Public Transit Options - 15	(30)		
E – Provide a Safe and Pleasant Environment – 17	(49)		
F – Develop Coordinated Partnerships – 6	(14)		
79 Questions. Total Points:	**(192)**		

APPENDIX C - SAMPLE INDIVIDUAL SURVEY QUESTIONS

SAMPLE 1: QUESTIONS FROM THE FOOTPRINTS TO HEALTH INTERVENTION IN WAUSAU

General: Individual Physical Activity Questions

1. On how many of the <u>past 7 days</u> did you exercise or participate in moderate or rigorous physical activity for <u>at least 30 minutes total</u>?

   ❖ 0 days

   ❖ 1 day

   ❖ 2 days

   ❖ 3 days

   ❖ 4 days

   ❖ 5 days

   ❖ 6 days

   ❖ 7 days

   ❖ I'm not physically active

> **Moderate physical activity includes activities such as walking briskly, mowing the lawn, dancing, swimming, or bicycling.**

☐ *Regular exercise is physical activity that is done 3 to 5 times per week for at least 30 minutes.* Do you exercise regularly according to that definition?

   ☐ Yes, I have been for <u>MORE than 6 months</u>

   ☐ Yes, I have been for <u>LESS than 6 months</u>

   ☐ No, but I intend to in the <u>next 30 days</u>

   ☐ No, but I intend to in the <u>next 6 months</u>

   ☐ No, and I do <u>NOT</u> intend to in the <u>next 6 months</u>

☐ On days when you are physically active, how much time on average do <u>you</u> spend being physically active?

   ☐ Less than 10 minutes

   ☐ 10 minutes or more, but less than 20 minutes

   ❖ 20 minutes or more, but less than 30 minutes

   ❖ 30 minutes or more, but less than 40 minutes

   ❖ 40 minutes or more, but less than 60 minutes

   ❖ 60 minutes or more

   ❖ I'm not physically active

☐ On an average day, how much time do <u>you and your child</u> spend being physically active <u>together</u>?

     ❖ None

     ❖ Less than 10 minutes

     ❖ 10 minutes or more, but less than 20 minutes

     ☐ 20 minutes or more, but less than 30 minutes

     ☐ 30 minutes or more, but less than 40 minutes

     ☐ 40 minutes or more, but less than 60 minutes

     ☐ 60 minutes or more

5. On an average day, how much <u>total time</u> does <u>your child</u> spend being physically active?

     ☐ None

     ☐ Less than 10 minutes

     ☐ 10 minutes or more, but less than 20 minutes

     ☐ 20 minutes or more, but less than 30 minutes

     ☐ 30 minutes or more, but less than 40 minutes

     ☐ 40 minutes or more, but less than 60 minutes

     ☐ 60 minutes or more

Neighborhood: Physical Activity Questions

Please rate your current knowledge of the following:	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5
6. What opportunities there are for physical activity in my neighborhood or larger community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Whether there is a walking club or walking group in my neighborhood	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. What the distances are to stores or places nearby	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. What is a safe route that my child can walk to school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. If available, would you use maps of neighborhood walking routes?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

    ☐ Unsure

11. If available, which of the following physical activity opportunities would you participate in? (check all that apply)

    ☐ Indoor walking at a nearby school

    ☐ Open gym time at a nearby school for adults

    ☐ Open gym time at a nearby school for families

    ☐ A weekly walk-to-school day with your children

    ☐ Other: _____

Walking: Physical Activity

12. In a typical week, on how many days do you walk for at least 10 minutes at a time for recreation/exercise or to get to or from places?

    ☐ 0 days

    ☐ 1 day

    ☐ 2 days

    ☐ 3 days

    ☐ 4 days

    ☐ 5 days

    ☐ 6 days

    ☐ 7 days

13. In a typical week, on how many days does your child walk to school?

    ☐ 0 days

    ☐ 1 day

    ☐ 2 days

    ☐ 3 days

    ☐ 4 days

    ☐ 5 days

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) – National phone survey for adults. National and State results can be found at: http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS/

Section 5: Exercise
5.1 During the past month, other than your regular job, did you participate in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know / Not sure

Section 19: Physical Activity
19.1 When you are at work, which of the following best describes what you do?
- ☐ Mostly sitting or standing
- ☐ Mostly walking
- ☐ Mostly heavy labor or physically demanding work
- ☐ Don't know / Not sure

We are interested in two types of physical activity - vigorous and moderate. Vigorous activities cause large increases in breathing or heart rate while moderate activities cause small increases in breathing or heart rate.

19.2 Now, thinking about the moderate activities you do **when you are not working** in a usual week, do you do moderate activities for at least 10 minutes at a time, such as brisk walking, bicycling, vacuuming, gardening, or anything else that causes some increase in breathing or heart rate?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No **[Go to 19.5]**
- ☐ Don't know / Not sure **[Go to Q19.5]**

19.3 How many days per week do you do these moderate activities for at least 10 minutes at a time?
- _ _ Days per week (write in total)
- ☐ Do not do any moderate physical activity for at least 10 minutes at a time? **[Go to Q19.5]**
- ☐ Don't know / Not sure **[Go to Q19.5]**

19.4 On days when you do moderate activities for at least 10 minutes at a time, how much total time per day do you spend doing these activities?
- _:_ _ Hours and minutes per day (write in total)
- ☐ Don't know / Not sure

19.5 Now, thinking about the vigorous activities you do **when you are not working** in a usual week, do you do vigorous activities for at least 10 minutes at a time, such as running, aerobics, heavy yard work, or anything else that causes large increases in breathing or heart rate?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No **[Go to next section]**
- ☐ Don't know / Not sure **[Go to next section]**

19.6 How many days per week do you do these vigorous activities for at least 10 minutes at a time?

☐ Do not do any vigorous physical activity for at least 10 minutes at a time **[Go to next section]**

☐ Don't know / Not sure **[Go to next section]**

19.7 On days when you do vigorous activities for at least 10 minutes at a time, how much total time per day do you spend doing these activities?

_:_ _ Hours and minutes per day (write in total)

☐ Don't know / Not sure

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Questionnaire*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009.

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance (YRBS) – National survey for school-age children. National and State results can be found at: http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/yrbss/

80. During the past 7 days, on how many days were you physically active for a total of **at least 60 minutes per day**? (Add up all the time you spent in any kind of physical activity that increased your heart rate and made you breathe hard some of the time.)

☐ 0 days
☐ 1 day
☐ 2 days
☐ 3 days
☐ 4 days
☐ 5 days
☐ 6 days
☐ 7 days

81. On an average school day, how many hours do you watch TV?

☐ I do not watch TV on an average school day
☐ Less than 1 hour per day
☐ 1 hour per day
☐ 2 hours per day
☐ 3 hours per day
☐ 4 hours per day
☐ 5 or more hours per day

82. On an average school day, how many hours do you play video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work? (Include activities such as Nintendo, Game Boy, PlayStation, Xbox, computer games, and the Internet.)

☐ I do not play video or computer games or use a computer for something that is not school work
☐ Less than 1 hour per day
☐ 1 hour per day
☐ 2 hours per day
☐ 3 hours per day
☐ 4 hours per day
☐ 5 or more hours per day

83. In an average week when you are in school, on how many days do you go to physical education (PE) classes?
- ☐ 0 days
- ☐ 1 day
- ☐ 2 days
- ☐ 3 days
- ☐ 4 days
- ☐ 5 days

84. During the past 12 months, on how many sports teams did you play? (Include any teams run by your school or community groups.)
- ☐ 0 teams
- ☐ 1 team
- ☐ 2 teams
- ☐ 3 or more teams

APPENDIX D - RECOMMENDATION TABLE

Recommendation Table							
Instructions: Rate each of the recommendations identified in the Active Community Environment Assessment Checklist on the following aspects: importance, cost, time and commitment. Rate each on a scale of 1-5 (low-high) using the chart below. Higher scores should indicate priority items to implement.							
Importance	How important is the recommendation? 1 = Not at all important 3 = Somewhat important 5 = Very important						
Cost	How expensive would it be to plan and implement the recommendation? 1 = Very expensive 3 = Moderately expensive 5 = Not expensive *NOTE: You can get an idea of relative cost by looking at the strategies in Step 4, which are arranged by low, medium and high resource needs.*						
Time	How much time and effort would be needed to implement the recommendation? 1 = Extensive time & effort 3 = Moderate time & effort 5 = Low time & effort						
Commitment	How enthusiastic would people be about implementing the recommendation? 1 = Not enthusiastic 3 = Moderately enthusiastic 5 = Very enthusiastic						
Reach	How many people will likely be affected by this recommendation? 1 = Very few people 3 = Some people 5 = Most or all people						
Item #	**Recommendations**	Importance	Cost	Time	Commitment	Reach	Points / Ranking	Comments

Item #	Recommendations	Importance	Cost	Time	Commitment	Reach	Points / Ranking	Comments

APPENDIX E - PLANNING WORKSHEET

Planning Worksheet	
Recommendations	Describe the strategies selected from the Recommendation Table
Activities	List the activities required to meet the recommendation
Materials, Resources and Personnel	List the individuals who will do the work & the resources and tools they need to get the job done.
Time Frame	When will implementation begin? How long will it take to finish?
Evaluation	How will you measure your successes and/or misfortunes?

Recommendations: Strategies to Implement	Activities	Materials, Resources & Personnel	Time Frame	Evaluation Method	Comments
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

Recommendations: Strategies to Implement	Activities	Materials, Resources & Personnel	Time Frame	Evaluation Method	Comments
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					

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Renee Callaway
WI Dept of Transportation
Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Larry Corsi
WI Dept of Transportation
Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Program Manager

Linda Lee
LaCrosse County Health Dept

North Carolina Division of Public Health
ACEs Community Assessment

Washington State Department of Health *Active Community Environments Checklist*

Robbie Webber, Chair
WI Partnership for Activity and Nutrition – Physical Activity Environment Committee

Wisconsin Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Staff

Mary Pesik, RD, CD
Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Coordinator
Phone: (608) 267-3694
E-mail: mary.pesik@wisconsin.gov

Amy Meinen, MPH, RD, CD
Nutrition Coordinator
Phone: (608) 267-9194
E-mail: amy.meinen@wisconsin.gov

Jon Morgan, MS
Physical Activity Coordinator
Phone: (608) 266-9781
E-mail: jonathon.morgan@wisconsin.gov

Jan Liebhart, MS, ABD
Epidemiologist
Phone: (608) 266-8496
E-mail: jan.liebhart@wisconsin.gov

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