

**Active Living 101 Workshop  
November 6, 2006**

**Carlton County Transportation Building**

**Meeting Summary**



## **Planning Group Meeting**

Andy Hubley, Planning Director of the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), welcomed members of the Planning Group. Planning Group members participated by ITV from four sites in Carlton, Grand Marais, Hibbing and Two Harbors. Helen Mahan introduced the ALbD team - Lisa Perlick, Mark Dessauer and Mark Fenton. Each member of the planning group introduced themselves by name and organization.

## **Barriers and Opportunities for Active Living**

Following the agenda review, facilitator Mark Fenton engaged participants in answering the question “What are barriers to creating active communities in this region?” Planning group members jotted their ideas on colored paper and placed them on the “magic wall”. These include:

### **Carlton**

- Safety, traffic, fear of crime and abduction
- Lifestyle/time
- Poor accessibility – neighborhood vs. rural schools
- Cost and maintenance of infrastructure and existence of infrastructure
- Pressure on policy makers
- Designed for automobiles
- Attitude – changing social norms
- Sedentary jobs from manufacturing to service

### **Hibbing**

- Vehicle oriented society-both attitudes and community designs
- Sedentary jobs/lifestyles
- Poor infrastructure conditions/existence

### **Two Harbors/Silver Bay**

- Attitude – If parents and adults do not stress/practice healthy living children will not lead healthy lifestyles. Peer pressure is also important.
- Busy Schedules – People are over scheduled. Attitude also affects this.
- Lack of public infrastructure to practice healthy living in daily lifestyle.
- Lack of accessibility/awareness of infrastructure to all citizens.
- Non-holistic approach to healthy lifestyles – Diet and exercise.

Following the discussion surrounding barriers, Mark asked the planning group to respond to the question “What do you perceive are the greatest opportunities for creating active communities in this region?” Responses include:

### **Carlton**

- Using family activities
- Making active living the norm
- Financial incentives – workplace incentives – lower healthcare costs

- Create destination – interesting/recycling land use
- Signage/lighting
- Connections/guiding documents
- Education/outreach (financial analysis of active living)
- Capitalize on existing energy
- New development/tourism orientated development
- Active recreation economic development
- Role modeling – personal leadership
- Promotions – walk to school day
- Comprehensive plans
- Workplace programs in place (2 get movin')

### Hibbing

- A new energy behind active living from health care providers, insurers, and communities
- New ideas in development that are oriented to seniors and tourists, but benefit all
- New information about obesity rates, activity rates and health implications

### Two Harbors/Silver Bay Site

- Work place initiatives – We spend so much of our time at work that this makes sense. Need to make it worthwhile for employer and employee (i.e. show health care costs reduction).
- Education – About benefits, opportunities, attitude, obesity epidemic.

## Groups and Committee Roles

Helen reviewed the project timeline and proposed planning group structure handouts. Planning group members asked for further clarification of the vision planning process. Helen explained the purpose of the project and suggested that a leadership group should be formed first to help guide the work and decision-making for the project.

## Stakeholder Roles

Helen directed participants' attention to the Stakeholder Inventory Charts in their packets and reviewed the work that has already been completed on the inventory. She asked the groups to review the stakeholder chart handouts and answer the question "Which individuals or organizations listed on this chart may feel threatened by a regional active living vision? What actions might they take?" She explained that the answers to the questions will help the group to decide who may need to be consulted and interviewed as part of the community assessment activities. Discussion centered around the following stakeholders:

### Carlton

- Taxpayers (equity, fairness)
- County official
- County engineer
- Transportation funding – roads vs. sidewalks
- Developers (pay for enhancements)

- Private land owners (bike trails = crime and lower land value, new work/requirements, how to develop property/more rules, land acquisition/easements)
- ATV/snowmobile clubs (restrict motorized access on trails)
- Rural/non municipality areas
- Parents (children safety – complain to PTA/school about kids having to walk)
- Planning agency (more work – resistance to more work/change)
- Public Works – more work/costs for maintenance changes from routine (snow plowing) – talk to city council
- Unions – less work – busing
- Communities not included – manage expectations of what vision means – requirements want to be a part if \$ involved

**Hibbing**

- Motorized recreation clubs (converting their renegade trails for non-motorized uses)
- Rural townships on the edge of cities (densities mean they won't see the same improvements)
- Developers (new rules will cost them money)

**Two Harbors/Silver Bay Site**

- Developer's – being asked to pay for infrastructure they didn't envision, don't see as necessary to sell their product. We can change ordinances to require trail and other active living amenities and can also show data of how these amenities improve attractiveness and property values of developments.
- Local Officials – May be threatened for similar reasons as developer's – being asked to spend money on non-traditional projects that they don't see a return on investment in – and will feel pressure from constituents to tighten budgets.

**Active Living Assessment**

Planning group members received copies of the Active Living Assessment. The purpose of the assessment is to identify existing community data and potential gaps centered on the 5Ps. This information will be used as a starting point in the community assessment process. ARDC agreed to provide further instructions and an electronic copy for easy completion prior to the December meeting

**December Leadership Group Meeting Overview**

Helen reminded group members that the next meeting will be in Two Harbors on Tuesday, December 12 with a focus on determining goals, outcomes and actions for the community assessment work.

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**Active Living 101 Workshop**

National walking expert, Mark Fenton, kicked off the afternoon workshop with a discussion of participants' 10 year vision for an active community. Following the vision discussion, Mark presented extensive information about active living, the impacts of physical inactivity and an overview of the 5P model – preparation, promotion, programs,

policy and physical projects. Examples from the 25 Active Living by Design projects were also mentioned.

### **The Walk**

Following the presentation, participants at each site walked around the residential and commercial areas observing both barriers and opportunities for physical activity. Mark Fenton lead the walk in Carlton and ARDC staff guided the walks at the other sites.

### **Bringing it Back Home**

After the walk, participants reflected on their “Ah ha” moments from the walk – a surprising or enlightening observation that suggests thinking differently about opportunities for or barriers to physical activity in the community. These observations included:

#### **Carlton**

- 30 mph still really fast
- No painted crosswalks
- “human curves”
- By grocery store – no good area to walk and not well marked
- Quality of surface matters
- Amount of noise and traffic
- Trail close to amenities and great parking

#### **Grand Marais**

- Age, accessibility needs in the apartment areas around town.
- Parking by the Senior Center, difficult for people to walk
- No sidewalks near the post office.
- Sidewalks in some areas were better maintained than others.
- Lots of brush overhanging the sidewalks.
- Crosswalks near the school lead to no pedestrian facilities on the other side.
- Pedestrian signs should be moved to the center of TH 61.
- Radar sign worked well to slow traffic in town.
- 30 mph should be the speed limit on TH 61 through the entire town.
- County road 7 by school should have a slower speed limit such as 19 mph.

#### **Hibbing**

- Boulevards trap sand and dirt and prevent it from getting from the roadways to the sidewalks
- Wide downtown road widths make a difference on vehicle speed (currently traveling too fast)
- Signs on the road side are ineffective (crosswalk, speed)
- Destinations matter-infrastructure should serve ped and bike generators
- Lack of consistency-sometimes there is a sidewalk, sometimes there isn't, sometimes there is a boulevard, sometimes there isn't, sometimes the sidewalk is 10 feet wide, sometimes it is 3 feet wide
- Sidewalks are in terrible shape
- There is no way to safely bike on Howard Street (downtown!)
- There is a lack of access to destinations

- Alleys are better than backyards? Or are they?
- Shrubs and trees need to be regularly trimmed away from the sidewalk
- Diagonal parking is a good thing
- Crossing 169 sucked
- It would be virtually impossible to get around Hibbing if you had a physical disability
- A connection to the Mesabi trail from downtown and neighborhoods is greatly needed
- Biking in Hibbing sucks
- City is working on a safe routes to school grant application, but it would take a lot to fix the lack of walkability at the Hibbing schools
- Hospital area is incredibly unfriendly to peds and bikes
- Signage in Hibbing needs to be modernized
- There are in tough shape, but sidewalks, crosswalks, and boulevards did exist in many areas and were easy to navigate for the able-bodied
- Cars that park on sidewalks need to be ticketed
- The college campus had a severe lack of sidewalks and paths
- Many intersections were un-restricted...no stops signs or crosswalks
- Sidewalks were generally too narrow

#### Two Harbors/Silver Bay

- Walkability good in neighborhoods but breaks down at city center (shopping center, City Hall, library, High School, etc)
- Senior housing (Silver Pointe Apts.) are close to shopping center and Library but have poor pedestrian connection.
- Never stopped to think about how dangerous crossing Outer Drive on foot can be.
- Silver Bay has good connections but is not a visually attractive City to walk in. Doesn't appeal to tourists as much.
- City has many trails also.

Next, participants answered the question "What information, data, or assessment would you like to help guide planning to increase physical activity in the community?"

#### Carlton

- How many kids walk and how many would walk to school
- Bike trail – how many people use it and what season
- What stores/businesses have tried in this area
- Comprehensive plan – are they currently working on it and if not, when?
- Cost Estimates
- Traffic volumes
- What are the destination points
- Review speed bumps
- Trucking firms in the area

#### Grand Marais

- What are the needs of seniors?
- How does the funding for roads work, state aid vs other county roads.
- Assessments for sidewalks, general perception.
- Clarification of funding for projects.

## Hibbing

- Sidewalk replacement schedules
- Existing ordinances regarding parking on sidewalks, etc.
- Maps of ped generators-shopping, public space, schools
- Is there a Hibbing area biking club?
- What is the current construction standard for sidewalks?
- What are the current zoning rules for sidewalks, setbacks, etc?
- What are the average traffic counts and how high are the peaks?
- Why are there boulevards on some blocks and not on others?
- What are the average speeds on City streets?

Finally, Mark asked participants to brainstorm ideas among the four P's (promotion, programs, physical projects, and policies) that would begin to create a more physically active community. Participants' ideas included:

## Carlton

- Promotion – trail – walking program for seniors
- Promotion - Bike to the zoo day
- Promotion - Asking businesses for signage/mapping
- Projects – connecting school to community with trail
- Program – use assessment and surveys that are feasible
- Program – beautification with Kids plus, 4-H and National Honor Society
- Policy - funding for road maintenance
- Policy – city clean-up city ordinances
- Policy – benchmarks – are we reaching them?
- Policy – sub division rules and regulations
- Policy – field trip to success places

## Grand Marais

- Maintain what we have for infrastructure.
- Exercise as part of your work day, lunch walks.
- Reimbursement, employee incentives to get active. ISD 166 has developed a program to encourage employees to get active.
- Change diagonal parking.
- Grand Portage-example wisdom steps program.
- SMC fall community presentations.

## Hibbing

- Expand the Do Campaign to smaller towns and rural areas
- Enforce existing rules
- Promote City Pride regarding being active and having a walkable town
- Connect civic groups with young people to help them get active
- Connect seniors with young people to help them get active
- Assess communities and then work to enact new policies
- Promote awareness of the issues
- Increase the walking population
- Show how walking is cheaper than driving

- Promotion is key, because policies won't change until the City Council sees people out walking
- Get real life testimonials about walking conditions from regular walkers, kids, seniors, and people with less mobility

#### Two Harbors/Silver Bay

- Improving connectivity, safety and attractiveness in and around the shopping center and City Hall appeared to be the focus of attention.

