

**Planning Group Meeting
December 13, 2006**

Apple Valley Community Center

**Community Assessment Action Planning
Meeting Summary**



Introductions

Following introductions of the planning group and members of the Active Living by Design team, Helen Mahan and Kate Kraft reviewed the agenda and desired outcomes for the day:

- Refine or further input into fundamental elements of active living vision
- Determine what information is needed, what you have and what you will need to collect
- Develop an action plan for how the new information will be collected and who will do it

Refining Fundamental Elements of Active Living

Mark Dessauer described the four key areas and supporting evidence for active environments: access to facilities, destinations, networks and safety. Kate reviewed the active community features information collected at the September meeting.

Developing a Community Assessment Action Plan

Planning group members were separated into four smaller groups, one for each active environment category. Using the active living assessment information compiled by Dakota County Planning Department, each group created a list of questions to determine some basic information about each of these elements. These questions include:

ACCESS TO FACILITIES

- Is there a map showing all of the active facilities? (ask cities, county)
- Fees? What fees are required?
- Where are dogs allowed?
- What demographic data is available?
- What are current park dedication requirements?
- List of existing parks? List of places for unstructured play?
- What is the cost to maintain the parks/trails?
- How many people use parks/trails?
- Who would use pocket parks?
- What do people think are appealing features in a park/destination?
- How many people need to use a facility to make it worth construction?
- What are people willing to play? What do they value?

DESTINATIONS

- Where do people want to go?
- Where do people go?
- What kinds of businesses, services, entertainment are within non-motorized distances from home/work?
- How many industrial/business centers have trails? How many would want trails? Barriers?
- How many kids walk to school?
- How many kids live within ½ mile, 1 mile, 2 miles...?
- What connectors are missing from key locations?
- Where can you live without a car?

NETWORKS

- Where are connectivity gaps?
- What percentage of kids live within walking distance of schools?
- What are barriers to kids walking?
- Where are the major destinations?
- What characteristics and needs make an attractive/desirable network?
- Which trails?
- Connections to BRT stops/mass transit?
- Camera monitoring to trails and parks to enhance safety?

SAFETY

- How do you measure “perception?”
- Location of sex offenders/bars?
- Who do you ask? (audiences? – might vary by community or neighborhood)
- Possible measures:
 - How may grade-level separations?
 - Where are street crossings?
 - How long to cross? Which have safe crossing times?
 - Where is adequate lighting? Where not?
 - Safety areas around schools?
 - Where have crime incidents occurred?
 - Where have accidents (peds, bikes)?
 - What are current policies that impact safety? (codes & standards, were developed primarily for auto safety not peds/bikes)
 - Where can we slow traffic down?
- What can we do to reinforce/educate safety issues related to peds/bikes?
- What has worked in other communities to calm traffic? (also snow removal)

Utilizing the list of questions, planning group members worked together to create a community assessment chart that listed the following:

- New information that needs to be collected
- Type of information currently available
- Responsibilities for extracting existing information (checking out plans, surveys, demo data)
- Suggestion for tools to collect new information

SAFETY			
Question	Information Available?	Best to Answer?	Best Method to Answer
Where can we slow traffic? Where are they going?	Traffic volumes Where people live What are their destinations?	City and counties have this data	Where are the roads too wide?
What are people’s perceptions? Attitudes?!	Anecdotal	Ask People!!	Focus Groups and surveys, town meetings
Accident data, crime data, injury data	Yes	Crime statistics from police, State data? DOH, ER visits	Map

Perception of? Is Crime just an excuse? Are we average, better or worse than others?	Based on population, other communities		Site visit to the UK
DESTINATIONS			
Where do people go?	No	Chamber of Commerce, merchants	Exist data , focus groups, surveys
What things are with in non-motorized distance to work	?	Chamber of Commerce, merchants, church groups	
What percentage of residents live within ¼ mile key destination?	Yes	GIS, public works	County, City maps
How many industries/business centers have trails? Who want? Barriers	Yes	Planning, Business owners, cities	Survey
Walk to school radius	Yes	ISD 196	
Multiple drop off/pick up for parents			
NETWORKS			
Characteristics of attractive & desirable network?	No	Community members & experts & interest groups	Surveys and interviews
Where are connectivity gaps for trails, sidewalks and bike lanes	Some Some None	City/County	GIS
Where are Existing & Future major destinations	Yes	City	Mapping, anticipated development
Percentage of kids that live within walking distance to schools	Yes	ISD 196	Surveys, focus groups, research interviews
What are barriers to kids walking		Parents, Principals and police	Surveys, focus groups, research interviews
FACILITIES			
Is there a map showing active facilities?	Yes but needs to be integrated county wide, all cities	City/County engineer dept or GIS	GIS mapping
What fees are required?	Yes	Each city/county Eagan P&R	Call – park/rec public facilities, private clubs, school district, malls, common info
Where are dogs allowed?	Yes	City/County Park & Rec and code enforcement	Telephone, common info
What demographic data available?	Yes	Met Council/County	Telephone Met Council
What are park dedication	Yes	City P&R or planning	Call – survey

requirements		Apple Valley P&R	
What is cost to maintain parks/trails?	Yes	Each city P&R/engineer City/county/school district national stds (NRPA)	Call, online each city
How many people use parks/trails?	Yes	City's P&R, police	Registrations, resident preference surveys/windshield surveys
Who would use pocket parks and what appealing features of parks?	?	Public	Resident preference survey Part of community input processes for mater plans
How many people need to use a facility to make it viable?	Yes?	City councils, department heads, County Commissioners, Private interests	?Value question
What are people willing to pay?	Yes?	Public	Past history, past surveys, new survey, focus groups

Communications

At the end of the meeting Mark Dessauer presented an overview of communication for the group. The presentation described the new website to highlight each community and host information (documents and presentations), the role of the communications committee, overview of community engagement (scope and audience) and finally a basic overview of communications.

- Mark then tasked the group to form a communication committee based on interest and expertise as well as write up an overview of the partnership and its goals.

