

# **Active Living Ramsey County! Key Informant Interviews Report**

*Conducted by Tyler Norris Associates Inc (TNA)*

*For the ALRC Partnership*

*September 27, 2005*

Between July 14 and August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005, 50 key informant interviews were conducted by a combination of the TNA team and ALRC partners. Those persons interviewed were carefully selected for their influence and diversity by ALRC partners. All ALRC partners were encouraged to participate in the interview process as interviewers and interviewees. The interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes.

The mode of data collection included notes taken in face to face and phone settings. ALRC partners themselves tended to complete the interview via a written template. Each interviewee received the same set of questions (items) but provision was made to capture interviewee ideas that went beyond our questions. Not every respondent answered every question.

The TNA research team organized all responses by question, and identified salient themes. We present this document to ALRC as a summary of findings to assist in advancing the overall initiative.

All statements in the sections labeled “WHAT INFORMANTS SAID” are quoted verbatim, carefully selected as reflective of significant points made by multiple respondents.

This document contains an executive summary (pages 2-4), the full report organized by questions (pages 5-36), and the list of those interviewed (pages 37-39.) A list of people ALRC was encouraged by interviewees to contact for future meetings is not included here, but was previously forwarded to project staff in advance of the September 29 meeting.

Thank you,

*Danya River, Tyler Norris and Rich Killingsworth*

# Key Informant Interview

## Executive Summary

The primary future directions suggested to ALRC from its key informants clustered in two areas:

1. Physical improvements to the built environment, integrated with active transportation options and compelling destinations in a comprehensive plan.
2. Education and communication, including social marketing and publicity about what exists now and the value to ones life of moving your body..

The following are the major issue areas identified through the interviews:

1. Lifestyles and social norms that fail to support physical activity: Perceived lack of time, motivation and support to be physically active. Coupled with poor diet, TV watching/computer time, and car dependency to meet the myriad needs of the modern day.
2. Pathways, crosswalks and safety: Lack of sidewalks, trails and safe routes. Lack of connectivity and safe crossings/access to sites where trails/routes do exist
3. Inadequate facilities and lack of opportunities: access to conducive places and destinations for movement and play.
4. Education & policy: Get physical education back in schools. Enhance public education on value of physical activity. E.g. how to live an active lifestyle.
5. Other key issues:
  - a. Crime and perception of risk
  - b. The need to publicize existing opportunities for physical activity
  - c. Cost of participating in activities
  - d. The “sweaty” factor and less than ideal climate
  - e. Effective, connected public transportation modes
  - f. Linking to health issues: heart disease, diabetes, hypertension & high blood pressure, asthma, oral health, early pregnancy/maternal health, smoking and substance abuse and mental / emotional health for all.

The primary issue/action areas that specifically relate to the built environment are:

- Trails/sidewalks/bike-lanes/crosswalks/connectivity
- Facilities (gyms & fields) and destinations
- Accessible & attractive parks/green spaces/walking areas
- Live/shop/work convenience, accessibility
- Public transit, walk/bike-bus/rail connections
- Comprehensive community design & connectivity between communities

While respondents generally feel that the opportunities for physical activity are getting better (more trails, bike lanes, activities, and recreation centers), they feel that the current level is not enough to address the community's needs. Everyone is eager to see large-scale improvements to the current structure, and note that the main reasons we've been held back are: inadequate funding, lack of comprehensive planning/leadership, and the need for more marketing, publicity, & signage to promote existing opportunities.

There's a sense that local organizations and businesses are making some contributions to promoting physical activity by offering wellness plans for their employees; building some paths, gyms, and fields; and by offering community programs and activities, among other things. But most organizations and businesses do not have wellness plans for their employees, nor engage in other health promoting foci, so an opportunity in this area.

There are clearly things working in this community from an asset-based perspective. Some much-sited examples are: Shoreview's trail system, Roseville's recreation centers (Skate Park, oval), and the many parks and lake developments around the county. There's a great opportunity to take these to scale because many people recognize that there's a business case, a personal financial case, a mental health case, and a community-wellness case for doing so. Also, the community recognizes that physical activity is essential to a high quality of life.

According to the interviews, the top things that need to be done are:

1. Build paths, sidewalks, safe crossings, connectivity.  
"Our goal should be that there is no place in the County that you cannot get to either by walking or biking!"
2. Build more facilities: community centers, gyms, fields, upgraded parks
3. Message, market, and educate on the value of, and opportunities for, physical activity. "Educate people about healthy and convenient lifestyle changes that can increase physical activity. Promote biking to work or using mass transit to travel to and from work."
4. Increase events and organized activity programs and offerings.
5. Improve & expand public transit
6. Coordinate private & public sectors action to increase and promote opportunities
7. Enhance walking/biking safety (traffic calming, crime issues, lighting etc.)

Although the ALRC initiative already has many supporters, the activities that would excite even greater participation are:

- A clear, complete and bold strategic plan, with strong team effort and funding behind it.
- A complete trails system initiative
- Plans that directly benefit kids and young families

In short, there is strong momentum around, and support for the ALRC initiative. It clearly addresses a great need in the community for increased personal and community health and wellbeing, and offers an opportunity to build the community will to act and invest in coherent plans.

# Active Living Ramsey County Key Informant Interview Full Report

**1: In your opinion, what are the key issues regarding health, especially physical activity in [Ramsey County, your municipality?]**

## ISSUE #1

### **Lifestyles and Social Norms that Fail to Support Physical Activity**

(41 responses)

*Informants noted LACK of TIME/MOTIVATION to EXERCISE, INACTIVITY, OBESITY/DIET, TV WATCHING, and CAR DEPENDENCY as key issues regarding physical activity in Ramsey County.*

#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

Many people are aware of how their habits jeopardize their health, (poor diet, smoking, lack of exercise) but they don't see viable avenues for change and don't do much amidst their busy lives. Need to make physical activity a pattern that we don't have to think about, to build it into our day-to-day lives. Kids are not as active because they spend too much time in front of TVs and games. [We need to get] people motivated to participate, get active, and get off the couch.

Also, people are beginning to realize the high cost that we are paying as a society because we have become so dependant on the automobile We need people to start thinking about using our trails and walking or biking to places instead of thinking about use for just recreation. We just use our car without thinking about it! People in the city think differently about walking to get places then those in the Suburbs. [In the suburbs], it's a lifestyle thing. [People] live in a place dependent on the car, every family has two or more cars & only walk to and from the car.

## ISSUE # 2

### **PATHWAYS, CROSSWALKS, AND SAFETY (oh my!)**

(18 responses)

*Informants highlighted the LACK of SIDEWALKS and TRAILS and in many instances the LACK of CONNECTIVITY and SAFE CROSSING where trails do exist as major factors influencing physical activity in Ramsey County.*

### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

More pathways and sidewalks are needed for biking and walking. [We want] the ability to commute by bicycle to work, school, and to other activities. There is a lack of pathways, bike lanes and safe connections between home, work, and play.

Also, community design is not pedestrian friendly. [Communities are] designed for automobiles. For example, Rosedale Mall is a suburban shopping center in Ramsey County. It is nearly impossible to safely walk or bike there or even to walk from a strip mall across the street to the mall.

Neighborhoods and trails [are separated] by freeways and highways. We need to address pedestrian safety on city sidewalks and suburban roads. The most populated sections of our city do not have sidewalks. The increase in traffic on residential streets and the increase in number of people speeding and/or going through stop signs causes concerns for pedestrian and child safety. The city is separated into four quadrants by a busy state highway (Snelling Avenue) and a busy county road (Larpenteur Avenue). The intersection of the two is the 3<sup>rd</sup> busiest intersection in Minnesota. This creates safe pedestrian crossing problems.

*“Crossing Snelling is taking life into your hands. My son was hit two times in last year on his bike. At Snelling & County Road B [there are] more accidents than anywhere in the Minneapolis region.”*

### **ISSUE #3**

#### **ACCESS TO FACILITIES/ LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES:**

**(8 responses)**

*Informants spoke of the lack of facilities/opportunities for physical activity, lack of access to playing areas.*

### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

There is a lack of places to play and in suburban parts of the county, a lack of facilities. We want an active community center to provide services and programs. We want to make sure these indoor facilities are accessible to everyone. We want to provide ample opportunity for recreation both indoors and outdoors.

### **ISSUE #4**

#### **MENTAL HEALTH:**

**(7 responses)**

*Informants mentioned the connection between mental health, physical activity and wellbeing. Specifically noted ailments were: anxiety, stress, depression and ADHD.*

### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

*Active Living Ramsey County - Key Informant Interview Report, September 2005*

Active living is more than just “physical activity.” It incorporates the emotional and mental wellbeing of an individual as well. [There is a] direct connection between mental and physical health. [We] need places to expense emotional issues. Without this we implode. People’s staying indoors increases isolation and lack of connection. And lack of physical activity impacts other health areas.

## **ISSUE #5**

### **EDUCATION:**

**(7 responses)**

*Informants want physical education back in schools. Also want to see greater public education on the importance of physical activity and how to best live an active lifestyle*

#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

This community really needs to tell the residents how important their health is to the whole picture. In many instances people are missing the needed education and information on how to best live an active lifestyle.

Families need to learn how to do things together, bring the family into community events. Activities should be centered on being healthy.

*“Our youth aren’t getting enough exercise and education. They’ve taken away the daily physical education in schools. The elite athletes get a lot of attention—not regular people.”*(Retired Roseville Area Schools Physical Education Teacher)

#### **OTHER ISSUES MENTIONED:**

- **Crime** (3 responses)
- **Need to Publicize Existing Facilities, Programs, and Opportunities for Physical Activity** (2 responses):
- **Inhibitive Cost of Participating in Activities** (2 responses):
- **The “Sweaty” Factor/Climate** (2 responses):
- **Need Better Public Transportation** (2 responses):

**Respondents also listed a wide variety of physical ailments/health issues that they considered to be of issue in the community:** heart disease, diabetes, hypertension & high blood pressure, asthma, oral health, early pregnancy/maternal health, smoking and substance abuse.

**2: In your opinion, has the opportunity for physical activity been getting better, staying the same, or getting worse in [Ramsey County, your municipality]?**

**BETTER: (26 responses)**

*These informants agreed that there are more trails, sidewalks and facilities. Most noted the expanded pathway system. A handful of respondents wondered if the increased opportunities were effective in increasing physical activity by Ramsey County residents.*

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Our consciousness is being raised about better health! Opportunities to be active are better and safer than ever before. Looking back 20 years or so, the trail system has become an important aspect of our infrastructure. We have increased the number of sidewalks along county roads and developed our parks. There are more community centers, and more opportunities to become involved today than in years gone by...but are people using them? We need to let people know about the opportunities provided them.

**SAME (9 responses)**

*There were a variety of responses in this category. Some say awareness has increased while facilities have not. Some say there are more opportunities, but that they are not being promoted effectively. Some say they don't perceive any increase in opportunities. Some point to the financial inaccessibility of the opportunities in their area (private clubs).*

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- The county is doing its job in giving/providing the opportunities, but they do not promote along the correct avenues. The county is lacking in the ability to promote.

*In Mounds View:* not well connected with opportunities for physical activity. Only one new private opportunity – don't have the big clubs. One small facility operated by the YMCA.

*In NW Ramsey County:* May be some more opportunities for clubs, Y, Curves. Diverse community – many that are financially limited

**WORSE (8 responses)**

*Informants noted that walking had become more dangerous due to traffic, and schools are not teaching physical education.*

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- It's worsened, in that walking has become more dangerous due to increased volume of traffic and high incidence of speeding. Schools are not teaching physical education as much and even the design of school buildings seems to provide less physical activity. Very excited to see [ALRC] happening – we need the physical features in the community. Need to create ways that kids connect and see each other.

**3a: In your opinion how is local government responding to the needs of the residents of [Ramsey County, your municipality] for more physical activity opportunities?**

**RESPONDING WELL: (8 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Community center in New Brighton and Shoreview...
- Recreation departments have done an excellent job leading the charge with organized activities. Local activity centers are very accessible. Over the past 5 years there seems to be a variety of opportunities being made available to people of all ages to become more active and promote wellness.
- Saint Paul is making major strides on pathway opportunities.
- In our community, the North Oaks Homeowner's Assn. (NOHOA) has embraced active exercise, maintaining a wonderful trail system on easements throughout the "city" and it maintains/grooms cross country ski trails on some of these hiking trails in the winter. NOHOA also maintains four or five different field areas for field sports and collaborates with a tennis club to maintain tennis courts that are available to residents.
- Shoreview is a very bike friendly community. With the plowed a groomed trails the community supports active living year –round.

**RESPONDING RELATIVELY WELL: (19 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- My sense is local governments' staff have had an emphasis on active living for a long while. Local government is responding relatively well, but more education is needed. The Bike Advisory Board [has had some] decent outcomes. There is some improvement for indoor physical activity space [in St. Paul].
- The message is getting out to our policy makers on the importance of trails systems. Not enough money is being allocated, but it is better. We do have

some bike lanes in St. Paul, but we need to push ahead much harder and much faster to allow people to commute by bicycle throughout the year. One positive, is the development and maintenance of the Gateway Trail. A few of the communities are building recreation centers. School district curriculum on health K-12 is also good.

- Twelve years ago, hardly anyone ever spoke about trails; now there is a demand for more and better trails. It is now an issue in every budget discussion. The city is hearing from residents on busy streets about the need for sidewalks. Road construction provides an opportunity to provide for walking, but it must be up front so it is not forgotten.

### **UNRESPONSIVE: (13 responses)**

#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Arden Hills where I live hasn't been particularly responsive. There is a bridge over a major highway that they haven't been willing to broaden. Bikers or walkers must use a very narrow sidewalk only inches from the cars. It is the only way to get from the most of Arden Hills to the only commercial district in the township.
- There has been a lack of response. We haven't hindered it but we haven't done anything to improve it. We maintain golf courses, parks trails...
- Limited actions by government. Planning process does not include trails, sidewalks, trees, benches, etc...Officials have not placed a high value on creating liveable/walkable communities.
- Negative – limited number of publicly accessible indoor facilities.

**3b: What do you believe is keeping [Ramsey County, your municipality] from doing what needs to be done to increase physical activity and improve health of its residents?**

### **#1: NEED MORE FUNDING: (22 responses)**

#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Funding sources is always an issue. Parks and recreation must compete with public safety and public utilities for ever-decreasing tax dollars. Increased financial support would definitely help increase opportunities for physical activity and healthy lifestyles. More public recreation and wellness related education is needed

- I'm concerned about budget cuts in schools and parks. In schools, Physical education and music classes shall not be optional, they are as important as other textbook facts that curriculum is based from.

**#2: NEED MORE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING & COORDINATION of DIFFERENT JURISDICTIONS: (17 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Lack of planning, or truly, effective planning [is what's holding Ramsey County back]. City Recreation departments do not talk to each other; cities offer different programs inconsistently. A countywide plan, integrating all entities is needed. Hennepin County is a good model for what you can do.
- We need to develop connecting routes to the north into Roseville and the other northern suburbs. [In the suburbs], biking is popular on local roads, but commercial areas are general outside of the residential areas and relatively remote. Virtually everyone in North Oaks drives to commercial areas in neighboring communities, save two modest strip malls on the edges of the community, remote to the residential areas.

**#3: NEED MORE EFFECTIVE PUBLICITY/SIGNAGE to LEVERAGE EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES: (7 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- More leadership is needed to promote available resources and encourage participation. We could invest a bit more in signage to leverage (infrastructure already in place). We need to constantly make [people] aware of the opportunities [for recreation] (TV, radio, postings, flyers, and internet). We typically only hear about the big events, [but] this is not what the typical person participates in. For those not motivated they just need to hear it over and over again.
- Three Rivers Park District has the money and puts out 4 newsletters sent out for each season about what is happening. It's the communication tool that [one informant] would pay for to get, but gets it for free.

**4: In your opinion how are local organizations and businesses responding to the needs of the residents of [Ramsey County, your municipality] for more physical activity opportunities?**

**ARE MAKING SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS (2 responses):**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Guidant has stepped forward and generously donated funding to help support the OVAL through the needed repairs and with long range funding for capital improvements. Target has added to the pathway system in the redevelopment and expansion of their store in Roseville. Some large Minnesota corporations have supported more transportation funding that includes light rail and busses as well as highways.

**ARE RESPONDING WELL (24 responses):**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Businesses are reacting/responding fairly well. They have added to the pathway system and, in some instances, they plow the trails, allowing for a more extended pathway system. For example, Grand Avenue businesses want and need pedestrians and bikers as customers, as parking is very limited. They want to be a destination and provide for it.
- More businesses are providing Weight Watchers programs, on-site exercise facilities, bike racks, weight-loss contests, and flextime for lunch exercise. YMCA-type organizations are good and appear to be making efforts to offer new activities to connect with a wide range of interests. BCBS is offering a 10% discount at Curves, and their messages to help get people moving have been useful. The signage in the skyways has also been helpful.
- Some organizations/businesses have made policy and infrastructure decisions that are supportive, like transit incentives, pedestrian programs, pedometer usage, etc. For example, Medtronic has embraced alternative transport with a cents/mile reimbursement. The BeBop challenge was also useful to help people drive less based on their environmental concern. Another great example is the U of MN bus pass, which strongly encourages busing over driving. The incentive is big financially. To do that staff and students generally have to walk or bike more than they would if they just got in a car.
- Some other particularly note-worthy organizations/businesses/programs are: Friends of Parks; Bike/Safety Organization of the city; Health Partners and 10,000 Steps; DO Campaign; and TMO's providing walking tours maps/cycling routes.

## **ARE UNRESPONSIVE/INEFFECTIVE (18 responses):**

### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Not doing as much as they could. Possibly some isolated cases of business wellness programs. Some health clubs. Smaller [businesses] don't do much and don't have much of a facility. Showers are a big deal.
- I don't see any efforts on the part of businesses in the Arden Hills/Roseville area. Organizations often sponsor events involving physical activity but too often it also involves high calorie/high fat foods.

## **DON'T KNOW (5 responses)**

### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- We do not really know--need to survey.

**5: Does your agency, organization or business have a formal plan or strategy regarding health promotion and physical activity for its employees? How about for family members or residents in the surrounding community? Do you have future plans to increase this? What are they?**

**HAVE FORMAL PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES (17 responses):**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- On-site fitness centers, subsidize health club memberships, HRA's, blood bank, screening, online supports
- Yes, we have a city employee wellness plan.
- **Ramsey County** as an employer does some things to promote physical activity but not as much as they did a few years ago. They had a very active and effective program called HealthWorks that had a coalition of representatives from the departments in the county and carried out many programs promoting physical activity and health. Now it is a small part of someone's job and they do a few things but not much. They do have the public transit people and the bike-to-work people come once a year.
- **Guidant** sponsors a wellness week each year. Guidant also has built trails on the corporate campus. Provide employees with pedometers to track mileage, offer health club reimbursements, offer health and wellness related programming, wellness assessment tool available to employees. The major focus has been on their employees at this time.
- Yes. **10,000 Steps Program**. Health Partners did an electronic survey and gave feedback to employees.
- Yes! The **Police Department** has a physical conditioning requirement for the job. Police officers are given 3 hours per week to do physical conditioning. They have a fully equipped fitness gym and a full-time Fitness Director. Police are given Cardio Fitness tests and if they do not pass may lose their job! The department takes physical fitness very seriously for work readiness.
- **YMCA**: Free membership to the employees. They promote the opportunity to use the facility by free membership and most employees are quite fit. In house (employee) competitions with inside incentive: Lazy Man triathlon where they have a month to complete as much distance as possible in each activity. They compete against each other.

**NO FORMAL PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES (14 responses)**

**HAVE PLAN FOR FAMILY MEMBERS/RESIDENTS in SURROUNDING AREA (15 responses):**

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#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **Guidant** is interested in the quality of life for the communities surrounding its corporate campus and has demonstrated its interest through partnerships and support in Arden Hills and Roseville.
- **Medtronic Corp.** Supports spouses/dependents, support AHA's Heart Walk
- A **Parks and Recreation agency**, our mission includes our role in providing venues (parks, trails, recreation centers, pools, gymnasiums) to support active living. Each Recreation Center has a plan for the community they serve. They respond to requests and to what they hear from the schools. For example, if a school-based program is proving to be very popular, a recreation center may continue the same type of activity in the summer so that children can continue.
- The **BAB (Bicycle Advisory Board)** looks at ways to provide better cycling routes and connections, safer signage and stripping
- Oh yes, [the **YMCA** has] a strategic plan focused around the residents. YMCA is incorporating family based activities, Mom and Child aerobics class. 8-14 year-old programs. Community events where the entire family gets involved.
- **Slice Of Shoreview** – This year we included a fun run as apart of the event. In addition, we encourage participants of the parade to walk vs. ride cars. We also include the “Tour'd Trails” as a part of the event to promote the trails in the city. We have introduced better food vendors, giving persons options of healthier food choices. This was all done on purpose.
- **The Great River Energy Bicycle Festival** is working to make cycling “cool” by offering programs in which kids interact with professional cyclists. Examples include bike safety rodeos, kids fun races, school visits, field trips.

#### **NO PLAN FOR FAMILY MEMBERS/RESIDENTS in SURROUNDING AREA (3 responses)**

#### **HAVE FUTURE PLANS TO INCREASE HEALTH PROMOTIONS (5 responses):**

#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **St. Paul Parks and Recreation:** We do have this goal in our strategic plan. We are planning for more active spaces, collaborations with other organizations, intensive education on the benefits of health and the use of activity to achieve it, finding a way to measure results.
- **HealthPartners:** would most likely enhance marketing 10,000 Steps. No end to our efforts—use 10,000 Steps as our base.

#### **NO FUTURE PLANS TO INCREASE HEALTH PROMOTIONS (3 responses)**

**6: When you think of opportunities for physical activity in [Ramsey County, your municipality], can you provide any examples of innovative approaches to promote or support physical activity?  
If so, what are they -- and are they effective?**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **BIKE LANES, TRAILS, SIDEWALKS, CROSSWALKS**
  - Grand Ave
  - MS River Blvd.
  - San Morena Ave
  - Summit Ave (dedicated bike lanes)
  - Vento
  - **Bike Lanes:** I commute to work for about a mile on the River Road and then the entire length of Summit Avenue. Bicycle lanes have been established that work quite well until they become covered with ice. The ice/dark/cold/drivers drinking coffee while talking on cell phones increases the level of risk about a reasonable level of tolerance.
  - **Extended cycling paths on greenways**
  - **Hennepin Gap Study-** found gaps in the routes that make a barrier to get there from here. McCoven Rd was an example...North/South is an issue in St. Paul – need to ID something other than Lexington.
  - **Lite Cross Country Ski Trails** at Battle Creek. (and other “year-round opportunities”)
  - **Non-Motorized Pathways** are great. In Roseville, they are also ploughed generally soon after snow in winter.
  - **Paved walking paths with interpretive signage** (about nearby foliage, animals and other wildlife).
  - **Shoreview Trail System:** Shoreview has a wonderful network of trails that have been in existence for 15 or 20 years and give the city great connectivity by foot or bike. That in conjunction with a wonderful recreation center makes the city a very attractive place for families to live.
  - **Shoreview’s new brick crosswalks.** This makes persons notice more and also demonstrates better connections between paths. I also think that it make persons feel safer.
  - **Streetscaping**

- Upgrading bike lanes/trails and addition of parks, especially along the river. 1,000's of new people downtown. Trails are new downtown.
- Walking/Biking/Skating paths around lake in Central Park. (by Roseville Parks and Rec. Dept.
- **BUSINESSES TAKING THE LEAD:**
  - Guidant and Land of Lakes as large employers probably have programs. Guidant sponsored a park shelter near their grounds and a trail that is open to the public.
  - Local grocery store has recently made a commitment to provide healthy snacks and fruits for YMCA programs. It's important to grow relationships with local business and organizations!!!
  - Opening the Xcel center for walking during the winter.
  - Private businesses with extra land partner for fields or parks
  - Tamarack Trails
  - White Bear Lake businesses providing free passes to the YMCA skate park. I do not know if the policy was effective.
- **COOL PLACES**
  - Cedarview Commons in St. Paul;
  - High Blue
  - Maple Pond Homes in Maplewood;
  - Montreal Court in Little Canada. Shoreview
  - Stillwater
  - Town home complexes are including amenities for physical activity.
- **EVENTS (BIKING/WALKING/EDUCATIONAL):**
  - Bikeathons are good ways to involve entire families.
  - Emmett Williams Elementary School walk-athon. The whole school walks about 3 miles.
  - Roseville Parks collaborates with the school districts to maximize use of facilities and to get input from citizens.
  - Saint Paul Classic Bike Ride and Skate-a-Thon are very popular/effective. (both annual events)
  - Slice of Shoreview, hooking the council members getting their support.
- **HEALTH CLUBS:**
  - Hole in the wall health clubs; the ones that pop up in strip malls. Curves went to Blue Cross Blue Shield and [got] discounts for people to join... 10% discount. Very innovative. Needed the exposure, BCBS helped get them that.
  - Ballys and YMCA do a good job and are trying to partner with health agencies in order to increase the use of their facilities.
  - YMCA project entitled, "Gulick," which teaches healthy living styles. How you can change your style?

- **PARKS/BEACHES:**
  - **Arden Hills T-Cap Property**—developed for recreation
  - **Crosby Park** – Stepped up enforcement. Police do extra patrols. New lighting on the new parks.
  - **Off-leash dog parks** are fairly unusual and very popular.
  - **Lake Vadness / Heights Project**--Improvements to public parks and beaches.
  - **Otter Lake Regional Park** development
  - **Roseville Parks does several events each spring and summer that get people out and familiar with the parks** if they aren't already.
- **PROGRAMS/ CAMPAIGNS/ ACTIVITIES:**
  - **Build into school curriculum**, co-curricular opportunities
  - **Community park programs for adults**.
  - **Getting kids in structured play**, more activities – these kinds of collaborations have really worked
  - **Health partners: 10,000 steps & DO Campaign**: Do not have specific date on how effective they are. Anecdotal evidence has shown positive results. The message needs to be even more intense and positive with published positive results.
  - Hear a lot of “*if-only we could get here from there*” given our busy streets. **Organizations bring programming on site to where kids are**, as kids coming to them is challenged.
  - **Jewish Community Center**—my patients tell me they get picked up to go exercise at their facility.
  - **JWW-rewards**
  - **Online survey by Health Partners** was excellent. She got reminder of health risk factors.
  - **Organized Sports**: basketball, volleyball, softball, track, baseball, etc.
  - Supporting **Polynesian partners** in New Brighton
  - **Walking groups**. There is a great opportunity for parks to attract participants as well. Beautification enhances the [invitation to] opportunity. These approaches are effective in getting people active, but there is most defiantly a segment of the population that is challenged in increasing their activity levels with barriers of all sorts, including personal barriers.
  - **Weight rooms open after school**
  - **Wellness program promoted by Don Salverda** was a good program. It dealt with improving physical activity. (Former Ramsey County Commissioner, Don Salverda).
- **PUBLIC RECREATION CENTERS**
  - **Community Center pools** can offer aqua exercise programs.

- **OVAL** is a unique facility that provides a wide range of physical activity options year-round.
  - **Roseville Gymnastics Center**
  - **The Roseville Recreation Dept** constantly brings in excellent programs. They are always looking for something new to excite people.
  - **Roseville Area Schools has opened up their gyms.** Community Education has done a lot to encourage people to use the schools. – Yoga, square dancing, swimming programs, senior citizen activities, etc.
  - **The New Brighton Family Service Center** has opportunities for physical activity for all ages.
- **SIGNAGE:**
    - **Signage.** Rail to Trail works because people get lost/poor sense of direction. R2T is easy (out/back), so if people know where they are/going/loops/times – more would use it.
    - **There are two signs about the number of steps it takes to walk the path around a nearby lake** that is in my neighborhood. It also has the sponsors of the signs identified. There is **also a mileage distance communication on the sign.** So both the number of steps and the distance is there. I think this is really important to tell people. It's both helpful and it serves as an incentive, it's rewarding to know what you accomplished especially with lives so centered on number performance nowadays. Tell people cool things like this. It's one less thing they have to be concerned with in their workout. Workout machines take care of this by counting electronically.
  - **SKATE PARK (Roseville):**
    - Numerous community events and public events at the **Roseville Skating Center.** The remodeling of the Skating Center allowed for concourses to be expanded so they can be used for a walking track.
  - **WALK TO SCHOOL:**
    - **Groveland school walking partnership**
    - **St. Anthony**-walking to school is the cultural norm
  - **OTHER:**
    - **Car sharing.**
    - We encourage our city Planning Commission to **support the addition of front porches or patios** that bring residents from their backyards to their front yards. This creates a perception of increased public safety for pedestrians walking down city streets.
    - **Physical Activity Prescription** from doctors/health care practitioners.

**7: How do you think physical activity relates to the quality of life in [Ramsey County, your municipality]?  
Do you think physical activity holds community benefits or impacts the local economy?**

**“PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS LIKE MOTHERHOOD and APPLE PIE.”**

*In other words, physical activity improves the quality of life in Ramsey County and everywhere else, too. (29 responses)*

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- Physical activity is like motherhood and apple pie. This is something everyone supports. The ability to be physically active is a basic requisite for high quality of life in any community. I consider a walkable community a proxy for a healthy community. More active people feel better, have better medical records, are more energetic, have a better mood and are uplifted. Other benefits include fewer issues around crime. The wellness benefits made available in the Ramsey county area are a significant reason why people live here ... available green spaces, access to lakes and waterways.
- “My wife and I exercise daily (walking) and getting out to our parks and open spaces; it is what makes my life enjoyable.”
- “It definitely improves the quality of life in North Oaks.”
- People who are more active are still going strong. [I have] an 82-year-old neighbor who turns down offers for a ride to the store. Instead she continually takes the bus. She is physically active. She’s doing great. Physical activity = health benefits. It’s common sense, yes.
- “DUH!”

**YES, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HOLDS COMMUNITY BENEFITS and/or IMPACTS the LOCAL ECONOMY (32 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **BUILDS COMMUNITY:** Being active outdoors gets neighbors out meeting each other and builds community. When people know each other they are more likely to look out for one another. This increases safety in the area as well as personal wellbeing. Well maintained streets, sidewalks, and parks encourage use and use [also] discourages crime. Also strengthens family relationships.
- **GOOD FOR BUSINESS:** Physical activity is a big business industry: clothing, equipment, tourism, and health care industry. [A] fair amount of money exchanged—fitness centers/clubs, construction of bike paths, etc. Having events or facilities in a neighborhood or part of the city draws people there and supports existing businesses or even causes new business

development. For example, I believe the lake and beaches and the walk/bike lane along Lake Avenue draw customers to White Bear Lake businesses. [One informant] was going to a biking event for a day and was planning to make a weekend out of it. He planned to spend \$150-200 in that area. People come to the area and it helps the economy. They buy gas, food. They shop. They may remember a particular coffee shop and come back.

- **DECREASES HEALTHCARE COSTS/INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY:** Most common chronic health conditions are mitigated by habits of regular physical exercise. Healthy citizens mean a decrease in health care costs and more productive citizens.
- **INCREASES PROPERTY VALUES:** A strong community along with well maintained infrastructure and facilities increases the value of real estate in a community. Amenities attract residents to stay or attract future residents.

**8: A similar question on the environment: How do you think the built environment (the way communities are designed) relates to physical activity? How do the ways communities are designed impact opportunities for physical activity, whether for leisure or transport? How can the built environment be enhanced to promote physical activity?**

*Informants that answered this question unanimously agreed that the built environment encourages/discourages physical activity by providing/not providing: community centers, trails/sidewalks, safe walking/biking opportunities with safe crossing at intersections, as well as planning that provides for live/shop/work convenience.*

#### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- “Right now much of our culture is driven, so to speak, by the automobile. Haul yourself out to the garage and then drive somewhere. Try to get one of those ‘handicapped’ permits so you can park close to the entrance. Here where winter is significant, we learn how to get a ride from someone, not how to stay comfortable walking outside when it’s cold.
- “Add to that, the lack of sidewalks and trails, the lack of transit options, the lack of appealing areas in which to walk, the long distances to shops and

services and there is little to encourage walking [or biking]. These are things we can change”

## **ENHANCE the BUILT ENVIRONMENT to PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY by ADDRESSING...**

### **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **TRAILS/SIDEWALKS/BIKE-LANES/CROSSWALKS/CONNECTIVITY (29 responses):**
  - The most sustainable type of physical activity is that which can be incorporated into daily life, just lacing up the shoes and walking out the door. If there are destinations or pleasant places to walk or bike it encourages people to be out and to be active. [One informant] lives with a sidewalk in his front yard and doesn't go more than 5 minutes without watching a person walk past every single day! The sidewalk is apparently plowed in the winter, and people pass year round. Young and old. It's just dumb not to have sidewalks along busy roads (like all the county roads in Roseville) where kids walk to schools.
  - Built environment can be enhanced to promote physical activity by improving walkable/bikeable connections between destinations of home, work and play; and by having sufficient density in and between destinations to support the implementation and maintenance of the connectivity infrastructure (bike lanes and trails, sidewalks, transit, etc.) Make walking paths safe and friendly especially at intersections is key. Walk/Don't walk signals don't work. In parks, walking trails shouldn't be so secluded that they're not safe. They must be well lit, too.
  - We need to have bicycle/[walking] freeway system with a city/county-wide infrastructure. We need more signage for bicycling and walking. R to T works because people get lost/poor sense of direction. R to T is easy (out/back). If people know where they are/going/loops/markers for distance/times – more would use it. Adopt a grand round with better signage [on how to] get to it, and, once you are on it, named routes. Make it specific for bikes...like Netherlands where texture and color of paving are different for bikes.
- **ACCESSIBLE & ATTRACTIVE PARKS/GREEN SPACES/WALKING AREAS (8 responses):**
  - Improving opportunities for green space and parkland. If it's close, easy to get to, accessible, people will come. A safe, attractive, easy to use site promotes itself. . The standard set in Roseville is to provide a park within walking distance for all neighborhoods. St Anthony Park

provides an excellent example of multiple tasks that can all be accomplished within a short distance of each other.

- **LIVE/SHOP CONVENIENCE, ACCESSIBILITY (6 responses):**
  - [With] the long distances to shops and [lack of] services and there is little to encourage walking. If people can go out their front door and walk a few blocks they might do that. If the destination is further than that they get in the car. The closer a facility or trail is to people the more it is used. Having stores close by would encourage people to walk to them.
  
- **EDUCATION (6 responses):**
  - It's all about education. Get kids in habit. Parents need to model activity so that exercise becomes the norm! "DO" campaign should look at active transport. It's a benefit to walk a certain distance to the bus stop and even if we can encourage that it is so much better than walking from the house to the car in the garage.
  
- **PUBLIC TRANSIT/ BIKE-BUS CONNECTIONS (4 responses):**
  - Having public transportation with routes that are well distributed over the community also encourages people to get out of their automobiles and get a little physical activity at each end of the trip. More racks on busses. Bike-bus-bike. Public transportation is not very good at all in the suburban part of Ramsey County.
  
- **COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY DESIGN & CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN COMMUNITIES (3 responses):**
  - Right now the build environment is designed for the automobile for the most part and relates poorly to physical activity. Planning, Design, Parks and Recreation, and Health all should be at the table to define what the community looks like. Suburban sprawl, local decision making without common plans to other communities has prevented continuity in planning.

**9: How would the concept of being physically active through walking or bicycling as a means of transportation resonate with the residents of [Ramsey County, your municipality]?**

**PEOPLE WOULD BE RECEPTIVE...**

**(22 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- I believe [it would resonate] very well! According to the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Minneapolis has the highest proportion of people in the country who bike to work (2.63%). It appears that this is due to bike lanes, the bike paths along the Mississippi River, the Cedar Lake trail, and other bike trails.
- I think it already resonates well with St. Paulites.
- The City of Falcon Heights has a highly educated population, many of whom are already including biking, walking, or other exercise in their daily routines. They would welcome more opportunities for safe bicycling.
- Roseville would experience generational impacts from the promotion of walking and biking as a means of transportation. The younger population would tend to be much more receptive.
- I would love to see Cities across Ramsey County connect their pathways enabling an opportunity to conveniently travel by bike or foot from one community to another. Make it easy and fun. Engage community residents in identifying ways. More would do it if it were available. Easier in walkable communities.

**...AND WE'D HAVE TO ADDRESS:**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **SAFETY ISSUES (7 responses):**
  - Safety. Parents don't want kids to walk to school, but kids do want to walk. "kind of a disconnect"
  - Biking however is hazardous [downtown]. Bikers need to be separated from the vehicular traffic. With the congestion, it is not safe.
  - Well-received if initiated and safe, convenient connections were in place.
  - Many employees of Regions Hospital would bike to work if they believed that they could do so safely, if they could store their bikes safely.

- Roads are not wide enough for people in these activities to feel safe. Need to have an off road sidewalk to bike or walk as a means of transportation.
- **CULTURAL NORM/MINDSET (7 responses):**
  - We need to change the norm! People are not walking or biking to go places. We need people to start thinking about using our trails and walking or biking to places instead of thinking about use for just recreation. We just use our car without thinking about it! People in the city think differently about walking to get places then those in the Suburbs.
  - Right now it only resonates with some of us. The incidence of obesity is rising rapidly, to the point that it's noticeably more common. I think, like with many other things, the trend of *choosing to walk* has to be set. People have to be encouraged to do things differently (i.e. get out and walk). Leaders have to set up the catalysts for this change.
  - Not everyone feels comfortable taking the bus and not having the independence that a car provides. It seems that many people do not dress for the weather and seek security from the elements in their own personal vehicles. Many folks run to and from their cars, park as close to the entrance of their workplace or other shopping store, and rely on the heater or air conditioner to be comfortable.
- **LIVE/SHOP CONVENIENCE (3 responses)**
  - Cities are built without a "Main Street" to access businesses and services. Distribution means of food and goods has changed, leaving few or no corner stores which used to get people out walking. People are trapped inside of their cars. Businesses would have to become conducive [to walking/biking].
- **ALL-SEASON ACCESSABILITY (2 responses)**
  - The reality of weather in our community is a barrier; snow, ice and the short days in winter keep people from finding it desirable or even safe for part of the year.
- **LACK of FACILITIES (1 response)**
  - Reluctance because ... [lack of] facilities seem to hold it back.
- **SHOWERING FACILITIES (1 response)**
  - Many employees of Regions Hospital would if they could shower when they arrived at work.

- **EXPANDING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS (1 response)**
  - We are too auto dependent, bad public transportation

**SUBURBAN RESIDENTS NOT RECEPTIVE as**  
**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE (Bike/Walk for Exercise Only)**  
**(9 responses)**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- I've brought it up with neighbors in Arden Hills and it doesn't resonate at all with them. At this time, I don't think they have a level of awareness of the importance of physical activity throughout the lifetime. They see their Lexus SUV, big powerboats, and snowmobiles as status symbols. Walking, as a means of transportation is something people do if they can't afford a Lexus.
- Tough sell. Residents work too far away, system is not built for this, suburban sprawl. People in Arden Hills seem to walk or bike more for recreation than for transportation. We have a long way to go for these to be viable options for travel to work.

**10: What actions, policy, or funding priorities would you support to build a healthier and more physically active [Ramsey County, your municipality]?**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **MORE/BETTER-CONNECTED TRAILS (13 responses):**
  - Multi-use trails, bike lanes, bike lockers. Install sidewalks, trails and improve the walking/biking environments by planting greenways. Target potential walking routes, such as from residential areas to shopping areas. Remove barriers, i.e. build footbridges over areas of high-speed motor vehicle travel. Landscaping. Pleasant walks with sitting benches. Make trails have additional amenities like interpretive signs or historic information if applicable.
  - Support additional trails and developing a plan for identification of unsafe linkages that make biking and walking safer and more attractive as an alternative means of transportation.
  - Work with Washington County to extend a trail/path all the way around White Bear Lake.

- **ESTABLISHING ADEQUATE/DEDICATED FUNDING FOR PARKS, TRAILS, REC. CENTERS, PUBLIC TRANSIT ETC. (9 responses)**
  - Taxes are an appropriate funding source. Taxing authority for Parks! They will pay if they know what it is for. Dakota, Washington and Ramsey County could get together to form a district.
  - Current action that needs to continue is recognizing opportunities for grant funding sources, going after them, and, therefore, giving change a reason to happen. The community then needs to step up to the plate for ongoing funding to continue or maintain what has been accomplished with the grants.
  - Fund physical activity initiatives. View this as a car problem, cars should pay: increase costs for student parking at high schools as disincentive to cars, 1-cent gas tax.
  - ID the revenue sources – dedicated funding stream like with the snowmobiles. (1% of every bike) User fees are important. In WI they have a trails sticker...
  
- **SUPPORTING CHILDREN’S HEALTH (9 responses)**
  - I would support any initiative that works to address the issues of childhood obesity and inactivity. Invest in young children, learning at a young age builds habits into action. Make healthy lifestyle fun. Increase funding for organized physical activity for children that leaves no one out due to cost and emphasizes fun and lifelong physical activity, not just competition for the talented athletes.
  - Reevaluation of the physical education teaching programs in schools. Policy- demand Physical education course for every student in all years of school. PE ought to be redesigned so that 9<sup>th</sup> graders do not spend 3 weeks simply playing badminton. Intramurals at high school for participation, not competition. Variety that serves to the diverse set of students. Introduce new popular activities. Offer classes with yoga, skateboarding, speed walking, break dancing, and not solely football and tennis. Also, get the kids outside so they realize physical activity can be incorporated in daily routines and not something that is participated in only at the “gym.”
  
- **PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN/COMMUNITY EDUCATION (8 responses)**
  - Use city newsletters and other tools to encourage walking clubs or other activities for adults. [Also, educate on] the relationship between health and physical activity.
  - Website. Do something interactive so kids would like it. Interactive health assessment.

- **DEVELOPMENT POLICY THAT MANDATES PUBLIC HEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY (6 responses):**
  - Policy that all development or redevelopment must be looked at from a health stand point. We need to be more aggressive in mandating that development or re-development be required to have bike-pedestrian amenities regardless of what individuals in a neighborhood may say. Individuals don't always have the big picture or even accurate facts. Example: individuals in a neighborhood that didn't want sidewalks because they thought it would increase criminal activity.
  - Development requirements that include walking and bicycle access to all commercial/office/manufacturing complexes. More trees in developments to provide some shade for walkers/bikers. Because of transportation policy in Finland, commuting by bicycle in a realistic option year round.
  
- **ADDING SIDEWALKS & COMPLETING the STREETS (5 responses)**
  - Complete the streets. Add wide sidewalks. Continue to maintain our streets and sidewalks. Maybe we should increase the percentage the county provides for sidewalks on county roads.
  
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY (5 responses):**
  - Building a sense of community and connection. Encourage volunteerism and engaged citizens.
  - We need to utilize a community involvement process as well as a policy making process – the community needs to be involved with the decision makers in the setting of physical and fiscal policies. The process in Roseville would involve the development of a needs assessment, review of the systems plan, the development of an action plan with the community serving as the advocates and promoters and finally identifying and securing appropriate funding.
  
- **MORE/BETTER FACILITIES (5 responses):**
  - Develop a county wide comprehensive plan for activity facilities. Invest in more fields, gym space for adult activity and community use
  - Work with the school district or the YMCA to provide more/better indoor exercise facilities (e.g., a walking track).
  - Build a warming house at Falcon Heights Elementary School for ice skaters
  
- **SUPPORT “ALL OF IT” (3 responses):**
  - Support “all of it”. It's a necessity that we make this a high priority. Any funding, actions or policies for the greater good

**11: In your opinion, what are the top three things that could be done to improve physical activity in [Ramsey County, your municipality]?**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

**#1: BUILD PATHS/SIDEWALKS/CONNECTIVITY (35 responses)**

*“If you Build it, They Will Run.”*

- We need to continue to provide quality parks, trails, and sidewalks! **Our goal should be that there is no place in the County that you cannot get to either by walking or biking!** Connectivity – seamless access. More bike trails and bike lanes that are protected from motor traffic. Increase requirements for sidewalks, bikeways, trees as part of all new (or rebuilt) developments. Winter walking options are particularly important, since physical activity needs to be year-round.

**#2: MESSAGE/MARKET/EDUCATE (20 responses):**

*“Walking Today Keeps the Doctor Away.”*

- Strong public relations campaign. Education/awareness building of the relationship between health and being physically active. Educate people about healthy and convenient lifestyle changes that can increase physical activity. More promotion of biking to work or using mass transit to travel to and from work. Countywide intensive education, marketing, incentive program to use facilities.

**#3: INCREASE EVENTS/ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES (14 responses)**

- **MORE ACTIVITIES:** Increase program offerings. More organized activities for intergenerational activities to model the behavior. Get organizations to walk kids to the YMCA, etc. Energizing the community to see their role in getting kids active.
- **MAKE IT FUN!** Incentives to get everyone in the family to participate. Perhaps a competition amongst the cities in the county. Think out of the box on what we can do as cities to get buy in of members/partners/participants.
- **SOCIAL EXERCISE/BUILD INTO WORK DAY:** Make social clubs, walking clubs, build into meeting or work schedules, instead of social hour with food, make it part of meeting. Help people network with others who have similar goals. Peer support works wonders
- **WALK TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS:** pilot neighborhood school – walk to school programs

**#4: PUBLICIZE AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES (12 responses)**

*“Start Spreading the News!”*

- Available activities need to be publicized!
- Single countywide publication that would provide an integrated listing of recreation and activity-based offerings, allowing for more transparency for the user... a clearinghouse of sorts.
- ADVERTISE to offer more activities in the community. Run ads in the paper. 4x4 ad every Wednesday with ongoing or current activities. Make People AWARE!!!! Promote the website like hell! Have a beautiful website. Get the word out about gardening, sports, etc.

**#5: BUILD COMMUNITY CENTER/FACILITIES (7 responses)**

- Invest in infrastructure: fields and gyms. Add a community center. [Build] recreational facilities / buildings large-scale athletic complex. Work with the school district or the YMCA to provide more/better indoor exercise facilities (e.g., a walking track).

**#6: PROVIDE SAFE CROSSING FOR PEDS/BIKERS (5 responses)**

- Confusion about crosswalks – it is life threatening, just to get to the bus. Drivers do not understand the law. Pedestrians think they can walk, but drivers not thinking. Make sure all intersections crossing major thoroughfares have provisions for pedestrians and bikes to cross safely.

**#7: IMPROVE & EXPAND PUBLIC TRANSIT (5 responses)**

*“Nail the Rail!”*

- St. Paul: more improvements to transit, and extension of Light Rail Transit from downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul and from airport to downtown St. Paul (complete the triangle).
- Make public transit more available and user friendly.
- Light rail transit expansion – this brings opportunities for enhancing transit connections to the stations and economic development along the routes. This all improves connectivity, density, and destinations.

**#8: COORDINATE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS TO INCREASE AND PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES (5 responses)**

- Work with companies, schools and government to promote access and benefits
- Work in biz community from the top. Work schedules, facilities to change/shower

**#9: CREATE LIVE/SHOP EASE & ACCESSABILITY (5 responses):**

*“Shop Where you Walk”*

- Change zoning so there is more mixed use in neighborhoods. Need small businesses in neighborhoods instead of the big stores centrally

located. You need a car to get to those. People used to walk to the corner grocery, barber, etc.

- More bike racks

**#10: ENHANCE WALKING SAFETY (NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME / SAFETY LIGHTING) (4 responses):**

**#11: DEVELOP/UPGRADE PARKS (2 responses):**

- Up-grade current park system. Develop existing parklands. Master plan park development with walkers in mind

**#12: MAKE AMENITIES ACCESSIBLE (2 responses)**

**#13: OR TRY ONE OF THESE!...**

- *“Dome the county in winter for year round outside activity.”*
- *“Get Desperate Housewives off the air”*

**12: What would excite you enough to become involved (or more involved) in improving the opportunities for physical activity and improving health outcomes in [Ramsey County, your municipality]?**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

**I'M ALREADY ON BOARD! (12 responses):**

- I am plenty excited! I work hard every day to stay active! I will support through my job and involvement in community!

**STRATEGIC PLAN/FUNDING/TEAM EFFORT (8 responses):**

- Formalizing a plan and commitment for funding
- Strategic plan, we need to partner to become successful. There must be a joint effort.
- The energy generated when talking with other people who are excited about it.
- An opportunity to actually do things: develop resources, add to the community. This would require some unique financing situations in Roseville – matching fund grants and other funding sources that would allow for development and rebuilding.

**TRAIL SYSTEM (6 responses):**

- Big initiatives around a trail system. Not putting continuous transportation money into roads but creating the opportunity of a walking trail and bike trail system. VANCOUVER, British Columbia [is a great example].
- I'd like to see Ramsey County launch a major initiative with Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and the League of American Bicyclists. Involve the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota, too. Encourage the neighborhood and cities to make their trails beautiful.
- Increase requirements for sidewalks, bikeways, trees as part of all new (or rebuilt) developments.

**BENEFITING KIDS/YOUNG FAMILIES (5 responses):**

- As a grandparent – I would like to secure the opportunity for funding for upcoming activities for our young kids to enjoy.
- Pilot neighborhood school –walk to school programs
- Find a way that St Paul Public School can actually DO something. HOW WILL WE DO IT?

**13: OPTIONAL: Which sources of data and information should be reviewed to determine how [Ramsey County, your municipality] could monitor and track trends in health and physical activity?**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Study (BRFSS)& Youth Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (YBRFS).** Ramsey County could pay to over-sample on them. A mini-census could be conducted every two years or so to determine levels of physical activity. The Steps to a Healthier St. Paul grant I coordinate will be collecting additional data with the BRFSS tool each of the next 5 years in the City of Saint Paul. That will be available for use with periodic reports generated.
- **Gary Sjoquist...**
- **Get safety data to show it's not that dangerous out there.** [One St. Paul Police Official] indicated that Saint Paul is one of the safest metro areas in the country. It is all perception that the media has a tendency to portray.
- **Health professionals** would know this better than I, but please do not exclude or over-look the **needs of disenfranchised populations of our county**; the disabled, low-income, elderly, racial or cultural minorities. This may be where we find a big part of the economic savings.
- **Mike Huber,** cardiologist
- **Needs Assessment, Demographic Survey and Usage Models**

- **Report on Livable Communities for Successful Aging is available:** A new report is available from AARP titled "**Beyond 50.05 - A Report to the Nation on Livable Communities: Creating Environments for Successful Aging.**" The purpose and scope of the report is to articulate a vision of livable communities for persons of all ages, and particularly for people age 50 and older. For more information or to download a copy of the report, visit [http://www.aarp.org/research/housing-mobility/indliving/beyond\\_50\\_communities.html](http://www.aarp.org/research/housing-mobility/indliving/beyond_50_communities.html)
- **Student surveys** through the schools.
- Studies from **National (and MN) Association of Realtors** regarding the data
- **Surveys of residents and businesses.**
- **Video/film on MN trends in Obesity.**
- **WELCOA Case Studies**
- **St. Paul/Ramsey County Public Health** – they are best positioned to address this.
- **Study how often our trail system is used.** Study how often other communities' trail systems are being used. Follow the successful designs. Survey in all areas of the city. **Get information from Greensboro, NC about how they measured use of their trails** and look at doing this in St. Paul.
- **Vancouver, BC.** They have an ideal walk able community and it's active in the winter even with weather similar to this area.
- **Research Statistics on:**
  - **General demographics**
  - **Overall community health**
  - **Built community research**
  - **Health/Active use research**
  - **Recreational trend research**
  - **Economic impact research**

**14: Who else should we talk to if we wanted to promote more opportunities for physical activity, especially through the built environment?**

*A 2-page list of contacts was provided on 9/23/05 to the ALRC partnership staff.*

**15: What advice would you have for ALRC members to help them plan the most effective ways to enable people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines? Is there anything the partnership should avoid doing?**

**ADVICE:**

**WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**

- **MARKET & PUBLICIZE!**
  - Use a professional firm.
  - Do it right on messaging.
  - “DO CAMPAIGN” individual stories...tell them.
  - Keep publicity focused on “Obesity” and bridge the message between physical activity and its tie to “Physical and Mental Health”.
  - You can’t believe how many people don’t have a clue what is going on! Home and garden show, clubs, clubs, clubs, you could fly to the moon if you wanted to. No one knows. Awareness and public relations are where we can be effective in what we do.
  - Health fairs...
  - In the last year or so there was an analysis in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) that found that physical activity campaigns only increase physical activity by about 5%. We need to improve the built environment for non-motorized travel and, through repeated campaigns; we need to help the public understand why non-motorized travel is essential to health.
  - Provide some form of incentive, recognition.
- **WORK TOGETHER to INCREASE OPPORTUNITY for EVERYONE:**
  - Be aware of community resources and work toward educating individual communities to the benefits of connecting with our larger community for expanded healthy living opportunities – there is strength in numbers.
  - “Outreach”! Often time’s institutions don’t outreach to other institutions and provide ways to get their residents to enjoy places outside of their living communities. For example nursing homes and assisted living complexes!
  - Reach out to other communities who have been very successful. Look outside of our box. Take the successful information and apply it to our community.

- Have a direction, tie in with others that are active already. Get out of the box and get new and creative ideas flowing!
  - Connect with the Business Community! Support longer lunch hours and health promotion in the work place! Walk more during work.
  - Engage parents to help kids get active. Listen to families... depression, kids not feeling connected – as to why kids stay home/inactive.
  - I think local/grass roots programming is the key...programming done by citizen volunteer groups.
- **OTHER**
    - Measurable number of goals for the project/ benchmarks
    - Define a public leader in exercise

### **AVOID:**

- **WHAT INFORMANTS SAID:**
  - Poorly orchestrated media campaigns
  - Avoid being too pushy or forceful with the subject. Many people won't change.

## **Other Comments:**

- Somespace...(12 ft. Walks)
- Larpinteur on south side (sidewalk?)
- Walk kid to school a good message
- Apache Plaza, St. Anthony/New Brighton. Build new place-but no bike accommodation. 1 in 50 yr
- Do a bike advisory board, build the Bureaucratic infrastructure...fund staff locally to craft and implement a strategic plan...St. Paul BAB is highly dysfunctional.
- Pay for staff time in engineering
- Theme @ women & safety
- Blueprint for life from BCBS – the calls very helpful
- [One elected official] believes that community design must be a comprehensive process. The “complete package” is key to designing an atmosphere that encourages individuals to leave their car and walk, etc. It is important that trees, trails, housing, destination points, and spaces feel inviting and are logically linked together.
- It is government’s role to initiate this type of thinking and planning. If not, it will never get done.
- [In the parks] there could be a passport system, like in National parks where people could get their passport stamped in every park in the city or the county, or maybe every week at the same park and earn a symbolic reward, a patch, master walker, etc.
- The county should have a fitness facility to make it more convenient for employees to exercise during breaks.
- Have insurance providers fund exercisers like they do non-smokers.

***MANY INFORMANTS ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING THE UPCOMING ALRC MEETINGS. PLEASE SEND INVITATIONS!***

**Active Living Ramsey County!**  
**KEY INFORMANTS**  
*As compiled by Tyler Norris Associates*  
*for the ALRC Partnership*  
*September, 2005*

1. **Fred Aery**, Author of local bike trail book; *St. Paul*
2. **George Altendorfer**, Ramsey County Sheriff- Division Commander; *Bear Township*
3. **Kay Andrews, ED**, Northwest Youth & Family Services; *NW Ramsey County/Falcon Heights*
4. **Beverly Aplikowski**, Mayor, Arden Hills, MN; *Arden Hills*
5. **Jen Barren**, Medtronic Corporation Health and Wellness Manager; *Twin Cities*
6. **Tony Bennett**, Ramsey County Commissioner; *Shoreview*
7. **Bob Bierscheid**, Director of Parks and Recreation-City of Saint Paul; *Saint Paul*
8. **John Brodrick**, St Paul School Board Member; *St Paul*
9. **Lonnie Brokke**, Roseville Parks & Recreation Director & Roseville Resident; *Roseville*
10. **Toni Carter**, County Commissioner; *Ramsey County*
11. **Patty Feala**, Clinical Supervisor, Adult Mental Health Case Management, RCCHSD; *responding as an advocate for adults with disabling mental illness who live in Ramsey County.*
12. **J. Michael Fredericks**, Publisher, Minnesota Cyclist. A bicycling magazine; *Ramsey County. (Has lived life in North suburbs of RC; Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, North Oaks, White Bear Lake)*
13. **Robert Freed**, Minneapolis Attorney, MVHS Parent, Roseville Covenant Church Member; Founder of High School Rugby Club; *North Oaks, Former resident in Arden Hills*
14. **Susan Gaertner**, Ramsey County Attorney; *Ramsey County*
15. **Don Gault**, St. Paul/Ramsey County Public Health Dept.; *Roseville Residence*
16. **Sue Gehrz**, Mayor, City of Falcon Heights; *Falcon Heights*

17. **John Goedeke**, Retired Roseville Area Schools physical education teacher retired Roseville City Council Member, Member of North Suburban Golden K Kiwanis (very active Kiwanis Club for retired men); *Roseville*
18. **Lori Grivna**, School Board, Mounds View Public Schools, Vice President Ramsey County League of Local Governments; *Shoreview/students and adults*
19. **Mary Sue Hanson, ED**, Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative, St. Paul Resident; *suburban Ramsey County*
20. **Matt Hollinshead**, Transportation Chair-Sierra Club North Star Chapter; *Ramsey County*
21. **Bob Jacobson**, Director of Public Safety (focus on safety and opportunity for citizens), City of New Brighton; *New Brighton*
22. **Therese Kelly**, St. Paul Bicycle Advisory Board and the St. Paul Parks & Recreation Commission; *Saint Paul*
23. **Carl Keuhl**, Communications Director for **Randy Kelly**, Mayor of St. Paul; *St. Paul*
24. **Chris Kimber**, Physical Activity Promotion Coordinator, Minnesota Department of Health; *downtown St. Paul*
25. **Craig Klausung**, Roseville Mayor; *Roseville*
26. **Dr. David Klevan**, Physician, HealthPartners – Como clinic; *St. Paul*
27. **Thomas E. Kottke**, The Heart Center, Regions Hospital, HealthPartners; *St. Paul*
28. **Jackie Krebsbach**, Chair of Slice of Shoreview Committee; *Shoreview*
29. **Kathy Lantry**, St. Paul City Council President; *St. Paul*
30. **David LaPorte**, Director, Great River Energy Bicycle Festival; *Roseville / Twin Cities*
31. **Julie Lindmark**, Guidant Corporation; *Lives in Shoreview, Works in Arden Hills, Partnership – Roseville*
32. **Peggy Lynch**, Friends of the Saint Paul and Ramsey County Parks and Trails; *Ramsey County*
33. **John Maczo**, City of St. Paul Transportation, City Engineer/Transport Coordinator; *St. Paul*
34. **Doug Meslow**, State Representative (53B); *White Bear Lake*

35. **Chris Nelson**, St. Paul Police Dept. - Juvenile Unit; *St. Paul*
36. **Donna Peterson**, Volunteer with LWV, Transit for Livable Community; *Roseville*
37. **Victoria Reinhardt**, Ramsey County Commissioner, Chair of County Board; *Ramsey County*
38. **Pat Riemersa**, VP of Operations of 5 YMCA branches in metro area; *Shoreview*
39. **Julianne Seiber**, Program Analyst/Steps Coordinator, Public Health; *Ramsey County*
40. **Chris Suriano**, Executive Director, Skyway YMCA, St. Paul, MN; *South Saint Paul*
41. **Nick Temali**, Director of Community Education, Mounds View Public Schools; *school district community*
42. **Eric Thompson**, Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, City of St. Paul, Division of Parks and Recreation; *City of Saint Paul*
43. **Alice Tibbetts**, St. Paul Bicycle Advisory Board; *Ramsey County*
44. **Kurt Ulrich**, City Administrator; *Mounds View*
45. **Jan Vanderwall**, Roseville Area Schools- Tech/Wellness Coordinator, *Roseville*
46. **David Vanneste**, Shoreview resident and realtor; *Shoreview*
47. **Andrea Williams**, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Intern County resident, full time student; *Ramsey County, Como Park area*
48. **Cor Wilson**, CTV Executive Director; *Falcon Heights & greater Ramsey County*
49. **Bev Wittgenstein**, St. Paul Community Education; *St. Paul*
50. **Jody Yungers**, Director of Park Services and Operations- Ramsey Co. Parks and Recreation; *Ramsey County*
51. **Don Salverda**, Don Salverda & Associates; *Roseville*