

ALRC Newsletter

Active Living Ramsey County (ALRC!) is delighted to introduce the first edition of *ALRC ALert*, a newsletter dedicated to providing information related to integrating regular physical activity and other health topics into communities.

The mission of ALRC! is to create and promote environments that make it safe and convenient for people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines. It takes a multi-disciplinary collaboration to achieve such a mission. The ALRC! partnership continues to thrive because of involvement from elected officials and representatives from organizations like the County, cities, schools, health plans and residents. In addition to supporting the



ALRC promotes environments that make it convenient for physical activity.

efforts of ALRC these partners further include expertise in public works, parks and recreation, public safety, and public health.

Currently, the ALRC! partnership is working on a few projects reflecting the mission, these include:

- ⇒ 1,000 Benches—a project providing a series of bench corridors to encourage walking and “provide pathways to health”
- ⇒ Active Transportation Geographical Information System (GIS) Overlay—creating a comprehensive bike/pedestrian facility layer within Ramsey County and identifying gaps, connections, and priorities for future development
- ⇒ Community Design & Health—working with communities to incorporate strategies to promote physical activity

FAST FACTS:

- *Almost 75% of Ramsey County residents regard obstacles to being physically active as key health issues in Ramsey County.*
- *Over 95% of residents also think opportunities for physical activities contribute to general quality of life in Ramsey County.*
- *Less than 60% think opportunities for such activity have increased in the past five years.*

(Ramsey County Healthy Communities Study. 2005 Residential Survey Overview. Decisions Resources, Ltd.)

Saint Anthony: On a Mission to Accommodate Active Transportation

The City of Saint Anthony is ahead of the game when it comes to completing comprehensive plans. St Anthony’s mission is to be a progressive and livable community, and a walkable village that is safe and secure. Their mission statement is reflected throughout their current comprehensive plan. The city plans to make lo-

cal transportation, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle investments to improve connections between workplaces, residences, retail, services and entertainment activities.

For more information on the City of Saint Anthony’s comprehensive plan please visit their website: www.ci.saint-anthony.mn.us.

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Incorporating Active Living in your Community: Increase Connectivity and Accessibility with Visual Cues

Developing better connections to area parks, trails and trail systems can be accomplished through increasing visual cues. These cues can include: (1) increasing signage, (2) providing clear pathways, (3) providing lighting schemes, and (4) vegetation and green space.

Enhancing the navigation of paths and sidewalks with attractive pedestrian-scale signage can point users to potential destinations. Some guidelines to consider for increased signage include:

- ⇒ Promoting an active community involves linking trails to local destinations of interest—signage should mention those destinations and remind users that active trips

can be as convenient and expedient as using a car (Active Living by Design)



Celebration of Bruce Vento Regional Trail signage in St Paul.

- ⇒ If trails are named, signs at the entrances to those trails should indicate those names

- ⇒ Trails exits should indicate what street, shopping/commercial area, etc. the trail is exiting to
- ⇒ On primary trails, mile markers or some other distance measurements should be placed to let users know how far they have gone
- ⇒ Signs at key intersections and at regular intervals along the Pedestrian Bike System should indicate distance to destinations
- ⇒ To encourage use of area parks, signs should be placed where paths connect up with parks and indicate distance along the path to the park

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Active Living Ramsey County is a collaborative effort working to create and promote environments that make it safe and convenient for people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines.

Do you have suggestions, comments or something to share? Please contact Amber Dallman at amber.dallman@co.ramsey.mn.us or 651.266.1179 for more information.



USEFUL RESOURCES

- ⇒ The Design for Health website bridges the gap between the emerging research based on urban design and healthy living and the questions and priorities of local governments. Information can be found on health and planning, as well as Health Impact Assessments at www.designforhealth.net.
- ⇒ The Land Use and Health program out of Oakland, CA has produced *General Plans and Zoning: A Toolkit on Land Use and Health*. The toolkit provides examples of model language for comprehensive plans and is available for download at www.healthyplanning.org.
- ⇒ For biking and pedestrian design and planning guidance and requirements, and links to city and county websites, see the Mn/DOT bike/pedestrian home page at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/>.
- ⇒ COMPLETE STREETS are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street. More information can be found at <http://www.completestreets.org/>.

We're on the web:
activelivingramseycounty.org