

Reinventing Suburban Business Districts in Ramsey County

The Urban Land Institute published *Ten Principles for Reinventing America's Suburban Business Districts* in 2002. However, the principles outlined seem appropriate to consider during the updating of municipal comprehensive plans. The principles provide strategies aimed at reinventing business districts. The ten principles are the following:

- ⇒ Understand your position in the market
- ⇒ Build community support
- ⇒ Develop a vision and a plan
- ⇒ Stress results over regulation
- ⇒ Break up superblocks and optimize connectivity
- ⇒ Embrace mixed use
- ⇒ Honor the human scale by creating a pedestrian-friendly place
- ⇒ Think transit—think density

⇒ Create a public/private partnership

⇒ Share and manage parking

The principles identified build on each other. For example, some of the strategies found under breaking up superblocks include:

- ⇒ Improving pedestrian linkages
- ⇒ Establishing community uses
- ⇒ Developing structured parking

Through the application of these principles suburban business districts can benefit, “the community (as a place the community owns and loves), the government (as a place that generates tax streams), and the private sector (as a place that attracts strong visitation and sales, rental income growth, and increase capital values).”

To view the full report, visit: www.smartgrowth.org/pdf/uli_Ten_Principles.pdf

FAST FACTS:

- *Active Living and Comprehensive Planning resources can be found on the ALRC website.*
- *Resources include: fact sheets, toolkit, and archived issues of the newsletter.*
- *These tools can be shared with Planning Commissions and Comprehensive Planning Task Forces to encourage the incorporation of active living principles into comprehensive plans.*

(Source: www.ActiveLivingRamseyCounty.org)

Active Living Ramsey County Bicycle Committee

The Active Living Ramsey County partnership recently adopted a five year strategic plan. The strategic plan identified developing an ALRC Bicycle Committee as one strategy to make progress on selected goals. This ALRC Bicycle Committee met for the first time in November to discuss the purpose and role of the newest trendbender team.

The purpose of the ALRC Bicycle Committee is to act as a resource to cities and the County while working to increase accessibility, connectivity and safety by identify-



Image courtesy of the Metropolitan Design Center.

ing gaps and the highest priority areas within the bike-way system, and work to encourage a comprehensive, complete and connected bikeway system for Ramsey County. The ALRC Bicycle Committee is a great example of collaboration between residents, municipalities, and the county.

If you are interested in participating or for more information on the ALRC Bicycle Committee please contact: alrc@co.ramsey.mn.us.

Incorporating Active Living in your Community: How Residents Can Better Influence Local Land-Use Decisions

1000 Friends of Minnesota works to promote development that creates healthy communities while conserving natural areas, family farms, woodland, and water. They have compiled *A Citizens Guide to Influencing Local Land-Use Decisions*, which outlines how residents can effectively engage in the development process more proactively.

The guide outlines a variety of areas to better inform residents about the planning process; including:

- ⇒ Getting involved in creating a long-term vision
- ⇒ Understanding the rules of development

⇒ Knowing who controls development



Residents of Arden Hills provide feedback on what kind of change they would like to see in their community.

- ⇒ What is good development
- ⇒ Providing sound advice for residents

The guide provides residents with easy to understand, valuable information about comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, decision-makers, what good development is, and definitions of important acronyms.

Providing residents with this easy to read guide may be helpful to getting proactive and effective feedback throughout the planning process. To access this guide and share it with residents go to www.1000fom.org/Posted_Documents/CitizensGuide.pdf

Active Living Ramsey County!
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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 alrc@co.ramsey.mn.us or 651.266.1179 for more information.



USEFUL RESOURCES

- ⇒ The Smart Growth website news and resources on community quality of life, design, economics, environment, health, housing, and transportation. www.smartgrowth.org.
- ⇒ The Sustainable Communities Network is for those who want to help make their communities more livable. Promoting a lively exchange of information in both urban and rural areas. www.sustainable.org.
- ⇒ 1000 Friends of Minnesota a nonprofit dedicated to addressing the important connections between development patterns, the health of communities and the environment. www.1000fom.org.
- ⇒ The Midway Transportation Management Organization works to improve transportation choices, mitigate traffic congestion and air pollution in St. Paul's Midway area. The draft of St. Paul's Bike Plan can be found at www.midwaytmo.org/bicycling.htm.

We're on the web:
activelivingramseycounty.org