

Active Seattle

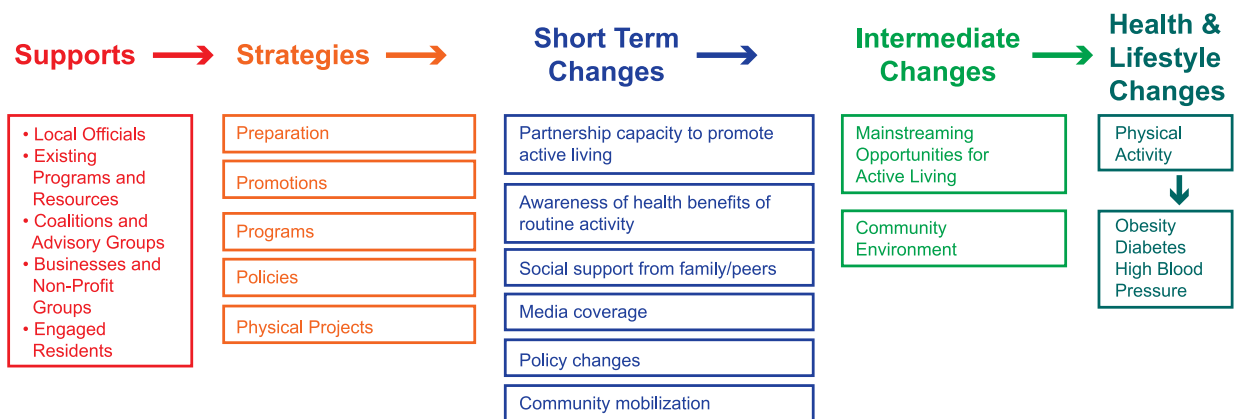
Evaluation of Active Living by Design | Seattle, Washington | 2003-2008

A group of middle school students stood on one side of an intersection in Seattle, Washington, where a car had recently hit a child who was attempting to cross the street. The youth were there as part of a “crosswalk action,” an attempt to increase awareness of pedestrian safety issues. This “crosswalk action” was a little different from previous efforts. In the midst of the group stood a man in a chicken costume. As newspaper and television reporters watched, the youth assisted the chicken as he crossed the street. The chicken soon became a local star, bringing attention, through a blog and myspace page and numerous media appearances, to a growing active living movement in Seattle.

“Active living” is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines in order to accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity each day. In November 2003, Feet First received a five-year, \$200,000 grant as part of the Active Living by Design national program (www.activelivingbydesign.org) funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). By advocating for changes in community design, specifically land use, transportation, parks, trails, and greenways, the Active Living by Design initiative intended to make it easier for people to be active in their daily routines.¹

The Active Living by Design Community Action Model provided five active living strategies to influence community change: Preparation, Promotions, Programs, Policies, and Physical Projects. The 5Ps represent a comprehensive approach to increasing physical activity through short-term, intermediate, and long-term community changes. This inclusive model allowed Feet First and the Active Seattle partnership to advocate for active living policies and physical projects in diverse communities while encouraging people to walk more often through social marketing and education.

Active Living by Design Community Action Model



Feet First, the lead agency, is an advocacy organization that serves the city of Seattle by promoting walkable communities. Together with other core partners, Feet First created and facilitated a partnership, Active Seattle, to address the pedestrian, bicycle, and built environment issues that influence physical activity in Seattle. Through the leadership of Feet First and numerous partners, the Active Seattle partnership engaged residents and organizations in efforts to encourage active living. The partnership developed and implemented a variety of physical projects, policies, programs, and promotions to accomplish this goal. Although their primary focus was on five diverse, disparate communities, the entire city of Seattle benefited from Active Seattle’s efforts to integrate physical activity into the daily routine of community residents.

¹ The Active Living by Design (ALbD) initiative was established by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in 2001, and its National Program Office (NPO) is part of the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Twenty-five interdisciplinary community partnerships were selected across the country to demonstrate how changing community design can impact physical activity. Transtria was funded by RWJF to work with the NPO to conduct ALbD evaluation and dissemination activities. This case report draws from Transtria’s evaluation efforts.

“If Feet First, public health, [and] other groups weren’t out saying ‘this is important’ we wouldn’t have this project. Again, would it have happened without it? In a general sense, no, I mean we’re doing it because there’s a sense that the public supports pedestrian facilities.” -Partner

Seattle, Washington

Large homogenous areas are a rarity in Seattle, Washington. The city has a number of small, diverse neighborhoods in close proximity to one another. Despite the close proximity of these economically and racially/ethnically diverse communities, residents generally remain segregated, which propagates poverty, particularly among the immigrant (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Latinos) and African American populations that comprise the largest percentage of lower-income residents in Seattle. Nearly 15% of adults in the region have sedentary lifestyles, with lower-income and ethnic/racial populations disproportionately affected.

“We have noticed there is a lot of diversity in these communities both in terms of income, race, and ethnicity...so some of the new housing structures that we have seen sort of have this \$500,000 market price house next to a public housing unit... Seattle has, I think, compared to other cities in the country much more...there is much more [diversity within communities] going on.” -Partner

Active Seattle identified five specific target neighborhoods for the ALbD project: Beacon Hill, Central District, Delridge, Lake City, and North Aurora. These five target neighborhoods were selected based on a number of factors, including demographic information (e.g., racial/ethnic diversity, income diversity), health disparities, transportation choices (e.g., walking, biking, transit, vehicle), safety data (e.g., pedestrian-vehicle collision), land-use patterns, and the presence of complementary efforts (e.g., business redevelopment, construction of transit systems, active community groups).

These communities are located in different geographic locations throughout the city and differ in the number and proportion of racial/ethnic populations. Beacon Hill, Lake City, and North Aurora have large Asian American; residents of Central District are primarily African American; and Delridge has a large Hispanic/Latino population. Moreover, Delridge, Beacon Hill, and North Aurora are communities where major transit projects (e.g., light rail development, bus service improvements) are currently underway. Although the partnership set out to work on active living issues primarily in these neighborhoods, many of their efforts reached the broader city of Seattle.

“We looked at data that we had for each community and BRFSS data, we looked at obesity rates and inactivity rates. We had information about lots of neighborhoods in Seattle...but one of our epidemiologists broke it down more for us, into more neighborhoods so we could look at health disparities...we were also thinking about having a combination of neighborhoods where there was a lot going on and some where there wasn’t much of anything going on, so we knew it would not all be super high need neighborhoods...but a combination of places where we could sort of tag onto things that were already happening, and then some others where it would be really starting.” -Partner

Active Seattle’s mission was to get “more people walking more often.” To meet this mission, the partnership aimed to 1) advocate for policies and physical projects that supported a more walkable city and 2) use social marketing and education to increase knowledge and awareness to improve behaviors.

CORE EFFORTS	YEAR 1: Strength & Capacity Building	YEAR 2-3: Policy Change	YEAR 4-5: Cultural Change
PLANNING & PARTNERSHIP Active Living Performance Measures	Develop common language, tools & presentations to build partnership	Refine & apply perf measures to partnership efforts & services	Implementation partners assume responsibility for ongoing programs and Active Living strategies
MAPPING PROGRAM Annual Edition Map-Periodicals	Create maps in each neighborhood using Participatory ABCD & Walking audits	Annual revised editions with new map layers and community-specific content	Community pride & identity visible in ownership of walking map design, publication, & distribution
PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SDOT–led Pedestrian Priorities	Crosswalks, signage, & low-cost enhancements Citizen initiatives	Publish new design standards Increase budget for pedestrian improvements	Institutionalization of Active Living goals in DOT & private development projects
HEALTH PROMOTION Communications and Incentives	All age walking programs Community clinic outreach Careful crafting of strategy for communications	Enhance & proliferate Active Living messages Reach new providers and populations	Observable changes in community health behaviors

MORE PEOPLE WALKING MORE OFTEN

Preparation

Partnership

The partnership model in Seattle was comprised of three sets of partners: the core partners, the technical advisors, and the implementation partners.

Prior to the ALbD grant, three core partners, Public Health Seattle & King County, Seattle Department of Transportation, and Feet First (lead agency), worked together on active living efforts in Seattle, including participation in King County and Washington State Coalitions for the Promotion of Physical Activity; the King County Traffic Safety Coalition; and the Way-to-Go Seattle program, a City of Seattle-led effort to increase walking, biking, transit use, and carpooling. These partners continued to work together closely after the inception of the partnership in 2003, each filling a different role. Feet First provided leadership and worked to increase community, grassroots, and institutional support. The Seattle Department of Transportation focused on the physical infrastructure improvements and innovations, and the Public Health department focused on creating behavior change through health promotion and programmatic activities. The partners’ vision was that these overlapping priorities would result in a cultural change in which walking and bicycling would be a natural part of everyday activity.

Relationship building and a large network of support helped Active Seattle increase its reach in the community. The Active Seattle partnership took advantage of opportunities to extend its reach, focusing not only on the five ALbD project communities but also engaging other institutions and stakeholders in various ways to influence active living locally, regionally, and statewide. Active Seattle also assisted partners in the implementation of projects, helped to connect research and practice, and identified potential funding opportunities. Most importantly, the Active Seattle partnership provided a platform for increasing partners’ capacities to meet their own goals through sharing of resources and services.

The Active Seattle partnership built relationships among its members and with its five target neighborhoods through meetings, planning sessions, a project website, in-reach efforts, and recruitment. For example, Active Seattle participated in the monthly neighborhood meetings in its target neighborhoods and provided additional opportunities to discuss street and sidewalk design.

Partners, staff, and community members identified several beneficial characteristics of the Active Seattle partnership:

- Active Seattle used the internet to maintain its internal communications.
- The many partner affiliations allowed Active Seattle to extend its reach and influence, while developing relationships with many diverse organizations.
- Partners and staff were dedicated to the active living movement.
- The partnership was able to serve as a mediator between neighborhoods and government organizations.
- The partnership focused its efforts on building expertise and competency in institutions at the neighborhood level so that citizens could be advocates for active living and other concerns.
- The partnership disseminated best practices from one neighborhood to others.
- Partners found that it was important to build a reputation of trust and honesty and to seek out powerful allies to support common objectives.

“The other thing I would say is look for allies...Look for those portions of business communities that are your friends. There are probably more than you think if you are in that kind of community empowerment mode. You don’t realize there are people in power who very much support your objectives.” -Partner

“I go to as many of the [school] staff meetings as I can because it just helps the principal know that I am really there, included in it. We have so many groups come in and say this school is a mess...we know how to fix it and we will fix it this year and then they leave and they never come back, so it takes a couple months to get that trust that you make with the staff at the school and going to the...teacher meetings totally helps because it shows you are there. It shows you are committed...” -Staff

“One of the roles that we have and the reason why our multi-neighborhood thing is interesting is that we can take knowledge from what we gained from one neighborhood and go to another neighborhood and say, ‘Well, by the way, this is happening here. You should know that.’” -Staff

Partners, staff, and community members also noted many challenges to creating and maintaining the Active Seattle partnership:

- The primary challenge was ensuring adequate communication among the partners.
- The nature of the large partnership and existing efforts in Seattle made it difficult to determine exactly what could be attributed to the ALbD project.
- Partners found it difficult to determine who was responsible for actions and how to hold individuals and organizations accountable for fulfilling their obligations.
- The partnership was concerned about organizations that were only drawn to Active Seattle by the possibility of funding.
- Despite the fact that the partnership was involved in the promotion of active living, there were only a small number of people in the community who knew about Active Seattle.
- The two alternative transportation groups represented in the partnership, pedestrians and cyclists, often disagreed on what should take priority.
- Some individual partners needed to get clearance from their home organizations before advocating to support legislative actions.

“It seems the most challenging part is just figuring out who is doing what, really. Because there is so much energy around it right now. I mean you get an email from somebody about a grant or presentation and you get it ten times from ten different people. And there is all this trying to figure out what makes the most sense and that is the growing pains of these new relationships...but...there is a lot going on and I think that is the challenge of the trans-disciplinary stuff is just trying to figure out who is doing what. I think so far those new relationships have worked really well.” -Partner

“There is the toughest part of all which is how do you hold somebody accountable who is not making progress and what does that look like?” -Partner

“I really call the partnership the people that we work with and the people that know us. And that’s not something that’s going to go away any time soon. So there’s kind of a core group of people that do this kind of work and that’s the partnership and what makes I guess the Active Seattle idea continue.” -Staff

The table below lists the partners involved in the Active Seattle partnership.

Members of the Active Seattle Partnership	
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Diabetes Association • Center for Public Health Nutrition • Group Health Community Foundation • Harborview Medical Center • Healthy and Active Rainier Valley • Injury Free Coalition for Kids in Seattle • Neighborhood House • Neighborcare Health • Public Health Seattle & King County • Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers • University of Washington Health Promotion Research Center • Urban Health Initiative
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBC Education Foundation • Parent Teacher Association • Seattle Public Schools • University of Washington
Parks & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade Bicycle Club • Cascade Orienteering Club • City of Seattle Parks & Recreation • National Park Service • Seattle Parks Foundation
Urban Design, Planning & Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Seattle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Transportation - Department of Planning and Development • King County Metro Transit • Washington State Department of Transportation • Washington Traffic Safety Commission
Community Leaders, Policy- & Decision-makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor's Office • Puget Sound Regional Council • Seattle City Council
Other Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Seattle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Neighborhoods - Police Department
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • America Walks • Bicycle Alliance of Washington • Community Coalition for Environmental Justice • Feet First* • Greater Greenwood Bi-Ped Safety Coalition • Sustainable Seattle • Transportation Choices Coalition
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESRI-Northwest • Flexcar • SvR Design
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Living Network • Harris & Smith Public Affairs
Community & Faith-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beacon Hill Pedestrians • Broadview Community Council • Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association • Greenwood-Aurora Involved Neighbors • High Point Neighborhood Association Committee on Pedestrian Safety • North District Stewardship Committee • Pinehurst Community Council • Safe Walks • Seattle Great City Initiative • Squire Park Community Council

*Organization that served as lead agency during the ALbD grant period

Leadership and Champions

Feet First was founded in 1995 as a group of citizens and professionals interested in promoting the rights and interests of pedestrians and encouraging walking (www.feetfirst.info). In 2001, it became an official 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The ALbD grant allowed the organization to hire its first full-time employee. Feet First advocates for active living principles by engaging in discussions with government agencies, developers, and community groups, meeting with residents to discuss options for improving infrastructure, and holding events to raise awareness of unsafe conditions.

Feet First, the ALbD lead agency, and the Active Seattle Project Director served primarily as an intermediary to bring together groups with a shared interest in active living. Partners stated that without this leadership, they likely would not have connected with one another. The partnership was led by two Project Directors over the course of the ALbD grant.

The original Project Director played a key role in getting the ALbD initiative organized in Seattle. When many groups and organizations in Seattle were interested in applying for the ALbD grant, the Project Director was able to pull the groups together to work in collaboration with one another. Throughout the project, he continued to serve as an intermediary between organizations to ensure collaboration.

“I don’t think you could say [the Project Director] is the catalyst, but he is the person who links things and then keeps the issues up... We [have the tendency to] run our programs, we run them well, and do our little thing and forget to sort of communicate with everybody else. With [him] you have to communicate because he is always around...Calling people and getting them together.” -Partner

“I think, frankly, the whole program is because of him because he is just everywhere at the same time. He’s not just connecting, but he’s really working with projects and helping people connect with each other. I don’t think he’s the cause of all these things, but he is a link between them...” -Partner

In the fourth year of the ALbD grant, Feet First’s Outreach Coordinator became Project Director. As Project Director, her strategy was to focus on campaign effort that included all pedestrian policy for Seattle, the Pedestrian Master Plan. This unified approach made it easier to communicate with residents and sustain efforts.

“I really wanted to kind of hone in on what the most successful things were, what we had the most opportunity for in Seattle. And so I think [staff]’s work plans were really kind of chalked full. As opposed to taking on like a dozen policy questions, the Pedestrian Master Plan ended up being the project as far as policy-wise that we spent the most time on. It was kind of a catch all for all things pedestrian, obviously.” -Staff

In addition to the ALbD Project Director, there were also other staff members involved in the Active Seattle project, many funded by sources other than ALbD.

The Safe Routes to School Coordinator’s duties included coordinating approximately 20 Walking School Bus Routes at each of the four participating schools and recruiting new schools to join the program. The Coordinator was supported by a Safe Routes to School Community Organizer, a position generally filled by a participant in the Quest, a program similar to AmeriCorps.

The Feet First Outreach Director’s duties included working with community associations, administering programming, developing maps and promotional materials, conducting communication development programs, and communicating with media outlets.

The Feet First Active Transportation Planner, later known as the Active Community Environments Program Director, was involved in activities such as working with community organizations, conducting focus groups throughout the community mapping process, and helping to search the literature for developing a health impact assessment.

Two positions at Public Health - Seattle & King County, the Built Environment and Land Use Manager and the Active Living/Healthy Eating Manager, were funded by the Local Capacity Development Funds set aside for efforts within each of Seattle's local health jurisdictions.

The partnership formed a unique relationship with the Seattle Department of Transportation after a key individuals from the department saw the connection between transportation and health and became an important advocate of active living. Active Seattle also benefited greatly from the in-kind assistance of graduate interns and high school volunteers.

Funding and Resources

In the early years of the ALbD grant, Active Seattle focused on generating resources to support additional staff and complementary project work (e.g., Safe Routes to School). In addition to the ALbD grant, the partnership reached out to a number of local, state, and national funding sources to expand the resources available to support its active living efforts. Financial and in-kind support came from the following sources:

- King County Steps to Health Active Community Environments Program
- King County Steps to Health Promoting Healthy Built Environments Program City of Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (Small & Simple Grant, Large Project Fund, Neighborhood Street Fund)
- Group Health Community Foundation
- Kellogg Food and Fitness Initiative
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (ALbD Sustainability, ALbD Special Opportunities)
- Washington State Department of Transportation (Safe Routes to Schools, Pedestrian and Bicycle Program)
- Washington Traffic Safety Commission

Although they were quite successful in leveraging funds, partners noted that the money received was only a “drop in the bucket” when considering the entire cost to implement construction of physical improvements long term.

Community Supports and Challenges

A major concern, in terms of built environment, was Seattle's lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle amenities. When Seattle annexed part of King County in the 1950s, it acquired streets that were built without sidewalks. Historically, the county's building standards did not require sidewalks to accompany street design, and the city had not yet invested the time or resources to develop sidewalks in these areas. Additionally, many arterial streets in Seattle were built without sidewalks because they pre-dated the city standards requiring them. Some neighborhoods had sidewalks, but they were not often useful for pedestrians since they did not make connections between areas such as residences and the edge of the block. Due to a change in development standards in 2007, sidewalks became an obligatory part of the permit for most new development.

Even when sidewalks were available, they were often not accessible or safe for pedestrians or bicyclists. Many neighborhoods were steeped in a culture that considered cars as the only means of transportation. Pedestrians and bicycles were not given space on or along the streets for safe travel. In some neighborhoods, houses and apartments were accompanied by on-street parking only. When new sidewalks were put into these neighborhoods, the residents often parked their cars on the sidewalks, ultimately preventing people from walking along them. In order to improve active living, the partnership prioritized changing the cultural norms related to walking and biking over trying to find funding for additional sidewalks or bicycle lanes.



“One of the problems with putting sidewalks in on streets in this area is that people park where the sidewalks are... Many of those houses have on-street parking only... The problem ends up being a cultural problem, where all these people have to end up being willing to change their practice, change their behavior as a part of the solution. And they have to change some of their beliefs...” -Staff



Oftentimes, improvements to sidewalks, crosswalks, and streets only occurred after tragic accidents. For example, a young boy was severely injured while trying to cross the street at a poorly marked crosswalk at a dangerous intersection. The community was aware of the possible danger before this incident but prioritized a left-turn option over the safety of pedestrians. After the accident, the partnership and other citizens advocated to have the Seattle Department of Transportation conduct a traffic analysis at the intersection. The analysis found that vehicle traffic was heavy enough in the intersection to warrant a traffic signal.

“There was no marked crosswalk [at the site of the accident], no legal crosswalk. [The government] had offered to put in a raised median here, but neighborhood folks were all like ‘we don’t want to prevent left turns here. That’s too hard.’” -Staff

Several other local initiatives were in place to alleviate physical barriers to active living. For example, a few years prior to the ALbD grant, Seattle’s government allocated \$200 million dollars for Pro Parks, an eight-year plan to improve parks, park facilities, and trails, led by Seattle Department of Transportation. The Green Legacy Coalition led the Parks for All campaign in an effort to renew the parks levy.

Active Seattle also aimed to increase community, organizational, and political capacity to support active living efforts. In order to succeed, the partnership addressed a number of challenges to building community support for active living efforts, including language barriers, lack of individual or family resources, lack of time to devote to active living issues, the belief that active living efforts were not the responsibility of the community, fear of violence, and automobile-centric safety priorities.

Lack of trust was prevalent in many communities in Seattle, particularly among immigrant populations. This mistrust was detrimental to active living in many ways, including a refusal to walk or allow children to walk to school. Despite the fact that most immigrant families were accustomed to walking in their native countries, they accepted driving as the main mode of transportation in the United States, perhaps due to fear for their children’s safety. Reaching Seattle’s diverse residents posed linguistic challenges as well. Translating materials and hiring translators for meetings required significant resources.

“All of the people that we spoke with came from walking communities in their initial country and they have come to a community where the driving is the norm... They had accepted the car driving more, but they still wanted to walk. They wanted their children to walk... And none of that was really surprising except to the degree to which parents and grandparents described having that fear that their child was going to be seriously hurt at any moment, which is really heart breaking...” -Staff

Seattle teamed up with existing community-based organizations and their active membership bases to build community support for active living. For example, community residents were often tapped as leaders and organizers for active living events. Influential community members were encouraged to persuade city decision-makers to address walkability issues. As Active Seattle nurtured these community relationships, some organizations became more engaged by supporting the efforts of the partnership through sponsoring clean-up projects to maintain the trails in their communities, participating in neighborhood mapping activities, and promoting active living programs.

“We also tried to build relationships with other community members who we knew, other opinion leaders and communities who supported our goals, and have them repeat and amplify the message. So there are the decision-makers with the message from multiple sources about the importance of [active living].” -Partner

“But the principals that I have worked with tend to be very enthusiastic and give me the support. They won’t initiate anything, but they will give you the support in writing, verbally talk up the programs. There is nobody who doesn’t feel good about the program. It’s just a question of do they have the energy to help it along...” -Staff

While working with existing community institutions was beneficial in terms of reaching diverse populations, some organizations and groups, such as school parent teacher associations and neighborhood councils, were not always representative of the entire population (i.e., parent teacher associations for ethnically diverse schools tended to be mostly white).

“I have only been involved in a couple of the community councils and met people, but in general they are not as representative as the diverse population.” -Staff

Many community organizations and institutions that worked with the partnership had limited budgets that forced them to prioritize activities, often choosing their own mission and objectives over those of the partnership. However, there were instances when a partner continued to allocate part of its small budget to active living programs because it recognized the benefit added to its own efforts. Likewise, the partnership used its funds to support active living activities within some resource-challenged organizations.

The political environment of Seattle was conducive to active living messages and efforts to improve pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure. Most citizens of Seattle recognized the importance of active living and alternative transportation and supported city officials who strove to improve these and other environmental issues. In addition, the Mayor outwardly supported active living principles, in part due to the connection to environmental issues. The Mayor and other local city officials participated in events sponsored by Active Seattle, such as Walk to School days.

“This year, we got local officials to walk [in the Walk to School day event]. So, there was a walk with the mayor... The mayor usually comes with some cameras... We always invite local officials to come and almost always get them... usually from City Council, they’re very supportive.” -Staff

At the same time, the political atmosphere in Seattle was not without its challenges. During the ALbD grant, Seattle held a major election, and officials battled for power and authority. Specific challenges cited by partners, staff, and community members included staff turnover within the government agencies, slow-moving bureaucracy, automobile-centric values, and a propensity for talk and little action. To address some of these challenges, the Active Seattle partnership worked closely with the mayor to build relationships with his aides and staff and ascertain his commitment to active living.

“[A partner] was the community outreach person for the mayor and... was the mayor’s campaign manager when he ran for re-election. So I developed a relationship with him during the campaign and [the Project Director] and I would meet with him to talk...” -Partner

The partnership held political figures accountable for their positions and voting records on active transportation and other physical improvements by creating a report card to disseminate among residents and pedestrian and bicyclist interest groups. Over the course of the ALbD grant, the public officials began to include active living language (e.g., walkability, health impacts of transportation) in presentations and public discussions.

Community Assessment

Active Seattle’s success was facilitated by a variety of assessment activities, including surveys, focus groups, and on-going walking audits. The assessment activities helped identify community supports and barriers to physical activity as well as provided an opportunity for community engagement and awareness.

Walking audits, or “re+walks,” were a key component of the partnership’s work plan. During re+walks, residents, neighborhood stakeholders, and local decision-makers gathered to make observations of the built and social environment in terms of barriers and facilitators to active living. Approximately 20 people participated in each neighborhood audit event. Over the grant period, Active Seattle conducted several walking audits in the five targeted neighborhoods, around neighborhood schools, and in other Seattle communities. In addition, children completed a photovoice assessment of their routes to and from school and around community centers as part of an afterschool program. Based on the re+walks, participants created prioritized lists of community changes.

“We did a walking audit with kids’ photos on it for the voice project at the community center. And the kids went out and took photos of the environment around and then wrote up the problems they saw in pictures.” -Staff

The audits were used to increase awareness, generate support, advocate for change, and inform the planning process. The audits were particularly successful in terms of encouraging leaders to support policy change and fund physical projects. For example, an audit in the Crown Hill neighborhood in the North Aurora community resulted in the City Council earmarking \$100,000 for physical improvements for walkability. Another audit prompted the city to budget \$500,000 for new sidewalks. Audits were also used to generate several maps for community residents.

“And this is...this sidewalk is new. They budgeted \$500,000 for this project. Some are like, wow, a lot of money for this stuff. But we came in here and we did this walking audit...We talked about the problems, and there was no sidewalk along here, and these speed humps are new, too.” -Staff

Active Seattle conducted surveys throughout each year of the grant period at four schools involved in a nutrition and physical activity program for school-aged youth. Schoolchildren self-reported their mode of transport to school on a given day (i.e., car, school bus, on foot). Results showed that almost 50% of students arrived by car, approximately 40% of students rode the school bus, and the remainder walked to school.

Focus groups and interviews helped Active Seattle determine which issues were most salient for parents who were thinking about allowing their children to walk to school. Focus groups revealed cultural and physical barriers to walking to school. For example, when deciding where to send their children, parents were permitted to choose from the five nearest public schools, often selecting the school farthest from their residence. Some parents chose to send their children to a school that was farther away in order to get their children out of the house earlier to get to work on time. This prevented their children from walking to school because of distance. In addition, some parents, particularly immigrants, did not allow children to walk to school because they feared for their safety, even among individuals who seemed to be caring and trustworthy.

The partnership worked with graduate students in public health to develop evaluation tools for students and parents as part of the Safe Routes to School Program. The tools were used to evaluate children's diets, obtain a sense of the students' opinions, and give parents the opportunity to track participation in the Walking School Buses. Results from walking audits were used to create Walking School Bus maps, which were then evaluated through classroom and parent surveys developed by local graduate students.

The partnership conducted additional focus groups to determine social receptiveness to physical activity messages and to develop concepts for Active Seattle publications. The focus groups were conducted in a number of languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, and Somali. Active Seattle partners learned that personal connections with participants were important when encouraging residents to participate in activities.

In addition to its own assessment activities, Active Seattle engaged a group called Leadership Tomorrow to conduct research and outreach regarding active living in the Central District neighborhood. For its part, Leadership Tomorrow conducted historical research, documented community institutions, and participated in focus groups on physical activity messaging.

In the third year of the ALbD grant, Active Seattle launched a Mobility Education Initiative that examined knowledge among teens, as well as their interest in this type of education. Surveys were conducted at teen health fairs and results were presented at the 2006 Washington Traffic Education Association. They also did assessment with older adults to develop a social marketing for the Cart Project.

Policies and Physical Projects

Active Seattle focused most of its efforts on improving street design policy to make Seattle more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. Even though the focus of the Active Seattle project was to increase active living in the five target neighborhoods, much of the policy work of this project occurred at a city-wide level. Policy changes included funding allocations, street-design policy, land-use zoning, school-related policies, and participation in a number of advisory committees. In addition to advocating for large-scale policy changes, partners also sought smaller changes to improve walkability and safety. Physical projects were prioritized based on opportunity and community concerns and were planned and implemented in a number of settings in Seattle, such as parks/recreation, transportation, and others. Policy influences and physical projects, related partner, staff, and community implementation activities, and associated outcomes include the following:

► **Bridging the Gap**

- Active Seattle endorsed and advocated for Bridging the Gap, a proposition that created a levy to generate \$544 million over nine years for street maintenance, active transportation improvements, and other major projects. Approximately \$98 million was set aside for pedestrian and bicycle improvements. This initiative was approved by Seattle voters in 2006.
- Active Seattle partners were involved in this effort as part of the Steering Committee and continued to oversee program implementation through participation on the Oversight Committee.
- This initiative established a program for sidewalk management that required the Department of Transportation to prioritize, repair, and manage a higher percentage of sidewalks in the city. Trails and streets without sidewalks were prioritized for improvement over the coming years.
- The initiative required that sidewalks be located within a certain radial distance around all schools in Seattle.

“I have mostly been involved in [Bridging the Gap] by talking to reporters and giving input on the [initiative]... and really setting up that resolution which basically spelled out about the process of the plan, what it would cover, who was going to be involved, so like the specific language of these types of groups, like community groups plus these different groups of people to be on an advisory committee. And just talking about how it should be multi-departmental. Because if you just have the Department of Transportation doing this, it is going to turn out completely different if you involve the Department of Planning and Development, the Police Department, Office of Sustainability and Environment...” -Staff

- Active Seattle’s involvement in the Bridging the Gap funding initiative eventually resulted in the creation of the Pedestrian Master Plan (http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pedestrian_masterplan/).
- In the fourth year of the grant, Active Seattle partners successfully influenced elected officials to adopt a Complete Streets policy. Complete Streets is a strategy for designing or redesigning streets in a way that incorporates active living amenities (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, street trees, traffic calming devices) to accommodate all modes of transportation.
- Active Seattle’s involvement in the Bridging the Gap funding initiative eventually resulted in the creation of the Pedestrian Master Plan (http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pedestrian_masterplan/).
- The resulting Pedestrian Master Plan includes short- and long-term actions and promotes four primary goals: safety, equity, vibrancy, and health. It includes policy guidance for construction closures, sidewalk maintenance, lighting, intersection design, and other pedestrian-related concerns.
- The plan has three parts that focuses on various aspects of pedestrian improvements: 1) where people are expected to be (i.e., pedestrian generators and destinations), categorized by high, medium, and low priorities; 2) physical infrastructure, specifically roadways and physical access to cross-streets; 3) measures of health, including obesity, physical activity, car ownership, and income.
- Most notably, the plan includes a data-driven prioritization process that uses health and socioeconomic factors, among others, to create project lists.

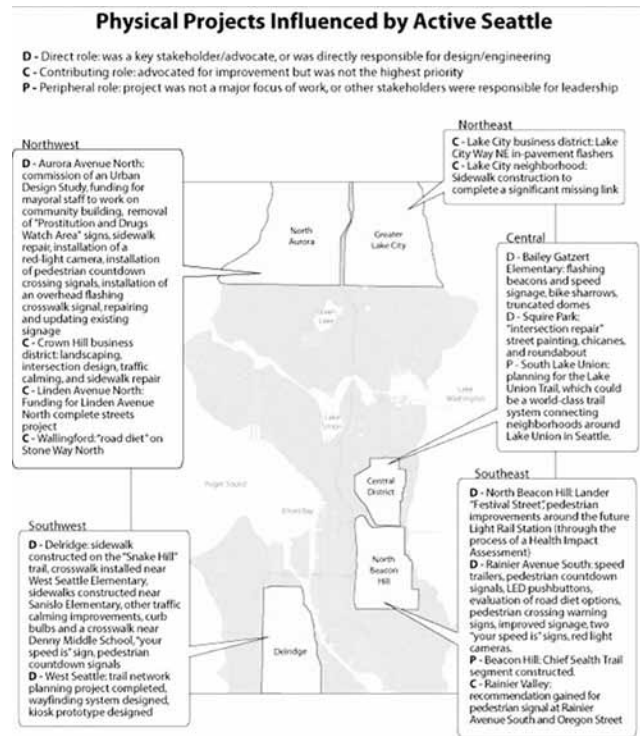
► Trails and Parks

- Active Seattle contributed to efforts by a number of community partners and city agencies to construct the Chief Sealth Trail in the Beacon Hill Neighborhood in southeast Seattle. A contractor offered to build the trail at no cost if he was allowed to use clean excavation soil from another city construction project for the trail rather than trucking the soil across the state. Partners considered a neighborhood plan that would bring a grocery store and other destinations to Beacon Hill to encourage use of the trail.
- Trail projects in west Seattle allowed Active Seattle to leverage money for kiosks, way-finding signage, and enhanced maps.
- Active Seattle advocated for the Interurban Trail, a utility corridor running from the city limits to the southern portion of the North Aurora neighborhood in Northwest Seattle.

“So the trail story is that in exchange for getting rid of all this dirt in the city right away, the company offered to construct the trail. So that’s like many millions of dollars that was able to be saved because of that.” -Staff

► Other Street Design Projects and Policies

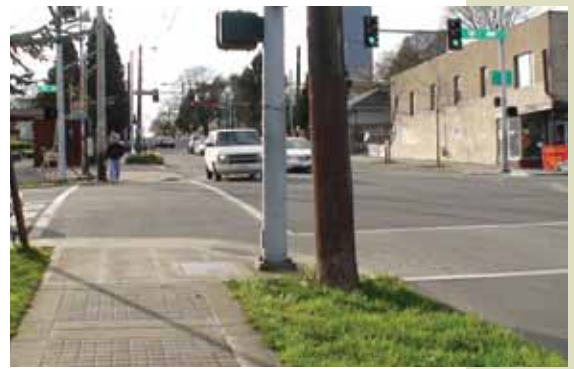
- Active Seattle worked with different communities and agencies to advocate for street design changes such as wider bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, road diets (i.e., reduction in traffic lanes), signals, road closures, signage, and street-calming projects.
- Re+walk walking audits led to a number of recommendations for physical projects and policies, including a “festival street” configuration, traffic calming, crosswalk creation, construction closure policy, a road diet, a pedestrian signal, intersection design, landscaping, traffic calming, sidewalk repair, and trail creation. For example, a “bike box” design was utilized at intersections to allow for greater advance stop distances for vehicles and to enable cyclists to change lanes.



“We are trying to slow traffic here, because the limit is 35 miles, but nobody follows it, it’s like 40 and over. And so we collaborated with police and DOT to make changes. The police have put in the speed readers...and ticketed about more than 800 people in the past year because of speeding.” -Community Member

► **School-related Policies and Physical Projects**

- Active Seattle worked with state level health, transportation, safety, and education agencies and elected officials to promote expansion of the Safe Routes to Schools program in Washington.
- As a result of Active Seattle’s advocacy efforts, the Washington state legislature approved 16 years of funding for the Safe Routes to Schools and school-based Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety projects totaling \$74 million.
- Active Seattle helped to pass the Mobility Education Initiative (House Bill 1588) that incorporated bicycle and pedestrian safety into the driver’s education curriculum in schools in Spokane, King, and Kitsap Counties. This bill also appropriated \$300,000 for the development and evaluation of a pilot course in these three counties.
- Active Seattle successfully advocated for a reduction of speed limits in several neighborhoods near schools. Where speed limits were already reasonable but were not obeyed by drivers, Active Seattle championed the placement of cameras, police officers, and other methods of enforcement.



“I call [House Bill 1588] the Mobility Education Bill, but it says something like ‘incorporating mobility education into broader training programs’ or something like that. And there are two parts to the bill. One part... specifically calls out every part of teaching bicycle safety and pedestrian safety into driver’s education, which is very marginally already, done by some of the best in practice teachers in the state...The second part appropriates \$300,000 for a development and evaluation and conduct of a pilot course.” -Staff

► **Policy Advisory Committees**

- Over the ALbD grant period, Active Seattle partners participated in several advisory committees and workgroups to advance initiatives and policies concerning active living in the Seattle area.
- These committees included:
 - Aurora Avenue Action Agenda Stakeholders
 - Aurora Traffic Safety Corridor Project Stakeholders
 - Delridge Community Council
 - Feet First Policy Advisory Committee
 - King County Board of Health Subcommittee on Pedestrian Safety
 - Mayor’s Green Ribbon Commission Transportation Task Force
 - Mobility Education Initiative
 - Morgan Community Association
 - Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group
 - Rainier Traffic Safety Corridor Project Stakeholders
 - Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board
 - Seattle Department of Transportation Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Freight Advisory Group
 - Seattle Department of Transportation Right-of-Way Improvement Manual Community Advisory Committee
 - Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board
 - Seattle Schools Transportation Futures Community Advisory Committee
 - Southwest District Council
 - Squire Park Community Council
 - University of Washington Prevention Research Center Physical Activity Policy Research Network
 - Washington State Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Steering Committee

► **Other Policies and Physical Projects**

- The partnership worked to change several land use zoning designations. For example, the Project Director identified a particular grocery store around which he sought a pedestrian zone in order to prohibit certain types of development that would discourage walking.
- The partnership's efforts resulted in a number of active living-friendly policies and plans, including a Bicycle Master Plan.
- The Open Space Seattle 2100 aimed to design Seattle's Green Network (e.g., greenspaces, waterways, and the built environment) for the next century. Active Seattle was involved in design charrettes and served on the Executive Committee.
- Active Seattle worked with the director of Sound Transit on the development of Link, Seattle's new light-rail system.
- The partnership worked to identify a solution to the walkability issues around Dearborn Park Elementary School, where students crossed or walked along a windy dangerous street or took a back route to school that required climbing a hill that was dangerous in certain weather conditions.
- In 2007, the city council named pedestrian safety as its top priority and allocated \$3 million for safety efforts.
- In the first year of the ALbD grant, the partnership provided testimony for the development for the new Washington Transportation Plan and a Seattle Right-of-Way Manual.
- In the second year of the grant, third graders spoke on record at a Senate Transportation Committee lunch about what they saw on their regular walks to school.
- Active Seattle participated annually in Transportation Advocacy Day in Olympia to lobby with others statewide.
- The partnership met with the Clinton Foundation and others to present ideas on how community walkability and specific Active Seattle efforts served as a platform for Climate Change Initiative efforts to reduce carbon emissions in participating cities.

“[A local grocery store chain] has a new practice here of co-locating gas stations with a grocery store. And you guys know about the gas stations and walkability. The City of Seattle has something called pedestrian zones, and neighborhoods can get a pedestrian zone designation that prohibits certain types of development. We knew that this store was a potential candidate for one of these gas stations...” -Staff

Challenges and Successes

Staff, partners, and community members noted a number of challenges to developing and implementing policies and physical projects:

- The Pedestrian Master Plan earmark covered only a small part of the funding necessary to tackle the extensive city-wide project.
- Partners were concerned that the Pedestrian Master Plan was not complementary to the existing Bicycle Master Plan.
- Within government agencies, such as transportation departments, there could be large discrepancies between what was established as policy and what the agencies actually implemented.
- Failure to operationalize policies and plans often occurred because of differing opinions about the importance of a policy, lack of funding or time.
- Policy change was an intense and lengthy process that included numerous revisions, legislative actions, and challenges to implementation and enforcement.
- Approaching policy change as a partnership effort was challenging when some partners took credit for a particular policy change, resulting in hard feelings among others involved.
- Partners noted that the search for additional funding for way-finding projects was reconsidered as interest from the community waned and no champion emerged to spearhead this initiative.

- The expansion of trails occurred slowly because trails were large projects requiring significant funding, planning, and mapping.
- Some partners felt that community members' demand for improvements should increase before additional funding was made available.
- At times, partners at transportation agencies did not advocate within their organization to promote institutional change on how streets and sidewalks were built but focused only on individual projects.
- Partners faced opposition from many influential sources, including the Chamber of Commerce.
- When partners achieved physical changes in a neighborhood, the project construction was sometimes executed in a way that opposed partners' recommendations.
- American with Disabilities Act standards were often the cause of disagreement among the partnership and government departments, particularly engineering.

“It’s [policies] that might end up making more of a difference than the projects that we get built. Yeah, more of an institutionalization through the process of meeting with all the different departments and just changing those processes that are going to make more of a difference. It’s just going to take longer. I think really what happens is over decades and decades.” -Staff

“I would have thought there would have been success sooner, but we were in a downturn economically and our biggest opposition frankly has been [Seattle Department of Transportation]. How can we build new sidewalks when we can’t even pay for arterials? We can’t even deal with potholes still. So that was a big obstacle. The other obstacle was traffic engineers whose goal is to move vehicles. The policy in this town for a very long time has been moving cars first, stationary cars second as a priority and anyone else in the right-of-way has to justify why they should displace moving cars or stationary cars.” -Partner

“I believe that we’re spending all this money on facilities, for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, but that we’re not doing a sufficient amount of generating demand. It’s all been focused on supply. And I was thinking that if we increase demand for these things, there will be a lot more money. If we increase supply, who knows whether it will be build it and they will come and I don’t really believe in that philosophy.” -Staff

“Some of the ADA standards are kind of degrading. The problem is the illogic coupled with the engineers. So you get the engineers and then you get people who advocate for accessibility, and the engineers just don’t necessarily agree with them.” -Staff

Programs and Promotions

Active Seattle programs were implemented in both school and community settings. Promotion of the Active Seattle project involved several different aspects of communication, including a social marketing campaign, community maps, events, presentations, and other community forums. Programmatic and promotional efforts, related partner, staff, and community implementation activities, and associated outcomes are described as follows:

► ***Safe Routes to School Programs and Promotions***

- Safe Routes to School was the main programmatic focus of the Active Seattle partnership throughout the five target neighborhoods and the entire city of Seattle. Over the grant period, Active Seattle established Safe Routes to School efforts at Bailey Gatzert Elementary, T.T. Minor Elementary, Wing Luke Elementary, Emerson Elementary, Maple Elementary, Dearborn Park Elementary, West Seattle Elementary, Sanislo Elementary, and Denny Middle School.
- In the first year of the ALbD grant, partners initiated a \$125,000 Safe Routes to School pilot project in two low-income schools in Seattle's Central District neighborhood. Partners also worked with community leaders and the housing authority to establish a Safe Routes to School program in the Delridge neighborhood, resulting in the identification of community needs and a grant request of \$114,585 for programming. Funding was provided by the Washington Department of Transportation. A Safe Routes to School Coordinator hired by the Seattle Department of Transportation managed many of the efforts.
- Safe Routes to School programs and promotions included Walking School Buses, Walk to School Days, pedestrian safety training, parent education, and incentives.
- In total, the partnership helped to coordinate approximately twenty Walking School Buses at each participating Safe Routes school. To encourage community ownership of the Walking School Bus program, the partnership provided stipends to parent leaders. In schools where parents did not lead the Walking School Buses, a school staff person directed the program.
- Partners developed a start-up checklist for Safe Routes to School and provided Safe Routes to School coaching for Walking School Bus leaders.
- Safe Routes to School programming engaged parents and children as well as members of the school district and school administration.
- Active Seattle participated in International Walk to School Month each year in the schools that implemented Safe Routes to School programming. These promotional events focused on encouraging children to walk to school and usually involved local city council officials, the mayor, the transportation department, school board, and Seattle Department of Transportation.
- Safe Routes to School programming and promotions yielded a 24% increase in the number of students who walked to school at Bailey Gatzert Elementary in the Central District neighborhood.
- In the third year of the ALbD grant, Active Seattle partnered with the Bicycle Alliance of Washington to establish a Center for Safe Routes to School through a Washington State Transportation Enhancements Grant (www.saferoutes-wa.org). The website was aimed at five audiences (i.e., families, schools, design professionals, public safety professionals, health professionals) and provided a variety of resources for implementing Safe Routes to School projects. With support from federal Transportation Enhancements funding, the Center provided two statewide conferences, networking through a Coordinating Committee of sixteen leaders representing seven Washington counties, and dozens of trainings for communities interested in starting or sustaining programs.

“I think the Safe Routes funding is making a big difference. The Safe Routes to School funding is available now and getting more and more well-known and so I think that is driving our communities to go for those particular grants [that] are really big and they tend to be comprehensive...it's nice to have a center that people can call, and it's good for contacts.” -Staff

► Community Maps

- Active Seattle partners worked with a variety of other organizations, including the Department of Transportation, to create a variety of maps. Almost 180,000 maps were distributed over the ALbD grant period.
- Some maps were designed to be used in interactive workshops where residents could write on them and locate particular places of concern. Some maps provided information about community groups in each neighborhood to encourage residents to become involved in their community.
- The online Seattle Green Map identified sustainable, walkable areas and featured walking destinations in each of the five target neighborhoods.
- The Neighborhoods on Foot map series encouraged walking by including walk times to popular destinations and identifying locations of staircases, signalized crossings, elevation changes, bike routes, bus routes, and walking routes. The project involved discussions with neighborhood experts and outreach through email and blogs. As a form of community engagement, residents were invited to mark up draft maps and return them to Feet First. Maps were available online and in hard copy.
- Walking route maps were created for every elementary school in Seattle.
- The three-year West Seattle Trails project (conducted in partnership with the National Parks Service) aimed to publish a trail network document and build a way-finding system of kiosks and signs. The planning and implementation project included a series of community walks, data collection, community feedback, and the creation and distribution of a walking map.
- The mapping projects had many benefits for Active Seattle partners. Through the mapping process, the community provided step-by-step feedback (e.g., planning, designing, editing, distribution). The community engagement process helped Active Seattle develop a strong relationship with community organizations, especially local elementary schools. Maps were used as outreach tools within clinics. Partners used maps as outreach tools by training health care providers to distribute maps when discussing physical activity with patients. Partners found that maps could also be used as advocacy tools to strengthen arguments concerning street and sidewalk improvements.
- Communities responded well to the maps and enjoyed seeing their neighborhoods in such detail, causing them to develop a deeper understanding of and concern for their surroundings.



“I think [the maps] are all community-based. They point out different groups that are working in the neighborhood and who is doing their on-the-ground stuff. Like for Beacon Hill there’s Beacon Hill Pedestrian Task Force and maybe up to ten different other groups so we put all their information on there and say when they meet and that kind of thing so it really is oriented toward getting people involved.” -Staff

“...the Delridge map was designed so that... people could write on it and put where they hang out or where they walk and also things like places where the traffic goes too fast, places where they want sidewalks. There is much more than that. It was about community gardens and...so it is just a visioning process I guess. So the workshops with the schools were where we sat down with people and actually had them fill the map out.” -Staff

“In terms of general community engagement... people seem to react to them, because you show them a map of their neighborhood, they’ve never seen that before, because you see city level maps, I guess. People usually get excited and they want to show you where they live or see things they could get to. They don’t know how close it is.” -Staff

▶ **Mobility Education Initiative**

- In the third year of the ALbD grant, Active Seattle launched a Mobility Education Initiative that aimed to examine mobility knowledge among teens and their interest in this type of education.
- Surveys were conducted at teen health fairs. Results were presented at the 2006 Washington Traffic Education Association, where partners recruited instructors for pilot mobility education courses. These courses expanded drivers' education to include alternative transportation forms using new technology, (i.e., video conferencing) as well as on-street training.
- This initiative also allowed the partnership to attract a sponsor for a 2007 legislative bill and establish state and national advisory committees for this work.

▶ **Feet First Chicken Social Marketing Campaign**

- Perhaps the most recognizable promotions effort of Active Seattle was a yellow chicken, the mascot of Feet First. This character was created by the partnership to achieve awareness of the safety-activity connection by families and the school community. The mascot crossed the road at numerous events.
- Partners received training from Spitfire Strategies through RWJF and the ALbD National Program Office on how to implement a social marketing campaign using the chicken. They also worked with local experts to develop goals and design their campaign.



- Active Seattle created a MySpace page and a blog for the chicken. They distributed stuffed chicks to community members, featured the chicken on brochures and other written materials for the campaign. Additionally, they named Feet First membership levels as the egg, chick, and hen levels, and asked community members to audition to wear the chicken costume.
- The yellow chicken campaign had a wide reach and was easily recognizable. Partners agreed that social marketing was an effective tool and sought to learn new techniques for garnering public support from for-profit businesses and other organizations.

▶ **The Cart Project Social Marketing Campaign**

- Through a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Special Opportunities grant, Active Seattle created the Cart Project, a social marketing campaign that provided personal shopping carts to encourage residents of the Delridge neighborhood to make short trips to local retail.
- An informal survey showed that 35% of participants increased their physical activity and half of the participants walked to the grocery store more frequently.

► **Presentations and Community Forums**

- Active Seattle partners participated in meetings and conferences for several national organizations, including the Transportation Research Board, the Healthy Aging Research Network, the Physical Activity Policy Research Network, Pro Walk/Pro Bike, and Safe Routes to School.
- Community residents and partners also presented their findings to local and state legislators.
- Partners facilitated discussions between community organizations, residents, and governmental agencies through community forums and coached community residents to be advocates for change.
- The partnership also participated in the schools' Parent Nights by sponsoring an informational booth to promote Active Living programs.

► **Media**

- Active Seattle had a good relationship with the Post-Intelligencer, a local newspaper. Partners organized editorials and other community pieces for publication and generally received good press from the newspaper.
- The partnership used Web 2.0 and other internet technology to promote Active Seattle efforts.
- Television, radio, and newspaper press releases were used to promote Active Seattle events (e.g., Walk to School Day) in the general community.

“Last year in October 2005, we had coverage also from KING TV and that was hooked in with a health link story. One of our local newscasters has a health link segment on every Tuesday night or something like that. So yeah, there’s been a lot of, by my standards, a lot of TV coverage of [Walk to School] days... [The media] seem to come to us as much as we go to them. We have done different stories on what is a walking school bus and what are the reasons for getting to school actively rather than car.” -Staff

► **Other Programmatic and Promotional Efforts**

- Active Seattle worked in partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation’s Sound Steps program, a community-based, senior walking program. Approximately 15 to 20 people walked with the Sound Steps group in good weather between two and five times per week.
- The partnership conducted a bike education program that included a biking club. Professional educators were hired to continue teaching this program.
- Active Seattle worked with community partners to promote the Longfellow Creek Legacy Trail, a four-mile trail that runs along a creek and through the Greg Davis Park in Delridge in southwest Seattle. Trail markers were installed and special events, such as Delridge Day, were held. Partners worked to create a sense of community ownership and pride around this trail and others across Seattle.
- The Building a Healthier Tomorrow brochure discussed the connection between health and the built environment. Approximately 8,000 copies were distributed to professionals, decision-makers, and community members.
- The Parents Make Choices brochure educated parents about children walking to school. The brochure was translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, and Somali. Approximately 8,000 copies were distributed.
- The partnership used various media outlets, including press releases, blog postings, the Feet First website, and e-mail to disseminate the active living message.

Challenges and Successes

Staff, partners, and community members identified a number of challenges to implementing programs and promotions:

- Some parents and teachers worried that if the individuals responsible for the Walking School Bus left, the program would end. These individuals desired additional training and support before they were willing to consider leading school-based efforts.
- Some Safe Routes to School programs ended when funding ran out. Partners complained the funding period for state Safe Routes to School grants was too limited to achieve sustainability.
- Safe Routes to School programming was challenged by inadequate infrastructure (e.g., lack of sidewalks) and safety concerns (e.g., lack of no speeding zone signage).
- While the Active Seattle embraced Web 2.0, partners and staff were concerned that these modes of communication did not reach their core demographic.
- Although video was a useful tool for promotions, it was sometimes challenging to obtain authorization from parents, especially those with language barriers, to film their children.
- Although successful in some instances, newsletters or flyers were less effective modes of communication because of diversity of language and difficulties ensuring print materials were read.
- One purpose of the promotional efforts in Seattle was to increase membership in Feet First, the lead agency. However, membership remained low.
- While interpretive services were used to reduce communication barriers, partners worried that such services were a risky expense if few people attended.
- Partners learned to build on existing meetings and events, but meetings and events tended to be costly and infrequent.
- In social marketing, a common approach has been to focus on populations that tend to be early adopters of behavior change. Active Seattle focused on lower-income populations, which often faced barriers that precluded them from being the early adopters.

“So, the teachers and the parents in their interviews said, ‘I need some training. If I am going to be walking 12-15 kids, what happens if they run into the street? What happens when they get in a fight? I am not going to take that responsibility until I have had training.’” -Staff

“A big challenge in schools is getting the consent that children can be filmed. So making sure you make it explicit to families that if they don’t want children filmed, they have these other alternative ways to be involved and not be in front of the cameras.” -Staff

“You are not going to get the people, as far as people that we would really want, to be reading online and be actively engaged in stuff online. [Those who] are may not be our core demographic. At the same time, it is really important to work on those kinds of things because there is so much potential for really using it in a social marketing context.” -Staff

“Kind of the rule of thumb for PTA meetings is interpreter on sight. And that is a tricky one. That’s really hard, because people get nervous that what if nobody will show up, and there’s a money expense for that... It is good to have that in your mindset ahead of time, and if you’re going to pay for the interpreters and you know that you are, then the incentive is built in to do really good outreach and to make sure you’ve invited people fully in a way that they’re likely to pick up on.” -Staff

Staff, partners, and community members identified a number of facilitators to implementing programs and promotions:

- Creating a strong relationship with key partners, such as the school district and parent leaders, contributed to the success of physical activity programs across Seattle schools and community.
- Incentives were effective in promoting events and encouraging people to attend.
- The Neighborhoods on Foot mapping project changed the way Feet First engaged community members by moving the organization toward increased visibility, strengthened neighborhood connections, and improved dissemination of messages.
- The West Seattle Trails project encouraged community advocacy and created a work plan that community residents could sustain.
- In order to reach the neighborhood's diverse populations outreach materials were published in multiple languages, relationships were formed with trusted community-based organizations, and childcare and food were provided when appropriate.
- The partnership found that many of its efforts could be easily replicated in other neighborhoods.

Sustainability

One of the many concerns of Active Living by Design grantees was the longevity of the partnership after the initial grant cycle ended. The core partners of Active Seattle firmly believed that the partnership would remain intact and that they were “bonded” through their past efforts. As Seattle residents and community organizations across the city, region, and nation continued to contact the partnership for expertise and guidance, Active Seattle ensured its staying power.

Active Seattle constructed its partnership in such a way that when a partner left or was no longer able to engage in assigned duties, there were others working on the same issues who maintained momentum. The partnership utilized a number of other sustainability strategies, including developing close relationships with community organizations, building the capacity of implementation partners, promoting community leadership and ownership of programs and activities, and changing norms related to physical activity. In addition, the partnership received a Sustainability Grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to develop a sustainability plan and continue ALbD work (e.g., way-finding system, trail planning). Other funding was obtained to walking audits, mapping projects, and social marketing.

The lead agency, Feet First, continued to conduct many promotions, programs and community outreach efforts, despite a decline in funding for staff time. Feet First made steps to diversify its funding streams to include donors and contracts, in addition to grants. For example, the organization secured contracts with the University of Washington, Seattle Children's Hospital, the City of Issaquah, Lummi Tribe, and the King County Food and Fitness Initiative for social marketing, walking maps, and walking audits.

Ultimately, many of Active Seattle's efforts were sustained through the creation of policies and funding streams for active living principles. The Seattle Department of Transportation integrated health concepts into plans and projects and adopted a Complete Streets policy. Bridging the Gap allotted significant funding for the Pedestrian Master Plan and other improvements. In addition, the number of active living staff in government agencies increased, including a Safe Routes to School position funded by the Seattle Department of Transportation. Active Seattle strengthened the active living movement in Seattle, creating lasting culture and institutional change.

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