

SC 13 – Promoting Active Living for Scott County



Project Lead:

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Description: Physical activity benefits the health of people in all age groups, regardless of their health status. In Scott County, only 1 in 4 residents engages in sufficient moderate physical activity during a typical week (150–299 minutes). A growing body of research indicates that inactive adults have a higher risk for early death, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers.

Active living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines, such as walking or bicycling for recreational, occupational, or purposeful (transportation) reasons. Incorporating active living concepts and practices into land use, community design, and site planning policies and decisions can help to encourage active living and increase levels of daily physical activity. Because of its rural and suburban character, Scott County cities and townships face unique challenges in implementing strong active living policies practices.

The goal of this project is to help Scott County and its cities and townships understand how their current policies and practices support or hinder active living, and identify assets, gaps, barriers, and opportunities with respect to promoting active living.

Key Issues, Questions, and Ideas for Exploration:

- Review the plans, policies, and ordinances of Scott County and its cities and townships. How do they currently address the topic of active living? Based on this policy analysis, what assets, gaps, barriers, and opportunities exist with respect to promoting active living in the county or these municipalities?
- What opportunities for, and barriers to, active living do residents of Scott County experience? The County is especially interested in learning about the experiences of demographic groups that are typically underrepresented in decision making, including seniors, recent immigrants, youth, people of color, and low-income residents.
- Much of the literature on active living is intended for more urban contexts than those typically found in Scott County. What does active living mean in a suburban and rural context? How can these concepts be effectively communicated to the public and policy makers in Scott County who might be skeptical of active living?
- Research case studies that demonstrate how comparable communities in Minnesota or the elsewhere in the United States have successfully integrated active living concepts and practices into their land use, community design, and site planning policies and

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decisions. What best practices can be gleaned from their experiences? Are there model policies or ordinances that can serve as examples for Scott County communities?

- Identify strategies for building community support for active living policies and practices. Research case studies and/or similar communities who have conducted an active living policy analysis or similar analysis. How did they share and apply these findings within the communities they serve? How have other communities fostered support for such initiatives? What would a marketing campaign to promote active living look like?

How Will Student Work Be Used to Build Community Resiliency?

Student research will be presented to the County's Active Living Steering Workgroup—which is comprised of elected officials, community development directors, planners, and other staff and decision makers—to inform them about opportunities to increase active living through plans, policies, and initiatives.

The research will also inform the work of Scott County department leads on a future Scott County Delivers session focused on Promoting Efforts that Encourage Healthy and Active Lifestyles for All Ages.

Students will be invited to present their findings and recommendations to the Active Living Steering Workgroup, Scott County Community Leadership Team, and others. Staff and decision makers from the participating municipalities will be invited to attend the session.

Existing Plans and Reports:

- [Scott County 2040 Comprehensive Plan](#)
- County and city plans, policies, and ordinances
- School district wellness policies and curriculum

Potential Stakeholders and Partners:

- Cities of Shakopee, Prior Lake, Belle Plaine, Jordan, Savage, New Prague, and Elko New Market
- Townships of Belle Plaine, Blakeley, Cedar Lake, Credit River, Helena, Jackson, Louisville, New Market, Sand Creek, Spring Lake, and St. Lawrence
- Three Rivers Park District
- Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP)
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Public Health Law Center, Mitchell Hamline School of Law

To learn more about this project or discuss how to integrate it into a UMN course or an individual student project (such as a culminating experience, capstone, master's project, or independent study), please contact Sarah Tschida or Mike Greco with the Resilient Communities Project at rcp@umn.edu.