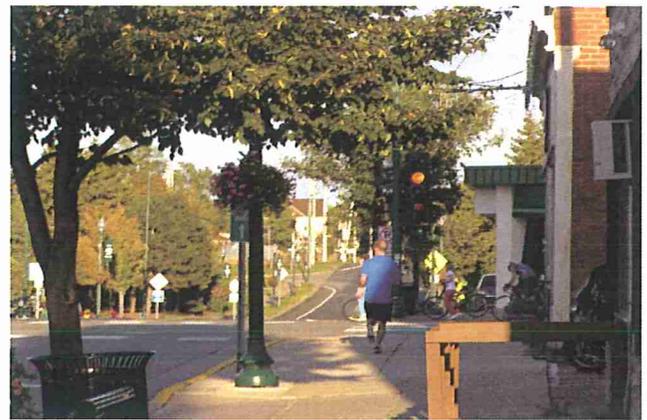


Active Living Plan



*Appendix A of the
2030 Comprehensive Plan*

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the concept of active living. Overall, this section examines the connections between the built environment (land use, transportation, parks and recreation) and its impact on public health. The three components of the built environment are addressed in greater detail in their own chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this section is to coordinate goals and policies from the Land Use, Transportation and Parks Chapters to implement the City's active living vision.

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, the Introduction defines active living, identifies the challenges in creating an active living community and establishes Rosemount's active living vision. Second, the Assessment established the connection between the built environment and public health by outlining both the health issues facing the community and how the design of our cities influence these issues. Finally, the Plan outlines goals and policies and an implementation strategy to realize Rosemount's active living vision.

What is Active Living?

Active living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines. On an individual level, the goal is to accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity each day for adults and at least 60 minutes each day for children and adolescents. Individuals may achieve this by walking or bicycling for transportation, exercising for pleasure, playing in the park, working in the yard, taking the stairs or using other recreational facilities.

Active Living communities make it easy for people to include physical activity in their daily lives. Walking to work, school, and the store or just for fun is safe and convenient. Bicyclists are accommodated and roads are built for all forms of transportation, not just the car. Recreation opportunities are accessible and parks, playgrounds, and all kinds of sports facilities are located near people's homes and are open to all residents. Overall, the goal is to promote development of the built environments that offers the opportunity to integrate physical activity into daily life.

Rosemount's Active Living Vision

Physical activity can favorably improve the health and quality of life for Rosemount residents. Therefore, the built environment should be designed to provide a variety of opportunities for physical activity and should accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities. To implement this vision, the City should consider the following three statements when reviewing development proposals:

1. Development patterns should encourage mixed uses, efficient design and a variety of transportation choices.
2. The transportation systems, including transit, should provide safe, convenient and affordable access to housing, worksites, schools and other destinations of interest for both motorized and non-motorized users.
3. The parks, trails and open space system should provide for the recreation and leisure needs of all residents as well as facilitate non-motorized utilitarian travel to destinations of interest, such as housing, worksites, schools and community services.

ACTIVE LIVING ASSESSMENT

An assessment of active living data and the local environment found long established national trends are influencing local active living conditions in Rosemount. First, the nation is experiencing an epidemic of inactivity and poor nutrition. Second, changes in technology and mechanization have influenced how communities are designed and develop. This assessment details how the national trends impact public health and development in Rosemount.

The Nation's Health Crisis: Inactivity & Poor Nutrition

America faces a national health crisis of epidemic proportions. In just a few decades, physical inactivity combined with poor nutrition has made us a nation of overweight and out of-shape people. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, the number of overweight or obese adults increased steadily from 47 percent in 1976 to 64 percent in 2000. This trend is important because obesity is a significant risk factor for developing chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Nearly 80 percent of obese adults have diabetes, high blood cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, coronary artery disease or other ailments. Physical inactivity and obesity now rank second only to tobacco use in their contribution to total mortality in the United States. Unfortunately, these health issues are not limited to adults. In 2000, 15 percent of both children and adolescents in the United States were overweight, tripling the numbers from two decades ago.

This health crisis is costly in both dollars and lives. According to the Dakota County Public Health Department, in 2006 the County experienced 496 deaths from cardiovascular disease or stroke, 373 new cases of colorectal cancer and 617 new cases of breast cancer. Overall, the CDC estimates that obesity related treatment cost the State of Minnesota \$1.3 billion in 2003. And, the data suggests that all these figures are on the rise.

The CDC estimates obesity is associated with a 36 percent increase in inpatient/outpatient health care costs and 77 percent increase in prescription medication costs. Being overweight increases yearly per-person health care costs by \$125, while obesity increases costs by \$395. In addition, a study of individuals age 15 and older without physical limitations found that the average annual direct medical costs were \$1,019 for those who were regularly physically active compared to \$1,349 for those who reported being inactive.

The Built Environment & Public Health

The health issues and environmental barriers identified above are not unique to Rosemount. While Rosemount has many existing features and policies that support active living, it has not escaped the national trends of inactivity, poor nutrition, and communities designed that are at the core of our health and inactivity issues. Even where facilities exist, features that support driving, such as wide roads and intersections, large parking lots and drive-through businesses, create an environment that is uncomfortable and unsafe for non-motorists. Spread-out, isolated destinations also discourage walking and bicycling. For many people, it is no longer possible to walk to the grocery store or to walk from work to a restaurant for lunch. The three elements of the built environment influence these conditions. A description of each element and how they impact public health and physical activity levels is outlined below.

Land Use: Land use planning influences the type, density, mixture, location and rate of development. For example, a mixture of land uses provides more destinations making walking and bicycling more feasible. Density puts destinations in closer proximity and facilitates active transportation. Ensuring a balance of jobs and housing (especially life cycle housing) improves opportunities for living and working within the same community, potentially reducing commute distances and making walking, bicycling and transit easier.

Transportation: The transportation network impacts the fundamental character of a community by determining how people move from place to place. Today, 50 percent of trips are less than three miles and 28 percent are less than one mile. Yet 65 percent of these trips are made by car. Transportation systems should serve all three elements of mobility: access (movement within a neighborhood), circulation (movement between neighborhoods) and travel (movement throughout the region). Typically, transportation investment is too focused on serving regional movements at the expense of balanced mobility within and between neighborhoods. Transportation planning can support active living and public health by promoting connected, accessible, and safe infrastructure for both motorized and non-motorized users.

Parks, Trails and Open Space: Traditionally park, trail and open space systems focus on recreational and leisure activities. Public space for recreational opportunities is a key component of active living. However, these facilities are also important elements of the City's transportation system and can have a major impact on public health. Research shows that people are more likely to use park, trail and open space facilities that are close to their home or workplace. In addition, they are more likely to use these same facilities for utilitarian purposes (such as walking to a store or restaurant or biking to a transit station or workplace) when these facilities are part of a larger network and connected to desired destinations.

Dakota County Active Living Partnership

In the fall of 2006, City staff began working with the Dakota County Active Living Partnership. This group and their work were funded through a grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and included Dakota County, School District 196, the communities of Apple Valley, Eagan and Rosemount as well as a mix of interested private sector stakeholders. The main focus of this group was to assess the active living conditions in the partnering communities and suggest policy changes to encourage increased physical activity in daily routines. This document is the direct result of that work.

The assessment was led by Active Living by Design from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill and involved a series of informational meetings as well as a telephone survey of residents conducted by the survey firm Decision Resources. The assessment gathered data about the individual activity levels, trends in urban development, and feedback from stakeholders.

Overall, the survey found 78 percent of Rosemount residents do not meet the Surgeon General's recommendation for daily physical activity. In addition, while many Rosemount residents have access to the City's sidewalk and trail system and live relatively close to work or school, few actually walk or bike to those destinations. While 83 percent indicated that there were sidewalk and trails in their neighborhood, 39 percent indicated that the sidewalk and trail network did not

connect with where they want to go. The survey also found that 25 percent of Rosemount residents live within 5 mile of work. Yet 94 percent of adults said they have never biked to work. Similarly 91 percent of children have never bike to school.

Based on the information gathered during the informational meetings and telephone survey, the group made four primary assessment findings.

1. While many residents of Dakota County and the partnering communities are recreationally active, few are walking or biking for utilitarian purposes.
2. Many components of the partnering community's land use, transportation, and parks and recreation policies seem to support active living but operate without a coordinated active living focus.
3. Transportation and recreation facilities are abundant but are not connected to form a network for active living and dangerous roads likely prevent their use.
4. The current infrastructure and distance between schools, workplaces, homes and services does not support of active living.

Local Barriers to Active Living

National studies identify three main barriers to becoming more physically active: personal (motivation, etc.), social (time or social support) and environmental (facilities and access to them). To address each of these barriers requires a comprehensive strategy of programs and support efforts, policy change in local schools and other institutions and infrastructure and facility improvements to create a safe, enjoyable environments for walking, bicycling and other forms of physical activity. The following is a summary of the environmental barrier identified in Rosemount.

1. Arterial and Collector roads with high traffic speeds and poor crossings.
2. Railroad lines with poor crossings.
3. Distance between destinations.
4. Incomplete sidewalk and trail network.
5. Limited transit service and supportive facilities.

ACTIVE LIVING PLAN

How do we address these issues? Moderately intense, daily physical activity, such as bicycling or walking, has long been recognized as an essential ingredient of a healthy life and could address many aspects of the health issue described above. Yet many Americans, both young and old, lead a sedentary lifestyle. Our workplaces and routine activities are increasingly automated. Many jobs require workers to spend hours at a desk. We use the automobile as our primary means of travel—even for short trips.

Active Living Goals

The following eight goals suggest ways to promote active living and development the built environment to realize Rosemount's active living vision.

1. Support Programming that Promotes Active Living.
 - A. Introduce walkable/bikeable communities and active living issues into public dialogue.
 - B. Encourage active living choices with signs and other prompts in public spaces.
 - C. Support active living incentive and programs.
 - D. Sponsor active living programs.
2. Foster Collaboration and Information Sharing.
 - A. Provide forums for departments to discuss active living strategies.
 - B. Establish an Active Living Advisory Committee (ALAC) to advise the City Council on active living issues.
 - C. Develop processes for sharing important data related to active living.
 - D. Partner with the health community, nonprofits, local businesses and community organizations.
 - E. Facilitate the collaborative process.
3. Support Pedestrian-Oriented Transportation Facilities and Services.
 - A. Fully implement the City Transportation Plan with special emphasis on the Transit and Non-Motorized section.
 - B. Support a balanced transportation system that makes it possible for residents to walk or ride a bicycle to a store, school or work.
 - C. Improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - D. Provide processes to assess active living infrastructure in the community and develop improvement plans.
 - E. Develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan.
 - F. Consider establishment of a Complete Streets policy.

4. Support Active Living Land Use Planning and Development.
 - A. Coordinate land use and zoning standards to address active living principals.
 - B. Incorporate active living issues into land-use review and the planning processes.
 - C. Use incentive, zoning, and development strategies to support active living.
 - D. Encourage higher-density, mixed-use development where appropriate along major roads and within walking distance of public transit.
 - E. Study parking standards and consider incentive for shared parking for complimentary uses.
 - F. Focus infrastructure investment in the developed portion of town to encourage downtown revitalization.
 - G. Develop and implement design guidelines that support active living.
5. Encourage Healthy School Sites, Facilities and Policies.
 - A. Educate school officials, parents and children about the importance of active living.
 - B. Locate schools in areas that support active living.
 - C. Support programs that encourage active living for school children.
 - D. Encourage community use of school facilities.
6. Support Recreation Facilities, Parks and Trails.
 - A. Implement the City's Parks, Trails and Open Space System Plan.
 - B. Ensure that physical activity facilities are accessible and affordable.
 - C. Support programming that promotes active living within the Park, Trails and Open Space system.
7. Enable Safety, Security and Crime Prevention.
 - A. Keep pedestrian routes free from crime.
 - B. Ensure pedestrians and bicyclists feel safe crossing streets.
 - C. Provide an environment that reduces injury.

8. Identify and Create Active Living Funding Sources.
 - A. Establishing long term funding mechanisms for programming as well as active living infrastructure construction and maintenance.
 - B. Use incentive systems.
 - C. Use financing techniques.
 - D. Partner with non-government groups.
 - E. Leverage existing funding streams (LCA, Safe Routes to School, CDBG, Federal Stimulus, etc.).

Active Living Strategy Implementation

Implementation of Rosemount's active living plan and vision should include the following five strategies.

1. **Preparation:** This includes developing and maintaining partnership of active living stakeholders from both the public and private sector in the areas of planning, transportation, public health, parks and recreation and the like. It also entails an assessment of existing conditions, environmental resources and additional resources.
2. **Promotion:** Effective promotion or communications efforts are vital to the success of any program because they are the means by which the project connects with the public. While promotional efforts may include secondary messages, the City's active living vision and what actions can be taken to fulfill this vision should be the primary message in all communications.
3. **Programs:** Programs may provide incentives for certain types of personal action or development of the built environment that supports the community's active living goals. Others can raise awareness of active living issues or mobilize the public to advocate for policy change.
4. **Policy:** Active living advocates should use the Preparation, Promotion and Program components to implement both public and private sector policies that institutionalize a health-supportive environment. Policy efforts should focus on the four main areas of active living: land use planning, transportation, public health, parks and recreation.
5. **Physical Projects:** The ultimate outcome of the City's Comprehensive Active Living Strategy is to use the Preparation, Promotion, Programs and Policy changes to get physical projects that improve the built environment for active living. These projects may develop in any of the active living focus areas of land use planning, transportation, public health or parks and recreation. These projects could include:

1. Pedestrian Intersection Improvements. These improvements could include installation of new traffic control signals and pedestrian crossings, revised timing of existing signals, revised roadway geometry (layout and design of lanes), curb bump-outs, traffic calming measures and the like.
 - A. 145th Street and Highway 3.
 - B. County Road 42 and Highway 3.
 - C. Shannon Parkway and County Road 42.
 - D. Diamond Path and County Road 42.
2. Trail Corridor Improvements
 - A. Interpretive Trail from Central Park to Spring Lake Park.
 - B. North Side of 145th Street from Chippendale to Diamond Path.
 - C. West side of Shannon Parkway from County Road 42 to Evermoore Parkway.
 - D. Connections to Lebanon Hills Park.
 - E. Both sides of Highway 3 from 140th Circle to Connemara Trail.
3. Bicycle Facilities
 - A. On-Street Bike Lanes for Collector and Minor Arterial Roads.
 - B. Develop Bike Parking Standards.
 - C. Install Bike Parking Facilities at all Public Buildings.
4. Signage
 - A. Wayfinding Signage for Pedestrian Trails and On-Street Bike Lanes.
5. Downtown Redevelopment
 - A. Mixed-Use Projects.
 - B. Park and Ride Facility.
 - C. Benches, Planter, and Decorative Sidewalk Improvements along Highway 3 from 143rd Street to the Entrance to Rosemount Crossings and from City Hall to Cameo Avenue.
6. Elimination of Pedestrian Barriers
 - A. Pedestrian Underpass at Highway 3 and 140th Circle.
 - B. Railroad Crossing Improvements at the 145th Street and Biscayne Avenue crossings.