

4. ACTIVE LIVING

Goal: Enhance the health, safety, and well-being of all who live, work, and play in the City.

In 2006, the City received a grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota to incorporate active living principles into the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the grant was to encourage cities to create a natural and built environment that encourages more physical activity and, subsequently, leads to an increase in overall public health. There is no single solution to increasing physical activity or public health, and the City does not seek to change personal choices. However, the City can work to remove obstacles to physical activity and increase opportunities for healthy living choices. The City continues to support the active living goals and policies identified during the last Comprehensive Plan update and has elected to retain this chapter in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

4.1 ACTIVE LIVING PRINCIPLES

A principal goal of active living is to create opportunities that integrate physical activity into daily routines. Removing obstacles in the built environment and encouraging a built environment that promotes physical activity can be achieved through the planning process.

In committing to promote and increase physical activity, the following principles, based on principles prepared by the Active Living by Design group (www.activelivingbydesign.org), serve as a guide to advancing the active living movement:

1. Physical activity is a behavior that can favorably improve health and quality of life.
2. Everyone should have safe, convenient and affordable choices for physical activity.
3. The City and new developments should be designed to provide a variety of opportunities for physical activity and should accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
4. Development patterns should encourage opportunities for active living where appropriate as well as a variety of transportation choices.

5. Buildings should be designed and oriented to promote opportunities for active living, especially non-motorized transportation.
6. Transportation systems, including transit, should provide safe, convenient and affordable access to housing, worksites, schools and community services.
7. Parks and green space, including pathways, should be safe, accessible and part of a transportation network that connects destinations of interest, such as housing, worksites, schools, community services and other places with high population density.
8. The City, in cooperation with other public and private entities, are encouraged to plan for ongoing interdisciplinary collaboration, promotion of facilities, behavioral supports, policies that institutionalize the vision of active living, and routine maintenance that ensures continued safety, quality and attractiveness of the physical infrastructure.
9. City planning processes should address the multiple impacts of the built environment and transportation choices on residents' ability to be physically active.

These principles can help serve as an evaluation framework for new developments, ordinances, and policies.

4.2 APPLYING ACTIVE LIVING PRINCIPLES

This chapter does not encompass all of the goals or policies related to the active living movement. Where applicable, active living principles have been incorporated throughout this Plan to encourage coordination between goals, policies, and strategies. For example, reconstructing a road in the transportation chapter is related to creating a new pathway in the parks and recreation chapter, which increases opportunities for physical activity and healthy living.

In addition to the goals and policies throughout this Comprehensive Plan, the city seeks to advance the overall *active living goal* with the following additional policies:

- Encourage the incorporation of active living principles into new developments and redevelopments where feasible.
- Consider active living principles when evaluating new policies, ordinances, procedures, and proposals.
- Work with the adjacent communities, school districts, public & private institutions, and employers to encourage and advance the active living principles.

- Evaluate the City's regulations to identify and remove obstacles to active living where feasible for residents of all ages and abilities.

The above strategies should not be considered all-inclusive. New opportunities and strategies should be identified to further advance the City's active living goal and principles.

In addition to the local strategies listed above, the City will continue to partner with the coalition members of Active Living Ramsey Communities to encourage and support efforts to improve active living at the regional level through changes in public and private design, transportation, and policies.