



Using Active Living Principles To Promote Physical Activity in Rural Communities

Tim Schwantes, M.S.W., M.P.H.
Project Manager, Active Living By Design



Agenda

- What is the issue?
- Five Active Living By Design communities
- 5P Strategies
- Assets
- Challenges
- Lessons Learned



Physical Activity in Rural Locations

- Physical inactivity is higher
- Rural populations are more likely to be obese
- Overweight and obese children are 25% more likely to live in rural settings
- Opportunities in the built environment are fewer



Barriers to Active Living in Rural Locations

- Reach
- Limited in resources
- Rural communities have lower population density
- Under studied



The Myth about Physical Activity in Rural Areas

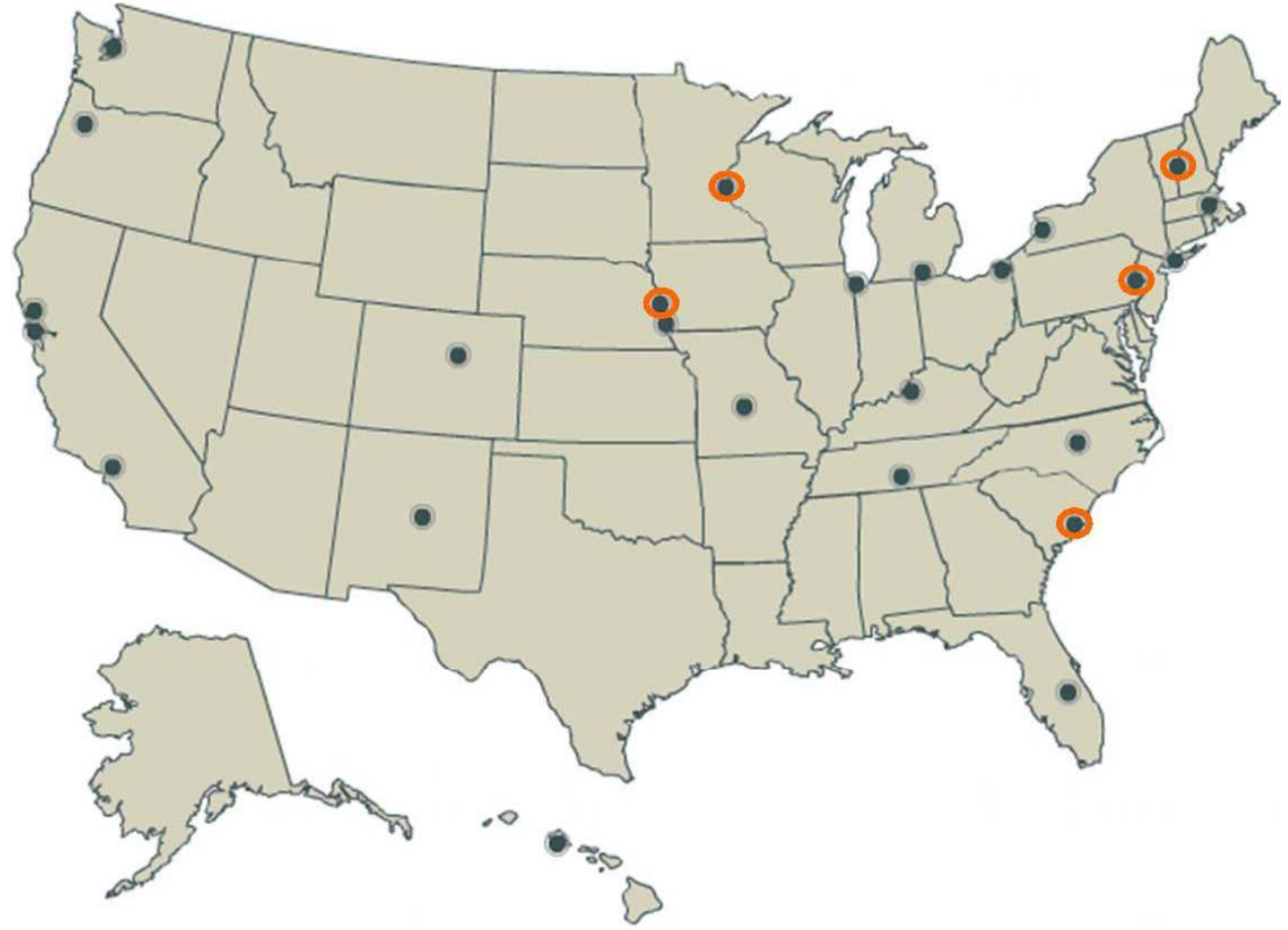
Rural populations have more opportunities for physical activity because of the expansive amounts of green space and natural amenities





ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN

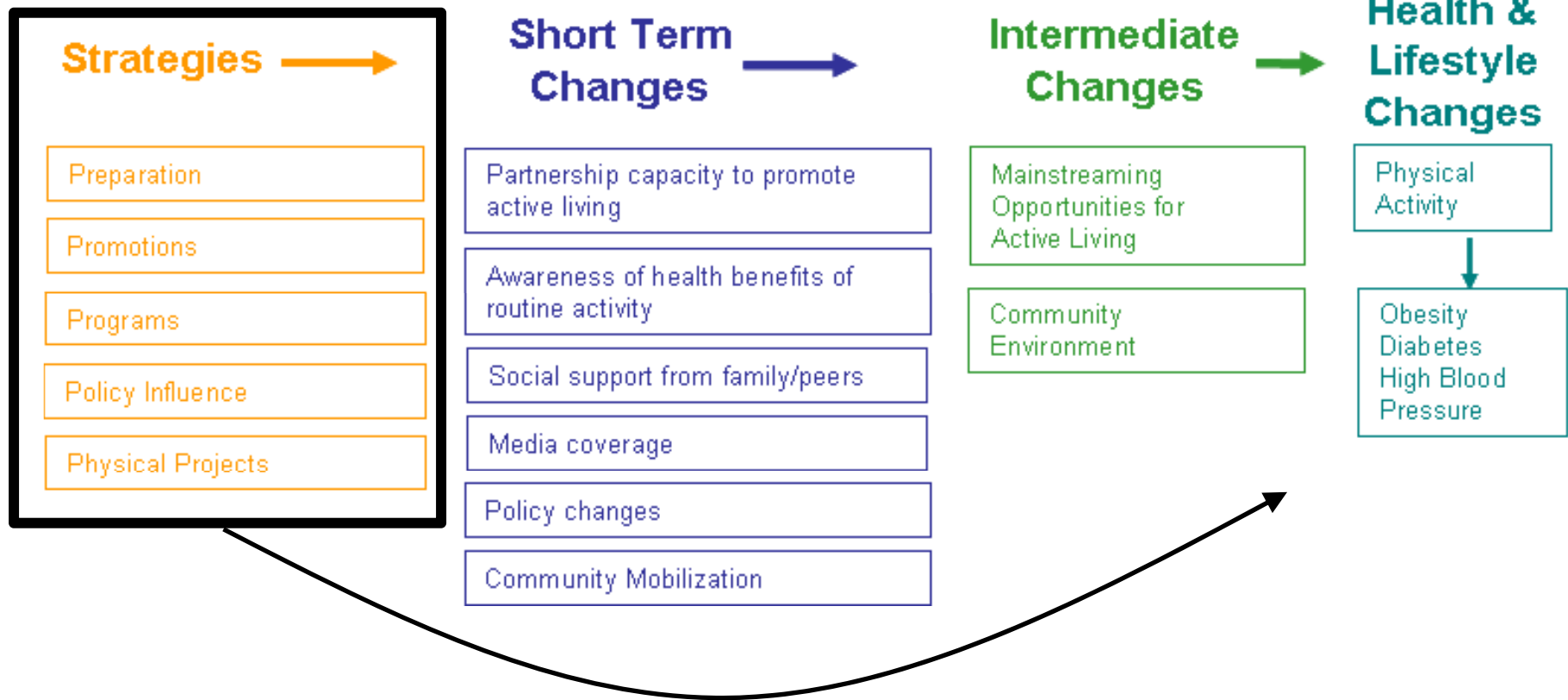
- Albuquerque, NM
- Bronx, NY
- Buffalo, NY
- Chapel Hill, NC
- Charleston, SC**
- Chicago, IL
- Cleveland, OH
- Columbia, MO
- Denver, CO
- Honolulu, HI
- Isanti County, MN**
- Jackson, MI
- Louisville, KY
- Nashville, TN
- Oakland, CA
- Omaha, NE
- Orlando, FL
- Portland, OR
- Sacramento, CA
- Santa Ana, CA
- Seattle, WA
- Somerville, MA
- Upper Valley, NH/VT**
- Wilkes-Barre, PA**
- Winnebago, NE**



 = 5 most rural communities

5P Strategies

Active Living by Design Community Action Model



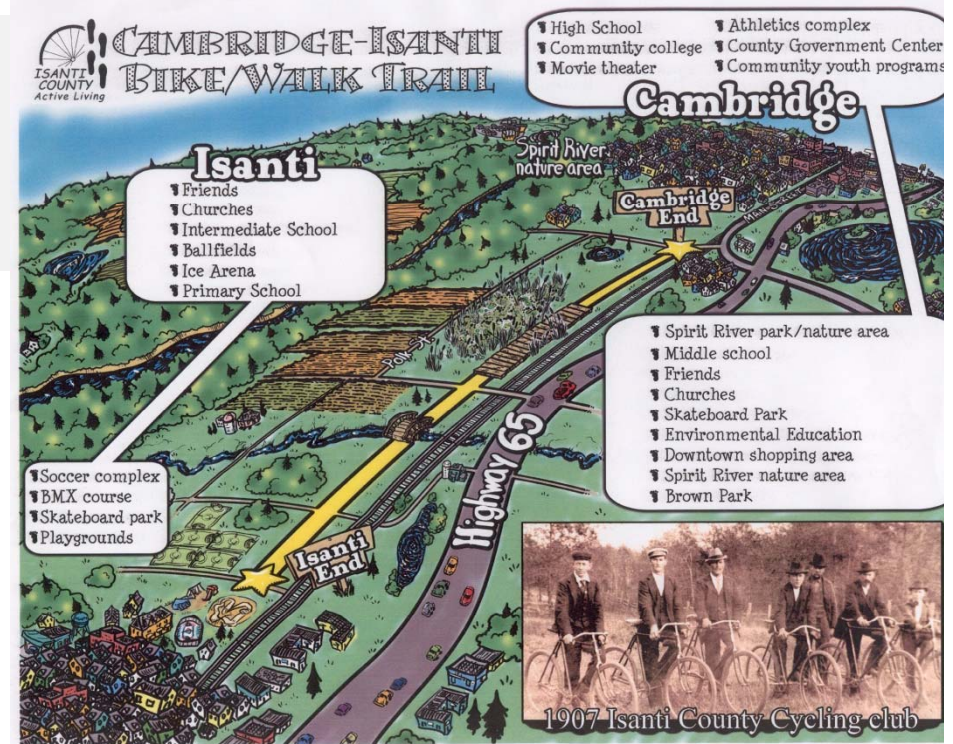
Assets of the 5 Rural Communities

- Natural beauty
- Connection to policy makers
- When change happens, often happens faster
- Culture/Sense of pride in “home”



Challenges They Faced

- Turnover
- Working across multi-jurisdictional settings
- Utilizing centralized meeting places
- Assessing and prioritizing community needs
- Large (geographic) projects take time



Lessons to Inform Future Work

- Partner with **larger employers**
- Incorporate programs that **reach a majority** of the population
- Connect **trails to town centers** - increases physical activity and economic opportunities
- Highlight and incorporate **local culture** and/or landmarks into active living work
- Identify and **pursue urban strategies** in town centers

References

- Brownson RC, Housemann RA, Brown DR, et al. Promoting Physical Activity in Rural Communities: Walking Trail Access, Use, and Effects. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2000;18(3):235-241.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Self-reported physical inactivity by degree of urbanization - United States. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 1998;47:1097-1100. 61 .
- Davison KK, Lawson CT. Do attributes in the physical environment influence children's physical activity? A review of the literature. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* 2006;3(19):1-17.
- Economic Research Services, State Fact Sheets: United States. Available at: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/StateFacts/US.htm>. January 15, 2009.
- Gamm LD, Huthison LL. Rural Healthy People 2010: A Companion Document to Healthy People 2010. 2004;3.
- Jackson JE, Doescher MP, Jerant AF, Hart LG. A national study of obesity prevalence and trends by type of rural county. *Journal of Rural Health* 2005;21:140-148.
- Parks SE, Housemann RA, Brownson RC. Differential Correlates of Physical Activity in Urban and Rural Adults of Various Socioeconomic Backgrounds in the United States. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2003;57:29-35.
- Sallis JF, Bauman A, Pratt M. Environmental and policy interventions to promote physical activity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 1998;15(4):379-397.
- Wilcox S, Castro C, King AC, Housemann R, Brownson RC. Determinants of leisure time physical activity in rural compared with urban older and ethnically diverse women in the United States. *Epidemiology and Community Health* 2000;54(9):667-672.