

Overview

The City of Decatur Community Transportation Plan for Active Living is a multi-modal plan to assure a high quality of life in the City by increasing pedestrian and bicyclist opportunities and safety for those traveling in Decatur. The City has adopted the goals and principles of an Active Living Community as the basis for the Community Transportation Plan.

About Active Living

Active Living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines. The goal is to accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity each day. Individuals may do this in a variety of ways, such as walking or bicycling for transportation, exercise, or pleasure; playing in the park; working in the yard; climbing a flight of stairs instead of taking the elevator; using recreational facilities; or even parking farther away from the grocery store than usual. An **Active Living Community** is designed to provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to engage in routine daily physical activity.



Photo Credit: City of Decatur

Decatur Gets Around



A COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Quick Health Facts

Physical inactivity plays a significant role in the most common chronic diseases in the United States, including coronary heart disease, stroke, and diabetes; each of these is a leading cause of death. Here are the facts:

- 74% of Americans are not regularly physically active and 28% of those do not get any physical activity at all.
- 64% of American adults are overweight or obese.
- In 2000, there were nearly three times as many overweight children and adolescents as there were in 1980.
- Obesity-related diseases cause more than 300,000 preventable deaths in the United States each year, second only to tobacco use.
- In 2000, the cost of obesity in the United States topped \$117 billion.
- Diagnosed diabetes among American adults increased 49% between 1990 and 2000.
- More than a third of children in grades 9-12 fail to exercise at least 20 minutes a day, three times a week.

Sources: Facing page - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Active Living by Design; American Journal of Public Health; and Go for Green; This page - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Active Living Network; and Active Living by Design

Benefits of Active Living

Lack of physical activity is associated with many of America's biggest health problems. Part of the problem is that physical activity has been largely designed out of our daily lives. As a result, Americans have become more sedentary, and as our activity levels have decreased, health problems have been amplified. But the trend is reversible. Small increases in activity can improve our health. Regular physical activity:

- Reduces the risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, and colon or breast cancer.
- Lowers blood pressure.
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- Promotes psychological well-being.

Studies have found that communities with pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly infrastructure, like sidewalks and trails, with links to destinations of interest have more physically active residents.

Active transportation does more than promote a healthier population and environment:

- The experience of walking and cycling helps connect people to places and creates a greater sense of community and place.
- Good transit and pedestrian facilities expand possibilities for seniors and youth to be a more integral part of the community.
- Active living communities encourage good health for children.
- If all inactive American adults became physically active, the potential savings in annual national medical costs could be as much as \$76.6 billion, in 2000 dollars.

Active Living and Transportation

Transportation determines not only how people move from place to place, but also the fundamental character of communities and the choices and opportunities people are provided. There is growing evidence that current transportation and land use patterns promote automobile dependency and discourage physical activity. Routine physical activity is necessary to prevent adverse health issues and help maintain a high quality of life for everyone. A balanced transportation system that offers more choices and encourages walking, biking, and transit would remove barriers to activity for everyone and make healthy levels of physical activity attainable for large numbers of people during their daily routine.

The City of Decatur is committed to becoming an Active Living Community where sidewalks, trails, and streets are designed to encourage multiple options for getting around the City. The City has a vision of creating a user-friendly place where residents have the option of walking, biking, or taking a bus or transit to school, work, the park, events in the Square, running errands, or visiting friends or family. The Community Transportation Plan for Active Living supports the vision, principles, and goals of the City's Strategic Plan that will not only enhance mobility in and through Decatur, but also maximize connections between residents, visitors, businesses, institutions, and government.



Photo credit: City of Decatur

For more information

Links to Active Living Programs

- **Active Living by Design** establishes innovative approaches to increase physical activity through community design.
www.activelivingbydesign.org
- **Active Living Leadership** works with government leaders to create and promote active communities.
www.activelivingleadership.org
- **Active Living Network** is building a national coalition committed to increasing physical activity.
www.activeliving.org
- **Active Living Research** investigates policies and environments to support active communities.
www.activelivingresearch.org
- **Active Living Resource Center** provides technical assistance to create active communities.
www.activelivingresources.org
- **Active for Life** delivers physical activity programs for adults age 50 and older.
www.activeforlife.info
- **Active Living Blueprint** develops strategies to increase physical activity among adults age 50 and older.
www.agingblueprint.org
- **Active Transportation** was created to help provide the motivation, information, tools, and resources people need to make walking and bicycling a safe, convenient, and enjoyable way to get around.
www.activetransportation.org

Links to Government Resources

- **Centers for Disease Control & Prevention** for information, statistics, and programs related to physical activity, active living, and health.
www.cdc.gov
- **City of Decatur** for more information on Active Living Communities and the Community Transportation Plan.
www.decaturga.com



Community Transportation Plan for ACTIVE LIVING



Photo credits (top to bottom): City of Decatur; The Oakhurst Neighborhood; and Decatur Yellow Bikes