

# **Collaborative Workshop on Walkable Communities in Iowa**

**Tuesday, August 2nd, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm  
Wellmark YMCA, Knapp Learning Center, 501 Grand Avenue, Des Moines**

# **Final Report and Recommendations**

## **Recommendations in Brief:**

### Recommendation #1:

Design a collaborative planning process

### Recommendation #2:

Deploy partner organizations to lay the groundwork for change

### Recommendation #3:

Develop a communications campaign that targets Iowa communities

### Recommendation #4:

Develop and deliver training programs at multiple levels

### Recommendation #5:

Identify funding sources for infrastructure changes

**Ian Thomas, America Walks  
Gary Toth, Project for Public Spaces**

# Executive Summary

An August, 2016 collaborative health and transportation workshop was held to address walkable communities in Iowa. The workshop was facilitated by America Walks and the Project for Public Spaces. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together leaders from multiple sectors to start a long-term statewide planning process for expanding walkable communities in Iowa. Its specific goals were to:

1. Improve understanding and strengthen relationships among Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), and other partners.
2. Explore benefits of increased collaboration, communication, and coordination between agencies in promoting walking and walkable communities.
3. Engage Department Directors and request feedback on proposal to develop a "Collaborative Framework on Walking and Walkable Communities."
4. Agree on a planning process, to be facilitated by Healthiest State Initiative (HSI), for moving forward.

This report summarizes the presentations made, discussions held, and ideas generated during the workshop, and includes recommendations for next steps for the partnership.

Recommendation #1: Design a collaborative planning process.

- HSI, IDPH, Iowa DOT, IEDA, and Statewide Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS) convene a series of meetings to review the report, draft a 2-year action plan, and reconvene all of the partners from the August workshop.

Recommendation #2: Deploy partner organizations to lay the groundwork for change.

- IDPH lead a community outreach team, made up primarily of partners with strong, engaged statewide networks. This team will identify existing communication channels and use them to promote the benefits of Iowa walkable communities.

Recommendation #3: Develop a communications campaign that targets Iowa communities.

- IEDA lead a communications team, to design and develop the communications materials to be disseminated by the Community Outreach Team. This will include creating a brand, web site, marketing materials, etc.

Recommendation #4: Develop and deliver training programs at multiple levels.

- Iowa DOT and SUDAS co-lead team to provide training to both transportation/planning professionals and community leaders. This will include Transportation and Land Use Planning training for Iowa DOT, MPOs, RPAs, and local planners and engineers, a Pedestrian Planning Assistance for Communities training, and Iowa Walking College.

Recommendation #5: Identify funding sources for infrastructure changes.

- Form a funding team to explore funding options for planning and building more walkable community projects.



# Background

***Iowa Healthiest State Initiative (HSI)*** is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that seeks to make Iowa the healthiest state in the nation by engaging worksites, communities, schools, retail food, organizations, institutions and individuals. In 2015, HSI convened public, private and nonprofit partners from across the state for a strategic planning process whose outcome was to develop a common message around the importance of walking and walkable communities.

Recognizing that walking is the easiest, most natural, and least expensive form of physical activity, the ***Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)*** is answering the Surgeon General's call to action to promote walking and walkability. The department recently convened an informal group of Iowans interested in increasing walking and biking throughout Iowa. *Active Living Iowa* brings together partners from public health, transportation, economic development, the private sector, nonprofit organizations and others interested in active living.

Walking is a recognized mode of transportation. Whether you live in a city or a small town, and whether you drive a car, take the bus or ride a train or your bicycle, at some point in the day, everyone is a pedestrian. The mission of the ***Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT)*** is to get everyone to their destinations safely, efficiently and conveniently: "*Smarter| Simpler| Customer Driven.*"

As home to Iowa's Community Development Division, Downtown Resource Center, State Energy Office, and Tourism Office, the ***Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)*** has a vested interest in increasing the walkability of Iowa's communities. Many of IEDA's programs use policy and financial incentives to promote walkable communities because they increase economic performance by providing better access to services, improving energy performance, and attracting employees, employers, and tourists.

In 2016, the ***Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)*** was accepted to participate in an "Action Institute on Walking and Walkability" hosted by the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors and funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The team included representatives from the MPO, the City of Des Moines Mayor's Office and Engineering Department, Des Moines Public Schools, IDPH, and HSI. Following the Action Institute, this team is charged with implementing a walkability action plan for healthier, more mobile communities.

On May 19th, 2016, Healthiest State Initiative hosted its annual conference with the theme, "Step It Up Iowa," and kicked off its new statewide walking and walkability campaign.

Then, on August 2nd, HSI, America Walks, and the Project for Public Spaces facilitated a "Collaborative Workshop on Walkable Communities in Iowa" with funding from the CDC and American Public Health Association (APHA).

## Workshop Goals

The purpose of the workshop was to bring together leaders from multiple sectors to start a long-term statewide planning process for expanding walkable communities in Iowa. Its specific goals were to:

1. Improve understanding and strengthen relationships among IDPH, Iowa DOT, IEDA, and other partners
2. Explore benefits of increased collaboration, communication, and coordination between agencies in promoting walking and walkable communities
3. Engage Department Directors and request feedback on proposal to develop a "Collaborative Framework on Walking and Walkable Communities"
4. Agree on a planning process, to be facilitated by HSI, for moving forward

This report summarizes the presentations made, discussions held, and ideas generated during the workshop, and includes recommendations for next steps for the partnership.

## Workshop Participants

### Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH):

- Gerd Clabaugh , Director
- Sarah Taylor Watts, Physical Activity Coordinator
- Carmily Stone, Bureau Chief
- Jill Lange, Bureau Chief, Nutrition & Health Promotion
- Kala Shipley, SIM Project Manager
- Maggie Ferguson, Brain Injury and Disability Program Manager

### Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT):

- Paul Trombino , Director of Operations
- Milly Ortiz Pagan, State Pedestrian Bicycle Coordinator
- Sam Sturtz, Transportation Planner
- Jeremy Johnson Miller, Transit Programs Administrator
- John Dostart, Urban Engineer

### Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA):

- Debi Durham , Director
- Jeff Geerts, Special Projects Manager for Community Development

### Other State Agencies:

- Scott Michelson (Iowa Department of Natural Resources)

Statewide Urban Design and Specifications (SUDAS), Iowa State University:

- Paul Wiegand, Director

Iowa Healthiest State Initiative (HSI):

- Jami Haberl, Executive Director
- Sarah Reichardt, Director of Operations
- Aryn McLaren, Director of Programs
- Mitch Anderson, ICHAP member
- Katherine Dykes

Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies:

- Todd Ashby (Des Moines Area MPO)
- Mike Armstrong (Des Moines Area MPO)
- Codie Leseman (Iowa Northland Reg. Council of Governments, Waterloo)
- Jacki Schares (Iowa Northland Reg. Council of Governments, Waterloo)
- Gena McCullough (Bi-State Regional Commission)
- Bryan Schmid (Bi-State Regional Commission)
- Ashley Christensen (Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission)

Local Government:

- Mayor Frank Cownie (City of Des Moines)
- Pa Goldbeck (City of Des Moines)
- Elizabeth Presutti (DART)

Non-Government Organizations:

- Craig Hanken (Iowa Alliance of YMCAs)
- Tyler Weig (YMCA of Greater Des Moines)
- Meg Schneider (Greater Des Moines Partnership)
- Troy Carter (Iowa Bike Coalition)
- Mark Wyatt (Iowa Bike Coalition)
- Leslie Berckes (Trees Forever)
- John Peterson (Iowa Public Health Association)
- Carrie Mueller (American Heart Association)
- Ann Mansfield (NE Iowa Food and Fitness)
- Elin Amundson (NE Iowa Food and Fitness)
- Mary Lawyer (Wellmark BCBS)
- Kent Sovern (AARP)

Workshop Facilitators

- Ian Thomas (America Walks)
- Gary Toth (Project for Public Spaces)

Special Guest

- Tom Schmid (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)



## **Presentation:** ***Collaborating for Walkable Communities - Benefits and National Best Practices***

In this session, each facilitator gave a 20-minute presentation designed to illustrate the importance of expanding walkable communities in Iowa and to explain why the health and transportation sectors (and other partners) must collaborate to make this happen.

Ian provided data showing that the cost of health care as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product is rising unsustainably, and that health care services and education have only a small impact on the problem. Because the built environment is the most important factor in determining health behaviors, and since public health agencies have little impact on the environment, they must partner with others - especially transportation and planning.

Next, Gary gave a history of twentieth-century transportation planning in the U.S. Due to the American "love affair with the automobile," federal and state transportation agencies were instructed (and generously funded) to design and build a massive highway and street system that was intended to enable private cars to travel quickly and efficiently throughout their city, the region, and the country.

Over several decades, it has become apparent that there are serious drawbacks to what is now seen as an over-reliance on the automobile - health, safety, pollution, quality of life, cost, etc. Public health professionals, with their experience in community engagement and data analysis, can assist transportation planners and engineers in moving towards a more multi-modal future. Redesigning communities so they are safe, convenient, and attractive for people to walk to nearby destinations is a critical component of this new approach.

Finally, in this session, examples of effective collaboration among state-level Health, Transportation and Commerce Departments and the non-profit sector in Minnesota, Oregon, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Arkansas, Kentucky, Colorado, and Montana were presented. This information is included in Appendix 2.

To illustrate the diverse benefits of walkable communities, a *Collaborative Framework of Aligning Principles*, developed by the Montana team in preparation for a parallel workshop, was presented. The six aligning principles are:

1. Safety
2. Mobility and Access
3. Economic Vitality
4. Quality of Life
5. Health and Environment
6. Equity

More information about Montana's *Collaborative Framework of Aligning Principles* is provided in Appendix 2.

## **Panel Discussion: *Inter-Agency Collaboration for Walkable Communities in Iowa***

Following a short break, staff members from the three state agencies who organized the workshop provided information about existing programs to expand walkable communities in Iowa, and how collaboration could advance the effort, and participated in a discussion with their Department Directors.

The presenters were:

- Sarah Taylor Watts, Physical Activity Coordinator, Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)
- Milly Ortiz Pagan, State Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator, Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT)
- Jeff Geerts Special Projects Manager for Community Development, Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)

### Summary of presentations (four key questions)

1. How does my Department's mission/values align with walkability?
  - IDPH: Walking and walkability lead to improved population health; support for Surgeon General's Call to Action on walking and walkable communities
  - Iowa DOT: Everyone is a pedestrian; walking is a recognized mode of transportation; focus on getting you there safely, efficiently, and conveniently
  - IEDA: Walkable design strengthens economic and community vitality, and makes Iowa the choice for people and businesses
2. What current Department programs and funding address walking and walkability?
  - Iowa DOT: Federal funding programs (TAP, SRTS, etc.); Iowa bicycle and pedestrian plan; ADA transition plan, safety programs and public transit
  - IEDA: Main Street Iowa; Iowa Downtown Resource Center; Iowa Green Streets Criteria and Green Site Certification; Redevelopment and Workforce Housing Tax Credit Programs; State Energy Office and Energy Plan
  - IDPH: Complete streets policies; Active Living Iowa partnership; I-WALK
3. What current barriers and challenges are experienced by Department?
  - IEDA: Poor communication; lack of funding for planning; lack of information about benefits of walkable communities; resistance to change; missed opportunities
  - IDPH: Limited staff capacity; health message is less convincing than economic message; lack of vocabulary/understanding of transportation planning process and timing for public input; lack of knowledge about funding mechanisms

- Iowa DOT: Funding limitations; multi-jurisdiction cooperation; public perceptions; balancing expectations (urban/rural, older/younger drivers; changing land uses)

#### 4. How could the other two agencies help overcome barriers?

- IDPH: Expand partnerships (Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Active Living Iowa); unified voice on walkable/bikeable communities; training and resources
- Iowa DOT: More collaboration with IDPH through B/P Advisory Committee, etc.: with IEDA through Iowa Scenic Byways and Trails program; better understanding of policies, programs, and funding.; whom to contact?
- IEDA: Better Block training proposal; understand Iowa DOT timelines; educate Iowa DOT on downtown context; consistent messaging on health benefits of walking; work with IDPH on parking ordinances

#### Responses by Department Directors

Iowa DOT Director Paul Trombino expressed a concern that a “complete streets” philosophy creates overly wide streets, but mentioned support for a “shared use” approach with utilities in the “right of way.” While Iowa DOT does a good job with inter-city transportation systems, he stated that the agency should defer more to local communities and partnerships for decisions within cities or even hand over highways to cities for redesign (as has been done in Council Bluffs). Director Trombino acknowledged that I-235 in downtown Des Moines “looks like a scar” but explained that Iowa DOT often finds itself “in the middle of a local fight.” The agency has a strong partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and supports “green storm-water infrastructure.”

IEDA Director Debi Durham supports a holistic approach to growth. Iowa is food producer state and needs to be able to move freight efficiently. From an economic development perspective, it's critical to design and build the types of communities people want to live in, and this focuses on “infill development,” re-habbing upper stories, and increasing density. Communities need to attract entrepreneurs, many of whom are millennials who care about the environment, want to live a “car-lite” lifestyle, and have a strong social conscience. Director Durham also mentioned that the Governor supports inter-agency collaboration and is working to empower Directors to break out of their silos and find better ways to work together to achieve multiple goals.

IDPH Director Gerd Clabaugh explained that the public health sector thinks about at-risk populations, such as senior citizens, people with disabilities, and families in poverty. Walking saves money for people if they do not need to own a car, but obesity is greatest in rural areas where one-third of Iowans live and where walkability is different from the urban setting. He feels that transportation is critical to all issues, and that the MPOs have done good job of bringing modern transportation issues forward. Walkable communities are “in the gap “ between agency jurisdictions and IDPH is collaborating with Iowa DOT on a “zero fatalities” approach and with IEDA on jobs, homes, health, and veterans' affairs.

# Walkability Audits

To educate workshop participants who were unfamiliar with the details of walkable community design, and to stimulate further discussion of these issues, "Walkability Audits" were coordinated before lunch.

Two 1.5-mile loops starting and ending at the Knapp Learning Center (one to the north and one to the south) were chosen and workshop participants were divided into four groups, each of which walked one of the loops in either a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction. Members of the same agency or organization (such as Iowa Department of Public Health or Iowa Bicycle Coalition) were distributed among different groups, each of which was led by an experienced walk audit leader (Ian, Gary, Sarah-TW, and Milly). And each participant was given a checklist of items to look for and evaluate as having either a positive or negative impact on walkability.

The checklist included:

- Building with large blank wall
- Fast, noisy traffic
- Historic building with attractive architecture
- On-street parking
- One-way street
- Pedestrian "bulb-out" at intersection
- Street trees
- Six-lane Interstate in the middle of the city
- Wide driveway across sidewalk

As participants returned from the "Walkability Audits," they were asked to sit at tables with members of their own agency, organization, or sector, in preparation for the afternoon's *Collaboration Multiplier* activities, as follows:

- Table 1: Iowa Dept. of Public Health
- Table 2: Iowa Dept. of Transportation
- Table 3: Other state agencies (IEDA and IDNR), and SUDAS
- Table 4: Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies
- Table 5: Health-focused non-profits (AHA, IPHA, Wellmark BCBS, NE Iowa Food and Fitness, and AARP)
- Table 6: Other non-profits (YMCA, Greater Des Moines Partnership, Iowa Bike Coalition, and Trees Forever)

Whilst participants ate lunch, they discussed their experiences on the "Walkability Audits." The observation was made that the two loops were quite different - whereas the "north loop" quickly entered an area of wide, high-volume streets with poor sidewalk connectivity and involved a crossing of the six-lane I-35 highway, the "south loop" was almost entirely on low-traffic, urban streets and included a river walk and other pedestrian-only areas.

# ***Collaboration Multiplier***

## **Partnership Asset-Mapping Exercise**

### **Data Collection from Individual Agencies/Sectors**

In the first part of this asset-mapping exercise, members of each of the six tables worked as a group to develop answers to the following questions:

1. Why is walkability important to my/our organization?
2. What desired outcomes or organizational goals do we have in this area?
3. What assets, strengths, and expertise does my organization/sector bring to a partnership focused on walkable communities?
4. What existing programs, partnerships, and data can we contribute to this partnership?
5. What barriers and challenges do we face, with which other partners can help us?

#### 1. Why is walkability important to my/our organization?

Table 1: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

- *Walkability is physical activity and provides access to services*
- *IDPH wants to be a leader in the movement and be recognized as much*

Table 2: Iowa Dept. of Transportation

- *Walking can assist in achieving safety and mobility*
- *Transportation is Iowa DOT's mission*

Table 3: Other state agencies (IEDA and IDNR), and SUDAS

- *Provides mobility for all users - not just those who can afford a car or have access to transit*
- *Attracts employees - and then employers*

Table 4: Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies

- *Enhances quality of life in communities*
- *Assists in "Age Friendly Communities"*

Table 5: Health-focused non-profits

- *Walkable communities possess more authenticity and identity*
- *Fosters social connections*

Table 6: Other non-profits

- *It provides a gateway – a common goal – to connect all of the agencies*
- *Brings people together*

## 2. What desired outcomes or organizational goals do we have in this area?

### Table 1: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

- *Healthy people living in healthy communities*
- *IDPH recognized as a resource for health and transportation*

### Table 2: Iowa Dept. of Transportation

- *A customer driven approach - embedded in this is the understanding that communities are increasingly seeking walkable communities and Iowa DOT wants to be responsive*
- *Finding ways for agencies/NGOs to work together to remove the physical barriers to walkability*

### Table 3: Other state agencies (IEDA and IDNR), and SUDAS

- *Provide links between parks and end users in communities*
- *Robust and resilient infrastructure - communities where folks can walk to necessities and connect with each other*
- *Provide options after natural disasters decimate infrastructure*

### Table 4: Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies

- *Mode shift to walking*
- *Opportunities to expand those involved in the conversation about design of transportation and communities*

### Table 5: Health-focused non-profits

- *Improved health*
- *Save rural communities (development designed for walkability is more compact and doesn't gobble up rural landscapes as does autocentric development)*

### Table 6: Other non-profits

- *Reduce healthcare costs*
- *Save lives*

## 3. What assets, strengths, and expertise does my organization/sector bring to a partnership focused on walkable communities?

### Table 1: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

- *Passionate staff; can provide leadership support*
- *Relationships with community based organizations*

### Table 2: Iowa Dept. of Transportation

- *Engineering knowledge of designs that work*
- *Ability to convene many of the customers and partners, through programs and processes*

Table 3: Other state agencies (IEDA and IDNR), and SUDAS

- *Joint funding and leveraging assets*
- *Design and construction standards*

Table 4: Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies

- *Data/geographical mapping analysis*
- *Ability to facilitate planning for the future*

Table 5: Health-focused non-profits

- *Experience with data focused decision-making*
- *Statewide reach*

Table 6: Other non-profits

- *Large constituency; ability to engage them*
- *Trusted facilitators*

#### 4. What existing programs, partnerships, and data can we contribute to this partnership?

Table 1: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

- *Knowledge of best practices*
- *County-level health data and perception data*
- *Model policies*

Table 2: Iowa Dept. of Transportation

- *Statewide and national partnerships*
- *Transportation data, e.g. crash data and traffic counts*
- *Funding, e.g TAP and Safety (HSIP/TSIP)*

Table 3: Other state agencies (IEDA and IDNR), and SUDAS

- *Funding opportunities – connecting needs to opportunities*
- *State Park and Institutional Road funding program*

Table 4: Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies

- *Multiple advisory groups, e.g. trails, policy, etc.*
- *Can curate data and best practices for communities and other agencies*

Table 5: Health-focused non-profits

- *Rural regional SRTS model*
- *AARP Livability Index; fact sheets*

Table 6: Other non-profits

- *Blue Zones*
- *Community planning/visioning assistance (can do it for them)*

5. What barriers and challenges do we face, with which other partners can help us?

Table 1: Iowa Dept. of Public Health

- *Weak relationships with cities*
- *Health message has not been selling*

Table 2: Iowa Dept. of Transportation

- *Locals often have difficulty finding funding match*
- *Lack of trust in the communities*

Table 3: Other state agencies (IEDA and IDNR), and SUDAS

- *Lack of communication between agencies*
- *Lack of planning*

Table 4: Metropolitan/Regional Planning Agencies

- *Getting messaging heard over background noise*
- *Suspicion of planning process, viewed as "top down" (e.g. Agenda 21 opposition)*

Table 5: Health-focused non-profits

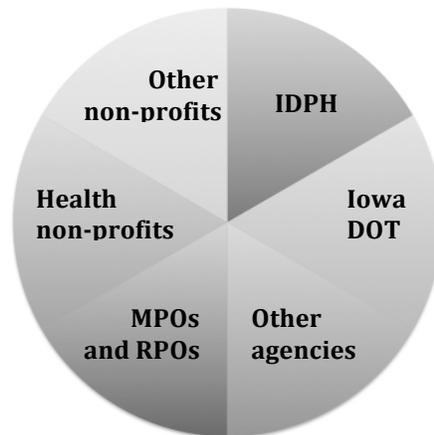
- *Lack of capacity in communicating with agencies*
- *Lack of consistent and reliable long term funding to sustain programs*

Table 6: Other non-profits

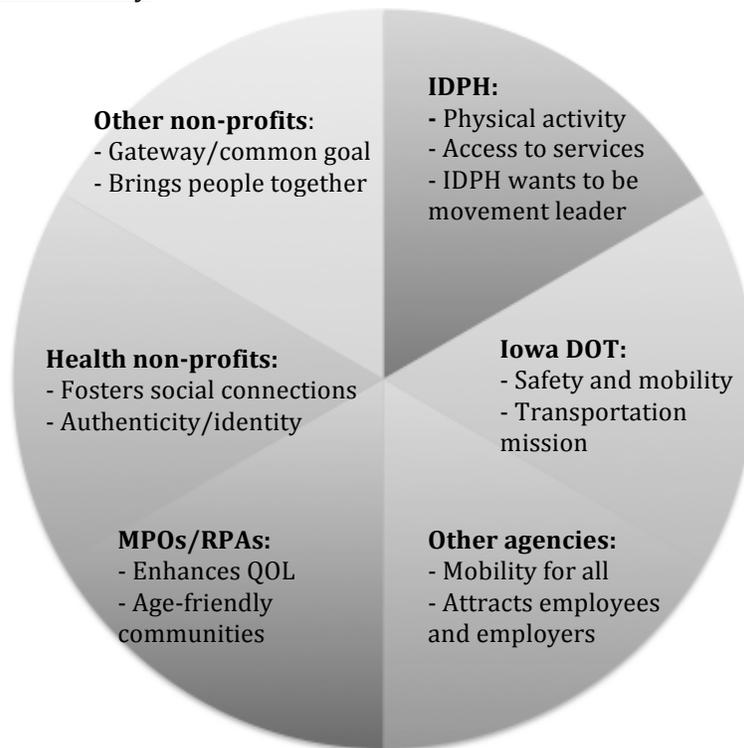
- *Getting entities to take time to do planning*
- *Folks don't understand why YMCA is involved in these missions*

**Combining Partner Input to Develop Draft Collaborative Model**

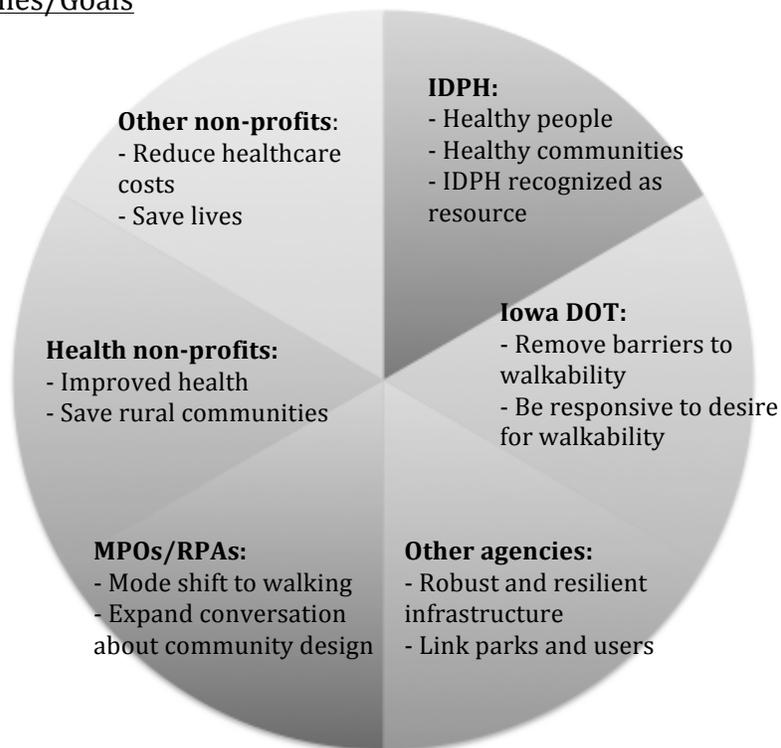
In the second part of this exercise, the individual partner agencies/sectors reported out to the facilitators, who combined responses to develop a "Collaborative Model" that utilizes the following diagram:



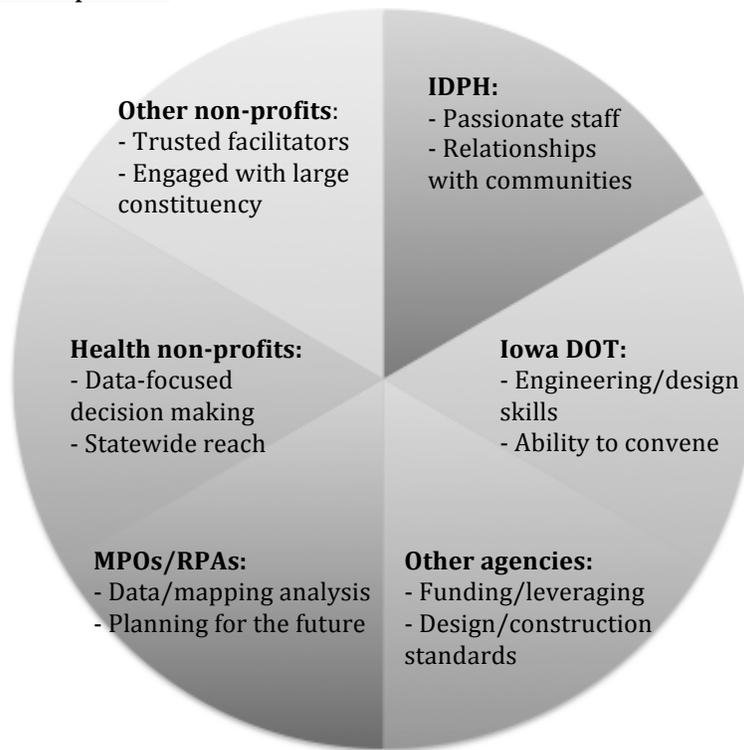
## 1. Importance of Walkability



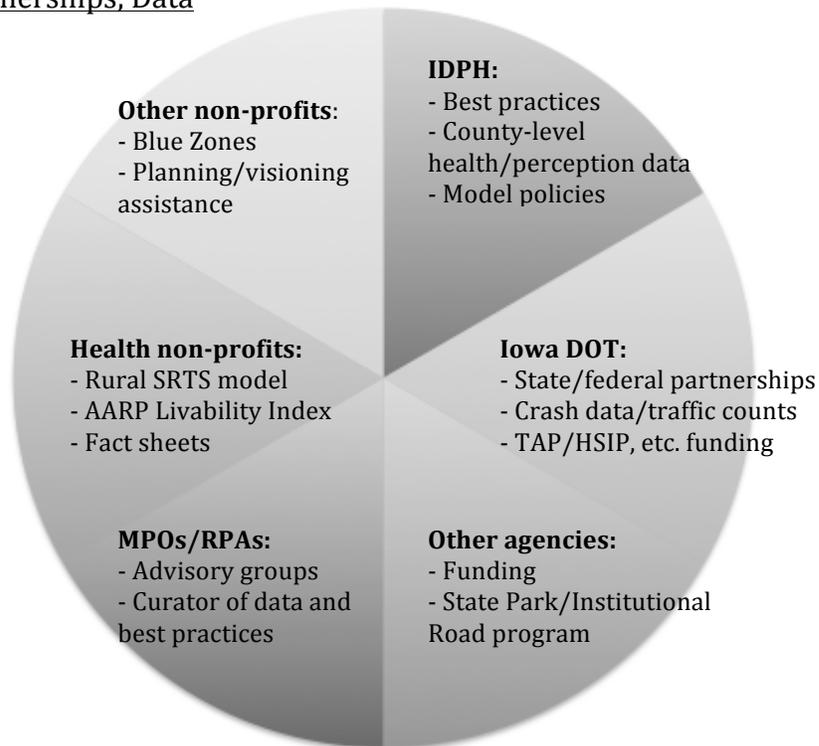
## 2. Desired Outcomes/Goals



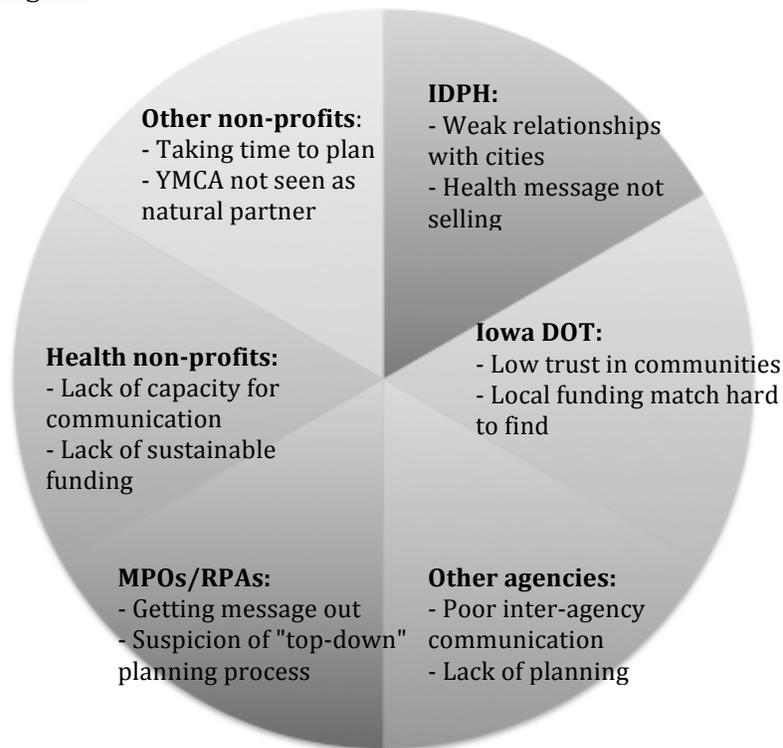
### 3. Assets, Strengths, Expertise



### 4. Programs, Partnerships, Data



## 5. Barriers/Challenges



The facilitators captured all of the output from this asset-mapping activity on these five Collaborative Multiplier "wheel" diagrams - thereby, presenting the data in a way that makes it easy to spot synergies between different partners.

## ***Collaboration Multiplier*** **Strategic Planning Activity**

For this final activity, workshop participants were mixed up again. By "counting around" at each table, all of the staff from IDPH moved to different tables, the same for all of the staff from Iowa DOT, and from the planning organizations and non-profits, etc.

Participants at each of these new, mixed up tables then worked together to answer the following three questions:

1. How can my organization help another organization overcome its barriers?
2. How can another organization help my organization overcome our barriers?
3. What are the important shared goals/outcomes throughout the room?

Ian and Gary facilitated a "report-out" from all of the tables and captured all of the ideas on flipchart sheets. Here is a summary of this final output.

Strategies for partners to help each other overcome barriers:

- All partners share their data with each other
  - Iowa DOT and IDPH have large quantities of valuable data
  - Synthesize/overlay crash data and traffic volumes with health risks and poverty data
  - MPOs and RPAs have skills in curating the data
- All partners share best practices and technical expertise with each other
  - Iowa DOT and SUDAS have design/engineering expertise to share with IDPH and others
  - MPOs/RPAS and IEDA have planning expertise to share with IDPH
  - IDPH, AARP, YMCA, and Trees Forever have advocacy expertise to share with Iowa DOT, MPOs/RPAS and others
  - Some partners have grant-writing and fundraising expertise to share with others
  - Planners help everyone by connecting all the dots
- Partners conduct more research to fill gaps
  - How does Iowa DOT explain its interest in livable communities?
  - What are the different benefits of walkability in urban and rural settings?
  - North East Iowa Food and Fitness understands rural areas; Iowa League of Cities understands urban setting
  - Create resource maps to illustrate which partners have which knowledge
- Improve effectiveness of communications
  - Align messaging among all partners
  - Develop evidence-based communication campaign about benefits of walkable communities
  - Leverage partners with statewide networks (eg. AARP, YMCA, Trees Forever, Wellmark) to impact larger audiences
  - MPOs/RPAS can help outreach to new communities
  - Credible partners connect with elected officials
- Engage state and local elected officials
  - Create compelling briefs about walkability benefits
  - Line up local support in advance for good plans (such as Iowa DOT "road diet" or IEDA "green streets/infrastructure" project)
  - Provide political cover when an official gets behind a progressive project or when an agency (e.g. Iowa DOT) steps outside of its historic mission
  - Hold officials accountable if they do not supporting good projects and programs

Shared goals among all/most partners:

- *Safe and livable places*
- *Community and social connectedness*
- *Multimodal transportation accessible to all users*
- *Communities that combine health, safety, and economic development*
- *Integration of transportation and land-use planning processes*
- *Desire amongst participants to deliver a shared message*

## **Workshop Review and Key Take-Aways**

In the closing session of the day, Jami announced several upcoming events, gave her summary of the workshop, and facilitated a final discussion among participants. The following key take-aways and "Aha! Moments" were noted:

- *It was impressive that multiple departments were at the table*
- *All of the participating groups share a large number of common goals*
- *Iowa DOT is not trusted by communities, whereas IDPH, and particularly local health departments, are trusted*
- *Public messaging must be sharp and robust to compete with commercial advertising*
- *It's important to rally political leadership and support those who "do the right thing"*

## **Recommendations for Next Steps**

### **Recommendation 1: Design a collaborative planning process**

In a September 6th post-workshop call, the planning team agreed that the first three goals set by the team for the workshop had been accomplished, whereas the fourth had not.

The workshop was fully successful in its efforts to:

1. Improve understanding and strengthen relationships among IDPH, Iowa DOT, IEDA, and other partners
2. Explore benefits of increased collaboration, communication, and coordination between agencies in promoting walking and walkable communities
3. Engage Department Directors and request feedback on proposal to develop a "Collaborative Framework on Walking and Walkable Communities"

However, there was not time during the workshop to:

4. Agree on a planning process, to be facilitated by HSI, for moving forward

While considerable progress was made in identifying different ways the partners could work together to increase walking and promote walkable communities throughout Iowa, there was no discussion of when everyone would meet again or how the partnership would operate. Although all of the government agencies, planning organizations, and non-profit groups committed to continuing to work together, no plans for next steps were made.

Therefore, our first recommendation is for the original planning team to take on that task. We suggest that Healthiest State Initiative (Jami and Sarah-R) convene a series of meetings with IDPH (Sarah-TW), Iowa DOT (Milly), IEDA (Jeff), and SUDAS (Paul), designed to:

- Review and discuss this report and recommendations;
- Develop a draft 2-year Action Plan based on the recommendations in this report;
- Study the output of Collaboration Multiplier activity and create a model illustrating which partners can best contribute in which particular ways;
- Coordinate a half-day or full-day work session in the spring of 2017, and invite all of the participants from the August workshop to attend;
- At work session, hold structured discussions and seek consensus on the Action Plan.

Most workshop participants are members of Active Living Iowa - a statewide group working to increase walking, biking and other forms of active transportation through education, policy change, and infrastructure development. Since this group is already established, holds bimonthly meetings, and is focusing on encouraging Iowa cities to design roads for all users by passing Complete Streets policies, it makes sense to incorporate these workshop recommendations into Active Living Iowa's work plan, going forward.

We also recommend the planning team disseminate this report to workshop participants, update partners on the work of the planning team, and announce the next steps.

## **Recommendation 2: Deploy partner organizations to lay the groundwork for change**

We recommend the draft Action Plan include a proposal for the creation of 2 or 3 teams. Each of these "Action Teams" would be made up of 4 or 5 partners (at least one from the planning team) and focused on a specific component of the plan.

It will be important to have a conversation with each partner organizations about the level of commitment they will make to the collaborative effort. Memoranda of Agreement could be negotiated and signed, that lay out the number of Action Team meetings each partner will participate in, and the amount of staff time dedicated to the work of the collaboration.

One of the teams should be a Community Outreach Team, made up of primarily of partners with strong, engaged statewide networks, such as:

- IDPH (team lead)
- Local public health agencies
- IEDA
- MPOs and RPAs
- Iowa Bike Coalition
- Iowa Alliance of YMCAs
- AARP Iowa

The goal of the Community Outreach Team would be to identify existing communication channels and use them to promote the benefits of walkable communities throughout Iowa.

Initial work might include documenting the number of local offices, paid staff, volunteers, and members these organizations have in locations throughout the state, as well as a measure of the levels of engagement in the issue of creating healthy, livable, walkable communities. Here are some other useful questions to ask:

- How often do local groups meet?
- How many folks attend and who are they?
- What kind of local communications exist (web sites, newsletters, social media)?
- How much access to earned media does each local chapter command?

The Community Outreach Team might take 6 months to document this information and then create a Dissemination Plan to deliver communications materials developed under Recommendation 3 as effectively and efficiently as possible.

### **Recommendation 3: Develop a communications campaign that targets Iowa communities**

Another group of partners should be assembled as a Communications Team. Their goal would be to design and develop the communications materials that are disseminated by the Community Outreach Team.

We recommend the following partners, each of whom has communications/advocacy skills and/or technical expertise in the benefits of active transportation, be considered as members of the Communications Team:

- IEDA (team lead)
- Iowa Public Health Association
- American Heart Association
- Wellmark BCBS
- Iowa DOT
- SUDAS
- AARP Iowa (messaging to older adults)
- NE Iowa Food and Fitness (messaging in rural areas)
- Trees Forever

We suggest the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) lead this team because the local economic development arguments for walkable, livable communities are the most compelling. The health message is also important for this communications campaign, and so the Iowa Public Health Association, American Heart Association, and Wellmark BCBS should be included. Iowa DOT and SUDAS will be able to provide accurate information about transportation trends and the impacts of specific projects such as sidewalk improvements, "road diets" or "right-sizing," and bike lanes. The other members suggested above have skills in messaging to key groups and/or strong advocacy networks.

The Communications Team should identify funding, and create a brand (such as “Iowa's Vibrant Towns”), web site, email marketing system, presentation, brochures, etc. The AARP Livability Index and other tools could be used to develop messaging to emphasize livability and local economic impact benefits of walkable communities, and counter myths such as “fear of density” - all backed with research evidence.

The Communications Team could work for 6 months to develop a pilot campaign and then hand over the initial materials to the Community Outreach Team.

#### **Recommendation 4: Develop and deliver training programs at multiple levels**

The third team we feel should be established is the Training Team. Modern training resources on effective, community-based land-use and transportation planning are available from a variety of sources, and at a variety of technical levels.

We recommend Iowa DOT and SUDAS co-lead this team. Because of the focus on planning for effective transportation solutions, the MPOs and RPAs will also be critical members.

Here are our other suggestions:

- Iowa DOT (team co-lead)
- SUDAS (team co-lead)
- MPOs and RPAs
- Greater Des Moines Partnership
- IDPH
- Local public health agencies
- Iowa Bicycle Coalition

We envision two distinct types of training based on two primary target audiences - transportation/planning professionals and community leaders.

For transportation and planning professionals, we recommend starting with the National Highway Institute's *Transportation and Land Use Planning* course:

[https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/training/course\\_search.aspx?tab=0&key=Transportation+and+Land+Use+training&sf=0&course\\_no=151043](https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/training/course_search.aspx?tab=0&key=Transportation+and+Land+Use+training&sf=0&course_no=151043)

Primarily targeting “mid-level state DOT employees, city/county engineers and planners, MPO staff, transit operators, FHWA, FTA, EPA employees, and resource agency staff,”

*Transportation and Land Use Planning* is designed to help practitioners:

1. Develop a multimodal transportation system that supports desired land uses, and
2. Shape land uses to support the transportation system.

Course lessons include the principles of transportation and land use; the processes through which transportation and land use issues can be jointly addressed; and implementation steps to ensure that transportation and land use systems are designed in a compatible, mutually supportive manner.

*Transportation and Land Use Planning* should be provided to Iowa DOT, MPOs and RPAs, and local planners and engineers. The Community Outreach team could help identify targets and the Communications team could promote the course throughout the state. In addition to providing the training, Iowa DOT, SUDAS, and other members of the Training Team should develop a technical support program for community planners/officials, utilizing FHWA resources and other best practices.

Ultimately, Iowa DOT and its state/regional partners should create a corridor study process that moves beyond simply investigating capital improvements and includes non-transportation performance metrics (health, economic impact, equity, etc.). Here are some models from other states:

- Washington State DOT: *Moving Washington Forward: Practical Solutions* (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/PracticalDesign/>)
- New York State DOT: GreenLITES - Green Leadership In Transportation Environmental Sustainability (<https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/greenlites?nd=nysdot>)
- Indiana State DOT: *Open Roads Practical Design* (<http://www.in.gov/indot/3261.htm>)
- Pennsylvania State DOT: *PennDOT Connects* (announced in September, 2016 - details not available yet)

For community leaders and coalitions, the Training Team should consider developing an *Iowa Walking College* program, based on America Walks' national model, and a *Pedestrian Planning Assistance for Communities* training, based on a model pioneered in Kentucky.

*The Walking College* is an interactive, mentorship-based, online educational program for walkable community advocates. Each year, Walking College Fellowships are awarded to community change agents working alone, in organizations, or in professions such as public health, planning, transportation, or education, who demonstrate a passion for making their communities more walkable and livable and a vision for what that would look like.

The learning objectives for the Walking College are:

1. Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences about the benefits of a walkable community;
2. Recruit and inspire other local advocates to join the movement, establish an organizational structure, write winning grant applications, and fund-raise;
3. Organize public events, programs, and communication campaigns that emphasize the need for improved walkability;
4. Engage professionals in multiple fields, including public health, planning and transportation, on the ways walkability affects their priorities;
5. Navigate the structure of local and state government and engage elected officials in conversations about walkability;
6. Design and implement effective policy campaigns, such as reducing speed limits and requiring complete streets;
7. Research, understand, and communicate data to support campaigns.

Iowa Healthiest State Initiative and Iowa Department of Public Health have already started planning a state-level Walking College program that will be delivered in 2017. This will be a critical component of implementing Recommendation #4.

The other model the Training Team should consider was pioneered by Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) and Kentucky Department of Public Health (KDPH) in 2012. After identifying community access to physical activity as a top health priority, KDPH provided all 69 local health departments with funding and resources to conduct community walkability audits, and KTC team members followed up with individualized feedback and technical assistance to help each community interpret the results of the audit and start to address identified problems. The following year, several communities received competitive funding to begin planning for active transportation design. Three of these began to develop pedestrian master plans with training and technical assistance provided by KTC, Federal Highway Administration, and the KY Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Then, in 2014-2015, KTC and the KDPH formalized the training and technical assistance into a workshop curriculum, and held regional workshops in the western and eastern parts of the state. Travel grants were awarded to ten communities who were then expected to convene a team of stakeholders, attend the workshop, conduct a walkability audit, prioritize pedestrian improvements, develop a formal pedestrian plan, and have it officially adopted by the local government. Accomplishing all of these steps documents the community's need and readiness for pedestrian improvements, and greatly improves the prospects for the community to obtain funding for projects listed in the plan.

Through these efforts, at least 27 Kentucky communities and 3 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) have adopted pedestrian plans, and most of them have funded and completed actual construction projects.

More information about Kentucky's *Pedestrian Planning Assistance for Communities* training:

- Webinar: <http://americawalks.org/pedestrian-planning-for-communities-a-transferable-training-and-implementation-program-from-kentucky/>
- Toolkit: [http://www.fitky.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/04/PLAN-Document\\_042816.pdf](http://www.fitky.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/04/PLAN-Document_042816.pdf)

In summary, we recommend the NHI's *Transportation and Land Use Planning* course be promoted by the Training Team immediately, while HSI and IDPH develop the *Iowa Walking College* and research Kentucky's *Pedestrian Planning for Communities* program.

### **Recommendation 5: Identify funding sources for infrastructure changes**

Long-term sustainability for all of these initiatives to increase walking and promote walkable communities in Iowa will depend on funding.

Therefore, our final recommendation is to form a Funding Team to explore funding options for planning and building more walkable community projects. To start with, Iowa DOT's funding guide includes sections on bicycle/pedestrian projects and trails:

- *Guide to Transportation Funding Programs of interest to local governments and others* (Iowa DOT ): [http://www.iowadot.gov/pol\\_leg\\_services/Funding-Guide.pdf](http://www.iowadot.gov/pol_leg_services/Funding-Guide.pdf)

More specifically focused on active transportation, here is Oregon DOT's comprehensive (and transferable) listing of numerous federal, state, and local sources of funds:

- *Funding Walking and Biking Improvements* (Oregon DOT ): <http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/TGM/Pages/walkbikefunding.aspx>

State agencies are generally reluctant to engage in advocacy activities with the Legislature; however, private-sector entities within the coalition, such as AARP and America Heart Association, may want to take the lead in making the case to the State Legislature that dedicated funds should be provided for walkable community design and active transportation. An effective strategy may be to make a "multi-disciplinary "case for funding by stressing the quality of life, economic development, tourism, social equity, safety and health benefits.

The goal would be to create a new dedicated funding source for pedestrian and bicycle planning and infrastructure projects that goes beyond the federally-earmarked Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds.

Finally, IEDA's Jeff Geerts mentioned the possibility of EDA development standards, redevelopment tax credits, and green storm water projects to fund active transportation infrastructure.

## Conclusion

This was a very successful workshop. Three of the four workshop goals established by the local planning team were accomplished, and most of the participants indicated a high level of satisfaction with the experience and a strong desire to continue working together to increase walking and expand walkable communities in Iowa.

Iowa Healthiest State Initiative (HSI) is a significant asset. We are not aware of equivalent organizations in any other states. The combination of sustainable funding with a focus on healthy lifestyles and interdisciplinary collaboration is very unusual and very beneficial. The fact that HSI's current strategic plan emphasizes a statewide walking campaign adds considerable weight to the existing asset.

The planning team, consisting of HSI, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Department of Transportation, Iowa Economic Development Authority, and Iowa State University's Statewide Urban Design and Specifications program is also strong. With HSI's leadership, the commitment of the leading agencies (whose Directors all attended the workshop), the technical expertise of SUDAS, and the engagement of a broad range of government and private-sector partners, we believe many/most of our recommendations can be accomplished in the next 2-3 years.

Finally, please note that America Walks plans to stay engaged with the Iowa team - to continue to evaluate the effort, to provide ongoing technical assistance, possibly to facilitate another event.

Ian Thomas and Gary Toth

## Appendix 1: Workshop Evaluation

The following evaluation was administered at the end of the workshop. 28 responses were received from the 42 participants (67% response rate). Responders were asked to indicate whether they "strongly agree," "agree," "are neutral," "disagree," or "strongly disagree" with each of seven statements about the workshop.

### Statement 1: "I liked the general format of the workshop."

#### Responses:

- Strongly agree: 8
- Agree: 20
- Neutral: 0
- Disagree: 0
- Strongly disagree: 0

#### Comments:

- Half day would have been a little easier and accommodating
- I missed the first half
- I thought there was redundant info./tasks near the end of the workshop; otherwise, good stuff
- I was led to believe the workshop was going to be more active, ie. walking meetings, breakouts
- The timeframe of activities was good, moving from place to place holds everyone's attention
- Excellent participation from all participants
- Breaking up sitting a bit more would keep folks better engaged, especially in the afternoon
- Loved the walk but didn't know how much time we'd spend outside versus inside, so wasn't sure how to dress
- I appreciate mixing group members so more connections can be made

### Statement 2: "I have increased my understanding of ways to collaborate to promote walkable communities."

#### Responses:

- Strongly agree: 8
- Agree: 17
- Neutral: 3
- Disagree: 0
- Strongly disagree: 0

Comments:

- Good networking opportunity
- Increased my statewide network and rekindled regional network
- I felt there was a good amount of perspectives within the room
- Very interesting to learn the barriers of other groups at the table, and how we can support each other
- The broad view of all the partners was fantastic to see
- Need to try to move beyond vague statements like "We want healthy, livable cities;" "we want economic vitality." I know a little more about what each group offers but maybe not how the whole web works.
- I liked the design of the "Collaboration Multiplier" sessions
- I didn't feel there was enough time to network and learn how others could help my organization
- Great to see all the various organizations together
- I have a good idea; I felt like we did not develop a detailed plan, but that would likely have taken several days

Statement 3: "The facilitators were knowledgeable and helpful."

Responses:

- Strongly agree: 17
- Agree: 11
- Neutral: 0
- Disagree: 0
- Strongly disagree: 0

Comments:

- Good speakers and discussions
- Deep, varied expertise
- Good job. Smart. In-depth knowledge.
- Excellent information provided
- Great facilitators
- Gary, as an engineer, brings credibility and trust
- Ian is a great, lively facilitator

Statement 4: "The *Collaborating for Walkable Communities: Benefits and Best Practices* presentation was informative and helpful."

Responses:

- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| • Strongly agree: 5 | • Disagree: 0          |
| • Agree: 17         | • Strongly disagree: 0 |
| • Neutral: 2        | • N/A 4                |

Comments:

- Very interesting statistics and background
- Got a little long
- Good basis to start discussion
- More visual materials for best practices would be helpful

Statement 5: “The *Inter-Agency Collaboration for Walkable Communities* presentation and panel discussion helped establish a foundation for a broad-based statewide initiative.”

Responses:

- Strongly agree: 9
- Agree: 13
- Neutral: 2
- Disagree: 0
- Strongly disagree: 0
- N/A 4

Comments:

- It was great having as many Department Directors as we did
- The commitment of three Department Directors to attend was impressive
- This was fabulous
- A visual aid combining each of the three groups' offerings would be helpful - visual aids to help see how they could connect
- Good to understand the 3 agencies' activities in walkable communities
- Keep presentations all together instead of breaking into sections - "barriers" got lost
- It was good to see support and discussion from all agencies represented - especially, the Directors that came

Statement 6: “The walkability audit improved my understanding of the ways planning and design decisions/policies impact the build environment.”

Responses:

- Strongly agree: 6
- Agree: 14
- Neutral: 4
- Disagree: 0
- Strongly disagree: 0
- N/A 4

Comments:

- Nice to get out!
- Already well-informed

- Good examples along the route to discuss as a small group
- It may have been helpful to review the checklist before going out
- Great interactive piece
- First audit I've been part of - components I had not considered before when just "walking"
- I have done similar walk audits. I feel like I learn something every time
- Learned some new things to look at with trails

Statement 7: “The *Collaboration Multiplier* asset-mapping exercise and strategic planning activity created the momentum for further collaboration.”

Responses:

- Strongly agree: 8
- Agree: 16
- Neutral: 4
- Disagree: 0
- Strongly disagree: 0

Comments:

- Helpful to know what other resources are available
- Lots of ideas for collaboration surfaced
- Sharing answers was too drawn out - shorten so more time for table conversations
- Good interaction within each group
- It was very interesting to see how common our wishes and visions are - we just need a place to share them
- Brought forth strengths of organizations that can be put to use
- Great discussion; great relationship-building, connections

## **Appendix 2: Collaborations between Transportation and Health Departments in Other States**

Based on research conducted during the last two years, about 20 states are actively engaged in collaborations between the Health and Transportation Departments to expand walkable and livable communities throughout their states.

The following summary highlights recent and ongoing work in some of the most active states: Oregon, Minnesota, Massachusetts, and North Carolina, who have pioneered this work for many years, along with Montana, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Colorado, where America Walks hosted state collaborative workshops on walkability in 2015.

## **Oregon: Memorandum of Understanding**

In 2013, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division (OHA-PHD) established a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in which both parties agreed to “communicate, coordinate and collaborate on activities that support their mutual goal to improve the link between public health and transportation policies and programs in Oregon.”

Both groups recognize that transportation is intrinsically linked with health and that social determinants of health, such as living conditions and travel behaviors, are a key factor in the overall health of the population. The MOU identifies that ODOT and OHA-PHD will work together to meet Oregonian’s mobility and health needs through:

- Shared communication and planning
- Shared encouragement of active transportation
- Collaborative research and data analysis
- Leverage resource and funding opportunities

### Reference:

- *Health and Transportation White Paper (Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan)*, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/BikePed/HealthWhitePaper.pdf>

## **Minnesota: Inter-Agency Agreement and Statewide Pedestrian System Plan**

In 2014, following the creation of an inter-agency agreement between the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the two agencies developed the Minnesota Statewide Pedestrian System Plan.

### Goals of the plan:

- Gain a better understanding of pedestrian needs and challenges
- Develop and prioritize recommendations for new projects, policies, and programs
- Provide recommendations to clarify roles and responsibilities of partners

### Process for plan development:

- Stakeholder Visioning (August 2014)
- Project Advisory Committee (25 stakeholder groups)
- Minnesota Walks: Current & Future Steps Towards a Walkable Minnesota
- Public outreach and engagement

### References:

- *Minnesota Statewide Pedestrian System Plan*, Minnesota Departments of Transportation and Health - <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/peds/plan/>
- *Minnesota Walks* toolkit - <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/peds/plan/pdf/minnesota-walks-2016.pdf>

## **Massachusetts: Healthy Transportation Compact and Healthy Transportation Policy Directive**

Massachusetts may have been the first state to legislate collaboration between its health and transportation agencies. As far back as 2009, the State Legislature established a Healthy Transportation Compact, which "Directs the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) to partner with other agencies and consider health in transportation."

Later - in 2013 - MassDOT established the Healthy Transportation Policy Directive with the following goals:

- To formalize commitment to transportation networks that serve all mode choices
- To ensure all MassDOT projects provide customers safe, comfortable, healthy transportation options
- To achieve designated mode shift goal

### Reference:

- *Healthy Transportation Policy Directive*, Massachusetts Dept. of Transportation - <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Portals/0/docs/GreenDOT/DirectiveHealthyTransportation.pdf>

## **North Carolina: Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

In December, 2013, the Board of the North Carolina Department of Transportation adopted WalkBikeNC - the state's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

The 18-month collaborative process included the following partners:

- NC Department of Transportation
- NC Department of Health and Human Services
- NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- NC Department of Commerce
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation
- Davis Wealth Management Foundation.

The five principles of the plan are:

1. Mobility: Expand walking and biking network
2. Safety: Improve safety for walking and bicycling
3. Health: Embrace health and wellness in transportation decisions
4. Economy: Foster robust economic growth
5. Environment: Encourage stewardship

### Reference:

- *WalkBikeNC*, <http://www.walkbikenc.com>

## **Montana: A Collaborative Framework for Walkable Communities**

A workshop was held on Wednesday, August 12th, 2015 in Helena, Montana, in partnership with Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Department of Commerce, and Bike Walk Montana.

The following three workshop goals were established:

1. Strengthen relationships between Departments of Health, Transportation, and Commerce, and Bike Walk Montana;
2. Explore benefits of increased collaboration, communication, and coordination between agencies in promoting walking and walkable communities;
3. Present draft "Collaborative Framework" to agency directors, request feedback, and seek support for continuing collaborative process.

Prior to the workshop, the four partner organizations drafted a "Collaborative Framework for Walkable Communities" based on the following six "Aligning Principles:"

1. **Safety:** Walkability reduces fatal and serious injuries in Montana communities, by improving the safety of pedestrians and all road users.
2. **Mobility and Access:** Walkable communities provide mobility and access to services, education, employment, and social opportunities for all Montana residents.
3. **Economic Vitality:** Walkable communities are economically vibrant and resilient because they align with current and future trends in the preferences of Montana residents and tourists.
4. **Quality of Life:** Walkable communities contribute to Montana's quality of life through healthier lifestyles, expanded commuting options, and easier access to recreational and social opportunities.
5. **Health and Environment:** Walkable communities improve the health and well-being of Montana residents by encouraging active lifestyles and a healthy environment.
6. **Equity:** Walkable communities equitably support the lives and lifestyles of Montana residents of all ages, abilities, income levels, races, and national origins.

Between 6-10 staff from each department participated in the entire workshop, along with representatives of Bike Walk Montana and two other groups.

After lunch, Director Mike Tooley (Montana Department of Transportation), Director Richard Opper (Public Health and Human Services), and Director Meg O'Leary (Commerce) received a presentation from their own staff plus Bike Walk Montana Executive Director Melinda Barnes, about the proposed "Collaborative Framework for Walkable Montana Communities," that had been developed and refined earlier in the day. All three Agency Directors expressed support for continuing the collaborative effort and Director O'Leary asked, "What can senior administrators do to help remove barriers?"

The key next step for the three state agencies was to hold individual meetings with their Directors to discuss future plans.

## **Arkansas: Local Communities Lead the Way**

America Walks coordinated a Workshop on Collaboration for Walkable Arkansas Communities on Tuesday, August 25th, 2015 in Little Rock, AR. The partnership between the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) was the primary focus of this workshop, along with engagement of local officials.

The following goals were agreed upon by the planning team, which consisted only of ADH and AHTD staff:

1. Strengthen relationship between Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD)
2. Develop shared understanding of the benefits of walkable communities between ADH, AHTD, and other partners
3. Develop Action Plan for providing Technical Assistance to communities to develop Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans

The entire morning session was for Health and Highway/Transportation agency staff only. Participation consisted of six ADH staff including the Deputy Director, and ten AHTD staff including the Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Engineer.

Facilitators Ian Thomas and Gary Toth gave an opening presentation titled "Collaboration for Walkable Communities," on national health care expenditures, importance of the built environment, a history of transportation planning in the U.S., and the need for health and transportation sectors to collaborate to solve serious health, safety, and cost problems. There followed a small-group discussion titled "ADH and AHTD: Where is the Common Ground?" during which the public health and transportation teams separately evaluated their own strengths and challenges in this work, and then identified ways to support each other effectively.

In the afternoon, the workshop expanded to include staff from other state agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, statewide non-profit groups, the Arkansas Coalition to Prevent Obesity and local elected officials. Four small-town mayors participated in a panel discussion focused on individual walkability projects they are leading in their own communities:

- Mayor Rick Elumbaugh (Batesville, AR)
- Mayor Jill Dabbs (Bryant, AR)
- Mayor Frank Hash (El Dorado, AR)
- Mayor Chip Johnson (Hernando, MS)

In the final session, the entire group started to develop a statewide plan to provide planning assistance to communities to promote walking and walkable design. One of the main outcomes of the workshop was that local communities are currently leading the way in Arkansas, and that there are important next steps state agencies can take to support their efforts.

## **Kentucky: *Pedestrian Planning Assistance for Communities Training***

Kentucky's public health and transportation agencies have been working closely together to improve walkability for several years.

Through the Physical Activity Committee of the Partnership for a Fit Kentucky, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and the Kentucky Department for Public Health have developed a robust collaborative program in which they reach out to local communities and deliver training in how to develop local pedestrian plans. More than twenty plans have been adopted by local elected bodies since 2013 and this has led to walkable community projects in several of these cities.

With that background in mind, the goals for the Kentucky workshop were:

1. Expand partnership and increase impact of existing pedestrian planning and implementation efforts
2. Increase communities' access to effective resources and funding for pedestrian planning and implementation

During the morning session, managers and staff from the Kentucky Department of Public Health (KDPH) and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) discussed their innovative "Pedestrian Planning Assistance for Communities" training program. This program guides local officials and community residents through the process of gathering public input about pedestrian safety and access needs in their community, and developing a formal Pedestrian Plan that is adopted by the City Council or County Board, thereby making projects within these plans "shovel-ready" for implementation as and when funding becomes available. The challenge for KDPH and KYTC is to build awareness of the benefits of walkable community planning and create more demand for the training among communities throughout the state.

To address this challenge, the workshop brought together other state agencies and organizations, educated them about walkability and the "Pedestrian Planning Assistance for Communities" program, and solicited their help in building awareness and demand for this program in communities throughout the state. Organizations in attendance included Kentucky Injury Prevention Research Center, Kentucky Department of Aging and Independent Living, Kentucky Environmental Education Council, Kentucky Cooperative Extension, University of Kentucky Transportation Research Center, Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky, Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Kentucky Youth Advocates, and Kentucky Cancer Consortium.

Two of the most engaged partners were Kentucky Main Streets, who have staffed offices in 44 communities, and Kentucky AARP, who have 460,000 members and hundreds of volunteers throughout the state. Both of these organizations committed to becoming trainers for the program and using their communications networks to building awareness and increasing demand.

## Colorado:

A State Agency Collaborative Workshop was hosted by the Walk Colorado Working Group on Thursday, September 10th, 2015 in Denver, CO.

The goals for this workshop were to:

1. Document existing collaborations among state agencies, organizations, and communities, that support walking and walkable community design
2. Identify opportunities and barriers regarding increased collaboration, communication, and coordination of walkable community advocacy, planning and implementation activities
3. Strengthen relationships among all partners and develop additional goals, strategies, and action steps for the "Walk Colorado Collaborative Action Plan"
4. Establish next steps for the "Walk Colorado Partnership"

The Walk Colorado Working Group consists of three state government agencies and three non-profit organizations:

- Colorado State Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)
- Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Colorado State Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)
- Colorado Health Foundation
- Colorado Municipal League
- Walk Denver

In the morning, the six Walk Colorado Working Group members participated in a "Collaboration Multiplier" asset-mapping exercise, based on the following questions:

1. Why is walkability important to my organization?
2. What desired outcomes or organizational goals do we have in this area?
3. What assets, strengths, and expertise does my organization bring to a partnership focused on walkable communities?
4. What existing programs, partnerships, and data can we contribute to this project?
5. What barriers and challenges do we face, with which other partners can help us?

In the afternoon, other partners joined the workshop, including the Injury Prevention and Chronic Disease Units of CDPHE, Safe Routes to School and Traffic Safety Divisions of CDOT, State Office of Tourism, State Department of Education, the Governor's Office, AARP, the Sonoran Institute, Urban Land Institute, Great Outdoors Colorado, LiveWell Colorado, Walk2Connect, and the Fort Collins Partnership for Age-Friendly Cities.

Small-group discussions and report-outs were held around the following three questions:

1. How is my group promoting walkability?
2. What assets, strengths, expertise, and programs do we bring?
3. How do we generate excitement about walkability?

The output from these discussions will further inform the Walk Colorado Collaborative Action Plan.