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# ACTIVE Louisville

## Incorporating Active Living Principles into Planning and Design

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**Background:** ACTIVE Louisville was a collaboration working to introduce active living principles into a downtown redevelopment planning and design process, in order to create more vibrant neighborhoods where residents incorporate healthy habits into daily routines.

**Intervention:** ACTIVE Louisville worked to increase physical activity and health awareness in three low-income neighborhoods undergoing redevelopment related to the replacement of a public housing project with a new, mixed-income community under a federal HOPE VI grant. Working with local planners, neighborhood groups, community organizers, and housing officials, ACTIVE Louisville helped expand physical activity awareness and opportunities.

**Results:** ACTIVE Louisville leveraged limited funding to accomplish an ambitious work program and to generate resources through creative collaborations that influenced policy and practices. ACTIVE Louisville had a considerable impact on the design of the HOPE VI project, the mission of a local community center, and the approach of the Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement of the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness.

**Lessons learned:** Introducing healthy lifestyles to communities with high levels of inactivity requires an interdisciplinary approach that will have an enduring effect only if it is absorbed into policies and practices of local institutions.

**Conclusions:** ACTIVE Louisville's association with the Louisville Metro Housing Authority and the housing authority's high-profile housing redevelopment project amplified ACTIVE Louisville's impact. ACTIVE Louisville's public health interventions were well timed: physical improvements were underway in its target neighborhoods, and ACTIVE Louisville was able to coordinate with and have influence on the community and government groups that were involved in the HOPE VI project and related neighborhood redevelopment.

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### Introduction

In 2003, the Louisville Metro Housing Authority in Louisville, Kentucky, successfully applied for a \$200,000 5-year Active Living by Design (ALbD) grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). It was an auspicious time, as Louisville Metro was beginning massive efforts to revitalize the city's downtown area<sup>1</sup> and to address the growing problem of its residents' poor health, some of which was related to sedentary lifestyles. In 2005, 24% of the Louisville population reported they had not participated in any physical activity in the past month, and 61% are either overweight or obese.<sup>2</sup>

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The housing authority had recently embarked on a downtown redevelopment project called Liberty Green, involving \$40 million in funds from HOPE VI, a federal program begun in 1993 to lessen concentrations of poverty and revitalize distressed public housing. The program also provides services that assist residents in moving toward self-sufficiency ([www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/](http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/)). Louisville Metro was able to leverage an additional \$200 million to make related physical improvements in Liberty Green's Phoenix Hill neighborhood and two adjoining neighborhoods, Smoke-town and Shelby Park. The Liberty Green project was strongly supported by the Louisville government as part of its initiative to increase downtown housing and improve the livability of nearby neighborhoods. The ALbD grant proposed to incorporate active-living principles into the planning and design process as the redevelopment proceeded.

ACTIVE Louisville's mission is to create more vibrant neighborhoods where residents incorporate healthy habits into their daily routine ([www.louisvilleky.gov/](http://www.louisvilleky.gov/)

**Table 1.** Population characteristics in target neighborhoods, 2000 (% unless noted otherwise)

	Smoketown	Shelby Park	Phoenix Hill <sup>a</sup>
<b>Population (n)</b>	2116	3206	7164
<b>Race</b>			
White	14.5	41.1	26.3
Black	81.3	53.3	67.7
Other	6.0	4.5	4.5
<b>Income &lt;\$15,000</b>	89.2	67.6	68.7
<b>Families below poverty</b>	51.5	28.4	57.2
<b>Housing aged &gt;50 years</b>	86.3	78.4	48.9
<b>No high school diploma</b>	16.0	17.9	39.0

<sup>a</sup>Data represent population prior to HOPE IV project

Health/MHHM/ACTIVE+Louisville.htm). The interdisciplinary partnership planned to achieve this by influencing the HOPE VI reconstruction to make changes in the built environment and institute policies that would remove obstacles to and support active living.

It was the partnership's intention to use the same model to reshape the way planning, policy, and physical development occurred throughout the Louisville Metro area and to influence the physical activity and nutrition promotion approaches and programs of the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness, which had recently brought on Dr. Adewale Troutman, a charismatic African-American leader and educator on health disparities, as its director. The partnership also looked to the public health department as the permanent home for its successful initiatives at the end of the initial funding period.

## Methods

### Settings and Participants

Nestled on the Ohio River in north central Kentucky, Louisville has a mix of urban and suburban areas and a diverse population of approximately 701,500 (76% white, 19% black or African-American, 2% Latino, 3% other races).<sup>3</sup> ACTIVE Louisville's project area encompassed three contiguous low-income neighborhoods directly east of downtown Louisville: Smoketown, Shelby Park, and Phoenix Hill (Table 1). These neighborhoods experienced considerable disinvestment since the 1980s, largely because of the migration of residents and resources to suburban areas. Smoketown is home to the Sheppard Square housing project, which has a highly transient population that poses a large challenge to community organizing efforts. Shelby Park is a slightly larger and more stable community south of Smoketown. Both Shelby Park and Smoketown have been frequent targets of redevelopment efforts since the 1960s, but few have had long-lasting effects. Prior to redevelopment, Phoenix Hill was 68% African-American and 57% of its residents lived in poverty, many of them in the Clarksdale housing project that was razed and replaced with Liberty Green.

## Active Living by Design Community Action Model

**Preparation.** While writing the HOPE VI grant, the housing authority worked with dozens of local agencies and amassed a body of knowledge related to housing and the built environment in the target neighborhoods. The authority garnered investments from local organizations, neighborhood groups, and city organizations that were used as leverage for the HOPE VI grant. The ACTIVE Louisville partnership benefited from that reservoir of information and connections, as well as the local and national prominence of the HOPE VI project. The core members of the ALbD partnership were the same parties who conceived and wrote the HOPE VI grant, representing city planners, health officials, the transit authority, and the Presbyterian Community Center located in the center of the target area. The list of partners expanded as additional skills and resources were identified.

Initially, the partnership consisted of four committees (promotion, policy, programs, and physical projects). The committee structure worked well for about a year, until the committees became too time-consuming to direct and coordinate. Committee members were blended into a large mailing list, which served as a database of particular skills and resources. Project staff used the list to convene smaller groups as needed for specific projects. Quarterly partner meetings were held at various locations within or near the revitalization area to communicate and coordinate efforts. Virtually all of the partners were involved in some way with either Liberty Green or the redevelopment of Smoketown and Shelby Park. The network eventually included partners in the areas of advocacy, public health, community and economic development, transportation, public works, housing, planning and design, and academia (Table 2).

ACTIVE Louisville's first step was to conduct a series of focus groups in each of the target neighborhoods to help give direction to the partnership's activities through discussions about physical activity and eating a healthier diet. The focus groups demonstrated that the residents understood the benefits of exercise but lacked time and motivation to be physically active. They also revealed a strong concern about the safety of walking or running in the neighborhoods. The information became the basis of the partnership's work program.

To keep the players involved in the partnership, it was critical that Louisville Metro departments and employees supported the goals of the partners and participated in its activities. The mayor's office issued a memo that approved the use of Louisville Metro employees' time for work on ACTIVE Louisville projects, specifically in the departments of planning, public works, and public health. Shortly after ACTIVE Louisville began its work, Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson founded the Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement (MHHM) and modeled it on the same principles of collaboration and partnerships ([www.louisvilleky.gov/health/mhhm](http://www.louisvilleky.gov/health/mhhm)).

**Implementation.** ACTIVE Louisville's activities were structured around the 5P framework developed by ALbD ([www.activelivingbydesign.org/our-approach/community-action-model](http://www.activelivingbydesign.org/our-approach/community-action-model)); preparation, promotion, programs, policy, and physical projects; (Table 3).<sup>4</sup> The partnership supported innovative approaches to change on multiple levels (e.g., community, organizational, individual) across multiple sectors (e.g., government, education, planning).

**Table 2.** Roles of key partners

Partner	Preparation	Promotion	Policy	Programs	Physical projects
Presbyterian Community Center	Developed grant, presented grant to funders, served on steering committee, convened neighborhood focus groups, provided access to neighborhood organizers, provided meeting space	Disseminated information through existing programs, billboard, newsletter	Initiated planning effort for nine-block campus, included health in its core mission, identified funding for Quality of Life plan	Provided facility for fitness programs, provided clientele for fitness programs, supplied Clean Team youth to participate in Clean Up and gardening program, identified funding for education programming in community garden	Provided liability insurance for community garden
Louisville Metro Housing Authority	Provided fiscal management of grant, funded consultants to write grant, funded consultants to manage grant, served on steering committee, provided access to planning processes in three target neighborhoods, provided staff time of project directors	Publicized information through letters to clients, meetings, and HOPE VI project team meetings	Absorbed active living as a focus of housing redevelopment	Provided clientele and space for fitness program; provided staff support for Family Fitness Festival	Built Liberty Green housing development with walkable sidewalks and pocket parks
Louisville Metro Public Health and Wellness Department	—	Disseminated information through Mayor's Healthy Hometown meetings, newsletter, press conferences, events; provided funding for promotion of 2008 Pedestrian Summit	Adopted built environment/active living as primary focus of Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement	Provided funding for fitness program; provided staff support for Family Fitness Festival	Initiated Mayor's Miles markers, opened golf courses for walkers, developed walking track at Shelby Park
Louisville Metro Policy and Management Department	Provided consultation on writing grant, provided context of previous planning efforts, helped develop work program, served on steering committee	—	—	—	Bicycle infrastructure improvements; walkability assessment design and implementation
Transit Authority of River City	Provided consultation on writing grant, provided context of previous neighborhood planning efforts, developed communications plan, served on steering committee, provided meeting space, provided staff time of project director	—	—	—	—
University of Louisville	Documented focus groups, conducted Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design analysis	—	—	—	—
Partnership for a Fit Kentucky	—	Shared information in newsletters and meetings	—	—	—
Media	—	Local television and print media publicized information about events and programs	—	—	—
Meyzeek Middle School	—	—	—	Supported SRTS program, provided students to participate in gardening program; location and support for Family Fitness Festival	—
Louisville Metro Parks	—	—	—	Provided facility for walking club and related classes	—

*(continued on next page)*

**Table 2.** (continued)

Partner	Preparation	Promotion	Policy	Programs	Physical projects
Making Connections	—	—	—	Absorbed Family Fitness Festival in Back To School Jam	—
Louisville Metro Public Works Department	—	—	—	Provided project management for Pedestrian Summit	—
Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency	—	—	—	Provided funding and consultation for Pedestrian Summit and Community Walkability Plan	—
Youthbuild	—	—	—	—	Provided volunteers, benches, and gazebo for community garden
Metropolitan Sewer District	—	—	—	—	Provided funding for community garden improvements, provided technical consultation for bioswales (landscaping elements designed to capture and filter surface water runoff) in SRTS plan
Louisville Metro Planning and Design	—	—	Included walkability as part of its neighborhood planning process	—	—

SRTS, Safe Routes to School

**Policy and physical projects.** In addition to ensuring that Liberty Green supported active lifestyles, ACTIVE Louisville partners sought policies aimed at integrating health and fitness into the mission of the Presbyterian Community Center, the primary resource for support, education, and job training in Smoketown and Shelby Park; and adding the built environment as a focus of the public health department’s initiatives. Within Liberty Green, the goal was to ensure that the planning process resulted in a built environment that was conducive to walking and other physical activities. Partners participated in discussions about sidewalk widths, curb cuts, and pocket parks and advocated strongly for constructing an active-living center.

To influence development in the neighborhoods beyond Liberty Green, the partnership was also active in a series of planning efforts conducted in Smoketown and Shelby Park during 2004 and 2005. These efforts were initiated by the housing authority, which contracted with nationally recognized Urban Design Associates as part of the Smoketown/Shelby Park component of the HOPE VI project. Out of that effort came a plan to concentrate new development and redevelopment projects in a nine-block area of Smoketown that includes the Presbyterian Community Center and Meyzeek Middle School (Figure 1). ACTIVE Louisville partners advocated to make the nine-block area an “active-living campus,” and the St. Peter Claver community garden grew directly out of the design charette (collaborative) held by Urban Design Associates. The garden opened in the summer of 2005 and now serves as an outdoor classroom for Meyzeek Middle School as a part of a complementary RWJF Healthy Eating by Design grant.

**Programs and promotion.** Based on the focus groups and discussions with stakeholders, the partnership promoted walking and physical activity through programs and events related to healthy lifestyles. These activities included walking clubs, a multi-generational fitness program, a youth bicycle education program, and an annual family festival

that emphasized activity. The programs were designed to be incubated by the partnership and then turned over to a project sponsor, with partners continuing to provide advice and volunteer time, and offer grant-writing assistance as needed. While the ACTIVE Louisville programs met with mixed success in terms of participation, their primary goal was to raise the profile of the partnership, build credibility in the neighborhoods, and establish relationships with community groups.

## Results

The partnership’s sustainability strategy of creating programs that could be absorbed or handed over to other organizations had successes and failures. The “Get Up, Get Out,” fitness program was funded by the public health department after the first year and is now managed by the Presbyterian Community Center. The Family Fitness Festival was merged with the Back to School Jam sponsored by another agency.

ACTIVE Louisville successfully coordinated changes in the built environment to promote physical activity. The St. Peter Claver Community Garden is now a regular walking destination for children from Meyzeek Middle School and other youth organizations. While gardening activities educate youth about nutrition, they are also a good source of physical activity. The HOPE VI Liberty Green housing development, nearing completion at the time of publication, features wide, unobstructed sidewalks, well-marked and signalized street crossings, way-finding signage, traffic-calming islands, parking in the rear of the buildings, and three pocket parks. Work along the Hancock Corridor continues in conjunction with the Presbyterian Community Center

**Table 3.** ACTIVE Louisville's 5P activities

<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified and recruited additional partners</li> <li>Wrote communications plan</li> <li>Convened partners and held initial meeting</li> <li>Established partnership structure including steering committees</li> <li>Conducted skills and asset surveys with partners</li> <li>Established communication channels including regular email updates and quarterly newsletters to partners</li> <li>Conducted focus groups with area residents and stakeholders</li> <li>Requested cooperation of local government and in-kind contribution of staff</li> <li>Continued to convene quarterly partnership meetings at locations within or near the revitalization area to keep partners abreast of redevelopment projects; meetings included a physical activity and healthy food tastings</li> <li>Continued to issue regular email updates and quarterly newsletter to keep partners aware of special events and programs and opportunities to co-sponsor</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed logo and brand</li> <li>Garnered media opportunities (local news outlets)</li> <li>Sponsored and co-sponsored events including an annual Family Fitness Festival</li> <li>Prepared printed materials to raise awareness of specific programs</li> </ul>
<b>Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back on Track (2005): A free walking and fitness club that combined physical activity (walking and Pilates classes) with professional trainer support, health-focused education, and healthy food tastings. The program also promoted awareness of a brand-new walking track in Shelby Park.</li> <li>Convened a walking club to establish the Hancock Corridor as a walkable connection between Shelby Park and Waterfront Park</li> <li>Get Up, Get Out (2005–current): A series of free fitness classes held at the PCC, including Hip-Hopercise, a class for all ages; Golden Gliders, a class for seniors; and group sessions with a professional personal trainer using fitness equipment available at the center</li> <li>Safe Routes to School (2005–current): Worked with community stakeholders and partners to establish the Safe Routes to School Program in Louisville first by hosting a national training at Meyzeek Middle School and then through assisting JCPS and the city in writing applications to apply for state Safe Routes to School funds</li> <li>Youth Bicycle Education and Repair program (2005): Graduated three teens who participated in 16 weeks of training; program discontinued because of high cost of operating</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented a walkability assessment that is incorporated into the city's neighborhood planning process via the small area neighborhood plans</li> <li>Participated as track leaders in the 2005 Bicycle Summit that resulted in a bicycle infrastructure master plan</li> <li>Created a Built Environment Committee (now Active Living Committee) within the Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement</li> <li>Engaged Louisville Metro Department of Public Works in convening a Pedestrian Summit that resulted in a Walkability Plan that uses the 5P framework and is supported by the mayor</li> <li>Worked with Liberty Green development team to incorporate ALbD principles into site design and infrastructure</li> <li>Advocated for promotion of active living in the redesign of Smoketown and specifically the nine-block campus</li> <li>Re-ignited Mayor's Miles program through the Active Living Committee</li> <li>Supported policy changes in partnering agencies that promoted healthy eating and active living principles</li> </ul>
<b>Physical projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of St. Peter Claver Community Garden</li> <li>Pedestrian amenities and pocket parks at Liberty Green</li> </ul>

with projects designed to remove hazards, improve signage, and increase safety.

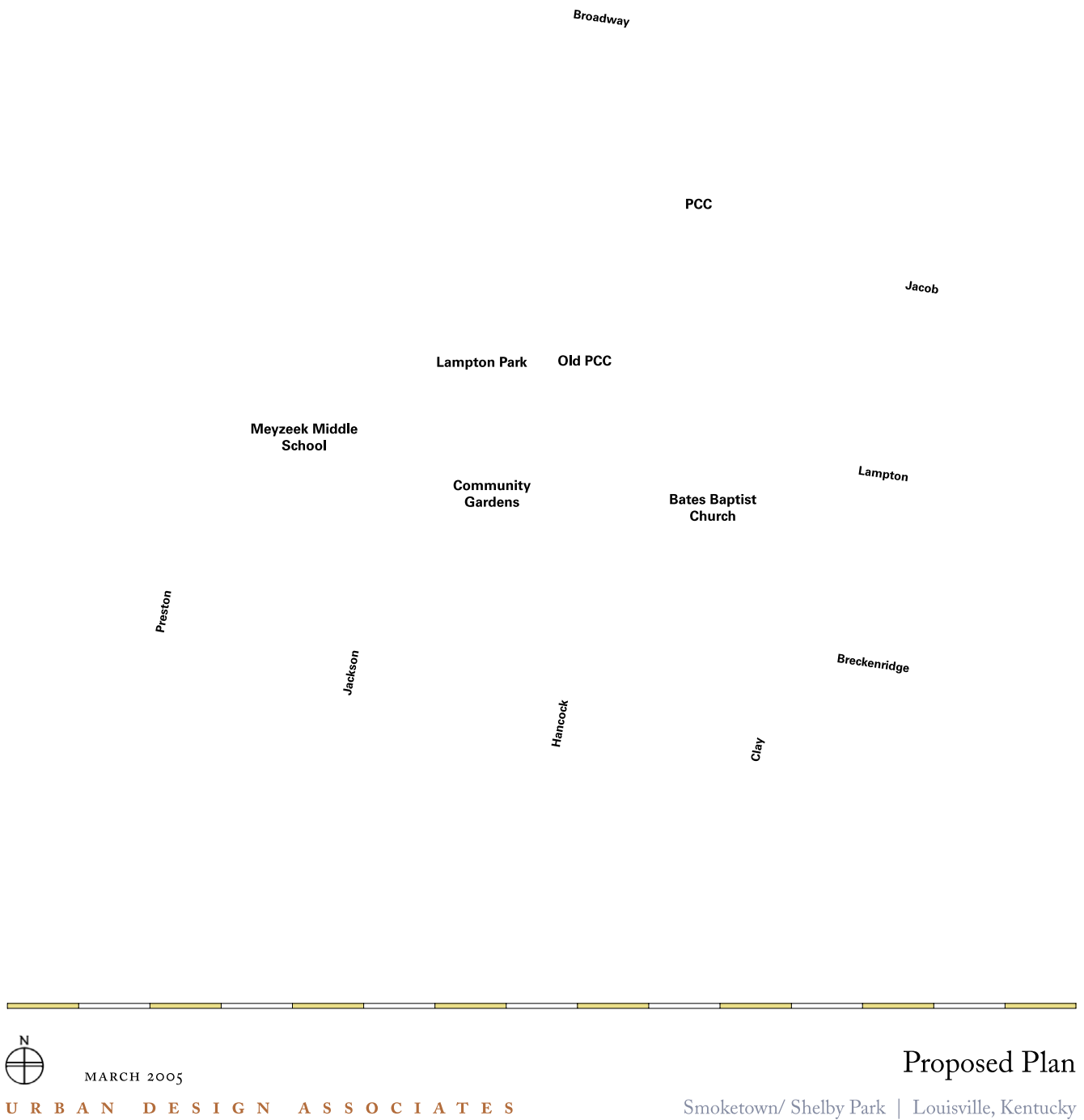
Active-living strategies have become part of the MHHM and, by extension, the work done by the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness to promote physical activity.

The partnership initiated MHHM's Built Environment Committee, now called the Active Living Committee, on which former ACTIVE Louisville partners and staff supported through ALbD continue to serve. The committee provided leadership for a Pedestrian Summit held in May 2008. The summit convened more than 100 residents and officials interested in promoting walkability. It resulted in a Community Walkability Plan, which laid out dozens of changes to make the

community safer and more appealing for both recreation and transportation. Short-term objectives outlined in the plan, which purposely uses the 5P framework, include completing walkability assessments in additional neighborhoods, expanding the Mayor's Miles program, and creating Step Up Louisville, a voice for pedestrian safety and walkability issues.<sup>5</sup> Mid- and long-term goals include creating an inventory of the existing pedestrian network, expanding the number of countdown and audible pedestrian signals at intersections, maintaining pedestrian ways adjacent to construction projects and during special events, and conducting health impact assessments for transportation-related projects.

ACTIVE Louisville was successful in weaving together its promotions, programs, and policy changes and inte-





**Figure 1.** Map of nine-block area in Smoketown neighborhood

grating all its efforts with a Healthy Eating by Design (HEbD) grant awarded by RWJF in 2006. At that point, healthy eating was integrated into all of the partnership’s programs and events. With an extensive partnership list and a large diversity of skills within the partnership, all the moving pieces—the 5Ps—were in play with every initiative.

**Discussion  
Lessons Learned**

**The benefits of partnerships.** A primary lesson learned in the development of ACTIVE Louisville is that working with partners is a two-way street: maintaining good partner relationships requires helping partners with

**Table 4.** Sources of support for ACTIVE Louisville

Source	Purpose	Amount (\$)
Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky	To support a WIC pilot project that provided \$10 in weekly produce vouchers to WIC participants at the Smoketown/Shelby Park Farmers' Market	3,525
Home Depot	Tools and supplies for the St. Peter Claver Community Garden	500
Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency	For Pedestrian Summit Plan	100,000
LMPHW	To continue the Get Up, Get Out programming at the Presbyterian Community Center	25,000
LMPHW	To bring Mark Fenton to Louisville to give presentations about the benefits of becoming a more walkable city	3,800
LMPHW	To continue the Get Up, Get Out program	24,600
Louisville Metro Department of Public Works	Remediation and replacement soil for St. Peter Claver Community Garden	75,000
Louisville Metro Government	Bicycle infrastructure improvements in Louisville	3,500,000
Metropolitan Sewer District	Garden education and infrastructure including fencing, water connection, entrance garden, and pavilion	30,000
Nickelodeon	New outdoor basketball goal for Meyzeek Middle School	10,000
RWJF	Special Opportunities grant to promote walkability of the Hancock Corridor and improve connections between Shelby Park and Waterfront Park	43,300
RWJF	Transitional Supplement grant to establish active living emphasis within LMPHW and increase safety and walkability in the Hancock Corridor	44,669
RWJF	Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Leading site grant to increase active living and healthy eating in 12 target neighborhoods through systems and policy changes	400,000
SRTS state grant	For SRTS improvements at Sanders Elementary School	25,000
SRTS state grant	For SRTS improvements at Meyzeek Middle School	170,000
		<b>TOTAL: 4,455,394</b>

LMPHW, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness; RWJF, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; SRTS, Safe Routes to School; WIC, U.S. Department of Agriculture Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

their individual initiatives and compromising at times to meet their objectives. Project staff focused heavily on attracting many partners and kept them engaged at well-planned meetings with healthy food, an interesting activity, and a substantial agenda. For example, one meeting was held at the community garden and featured a gazpacho-making contest.

**The importance of a lead partner.** The partnership was led by consultants paid by the housing authority with grant funds, but did not have the involvement of housing authority staff once Liberty Green was under construction. It functioned as a loosely organized partnership, not a nonprofit community group, or public agency. This created some confusion in explaining what the entity was, but also posed difficulties in generating resources. Without nonprofit or tax-exempt status, ACTIVE Louisville could not accept grants or donations and had to rely entirely on the housing authority as grantee for the administration of the budget.

Partners faced ongoing challenges with funding and staffing. With a budget of about \$40,000 a year and no full-time person committed to leading the partnership, there was a high degree of turnover in project management. ACTIVE Louisville had four project directors/coordinators over the course of the funding period. Two were consultants who were subcontracted for the

project by the housing authority, one was a full-time employee of partner agency Transit Authority of River City, and another was a project intern who was hired part-time to direct the project. While a dedicated inner core of partners can maintain momentum during leadership changes, many other ALbD partnerships had project managers with full-time pay and benefits supported through grant funds or by another organization that was willing to dedicate full-time staff to the project.

Nevertheless, the partnership was able to multiply its financial and human resources and maximize accomplishments despite a limited budget. Table 4 shows the extent of additional revenue leveraged through partners, grants, and other sources.

**Multiple partners, multiple bureaucracies.** ACTIVE Louisville's lead agency, the housing authority, has a cumbersome budgeting and auditing process. There were also numerous bureaucratic and regulatory challenges in working with local government and the school system. Changes in the built environment are governed by multiple jurisdictions that often have complex and contradictory protocols and differing priorities. The housing authority was focused on the legal, construction, and funding issues of Liberty Green and did not always make the partnership's goals a priority. In addition, the reconstruction and occupation of Liberty Green did not occur until the ALbD grant was almost

finished. Partners were involved in designing sidewalks and pocket parks, but, during the period the housing was built, there was no one living there. Because of the vacancy and because of the Presbyterian Community Center's strong advocacy role, efforts were concentrated on the adjoining neighborhoods of Smoketown and Shelby Park.

While it might have been a better fit to have the public health department serve as lead agency, it would not have given the partnership access to the many organizations and opportunities created by the housing authority and Liberty Green.

**Sustaining programs and promotions.** Partners' experiences demonstrated that programs and promotions are difficult to sustain, while policies and physical improvements are more likely to endure. Partners discovered an important corollary: programs and promotions are a very effective way of initiating discussions and providing demonstrations of the efficacy of policies and physical improvements to influence health. For example, the partnership held a series of events to promote the opening of the Shelby Park walking path. The events drew area residents and participants from outside the area to walk and attend discussions about fitness issues. While more than 100 people attended this series of events, it was even more important that the neighbors in Shelby Park recognized the increased use of the walking path and that the Shelby Park Community Center staff received additional support and programming that brought them new visitors and increased visibility. Within a few months, the walkers in the park had increased substantially, and the Shelby Park staff had an increased awareness of the walking path as an asset. Partners decided it was no longer a priority in need of promotion.

### **Project Sustainability**

ACTIVE Louisville found the key to project sustainability was building it in from the start and creating a credible record of achievement. By involving key community leaders in the project and engaging them in long-term objectives and goals, the partnership was able to successfully hand over the baton to other institutions at the end of the grant period. Through their many successes, community connections, and strong reputation, partners were able to help attract resources needed to sustain the effort. The key to doing that was building strong relationships with the partnering agencies, understanding their objectives, identifying the effective people within that agency, and communicating continuously about progress on mutual goals. For instance, the housing authority has recently identified funding and a site for its community center, originally known as the active-living center, well after its fiscal association with ALbD ended. This is because people formerly involved with the ACTIVE Louisville partner-

ship and those continuing to work with its successor, the Active Living Committee, continue to communicate with housing authority staff and support those efforts.

The other key vehicles for project sustainability are the MHHM, the Presbyterian Community Center, and Meyzeek Middle School, all of which have in some way institutionalized the partnership's programs and philosophy. Some of ACTIVE Louisville's leadership has been absorbed into the public health department as part of the MHHM and its Active Living Committee. An ALbD Transitional Supplement grant secured in 2008 to fund a sixth year of ACTIVE Louisville's work and a \$400,000 Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities grant will be administered by the public health department and will build on many of the partnership's successes. Partners increased the capacity of the MHHM by creating and chairing the Active Living Committee, which took the lead in developing the 2008 Pedestrian Summit and Community Walkability Plan. It provides a framework for advancing policy, programs, and physical projects that will ensure continued improvement in the built environment. Responsibility for implementing the plan resides within MHHM. In early 2009, the Active Living Committee also began coordinating with the Mayor's bicycling task force. A "Street Sense" safety campaign is the first fruit of that collaboration. Much of the Active Living Committee's success stems from the visionary support of the public health department.

In 2008, the Presbyterian Community Center received several grants that have allowed it to embark on a long-range "Quality of Life" plan to improve the health status of its residents. Community engagement in safety initiatives and health promotion are important parts of this effort. The nine-block "active-living" plan is part of the core goals, along with sustaining educational programming in the St. Peter Claver Community Garden.

The partnership worked closely with Meyzeek, a math-science-technology magnet school located in Smoketown, to develop a gardening specialist and programming. Working with its principal and a science teacher, partners were able to help develop a science curriculum that included growing at the community garden near the school. Meyzeek was also a key partner with ACTIVE Louisville in improving safety for pedestrians, partially because of the partnership's national training on Safe Routes to School. This training, held in 2005, brought together representatives from several schools and the school district, along with people involved in traffic enforcement, public works, public health, and recreation. Because of this involvement, Meyzeek was awarded a Safe Routes to School grant and has begun to make low-cost changes in its traffic patterns to improve the built environment for students who walk to school. Further physical changes related to safety are scheduled, including curb bump-outs to slow traffic and new crosswalks.

The grants funded by RWJF will continue to build capacity within ACTIVE Louisville's partner organiza-



tions. Partners, now working through the Active Living Committee, have been able to share much of the research and best practices developed by other ALbD partners and active-living research and have, in turn, contributed to the body of research regarding physical activity and obesity.

### Conclusion and Next Steps

In the 6 years since the ALbD grant was awarded, the built environment has become a major focus of Louisville's health initiatives. The mission and goals of ACTIVE Louisville will be continued primarily through the MHHM, which is involved in areas outside the conventional public health arena: community walkability, Safe Routes to School, and bicycle promotion. The MHHM will also play a lead role in the Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities initiative funded by RWJF to bring systems and policy change to 12 target neighborhoods and will partner in the Quality of Life plan.

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