

## **ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT YEAR 3**

Chapel Hill Community Health and Mobility Initiative

Town of Chapel Hill

49757

November 1, 2005 – October 31, 2006

Total grant: \$200,000

Project goal: The overall objective of the initiative is to create a culture of active living within the Chapel Hill community.

**October 31, 2006**

ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
FALL 2006

Brooke Adams	Be Active North Carolina
Evie Benson	Chapel Hill YMCA
Stephanie Willis	Chapel Hill-Carrboro School Board
Terry Blalock	Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation Commission
Regina Blalock	Citizen-at-large
Truls Ostbye	Citizen-at-large
Liz Parham	Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership
Erik Landfried	Be Active North Carolina
Diana Straughan	Citizen-at-large
Brian Decker	Chapel Hill Ped/Bike Advisory Committee
Ade MacGregor	Chapel Hill Transportation Board
Laurin Easthom	Council Member

## 1. ACCOMPLISHED

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### *Continuation of Partnership Group*

During this period the ALbD program was successful in updating the partnership group. One new organization was added, the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership. The Active Living by Design Partnership Advisory Committee includes representatives from the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school board, public health organizations, and fitness promotion organizations. Several new citizen representatives have been appointed to the committee. The Committee will assist the Active Living program to provide the Chapel Hill Town Council with recommendations on a range of topics, all related to improving the physical environment and promoting greater public awareness about active living. The officials' decisions on land use, other policies, and funding for programs and physical changes have great impact on the active living culture in our community. The advisory committee meets monthly.

### *Go! Chapel Hill*

The Advisory Committee determined that the Go! Chapel Hill program would be divided into three areas - Active Businesses, Active Schools and Active Neighborhoods. Planning and evaluation would fall within these three areas making up the larger Go! Chapel Hill Community Wide area.

### *Active Schools*

One school Rashkis Elementary School was added to the existing schools including schools Scroggs and Estes Hills Elementary Schools as well as Phillips Middle School.

The four existing schools conducted student surveys on student travel behavior to and from school for one 5 day week. Results were compiled with a parent survey going home with students, as well as a neighborhood audits at the Estes/Phillips and Scroggs neighborhoods. All 5 schools participated in the International Walk to School Day. Trainings were done for the neighborhood assessments.

### Infrastructure Improvements

Resulting from the efforts of the parent volunteer work through the surveys, neighborhood assessments and recommendations- Council voted on September 27, 2006, that Flashing School Zone Lights will be installed at Ephesus, Estes Hills, and Phillips Schools. A sidewalk was also constructed on Longleaf Drive in the Ephesus school zone.

### International Walk to School Day

Ephesus Elementary, Phillips Middle School and Rashkis Elementary School participated in International Walk to School Day on October 4, 2006.

### Walking Wednesdays

A total of 4 Walking Wednesday programs were completed successfully over an 8 week period ending the last full week of school. The program began with 152 students participating and ending with 468 students participating. The program included gathering points for students to meet and walk to school together as well as recognition of participation with Go Cards and stickers for days walked. There was a celebration on the last day of the program with students receiving recognition of their achievements with activity carry bags.

Scroggs Elementary reported a significant decrease in the drop off traffic on Wednesdays before and after school.

### Go! Club

A volunteer review and breakfast was held after the Walking Wednesday's program resulting in the suggestion that a self reporting calendar be incorporated and offered to all school students. This encourages those not in the walk zones to become physically active daily.

A color trifold calendar was delivered to the Chapel Hill K – 8 students. The calendar included calendars for September and October for self activity report as well as tips for ideas encouraging activity.

### Statewide Safe Routes to School Kick Off

Chapel Hill's Active Routes to School program was cited by the NC Department of Transportation as the model for the state. As a result the NC DOT determined to have the Statewide Safe Routes to School program in Chapel Hill near Scroggs Elementary School. Local students, parents and administrators, Town Officials and the NC Secretary of Transportation led the statewide kick off. Go! Chapel Hill ALbD helped coordinate the ceremony.

### ***Active Businesses***

Go! Chapel Hill formed partnerships with the Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce and the Chapel Hill Downtown Partnerships. It was determined that the business community would benefit most from a program that encouraged employees to lead a healthier, more active lifestyle both inside and outside the workplace. The benefits of decrease in sick leave, higher employee morale and an increase in workplace productivity (sales) would be as a direct result of healthier employees through the Go! Chapel Hill program.

The Active Business section was promoted through the Town Transportation Management Plan.

### Toolkits

Business toolkits were developed including bike/ped maps, pedometers, a 10,000 steps program, transit guides, and a menu for healthy living daily tips. Toolkits were distributed

with updated information on Chapel Hill Transit, new schedules and new routes as well as information to those requesting Alternative Commute materials and contacts. Toolkits continue to be updated regularly.

#### Downtown Walking Map

A walking map of the downtown area of Chapel Hill showing all the murals of Michael Brown in Chapel Hill and various points of interest was completed. A special event is being planned for promotion of both toolkits and distribution of maps

### ***Active Neighborhoods***

#### Northside Neighborhood

In year 2 the ALbD Advisory Committee reviewed the NC Prevention Partners (NCP) assessment, from Year 1, of mobility barriers within the Northside neighborhood, a largely minority, low income residential area. A Public Forum was held for the Northside Neighborhood after making available the NCP report. Residents of the Northside Neighborhood attended and spoke as Town Council heard their reactions to the report. Most comments centered around the neighborhood not desiring the recommended sidewalks as it would encourage loitering and which is already a daily battle the neighborhood fights.

In November 2004 the Town contracted with North Carolina Prevention Partners to conduct an evaluation of barriers to mobility in the Northside Community. The Report summarized the results of an assessment of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Northside neighborhood. The Report included recommendations for the repair and construction of sidewalks, connecting pedestrian corridors, improved street lighting, and public safety improvements.

On February 28, 2005, the Council referred the Mobility Assessment of the Northside Neighborhood Report to the Town Advisory Boards for comment.

On June 20, 2005, the Council held a Public Forum to receive citizen comments on the findings and recommendations of the Mobility Assessment of the Northside Neighborhood Report. (Attachment 2)

On August 11, 2005, the Active Living by Design Advisory Committee reviewed the comments from the Public Forum. The Committee also conducted a walking study of the neighborhood reviewing the study and the comments and prepared recommendations.

At the same time Town staff provided recommendations on the draft Northside Report, including comments subsequently incorporated into the draft Plan from Police, Engineering, Public Works, Parks & Recreation and Housing departments. Comments were also received from Empowerment Chapel Hill.

On September 12, 2006, Town Staff met with residents at the Northside Neighborhood Watch meeting to present a revised draft Plan and receive comments. The comments were incorporated into the draft Plan.

#### Walking Loops

A Draft Plan of Walking Loops including miles and steps taken was developed as well as signage. This will go to Town Council for approval.

#### Timberlyne Neighborhood

The Durham Chapel Hill Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization is funding a Walkable Communities Workshop series through STP-DA bike/ped funds in 2006. The series is run through the National Center for Biking and Walking (NCBW), headquartered in Washington, DC. This will help develop realistic strategies to make communities safer and more pleasant places to walk and bike. A walking or bicycling audit will help understand and identify obstacles and potential solutions. – DCC-MPO

The Chapel Hill Walkable Workshop scheduled for November 2<sup>nd</sup> will focus on the Timberlyne neighborhood.

#### NC 86/MLK Jr. Blvd. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Recommendations

The information prepared on the NC 86 Corridor by the UNC Highway Safety Research Center collected in Year 1 enabled the Go! Chapel Hill ALbD Advisory Committee to make recommendations to Town Council for the Town's Capital Improvement Plan. The Airport Road/NC 86 corridor provides the principle means of access into the Town of Chapel Hill from the north. Town Council accepted the recommendations of the report and directed the ALbD staff to work with other Town Staff to develop an Implementation Plan. The Town secured funding and anticipated initiatives of the study in the last quarter of the year, December 05/06.

The Town of Chapel Hill contracted with consultants Ramey, Kemp and Associates to develop a Draft Plan for recommendations of improvements on NC 86/MLK Jr. Blvd. A community forum was held on September 26, 2006 for citizens to review and comment on the Draft Plan. A revised plan with those comments is currently being circulated to Town Departments and Committees and will be presented to Town Council in November 2006.

### ***Administrative***

#### Fit Community Designation

Chapel Hill Active Living by Design applied with a partnership of NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund and Blue Cross Blue Shield for a Fit Community Designation. Chapel Hill was one of eight North Carolina Communities that received a Fit Community Designation awarded by North Carolina Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue at a statewide ceremony. The designation supports physical activity and healthy eating initiative in the community,

schools, and workplaces. The Town of Chapel Hill received a plaque and signage that can be posted at the entrances to the Town.

### NC Healthy Summit

Trust for America's Health and the NC Division of Public Health hosted the Healthier North Carolina Summit in August 2006. National Active Living by Design contracted with a professional filming company to film Go! Chapel Hill Active Living by Design program highlights. The 5 minute film highlighted the NC 86/MLK Jr. Blvd project, the Norhtside Mobility Pedestrian Plan and the Active Routes to Schools program. The film was presented at the NC Healthy Summit and will also be shown at other National ALbD functions.

### Go! Chapel Hill Web Site

The newly designed Go! Chapel Hill website promotes all 3 areas of the Go! Chapel Hill Active Living by Design program. It is designed to be a valuable resource for those needing information on how to become involved in active businesses, schools, or neighborhoods as well as beginning a 10,000 steps program or finding information for a healthier more active lifestyle with tips or linking onto other healthy living links. The web site is updated frequently.

## **2. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES NOT ACCOMPLISHED**

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### **Active Businesses**

The Transportation Management Plan will be used in the future to encourage businesses in Active Living. The large Town plan is in development. Toolkits were not distributed and new businesses were not added.

### **Active Neighborhoods**

A walkable workshop is being coordinated for November 2, 2006. This will begin the neighborhood assessment process and programming ideas. Toolkits have not been developed.

### **Active Schools**

Recommendations were not taken by the ALbD Advisory Committee to the School Board. The focus was upon the Walking Wednesday's program and the Statewide SRTS Kick Off for funding.

Staff working on the Go! Chapel Hill program was part time.

### 3. OTHER COMMENTS FOR RWJF

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None.

### 4. ITEMS PRODUCED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

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#### Active Business

- Business Toolkit
- Alternative Commute Materials
- Downtown Walking Map

#### Active Schools

- International Walk to School Day Event
  - Phillips, Ephesus, and Rashkis
- Trainings
  - Trainings on Neighborhood Audits were conducted
    - Estes, Scroggs, and Phillips Schools
- Committee submittal of Recommendation in 2005
  - Resulted in Flashing Lights for Ephesus and Estes Hills
  - Sidewalk on Longleaf Drive at Ephesus
- Construction of Longleaf Drive Sidewalk
- Revised Safe Routes to School Parent Survey
- Revised Safe Routes to School Student Survey
- Revised Neighborhood Audit
- The Northside Mobility Pedestrian Draft Plan

#### Active Neighborhood

- NC 86/Airport Road Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Mobility Study produced a stoplight
- Updated Greenways & Trails Map through Health Department
- Draft Plan for NC 86/MLK Jr. Blvd.
- Draft Plan for Northside Pedestrian Mobility Plan
- Draft Plan for Northside Walking Loops

#### Promotional Materials

- Redesigned Go! Chapel Hill Website
- New Go! Chapel Hill International Walk to School Day Flyer
- 28 WCHL Radio Spots - Prevention First Challenge/Go! Chapel Hill
- 5 TV News stories
- Newsletter Entries –Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Partnership, Chapel Hill Transit Newsletter- Go! ALbD Activity Tips
- Go! Chapel Hill Activity Mat for events



Newspaper Stories  
Newspaper Ads  
Town Newsletter Go! Stories  
State Safe Routes to School Newsletter  
Mini film