

Portland Active Living by Design

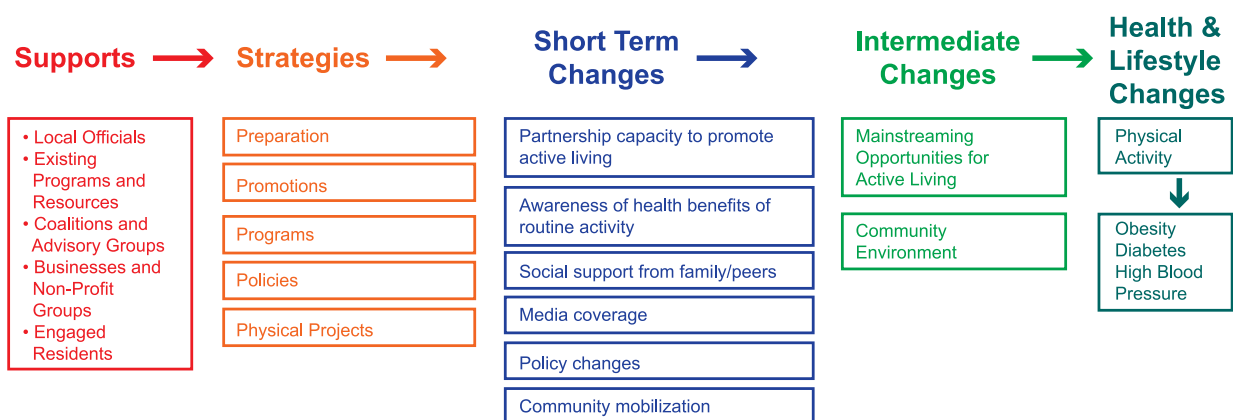
Evaluation of Active Living by Design | Portland, Oregon | 2003-2008

When the Lents neighborhood in Portland was declared an Urban Renewal District by the Portland Development Commission as part of a state-authorized redevelopment and finance program, a group of passionate individuals and organizations recognized a unique opportunity to influence redevelopment plans. A partnership formed to support Lents as it redeveloped areas perceived as unsafe, poorly planned, and economically unviable. The partnership’s main mission was to educate and encourage policy- and decision-makers to incorporate active living principles into redevelopment efforts.

“Active living” is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines in order to accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity each day. In November 2003, two established and active Portland groups, Oregon Active Community Environments and Oregon Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity, received a five-year, \$200,000 grant as part of the Active Living by Design national program (www.activelivingbydesign.org) funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. By advocating for changes in community design, specifically land use, transportation, parks, trails, and greenways, the Active Living by Design initiative intended to make it easier for people to be active in their daily routines.¹

The Active Living by Design Community Action Model provided five active living strategies to influence community change: Preparation, Promotions, Programs, Policies, and Physical Projects. The 5Ps represent a comprehensive approach to increasing physical activity through short-term, intermediate, and long-term community changes. This inclusive model allowed Portland ALbD to engage a diverse group of partners to incorporate health and equity values into the planning and policymaking processes.

Active Living by Design Community Action Model



The Active Living by Design (ALbD) grant had a profound impact on staff, partners, and community members. Organizations began to think about their own mission and goals in a way that included active living. Many partners began to incorporate a multidisciplinary approach to all of their work.

“The active living funding really was terrifically important because it was the first infusion of money in [Lents] around these issues. So it was huge... It was the opportunity to sort of play out some of the ideas that we all cared about...” -Partner

¹ The Active Living by Design (ALbD) initiative was established by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) in 2001, and its National Program Office (NPO) is part of the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Twenty-five interdisciplinary community partnerships were selected across the country to demonstrate how changing community design can impact physical activity. Transtria was funded by RWJF to work with the NPO to conduct ALbD evaluation and dissemination activities. This case report draws from Transtria’s evaluation efforts.

Staff and partners reported that Lents community organizations and residents embraced active living and took great strides in incorporating active living principles into numerous efforts, including affordable housing, community redevelopment, youth education, bike and pedestrian safety, and safe commutes to work and school. In addition, staff recognized the importance of leveraging community-based experiences and relationships to advocate for active living at higher policy and systems levels.

Portland, Oregon

Many neighborhoods in Portland, Oregon, are known for well-planned and well-utilized pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. However, active living-friendly environments are not the norm in all Portland neighborhoods. The Portland ALbD partnership intended to address active living issues in three communities that faced different challenges: Lents, Damascus, and Interstate. Early in the grant, the partnership recognized the need to focus its efforts more narrowly. As a result, Lents became the primary project area.

Lents, located in the southeast region of Portland, is one of the largest, oldest, and most diverse neighborhoods in the metropolitan area. The neighborhood is home to a large number of Asian, Russian, Eastern European, and Latino immigrants. Partners also noted that as many as twenty-four different languages were spoken at local schools and 78% of students were on free or reduced lunches. The neighborhood has struggled with high rates of crime and poverty. Partners and community members noted the visible presence of graffiti, drug deals, strip clubs, and abandoned lots.

Damascus is a 12,000-acre, rural community on the southeast fringe of the Portland metropolitan area in Clackamas County. In anticipation of population growth, Portland expanded its Urban Growth Boundary to include Damascus in 2003. The ALbD partnership recognized a unique opportunity to develop plans and policies to create a community supportive of active living from the ground up.

The Portland ALbD partnership also partnered with the Portland Department of Transportation in a nine-month project in the Interstate community in north Portland to implement a social marketing campaign and active living programming to coincide with the opening of the Interstate light rail line and increase active transportation among Interstate residents.

In all of its efforts, Portland ALbD focused on four primary goals:

- Develop a network of traditional and nontraditional partners that could influence active living policy and environmental change in the Portland region;
- Affect urban planning and policy decisions at the city, county, and tri-county regional metropolitan levels that would establish long-term, systemic support for active environments;
- Effect built-environment change in the community setting that would improve infrastructure for active living and increase access to active living opportunities for underserved populations;
- Recruit and support program and promotion partners whose locally-based activities would complement policy and environmental change strategies.

Preparation

Partnership

Staff from the Oregon Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity and the Portland Department of Transportation drafted the original ALbD proposal. The American Heart Association of Portland served as the lead agency for the first three years of the ALbD grant. Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute became the lead agency in the fourth year.

The Portland ALbD partnership emerged from two existing networks: the Oregon Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity and the Oregon Active Community Environments. In the first years of the grant, the Portland ALbD partnership consisted primarily of representatives from public agencies. Eventually, the partnership expanded to allow for a multi-disciplinary approach. As the partnership expanded, its resources and knowledge increased, which aided Portland ALbD in its mission to achieve healthy living goals in the ALbD communities.

The partnership met as a large group for each of the first 18 months of the ALbD grant, then transitioned to quarterly project-specific meetings. This allowed for more focused planning and better retention of partners. ALbD staff devoted time and energy to developing and maintaining relationships with member organizations and maintaining communication with all partners to keep them informed of upcoming activities and opportunities for involvement. By establishing and nurturing these relationships, the partnership built a strong foundation and a better understanding of each organization's strengths and weaknesses. This allowed staff to better delegate project roles to match the interests and strengths of partners.

Portland ALbD outlined common goals and objectives in order to effectively collaborate with partners. For example, the partnership established a good working relationship with Portland Public Schools by finding links between their active living objectives and those of the schools. The partnership also worked to build community support through collaborations with local partners already having an established positive rapport in the target communities.

“We do have a lot of partners that are doing community organizing, which again is why we don’t have resident meetings. We have partners who have resident meetings, and if it makes sense for us to have the information there or be there, we will be.” -Staff

Most partnership efforts were conducted by community-based organizations and public agencies. ALbD staff supported partners by chairing workgroups, securing resources, leading campaigns for specific objectives, and managing certain projects. Staff also provided technical assistance to partners in the form of grant writing, strategic planning, and evaluation. The staff worked to build the capacity of partners through workshops, individual meetings, and e-mail.

Partners, staff, and community members identified several beneficial characteristics of the Portland ALbD partnership:

- Roles and responsibilities were clearly identified and outlined for each partner.
- A cross-disciplinary approach provided new opportunities for partners to learn from each other and create more holistic, sustainable changes in their communities.
- Partnership staff worked to build the capacity and competencies of partners to increase likelihood of sustainability.
- Partners were recognized and commended for successes.
- The partnership's willingness to align partnership objectives with those of other organizations expanded its impact.
- Staff and partner involvement in community events enhanced partner participation and collaboration.



“I was committed to this cross-disciplinary approach, and I really think it created an environment and a place and an opportunity to bring people together. I will stand by that as being, for me, by far the best piece that came out of the funding.” -Partner

“[The partnership] is not necessarily taking credit for it, so it’s giving credit back to the Community Cycling Center, to [the parent teacher association], to Kelly Elementary, to the [Schools Uniting Neighborhoods] Schools, so that everybody is seeing their accomplishments but on a bigger scale. It makes it look like everyone’s individual accomplishments are much bigger...” -Partner

Partners, staff, and community members also noted many challenges to creating and maintaining the Portland ALbD partnership:

- Some partners were selected based on name recognition rather than interest; consequently, investment and commitment varied.
- It required a tremendous effort to build consensus and collaboration between diverse partners.
- A high turnover of partners disrupted cohesion and connectedness within the partnership.
- A lack of cohesion emerged when separate, location-based workgroups formed in place of large partnership meetings.
- Many members participated because of their personal interests rather than because their organization supported the partnership’s mission.
- A lack of funding and resources negatively impacted the involvement of many partners.
- It was challenging to demonstrate the importance of active living to partners from different disciplines and areas of expertise.
- An attempt to establish the partnership as a 501(c) 3 (non-profit) organization failed.

“One of the major challenges of the whole project, was dividing the project into three separate pilot communities. It presented a lot of challenges for making the whole partnership very cohesive.” -Staff

“Well, just again because of the buy-in and the investment... You know [the partners] weren’t getting paid for [their involvement in the partnership], and so problems with people responding in a timely manner or they might come to a partner meeting and sit around and we can all talk about ‘Oh wouldn’t it be cool if...’ But then when it came to ‘OK, well who can do this? Who can do this? Who can do this?’ People weren’t willing to step up.” -Staff

The table below lists the partners involved in the Portland Active Living partnership.

Members of the Portland Active Living Partnership	
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Heart Association* • Community Health Partnership* • Kaiser Permanente • Multnomah County Health Department • Northwest Health Foundation • Upstream Public Health
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portland Public School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Earl Boyles Elementary School - Kelly Elementary School - Lents High School - Marshall High School • Portland State University
Parks & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Portland Parks and Recreation • Community Cycling Center • Wattles Boys and Girls Club

Members of the Portland Active Living Partnership (continued)

<p>Urban Design, Planning & Transportation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Portland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureau of Planning and Sustainability - Portland Transit - Transportation Department • Metro Regional Government • Oregon Department of Human Services
<p>Other Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clackamas County Government • Lents Brentwood-Darlington Weed and Seed • Portland Development Commission
<p>Advocacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1000 Friends of Oregon • Bicycle Transportation Alliance • Breastfeeding Coalition of Oregon • Coalition for Livable Future • Healthy Kids Watch Less TV • Lents Food Group • Metro Fruit and Veggie Coalition • Oregon Coalition for Physical Activity Policy • Oregon Nutrition Policy Alliance • Springwater Habitat Restoration Project
<p>Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alta Planning and Design Firm • Nike, Inc.
<p>Community & Faith-based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Volunteers (Lents WALKS) • Growing Gardens • Lents Habitat Restoration Project • Lents Neighborhood Association • Portland AARP • Revitalizing Outer Southeast (Rose) Community Development Corporation • Schools Uniting Neighborhoods

*Organizations that served as lead agencies during the ALbD grant period

Leadership

Initially, the local American Heart Association (Association) served as the lead agency for the ALbD grant. The Association provided workspace, served in an administration/fiduciary role, and employed the project coordinator. Unfortunately, the ALbD partnership became seen as a competitor for local funding opportunities and resources, rather than a collaboration that could enhance and contribute to the goals of the Association. Portland ALbD's community-based structure was often at odds with the Association's state and national priorities. In addition, the Association's financial system did not lend itself well to the partnership's multiple streams of funding. In the third year of the ALbD grant, the role of lead agency transitioned to the Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute (Community Health Partnership). The Community Health Partnership's mission to improve the health of Oregonians through advocacy and support of effective public health policy and focus on childhood obesity closely aligned with Portland ALbD.

“But I think it’s not just that our role has shifted just to policy, but the role that we play in the community in program support is more supporting our partners to do the work.” -Staff

The partnership elected to use the ALbD grant primarily to support Project Director and Project Manager positions. Portland ALbD had two Project Directors over the course of the grant. The second Project Director played a huge role in the success of the partnership by cultivating relationships and connections between partners and nurturing the partnership to ensure it continued to push the active living agenda in the Portland area. The Project Director took on a facilitator role to build capacities and competencies of partners for active living sustainability. Staff and partners described the Project Director as knowledgeable, dedicated, and hard-working.

“I wasn’t delivering the programs; I was a connector, I was a convener, I was putting people together...” -Staff

At times, staff found it challenging to provide the level of technical expertise required for transportation and urban planning efforts. Staff learned to build relationships with partners they could call on to provide technical expertise and to be aware of easily accessible resources.

The partnership hired several part-time staff positions throughout the grant to run various programs and projects. Portland ALbD leaders believed that providing paid leadership positions rather than volunteer opportunities increased staff investment and commitment to the project.

Funding and Resources

Staff recognized the importance of helping partners secure resources to implement active living initiatives. Over the course of the ALbD grant, staff helped partners obtain more than \$400,000 in grant funding. Staff also learned it was important to secure resources to support resident participation and leadership (e.g., paid part-time positions, incentives, training).

Portland ALbD reached out to a number of local, state, and national funding sources to expand the resources available to support its active living efforts. Over \$1 million in financial and in-kind support came from the following sources:

- City of Portland
- Kaiser Permanente Community Fund
- Lents/Brentwood- Darlington Weed & Seed
- Metro Regional Government
- Northwest Health Foundation
- Oregon State Parks Recreational Trails
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Special Opportunities Grant
- Tri-Met

Community and Political Supports and Challenges

The existing physical infrastructure in Lents did not accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Partners, staff, and community members mentioned a number of barriers, including narrow sidewalks, poor sidewalk/road conditions, lack of crosswalks, inadequate timing for crosswalk timers, aggressive drivers, fast moving traffic, poor lighting, and dangerous parks and trails. When the neighborhood was developed in the 1950s, its streets were laid out in non-grid network designed for automobiles and the community was bisected by a multi-lane freeway. Lents was zoned primarily to accommodate high-density housing. As a result, the neighborhood was home to few healthcare facilities, public resources, and businesses.

“People have to go a long way to get just basic needs, you know, go to the doctor, buy some groceries. You know, those basic things just aren’t mixed in quite as well or not nearly to the degree that they are in the city.” -Partner

Because of the Urban Renewal District designation, the city hoped to expand the local public transit system to improve the north-south mobility. In addition, two light rail stations were slated to be built in the neighborhood. Although public transportation improvements had the potential to improve resident mobility, residents and partners pointed to the prevailing belief that the presence of light rail in the community could lead to the deterioration of the community and create an area even more conducive to crime.

“The problem we’re finding is a lot of communities where [public transit] has gone...a lot of the neighborhoods do deteriorate because, unfortunately when you lay the route, crime will go up in our neighborhood...” -Partner

Portland’s Springwater Corridor Trail is a popular 40-mile trail that runs from downtown east to the base of Mount Hood. Partners, staff, and community members reported that the segment running through Lents had excessive litter (including drug paraphernalia), damaged asphalt and lacked convenient access points. The presence of homeless people engendered a perception that the trail was unsafe. These conditions prevented residents from viewing the trail as a usable resource.

Lents residents began to show greater pride and interest in their community as improvement projects began to revitalize and rejuvenate the area. Although there was community support for the changes taking place, community support did not necessarily result in engagement and involvement. Staff earned the trust and respect of residents by being actively engaged in local programs and activities, participating in events, and attending neighborhood meetings. The partnership found it was difficult to engage community members in Lents because the residents often faced a number of hardships, which made active living environment change efforts a low priority. To encourage resident involvement and investment, Portland ALbD often hired residents to lead and participate in community projects. Some of these paid residents became heavily invested in partnership programs and efforts.

“There’s just so much going on in these people’s lives to have an expectation that they’re going to jump up and organize a walking group without some outside support...” -Partner

The partnership benefited from the existence of a number of City of Portland staff dedicated to improving the accessibility of alternate modes of transportation (e.g., Bike Coordinator, Transportation Options staff). These staff members not only served to move the cause of active living forward in the community but were also a resource to Portland ALbD.

Although many City of Portland employees were key members of the partnership, Portland ALbD faced challenges working with some agencies (e.g., Department of Transportation, Parks and Recreation). After the departure of a key Parks and Recreation partner, staff struggled to develop a relationship with the department because of its internal structure and processes. The partnership’s relationship with Parks and Recreation was weak and ineffective during the last years of the grant.

The Portland Department of Transportation had already begun to factor in health in its planning process (albeit minimally) and did not see the benefit in partnering with Portland ALbD to help promote active living. The relationship improved as the partnership shifted its focus to policy change, thus the partnership was able to collaborate on updates and improvements to transportation plans.

“One of the challenges has been...that people already feel like they get it and so more than any other agency, Portland Department of Transportation has kind of been like, ‘Yeah we got it before you were here. So thanks, but we get it.’ And so, in some sense, it has been kind of hard to partner with them because they don’t see the benefit that we bring so much because they already had health, the word health in their brochures. So until we got to the policy level...now we are having some conversations about their redoing their transportation plan...and we do have more of a role to play.” -Staff

Community Assessment

Portland ALbD, in conjunction with several partners, conducted a number of assessment activities to better understand the barriers and facilitators to active living in the project areas, including surveys, feasibility studies, community forums, charrettes, and inventories.

Prior to beginning work on the Springwater Corridor Trail, the partnership assessed the Lents community’s awareness of the trail and trail usage and sought input about possible trail improvements. The partnership also collaborated with Portland State University Urban and Regional Planning Program students to produce a report, entitled “Building Active Communities: Linking Lents,” on possible sites for a trailhead. Portland ALbD then hired a planning and design company to conduct a formal trailhead study to identify potential sites and designs.

Portland ALbD conducted several surveys in conjunction with partners and area organizations. As part of an effort to develop trail programming for Lents High School students, the partnership conducted a survey of trail use, physical activity, and community project involvement. Prior to developing walking routes for the Lents WALKS program, a survey was conducted to gather information about residents’ preferences (e.g., how the walks should be conducted, where they wanted to walk, how long the walks should be, what times of day and days of the week the walks should be held).

For the Damascus-Boring Concept Plan, the partnership surveyed residents to learn about walkability and bikeability issues and residents’ opinions of proposed physical infrastructure changes. It also held a community forum to gather qualitative data on support for active living projects. The partnership received an Active Living Research grant to evaluate the Damascus-Boring Concept Plan’s effect on active living and to disseminate the challenges and lessons learned from participating in the planning process. The case study was published in the *Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law* [2008 33(3):525-558], and a summary was published in the *American Planning Magazine* (February 2007).

Staff and partners used assessments to inform the planning process. City engineers conducted an assessment to identify major physical infrastructure barriers for capital improvement projects for Kelly GROW and Safe Routes to School. The partnership also conducted various community forums and design charrettes to gain stakeholders’ insight and opinions.

In addition, the Community Health Partnership was contracted by the Northwest Health Foundation to conduct a cross-site evaluation to assess capacity building for program planning at the community level. The 5P model and other ALbD efforts were included as part of the evaluation.

Policies and Physical Projects

Portland ALbD focused most of its efforts on shaping the planning and policymaking processes. Policy influences and physical projects, related partner, staff, and community implementation activities, and associated outcomes included the following:

► *Damascus-Boring Concept Plan*

- In 2003, the Damascus and Boring communities were included in the Portland Metro Government’s Urban Growth Boundary in anticipation of exponential growth.
- For the first two years of the grant, Portland ALbD staff and partners were part of a number of decision-making bodies, including committees (e.g., land-use, transportation, natural resources, public facilities, technical advisory) and the Damascus-Boring Advisory Council. Staff conducted community forums and surveys to gather resident opinions and ideas.
- The partnership’s role in this effort included providing a voice for community members for the changes they wanted to see included in the concept plan, increasing decision-makers’ awareness of the need for active living amenities, advocating for active living amenities, and providing a health perspective.
- The result of this planning effort, the Damascus-Boring Concept Plan, identified patterns for future development and transportation systems and outlined planning and zoning ordinances, all supportive of active living.

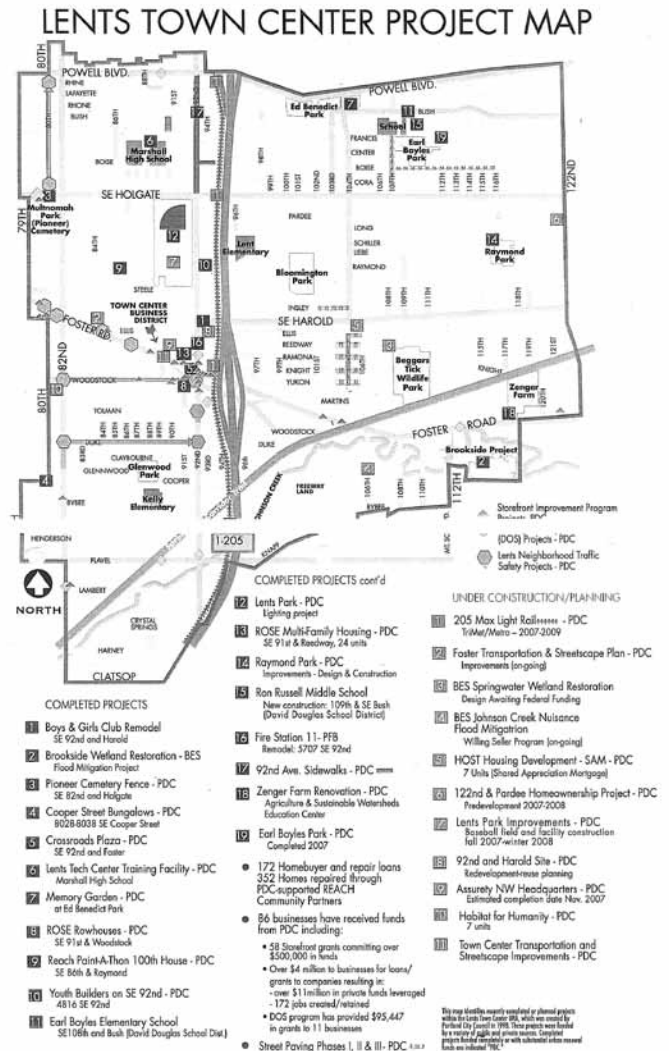
“And so [the Damascus-Boring Concept Plan] was a unique opportunity for a conversion of a rural area into an urban area and to get sort of the best smart growth, smart development type of components.” -Partner

Excerpt of language from Damascus-Boring Concept Plan:

Recommended Implementation Strategies for Walkable, Bikable, and Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods and Centers: Design for safety of pedestrians and bicyclists; Implement pedestrian-oriented block size; Provide a multi-use trail system to serve as important off-street bicycle and pedestrian connections to schools, parks, commercial areas and neighborhoods, particularly in areas where streams limit street connectivity; Work with school and parks districts and transit service providers to identify and develop safe walking and biking routes to schools, parks and transit stops.

Recommended Implementation Strategies for Schools and Parks: Work with school and park districts to locate facilities in order to maximize direct pedestrian and bicycle access and safety from residential neighborhoods to schools and parks; Provide opportunities for co-location between schools and parks and other public facilities where possible; Consider a network of neighborhood parks, community parks, urban plazas and other parks that are equitably distributed and sized to meet demands; Neighborhood parks should be located within walking distance of all homes.

► **Lents Urban Renewal Efforts**



- In 2003, the Lents neighborhood was designated by the Portland Development Commission as an Urban Renewal District.
- To influence the redevelopment process, the Portland ALBD Project Director served as a member of the Community Advisory Committee that focused on making zoning changes to Lents Town Center in order to accommodate a mixed-use, multi-family housing project.
- As a result of the committee's efforts, the Lents Town Center redevelopment included innovative pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly amenities, including bike lanes, sidewalks, upgrades to trail networks, and upgrades to three parks. For example, the partnership contributed to the redevelopment of the 7.85-acre Earl Boyles Park to include a community garden, walking paths, a playground, pedestrian-scale lighting, curbs and sidewalks, benches, and picnic tables.
- The Department of Transportation, Portland Development Commission, and other partners received \$1.45 million to install sidewalks, bike lanes, curbs and drainage enhancements, lighting, and landscaping.
- A number of transportation, park, commercial, and residential projects were influenced by the partnership, including a 77,000-square-foot property for commercial and retail use accessible to pedestrian traffic, infrastructure improvements to 92nd Avenue to improve the streetscape for pedestrian and bike connectivity, and a 24-unit multi-family affordable housing complex near public transportation, a farmers' market, and a mixed use development.

► **Springwater Corridor Trail**

- Portland ALbD worked to improve a section of the Springwater Corridor Trail, a 40-mile, rails-to-trails path that ran through the Lents neighborhood, to increase physical accessibility by developing an interpretive trail head in Lents.
- Various assessments were conducted by Portland ALbD to determine the community's awareness and usage of the trail and desired trail improvements. The assessment activities showed that the trail was underused by neighborhood residents and not considered an asset because of a number of issues, including crime and loiterers.



- In the second year of the grant, the Park and Recreation Department received funding to repave a 12-block section of the trail.
- Portland ALbD worked with local university urban planning students and hired a planning and design company to conduct studies to identify sites for a trailhead that was easily visible and accessible by the community.
- The Portland Parks and Recreation Department became concerned about increasing property values around the trail. Plans to add signage, benches, and artwork to the trail stalled when the Parks and Recreation Department issued a moratorium on trail amenities because of maintenance and vandalism concerns.
- While the community's priorities caused the partnership to shift its focus to other efforts, the partnership continued to engage in trail beautification projects in conjunction with Lents Springwater Habitat Restoration Project, Kelly Elementary School, and others. Efforts included the removal of invasive species and the planting of more than 5,000 native trees and shrubs.

“The trail is called the Springwater Corridor Trail. And it’s actually a very long trail that is part of our extensive regional trail network, but the section that runs through the Lents neighborhood is somewhat underused, it has some homeless and some crime issues, it’s not as visible or as much of a community asset as it is in some of the other sections and some of the communities it runs through.” -Staff

► **Regional Transportation Plan**

- Portland ALbD staff and partners worked directly with Metro Planning staff and elected officials to draft health and equity language for the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Portland ALbD staff and partners made a formal presentation recommending specific health objectives and performance measures and the recommendations were accepted.
- Partners continued to meet with the Metro transportation planning and policy staff to develop performance measures for state plans.

Excerpt from the Regional Transportation Plan:

Goal 7: Enhance Human Health: Objective 7.1 Active Living: Provide safe, comfortable and convenient transportation options that support active living and physical activity to meet daily needs and access services.

Potential Action 7.1.4: Remove barriers and reinforce compact development patterns to encourage walking and bicycling to basic services and nearby activities as a way to integrate exercise into daily activity.

Potential Action 7.1.5: Coordinate with public health professionals to conduct health assessments to judge the potential impact of transportation's infrastructure on human health.

► **Healthy Portland Plan Workgroup**

- Portland ALbD staff convened and coordinated an ongoing workgroup to allow public health stakeholders to participate in a revision of the Portland Comprehensive Plan.
- Portland ALbD staff presented the workgroups formal recommendations, which included the inclusion of health and human safety as one of the eight goals for the update.

► **Health Impact Assessments**

- Portland ALbD staff founded an ad-hoc Health Impact Assessment Working Group to explore the use of health impact assessments to judge the potential impact of transportation and infrastructure on human health and well-being.
- The working group conducted a health impact assessment of the Columbia River Crossing, a proposed bridge replacement project, developed formal recommendations and comments to agency leaders, and testified in front of decision-making bodies.

► **Other Policies and Physical Projects**

- Portland ALbD staff advocated, testified (written and oral), and served on planning committees/workgroups in order to support active living-friendly policies and plans at the local and regional level, contributing to multiple transportation and urban planning efforts.
- Staff and partners served on a committee that drafted A Healthy Active Oregon: Statewide Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan, an effort to engage public, private, and community stakeholders in the promotion of healthy eating and active living in communities, schools, workplaces, and homes.
- Partners contributed to the Portland Platinum Bicycle Master Plan by serving on an advisory committee and chairing a health equity subgroup.
- Partners served on the policy workgroup that drafted language for a report to the Oregon Health Policy Commission (i.e., Promoting Physical Activity and Healthy Eating among Oregon's Children) that recommended policy and legislative action to prevent childhood obesity.
- Portland ALbD staff participated on a Lents Community Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for zoning changes to develop a mixed-use, multi-family housing project.
- Portland ALbD staff and partners contributed to existing efforts to promote natural resource protection (e.g., Johnson Creek Watershed Council), access to healthy, affordable food (e.g., Zenger Farm, Food Policy Council) and new homeowner initiatives for low-income residents in Lents community (e.g., Weed & Seed, ROSE Community Development).

Excerpt from A Healthy Active Oregon:

Objectives and Strategies: State and local comprehensive plans and transportation policies and funding support walking, biking, and transit infrastructure; School districts shall retain neighborhood schools and site new schools that support walking and biking to school; Land Conservation Development Commission will require local municipalities to include health impact assessment in their comprehensive plans.

Challenges and Successes

Staff, partners, and community members noted a number of facilitators for developing and implementing policies and physical projects:

- Portland ALbD's extensive involvement on the Damascus-Boring Concept Plan expanded its planning policy knowledge and relationships, which caused others to seek out the partnership as an expert.
- The process of land-use, transportation, and urban planning was demystified for partners.
- Partners began to integrate cross-disciplinary efforts into their work plans.
- Planning and policymaking partners learned how to better integrate health into their work.

Staff, partners, and community members noted a number of challenges to developing and implementing policies and physical projects:

- Much of the policy expertise rested with the Project Director rather than the partnership as a whole, limiting policy involvement by the time and availability of the Project Director.
- Portland ALbD was unable to complete a trail head for the Springwater Trail in Lents as planned when the Parks and Recreation department reverted to an internal review process of park plans that excluded input from community stakeholders.
- Residents were hesitant to improve trail connectivity because of a fear that criminal activity from the trail would migrate toward children's play areas.

Programs and Promotions

The Portland ALbD staff focused on policy change and physical projects and consequently looked to community partners to lead promotions and programs. However, staff did manage a number of efforts in the Lents neighborhood. Programmatic and promotional efforts, related partner, staff, and community implementation activities, and associated outcomes are described as follows.

▶ Lents WALKS

- Lents WALKS was a community-organized walking program that encouraged residents to lead more active lifestyles. The program was based on the Portland Department of Transportation's Ten Toe Express program.
- ALbD staff engaged local residents in a number of ways, including designing routes and gathering local history for route narratives. The partnership also hired local residents to serve as guides.
- In 2006, over 20 guided walks were conducted that identified points of interest along each route. More than 100 people participated in the program.
- A walk coordinator was responsible for recruiting volunteers to lead the walks, which were centered on six themes: Springwater Corridor Trail East, Springwater Corridor Trail West, Making History, Memory Garden, Zenger Farm, and Keeping Safe.
- Participants received a packet of items to promote physical activity, including a pedometer, walking and biking maps, a coupon book, information about local events and organizations, a physical activity calendar, and log book.
- Participants also received incentives during each walk. For example, on the Zenger Farm walk, seed packets were handed out and, on the Keeping Safe walk, reflective wristbands were provided.
- After its initial success, the Lents Neighborhood Association discussed implementing a regular walking club. While this idea never came to fruition, the Lents WALKS maps and guides continued to be distributed throughout the grant period.

“And the idea...was...to get people out and walking around the community, to see the community in a different light because obviously you see things a lot differently when you are walking...and getting folks to feel a little bit more comfortable walking around... and to get a lot of areas in the community whether it was different parks or you know the shopping areas, we just tried to organize it so we go by certain places. So my, our ulterior motive was for people to go ‘Hey I can walk here, you know the church really isn’t that far.’ So that was kind of the idea.” -Staff

► **Kelly GROW**

- Kelly GROW was a Schools Uniting Neighborhoods program implemented at Kelly Elementary School that integrated active living, healthy eating, and neighborhood mapping.
- The goals for Kelly GROW included improving and supporting academic achievement, involving the family, community members, and local businesses, integrating volunteer work, and using community buildings.
- Portland ALbD facilitated the proposal development, resource generation, and curriculum development for the Kelly GROW program.
- Ten weeks of after-school programming were offered through Kelly GROW. The Community Cycling Center offered a Bike Safety Club that provided experiential education in bicycle safety and bicycle repair through an earn-a-bike model. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance offered a Navigating Neighborhoods class that focused on map reading and route planning.



“I do think Kelly GROW can be attributed to the ALbD project because without this project, these partners would not have come together to do this.” -Staff

► **Community Promotion**

- Portland ALbD reached out to the community through information booths, events, forums, and presentations.
- The partnership disseminated several incentives and materials in conjunction with programs, including pedometers, coupon books for local stores, helmets, and bike locks.

► **Presentations**

- Staff and partners presented their ALbD efforts to a variety of audiences, including the Healthy Active Oregon Conference, Oregon Public Health Association, Oregon Recreation and Park Association annual meeting, Portland State University, Lents Founders’ Day, the Interstate MAX light rail opening, and the African American Health Coalition.

▶ **Local Media**

- Portland ALbD activities were covered in several local and regional media outlets, including local television networks and newspapers (e.g., Oregonian, Oregon Health News, Salem Statesmen Journal).
- The partnership co-released press releases supporting Metro Regional Government’s Natural Areas Bond Measure in 2007.
- Portland ALbD staff published opinion pieces on the health impacts of a proposed interstate bridge replacement and on the connection between statewide land-use planning and public health.

▶ **Safe Routes to School**

- Portland ALbD worked with Kelly Elementary School to pilot Safe Routes to School. The program was designed to increase the number of kids walking and biking to school using the 4Es (i.e., encouragement, education, engineering, and enforcement).
- Safe Routes to School activities conducted at Kelly Elementary included assessments, walkabouts, mapping, Walk and Bike to School Days, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Education classes.



▶ **Travel Smart**

- The Portland Department of Transportation implemented the Travel Smart social marketing program, which encouraged Interstate residents to use alternate modes of transportation.
- Portland ALbD worked with the Department of Transportation to add physical activity-oriented questions in assessments, develop promotional materials, and participate in promotional activities.

“...we said the Travel Smart project was going to happen anyway, I mean it was not dependent on us at all, it was a matter of how much we could potentially support integrating health into that conversation.” -Staff

▶ **Other Programmatic and Promotional Efforts**

- The partnership organized Springwater Corridor Trail habitat restoration and service learning programs for local elementary and high school students.
- The partnership provided walking programs for seniors in the Lents community and offered recumbent bike rides and walking programs to Lents senior citizens during the summer.
- Portland ALbD staff coordinated a Pedestrian Summit in Portland.

Challenges and Successes

Staff, partners, and community members identified facilitators to implement programs and promotions:

- Student costs for participating in Kelly GROW were covered by organizational fundraising, and several organizations shared responsibility for maintaining the program.

Staff, partners, and community members identified a number of challenges to implementing programs and promotions:

- Lents was not conducive for walking. Residents did not enjoy walking in the community because of safety concerns and poor aesthetics.
- It was difficult to engage residents due to competing concerns and priorities unrelated to active living.
- Because Lents WALKS attracted a wide range of age groups (two to seventy), it was difficult to design walks to meet the needs and abilities of all participants.

“I don’t think that Lents is set up around pedestrians at all...I mean nobody really wants to walk. It’s not enjoyable to walk through parking lots...and crossing 7 or 8 lane roads. And so, just from an aesthetic standpoint, it just isn’t very rewarding to be out. And I think that is a huge barrier that still exists regardless of our walks that we did.” -Partner

Sustainability

Throughout the ALbD funding period the partnership focused on creating permanent and sustainable changes in the community by instilling active living cultural norms, policies, and physical infrastructure. The partnership’s physical project and policy work resulted in numerous long-lasting improvements, including miles of new bike lanes and sidewalks, upgrades to local trail networks and parks, and a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly Lents Town Center.

To sustain programs and events that needed ongoing funding, Portland ALbD worked to secure additional grants and institutionalize the programs. In addition, the partnership established itself as a facilitator for project development rather than the sole entity responsible for project operations.

“But again the idea of kind of planting seeds by some of these projects and stuff and hoping that they grow into something else, that’s then anchored into the community.” -Staff

This model had mixed success. For example, the partnership hoped that Lents WALKS would inspire neighborhood groups and organizations to implement similar programs to sustain the effort. Neighborhood groups did not show interest in developing similar programs, and Lents WALKS was ultimately not sustainable.

Over the course of the five-year grant period, the ALbD initiative evolved into the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Initiative at the lead agency, Community Health Partnership, and the ALbD 5P model remained an intrinsic part of HEAL. A number of ALbD efforts were sustained after the grant period. A grant from the Northwest Health Foundation supported Kelly GROW programming and also helped keep their work in Lents going after ALbD funding diminished in the last two years of the grant.. Funding from Kaiser supported a Healthy Community Policy Project to continue to encourage collaboration between public health and planning stakeholders. In addition, staff contracted with partner organizations to develop and evaluate other efforts.

The Project Director’s position was absorbed by Oregon’s Public Health Institute to allow for continued investment in the partnership’s goals. As the partnership transitioned into HEAL, a 0.4 FTE employee was hired with grant funds to assess work completed by Portland ALbD in the Lents neighborhood and to examine direction of the partnership in the future.

Acknowledgements

This evaluation and report were developed under the leadership of Laura Brennan, PhD, MPH, Principal Investigator, Transtria LLC, and Ross Brownson, PhD, Co-Principal Investigator, Washington University Institute for Public Health. Support for this evaluation was provided by a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (#57649). Transtria LLC led the evaluation and dissemination activities from November 2006 to December 2009. For more information about the evaluation and dissemination methods, activities or results, please contact Laura Brennan (laura@transtria.com).

Our team is grateful for the collaboration and support from the staff at the Community Health Partners and the Portland ALBD partnership in Portland, Oregon.

With special thanks to the many individuals who have contributed to these efforts from Transtria LLC (Anna Alexandrov; Joanna Bender; Shruthi Bhatt; Yolanda Campbell; Julie Claus, MPH; Kathryn Coniglio, MPH; Kate Dickman; Kate Donaldson, MPH; Melissa Hall, MPH; Courtney Jones, MPH; Shannon Keating; Allison Kemner, MPH; Benjamin Krause; Amy Krieg; Lisa Meng; Lauren Middendorff; Luke Odom; Regina Quadir, MPH; Laura Runnels, MPH; Elsa Taricone, MPH; Cindy Thomas, MPH; Sarah Weiner), Saint Louis University School of Public Health (Elizabeth Baker, PhD, MPH), Active Living By Design (Rich Bell, MCP; Phil Bors, MPH; Mark Dessauer, MA; Joanne Lee, LDN, RD, MPH; Mary Beth Powell, MPH; Sarah Strunk, MHA; Risa Wilkerson, MA), National Park Service (Helen Mahan), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Laura Leviton, PhD; Jamie Bussel, MPH), University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health (Kelly Evenson, PhD), University of California at Davis (Susan Handy, PhD), Wholonomy Consulting (Katherine Kraft, PhD), San Diego State University and Active Living Research (James Sallis, PhD), and Innovative Graphic Services (Joseph Karolczak).