

Breckenridge Creates Active Living Culture

New Trail Links Home-Work-Leisure

Bike riding offers a healthy, cost-effective and efficient way to move from place to place, and 51 percent of U.S. adults say they would like to ride more often. Of those, 53 percent worry about being hit by a car, and 47 percent would ride more often if bikes and motor vehicles were physically separated.¹ Communities in Minnesota eager to promote health and provide additional transportation options invest in trails and lanes that increase bike safety and promote biking.



Community Members and Friends on the New Trail

In Wilkin County, the Active Living Committee of Breckenridge has existed for over 10 years and leads the charge to make their city a safer place to ride. Led by Shawn Krause-Roberts, owner of local business Orthopedic & Sports Physical Therapy Inc. (OSPTI), the group is working on developing and funding multiple bike-focused projects in Breckenridge. The largest of these efforts, a newly-completed 1.5-mile bike trail along Highway 75, connects CHI St. Francis Health to the city and multiple destinations in between. In 2011, PartnerSHIP 4 Health (PS4H) helped jump-start the process with funding for the initial engineering study. The Active Living Committee secured additional funding from the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Otto Bremer Foundation, and an ongoing local fundraising campaign. The city supports the project and agreed to

maintain the trail if the committee could successfully fund the local match required by the awarded grants.

“The Committee has worked with PartnerSHIP 4 Health really well, and I want to thank the Committee and PS4H Staff Member, Patrick Hollister, for the different things that we’ve been able to put into place to help the community. We have seen people getting out and active, and the largest part of that is the bike path,” said Krause-Roberts.

With only signage, benches, and landscaping remaining to install, the Active Living Committee looks to the future. The long-term goal is to extend the trail into nearby Wahpeton, ND, creating a loop connecting the two cities and expanding safe biking opportunities.

Active Living at School and Work

Active living opportunities go beyond the bike trail in Breckenridge. Walk and Bike to School Day, an annual event led by OSPTI and community members, engages local schools in a friendly competition to see who can get the most students to walk or bike to school. Held each October, the event is part of International Walk to School Day. The Active Living Committee is also working on a Safe Routes to School project to create a bike lane between the elementary-middle and high schools, a frequently-traveled route for students involved in after school activities. CHI St. Francis Health, a destination of the Highway 75 trail, offers active living initiatives that complement the safe and easily accessible community trail. A fleet of nine bikes, including tandem and three-wheeled bikes, are available for employees to check out during the work day and/or overnight.

PartnerSHIP 4 Health applauds the trailblazing nature of the city of Breckenridge and its residents. The success of this community effort is a testament to the power of community collaboration in pursuit of a healthier culture that offers better health for everyone.

Learn more about PartnerSHIP 4 Health (local public health in Becker, Clay, Otter Tail and Wilkin counties) at <http://partnership4health.org>

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¹ <http://peopleforbikes.org/resources/u-s-bicycling-participation-benchmarking-report/>