

Plan4Health: Traffic Calming is Popping Up in St. Louis

"Safety is such a basic, inherent need that influences every aspect of our lives. The Traffic Calming Project motivated and empowered neighbors to become part of a realistic approach to the challenges pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists face on a daily basis when trying to coexist on our neighborhood streets. It was a wonderful opportunity for community involvement with feedback and a positive outcome that enabled neighbors to become involved in the decision making process that culminated with enhanced safety in the targeted areas."

*Delores Brown
Carondelet Community Champion
St. Louis Safety Group Coordinator*

Trailnet worked with various community organizations and businesses to receive donated tires and trees to use in the pop-up traffic calming demonstrations. The trees that were used in the demonstrations were planted in one of the neighborhoods following the demonstration.



SUMMARY

Plan4Health connects communities across the country, funding work at the intersection of planning and public health. Anchored by the American Planning Association (APA) and the American Public Health Association (APHA), Plan4Health supports creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions. The Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Partnership and Trailnet, a nonprofit 501(c)(3), are working to highlight the possibilities of creating a better pedestrian experience through temporary pop-up traffic calming demonstrations and working with the community to educate residents on the benefits of traffic calming to create safer streets.

CHALLENGE

Out of the 115 counties in Missouri, St. Louis ranks in the bottom quartile for length of life (108th), quality of life (107th), and health behaviors (111th). In St. Louis, nearly 60 percent of adults are overweight or obese and 27 percent report no leisure time physical activity. St. Louis ranked below the state and nation with a score of 5.2 on the Food Environment Index. This indicates a large portion of the low-income population does not live within one mile of a grocery store. While 80

percent of City residents live within a half mile of a public park, comparatively better than the rest of Missouri, poor pedestrian access leads to a low level of park use. The HEAL Partnership is committed to increasing access to physical opportunities and to healthy food and beverages. Trailnet is leading the Plan4Health initiative by working to make the streets of St. Louis safer and more accessible for residents in the most vulnerable neighborhoods.

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SOLUTION

The HEAL Partnership and members of the St. Louis community have re-imagined street design through pop-up traffic calming demonstrations across different neighborhoods. Instead of a space dominated by vehicles, the pop-up demonstrations create space that accommodates walkers, bicyclists, and vehicles in colorful and inspiring displays. In an effort to ensure such pop-up demonstrations continue into the future, the coalition developed a lending library of materials and instructions on how to implement the demonstrations. This toolkit is easy to share with neighborhoods across the city.

SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

The Partnership's efforts to make the streets of St. Louis safer and more accessible have engaged local residents and decision-makers, helping everyone experience the possibilities of policy change. This work is an example for other communities of how to change environments to make healthy living easier where people live, learn, work, and play.

If you are a resident of St. Louis, find the next pop-up near you and join the festivities. Consider following Trailnet's Plan4Health blog and hosting a pop-up demonstration in your community. For more information about all of the coalitions participating in Plan4Health, check out www.plan4health.us and join the conversation on social media with #plan4health.

RESULTS

The four pop-up demonstrations across the city were very successful, with community members engaging and learning about alternative ways to design city streets. The HEAL Partnership conducted walk audits to understand the neighborhoods and identify dangerous intersections. Part of the community engagement involved empowering community champions in each pop-up demonstration neighborhood to develop messaging and outreach to fellow neighborhood residents. The work gained traction during the fall of 2015 and even the City of St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay attended one of the demonstrations.

The Partnership is successfully engaging university students and leveraging local academics to support this work as well. A group of students are conducting health impact assessments in each of the four demonstration areas.

Plan4Health is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The views expressed in this success story do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the CDC or imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. Learn more about Plan4Health and the National Implementation and Dissemination of Chronic Disease Prevention project at www.cdc.gov/communityhealth.

Success Stories

<http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/>