



HumPAL

Humboldt Partnership for Active Living

Fall 2005

Newsletter

Steering Committee

- Tom Conlon**, Director,
Arcata Community Development Dept.
- Scott Kelly, P.E.**, Principal, Spencer
Engineering & Construction Management, Inc.
- Ann Lindsay, M.D.**,
Humboldt County Public Health Officer
- Mark Lovelace**, Project Coordinator
Healthy Humboldt Coalition
- Jim Test**, Executive Director,
Arcata Economic Development Corporation

Subcommittees

Subcommittees are forming now!

Volunteers are needed for the following subcommittees:

- Research**
- Policy**
- Education and Outreach**

For more info or to volunteer call Dana at (707) 269-2055 or email humpal@nrsrcaa.org.

Strategic Plan Update

The Strategic Plan Committee met through the summer to complete a draft plan -- look for the final plan on our website early in 2006!

Walkability & Community Design

Back to Our Roots... Walking for Transport

Walking is an excellent form of exercise that can be done with no special gear or skills. It is also a **practical and healthy transportation choice**, which can have significant benefits for both individuals and communities. Walking daily as a form of transportation can provide the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity needed to maintain proper health. There is growing evidence that current trends toward automobile-oriented land use and development have **reduced walkability**: it is less convenient, practical and safe to walk. These community design trends have fundamentally shifted travel choices Americans make on a daily basis.



The walk home from school along Highway 36.

According to the Center for Disease Control, walking trips made by children and adults decreased 40% between 1977 and 1995. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 'Active Living Primer' (2004) reports that during the past 20 years, the time we collectively spent in cars grew twelve times faster than the population, while the number of trips taken by foot dropped by 42%! Humboldt County has been no exception -- a 2004 study of children in Humboldt County Schools revealed that 37% of our children are overweight or at risk of overweight.

According to the 'Primer', in 2000, **only 28%** of American adults were regularly achieving recommended levels of physical activity. However, according to the 2001 National Household Travel

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Outreach In 2006

Over the next year HumPAL will be sponsoring a seminar and workshop series '**Building Healthy Communities: Connecting Transportation, Land Use, Economics and Health**'. The range of topics for the series will include healthy development and neighborhood design, Safe Routes to Schools, land use code reform, policy and other issues related to active living and community design. HumPAL will also have winter and spring general meetings during the first weeks of February and April, 2006. To learn more about these opportunities, and to become a member of HumPAL check out our new website:

www.nrsrcaa.org/humpal

The Humboldt Partnership for Active Living (HumPAL) is a diverse group of professionals and citizens working together toward integrating physical activity into daily life through education, policy change and support of appropriate community design.

Walkability Audits *In Humboldt County*

by Dr. Ann Lindsay, County Health Officer

What is a walkability audit? Simply stated, it is a group stroll through a community with a focus on observing what makes the walk pleasant, and what could be done to make walking more safe and enjoyable. HumPAL has tested out a format for walkability audits in three communities now: Rio Dell, Manila and McKinleyville. Community leaders in each community were shown a short power point presentation explaining the health implications of our automobile-centered society with suggestions as to how community development can make it easier for everyone to be more active (and healthy). Participants included County Supervisors, public works and planning officials, school administrators, parents, city officials, and others interested in "active living". The audit finishes with a group discussion, ranking the walkability of

the community and gathering suggestions for change. The process is fun and informative! Important connections were made between those living in the community and those with official responsibility for community planning. Residents discussed how to make changes, including accessing "Safe Route to Schools" grants, which have already helped children walk and bike to school safely in several neighborhoods.



Residents and HumPAL members talk about walking conditions in Rio Dell

The next **walkability audit** will take place, rain or shine, in **Arcata on December 15 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.** Meet at the Arcata City Hall Council Chambers. The Arcata audit will be a bit different, because Public Works Director, Doby Class, is interested in showing what Arcata has already done to improve walkability and getting input on other changes currently in the works. We are aiming to hold walkability audits in Eureka in both Supervisor Neeley's and Supervisor Smith's Districts this Spring. We will refine the walkability audit tool so that anyone can gather a group and conduct an audit to analyze a particular neighborhood to promote active living. HumPAL is working toward developing a walkability audit tool for communities that will provide local governments with useful information.

Walkability & Community Design

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Survey, 8.6% of all transportation trips are made by walking. And, 25% of trips in the United States are a quarter mile or less -- most of these short trips could easily be made by walking.

Additionally, a national survey says the public wants to walk more and recognizes the need for investment in walkability. One third of Americans say community design that reduces the need to drive is the answer to traffic problems. Nearly 63% of survey respondents would like to walk more to stores and other errands, and 74% favor using part of state transportation budgets to make it safer and easier for kids to walk to school (Belden Russonello & Stewart Research & Communications, 2003).

Walkability is everyone's issue: HumPAL is committed to helping Humboldt County become a more walkable and healthier community.

Reap the benefits of walking in your community:

1. Walkers bring business to shop owners
2. Walkers will interact with neighbors, building a sense of community
3. Walkers teach children safety skills
4. Walkers don't pollute the air or water
5. Walkers don't clog the roads
6. Walkers get energized and improve their fitness
7. Walkers inspire others to walk!
8. Walkers who are seniors live longer than those who are sedentary
9. Walkers make our communities more livable

http://www.lgc.org/freepub/land_use/factsheets/plan_to_walk.html

Dan Burden's 10 Keys to Walkable Communities

1. **Compact, Lively Town Center** (or many compact villages in larger towns or cities).
2. **Many Linkages to Neighborhoods** (including walkways, trails and roadways).
3. **Low Speed Streets** (in downtown and neighborhoods - 20-25 mph common).
4. **Public Places** Packed with Children, Teenagers, Older Adults and People with Disabilities.
5. **Neighborhood Schools and Parks**
6. **Convenient, Safe and Easy Street Crossings**
7. **Inspiring and Well-Maintained Public Streets.**
8. **Land Use and Transportation Mutually Beneficial.**
9. **Celebrated Public Space and Public Life.**
10. **Many People Walking.**

http://www.lgc.org/freepub/land_use/articles/ten_keys/page01.html

Research Update *Walking for Health*

By Tina Manos, Associate Professor
Health and Physical Education, HSU.

The **Walking for Health: Measurement and Research Issues and Challenges Conference** was held October 13th-15th at the University of Illinois. This conference brought together 300 scientists, transportation experts, engineers, and walking advocates from 17 countries. The goal was to promote a better understanding of this most fundamental and popular physical activity.

Conference Highlights:

Dr. David Bassett, the keynote speaker, discussed **state-of-the art measures** of walking behavior (including pedometers that are insensitive to position, accelerometers, infrared trail counters, direct observation, questionnaires, and radio frequency tags), all of which are being used to measure the effectiveness of interventions.

A key question that was addressed was: **"How many steps per day?"** While the answer is dependent on the desired health outcome, most researchers agreed that 10,000 steps per day matches well with the amount of physical activity recommended for health.

"America on the Move" (www.americaonthemove.org), a nationally-recognized organization working to promote physical activity and sound nutrition, advocates incremental increases in steps rather than promoting an absolute amount; the strategy is to motivate and not discourage **Americans who average only half of the 10,000 steps per day goal.**

Many speakers addressed the correlates/determinants of walking. The correlates of walking for transportation differ from the correlates of walking for leisure. There are also differences in the correlates for different populations. For example, the determinants of walking for those of low Socioeconomic Status (SES) are distinct from those at a higher SES. Dr. Susan Handy of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis said that we do not know if **mixed use, pro-active environments** actually promote more physical activity, or if those who like being more active move to these types of environments. Handy stated that we can not yet say that changes in the built environment will increase walking, but we can say that **changes** in the built environment **increase the opportunity** for walking and that is enough to **move forward** with **sweeping policy changes.**

Larry Cohen, Executive Director of the Prevention Institute (PI), stated that business and government must work to change norms. According to Cohen, "best practice approaches must be focused on primary prevention of disease, must be comprehensive, must be environmental, and must sustain change". The PI website, www.preventioninstitute.org, is replete with resources available to communities on ways to build coalitions and promote environmental level changes.



pedbikeinfo.org

Join HumPAL in 2006!

We're excited to announce that HumPAL is becoming a membership based organization in 2006! Over the past year we have received great community interest and support. In an effort to expand opportunities for all community members to be involved, we are encouraging everyone to become an official member of HumPAL!

Member Benefits include:

- Quarterly Newsletters;
- Biweekly email updates about events and resources; and
- General membership meetings and trainings.

Pick up a membership form at one of our events or download a form from our website: www.nrscaa.org/humpal.

HumPAL Newsletter

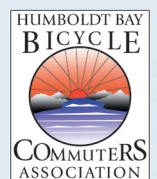
Trails for Humboldt Bay

Help raise support and funds to develop a system of multi-use trails around Humboldt Bay! Learn more online at www.trailstrust.org



Bike Commuters Online!

The 24-year old **Humboldt Bay Bicycle Commuters' Association** is on the web! For riding safety tips, info about upcoming meetings, how to report road hazards and much more, check out www.humbike.org.



Resources & Links

NATIONAL & STATE PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

- **Active Living by Design** - www.activelivingbydesign.org
- **Active Living Leadership** - www.activelivingleadership.org
- **Active Living Research** - www.activelivingresearch.org
- **Local Government Commission** - www.lgc.org
- **Walk & Bike to School** - www.walktoschool.org
- **National Center for Bicycling and Walking** - www.bikewalk.org
- **International City/ County Management Association** - www.icma.org
- **California Walk to School Headquarters** - www.cawalktoschool.com
- **Project LEAN** - www.californiaprojectlean.org

Articles for the newsletter are submitted by participants compiled and/or written by the staff of Natural Resources Services Division of RCAA.

LOCAL PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

- **HumPAL** • (707) 269-2054
• www.nrsrcaa.org/humpal
- **Project LEAN** • (707) 441-4652
• www.northcoastlean.org
- **County of Humboldt Public Health Branch**
• (707) 445-6200
• www.co.humboldt.ca.us/health
- **Natural Resources Services Division of RCAA**
• (707) 269-2055 • www.nrsrcaa.org
- **The Healthy Humboldt Coalition** • (707) 822-1166
• www.healthyhumboldt.org



For more information about the
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and to become a member, visit our new website!

www.nrsrcaa.org/humpal

Email: humpal@nrsrcaa.org • Phone: (707) 269-2054