

Shape Your World

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Shape Your World (SYW) is a statewide movement of North Carolinians who are committed to creating safer, healthier, and more connected communities to support physically active lifestyles. SYW mobilizes people across the state to get more involved by asking them to see their community in a new way, to connect with the issue by understanding the benefits that an active living environment can bring to them, and to act to shape the built environment in their community. SYW encourages people to think about how their communities are designed and to realize that they have a voice in how the community gets built, developed, or changed.

The SYW Web site (<http://www.ShapeYourWorldNC.com>) contains a wealth of resources that help community members learn about the built environment and learn how they can become engaged in creating the changes they want to see happen. The Web site contains many resources to help community members better understand and become engaged in shaping the active living environment in their community, including the following: a walkability and bikeability checklist; success stories of people across the state who are making changes in their community; a visualization tool that allows the user to upload pictures and add elements to a space, such as bike

racks, lights, or a playground, to see what various changes might look like; and a search tool to help community members find county commissioners, local planners, and parks and recreation departments. **NCMJ**

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work on increasing joint-use agreements between communities and facilities offering green space and playground access as part of public health interventions. The HEC state agencies are collaboratively looking at how to increase the inclusion of health considerations in comprehensive planning with an understanding of the connections between health and land use planning, transportation planning, environmental equality, and economic development.

The participation of state-level partners, community-level partners, and community members in the CPPW II project has been essential to its success. The HEC partnership has played a critical role in helping each individual agency understand how state departments could align and integrate efforts to support active living. Municipalities have been able to inform state partners of barriers they experience in their communities as a result of state practices and policies. Local community partners and community members have been able to better understand how the built environment can help or hinder their ability to make healthy choices.

In the end, we all win when North Carolina communities become healthier through increased access to physical activity. This requires collaboration between local community members, health officials, the public health community, parks and recreation organizations, regional planners, decision makers, and local and state agencies. The DPH is incorporating this vision in planning its work. Adding input from the medical and public health communities will facili-

tate success in these efforts and set us on a path to lower the demand for medical treatment, decrease health care costs, and improve the quality of life and the level of wellness for the entire population. **NCMJ**

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