

Piper, Alan

From: Naomi Crimm <Naomi.Crimm@readingpa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 2:14 PM
To: Piper, Alan
Subject: City of Reading Active Transportation Plan
Attachments: 10.26.21 DOH and DCNR WalkWorks Release Update.pdf

County of Berks Warning: This is an external email. Please exercise caution.

Good afternoon Alan,

I'm reaching out to let you know that the City of Reading recently received funding to complete an Active Transportation Plan (see attached announcement). The City's vision is to improve conditions for walking and biking along several key corridors, as well as increase trail connections and access to recreational opportunities to create a reinvigorated central core. The Active Transportation Plan will focus on better connecting people to downtown Reading, and will serve as a starting point for future plans and policies in the City as a whole.

Would you, or someone else from the MPO, be interested in participating in the plan's development? This could be through participating in our steering committee, or through an individual stakeholder interview at some point. As we refine the scope of this project, I'd love to hear what deliverables we can provide that would feed into the TIP and other regional planning efforts centered around transportation.

Thanks,
Naomi

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AND NATURAL RESOURCES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 26, 2021

Wolf Administration Awards 10 Community Grants to Increase Community Physical Activity

Harrisburg, PA - The Wolf Administration today announced WalkWorks grants to 10 communities totaling \$160,000 to assist with the development of active transportation plans and policies to increase physical activity options by connecting everyday destinations in their locales. WalkWorks, a program of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, continues to benefit from its close partnership with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and its generous funding of two of the grant recipients.

“Having access to areas for recreation, such as walking and biking, is essential in helping to keep Pennsylvanians healthy,” Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam said. “Physical activity can lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and premature death. Being active also helps prevent weight gain, reduces stress that leads to burnout and improves mood and mental health. We are proud of this collaboration and grant recipients that support the efforts to encourage safe, physical activity in their communities across Pennsylvania.”

“DCNR continues to encourage participation in outdoor recreational activities as much as possible because of the immediate and long-term health benefits,” said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. “This initiative, in collaboration with the Department of Health, aligns with our larger goal of providing recreational opportunities for all. The pandemic continues to remind us of the importance of spending time in natural spaces and making the direct connection to our health is something we hope resonates in communities across the commonwealth.”

With this funding, the grant recipients will be working over the next year with professional transportation and community planners to collect data, assess current conditions and aspirations, and incorporate public input in order to craft locally pertinent Active Transportation Plans. These plans will chart a course to new and improved pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks.

This year’s grant recipients are:

- **Allegheny County** – Forest Hills Borough: \$5,000; Verona Borough: \$18,000
- **Berks County** – City of Reading: \$20,000

- **Indiana County** – Indiana Borough: \$20,000; Indiana County: \$16,500; White Township: \$5,000
- **Lancaster County** – Akron Borough: \$20,000; Quarryville: \$18,000
- **Montgomery County** – Royersford Borough: \$18,000
- **Susquehanna County** – Susquehanna Depot Borough: \$19,500

Living in, working in, or visiting communities with safe, beautiful, functional and accessible public spaces and streets means being able to use activity-friendly routes to get to key destinations on a daily basis. Opportunities to increase physical activity and reduce obesity improves individual health, expands economic vitality and reduces healthcare costs.

In 2019, PennDOT published the [2019 Statewide Active Transportation Plan](#) which superseded the previous 2007 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The new plan represents a shift in strategy to focus on active options for functional transportation as much as or even more so than recreation/tourism and to make sure those possibilities are open to all. These WalkWorks grants embody and acknowledge the connections and needed coordination between transportation policy and public health.

“Active transportation means functional transportation options for all, not just the fit and fearless. WalkWorks is concentrating on bringing a Complete Streets mindset to transportation planning in communities around the commonwealth,” said Samantha Pearson, Healthy Communities Program Manager at the Pennsylvania Downtown Center and coordinator of the WalkWorks Program.

“How we live is a product of where we live,” Pearson said. “We are now recognizing that the design of many of the places we have built has had unintended consequences, damaging individual and community health. We are making strides in adjusting our surroundings to make them pro-health, pro-activity, and pro-exercise. For many years planners and urban designers looked at public space in terms of form, function, and aesthetics; economic developers pushed to enhance the vitality of the local economy; and health practitioners worked to improve community health all in separate silos. But we can – and should – all be working together. Our collaboration can lead to healthier people, more resilient communities and stronger local economies.”

The grant recipients were selected from a competitive pool of high-quality applicants by a multidisciplinary review team that included representatives from the Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, PennDOT, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Department of Community & Economic Development, and PennDOT’s Local Technical Assistance Program.

The WalkWorks program is committed to expanding walkability, bikeability, and accessibility across Pennsylvania and encourages everyone to incorporate activity-friendly routes into your daily routines.

Funding for the grants is provided from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under both the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant and State Physical Activity and Nutrition Grant programs as well as additional funding from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for two of the awardees.

To get more information about WalkWorks visit PAwalkworks.com.

Visit the [Explore PA Trails](#) and [Get Outdoors PA](#) website for information on recreational resources near you.

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