

Brown County: Active Community Workgroup



Key players:

- Supervisor of Recreation for Parks, Recreation and Forestry
- City transit director
- City planner
- Green Bay Police Department representative
- Traffic engineer for Public Works
- Green Bay Economic Development representative
- Local realtor
- Facilities director for Green Bay Public Schools
- Regional planning commission representative
- Live54218 Assistant Director



Live54218 is a community coalition with the mission of creating environments that promote and support community members making healthy choices. To meet this mission, Live54218 established a workgroup of community partners who are interested in promoting Active Community (AC) strategies in the greater Green Bay area. The Active Communities Green Bay (ACGB) team is currently working on developing and implementing a bike/pedestrian plan and a Complete Streets policy.

First steps

Before contacting potential team members, the Live54218 coalition contacted the mayor of Green Bay to get support for recruiting city employees to be part of the ACGB team. The mayor, who had worked with Live54218 on prior initiatives, was an enthusiastic supporter of creating the ACGB workgroup to help implement AC strategies and improve the community's health.

In the fall of 2012, the Live54218 team began contacting people from different sectors of city government, regional planning, the local schools, and the community to discuss the ACGB initiative. An expert from each sector was recruited to join the ACGB team. Team members attended an AC training in December 2012, which provided the newly formed team with the opportunity to build relationships and establish a vision for the workgroup.



Initially, the ACGB team met monthly to agree on priority strategies and develop an action plan. Priority strategies were selected based on consensus; each team member was allowed to vote for three strategies. The team also completed an asset map to ensure no one was missing from the group. Once an action plan was in place, the team moved to quarterly meetings with regular email communication to stay updated on progress.

Starting the conversation

During the first in-person meetings with potential team members, Live54218 coalition members discussed Live54218's background and the role the organization has played in improving the community's health. They brought a short list of Active Community strategies to highlight the work that the ACGB team could accomplish, provided information on the link between AC initiatives and economic development, and emphasized why each member was equally important for the team.

Gaining community support

The ACGB team has leveraged Live54218's existing community outreach efforts to gain support for ACGB's priority strategies. The Live54218 e-newsletter and Facebook page have been useful tools for educating the community on the importance and impact of implementing AC strategies. The ACGB team plans to contact neighborhood associations to increase community engagement and support for AC initiatives.

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Challenges

It can be challenging to find the time and resources needed to accomplish long-range goals. The ACGB team selected some strategies that were “easier wins” and some that would take longer to implement. This balance is helpful for sustaining motivation.

The ACGB team also found that involving the school district can be challenging due to its size and the existence of different “gatekeepers” for different activities. The inclusion of a school district staff member on the ACGB team has been helpful in navigating this challenge.

Key lessons

- Set up in-person recruiting meetings. It’s harder to say “no” to someone in person.
- Designate a chairperson or leader who is responsible for setting meetings, planning, and following up on the progress of action items.
- Be persistent in recruiting to ensure the team includes a range of expertise.
- Complete an asset map early in the process to make sure no one is missing from the team.
- Gain support from the mayor and other local policy makers.

Get started in your community

Do you want to create an Active Community workgroup to promote a healthier environment for your community? Start with these steps, and consult the [Active Community Toolkit](#) and the [Wisconsin Active Communities Alliance website](#) for more resources.

- Discuss your plans with the mayor to gain support for recruiting city employees.
- Create an asset map to determine who should be part of the team. Aim to have experts from many sectors of government and the community. See Key Players on page 1 for ideas.
- Contact potential team members and request in-person meetings. During the meetings, discuss how the workgroup will affect the community and why each person’s expertise is important to the team.
- After recruiting a team, designate a chairperson to be responsible for setting meetings, planning, and following up on the progress of action items.
- Revisit the asset map to ensure all key players and organizations are represented on the workgroup.
- Review the [Active Community toolkit](#) and agree on priority strategies. The ACGB workgroup found that a balance of easier and more challenging strategies was successful in sustaining momentum and achieving success.
- Develop a work plan and action items for the priority strategies.
- Gain community support for AC initiatives by leveraging existing community outreach efforts and engaging neighborhood organizations.
- Meet regularly to evaluate progress and update goals.

Resources:

[Active Community Toolkit](#)

[Wisconsin Active Communities Alliance website](#)

