

BOARD OF ALDERMAN

ITEM NO. E(3)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 21, 2003

TITLE: A Request to Submit the Active Living By Design Proposal

DEPARTMENT: Planning	PUBLIC HEARING: No
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia McGuire, 918-7327

PURPOSE

During Carrboro's Downtown Visioning Charrette, Dan Burden announced a public health initiative that had just been launched to develop methods for improving the health of American citizens by removing barriers to physical activity. The program, now based in Chapel Hill, is seeking proposals for community partnerships that will develop and implement innovative programs that will achieve its goals. A summary of a proposal for Carrboro and a number of community partners is presented for the Board's review. A resolution authorizing staff to proceed with the submittal of a proposal has been prepared and is recommended for the Board's adoption.

INFORMATION

Active Living by Design is a national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is a part of the UNC School of Public Health in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The program has been created to develop and evaluate innovative approaches to increase physical activity through community design, public policies and communications strategies.

A call for proposals was released in mid-November. Twenty-five community partnerships will be selected to receive 5-year grants of up to \$200,000 to develop, implement and sustain collaboration among a variety of organizations in public health and other disciplines, such as city planning, transportation, architecture, recreation, crime prevention, traffic safety and education, as well as key advocacy groups concentrating on land use, public transit, non-motorized travel, public spaces, parks, trails, and architectural practices that advance physical activity. Grant funds may be used for planning and program development, but not for bricks and mortar. Additional matching funds for capital improvements will be available to some of the grant finalists.

The application process has three stages:

1. Submit a brief proposal.
2. If invited, submit a full proposal.
3. If invited, participate in a review and selection meeting.

Key dates are summarized below:

November 2002.....Call for Proposals posted
January 6-31, 2003.....Grantmaking Online system

.....available for brief proposals
 January 31, 2003 - 3 pm EST.....Brief proposals due
 March 21, 2003.....Applicants notified about status
 March 21-May 23, 2003.....Grantmaking Online system
 available for full proposals
 May 23, 2003 - 3 pm EST.....Full proposals due
 June 30, 2003.....Applicants notified about status
 Mid July-mid August, 2003.....Review and selection meetings
 Mid September.....Finalists notified about status
 November 1, 2003.....Commence funding

Starting in the late summer 2002, staff and potential community partners began to meet to review the preliminary program information and to discuss a possible proposal. Since that time, a community partnership has coalesced around a proposal that seeks to build on Carrboro’s extensive history of inclusive planning, creative and cost-effective implementation. The proposal envisions an interconnected system of “opportunities for activity” radiating from the downtown that makes it easier for citizens of all ages, abilities, and circumstances, to incorporate walking and biking trips in their travels through and around the town.

The Active Living program requires that the proposal address four areas, described further below.

Creating and maintaining an interdisciplinary Active Living partnership. The Town of Carrboro will partner with a number of entities from public health organizations to non-profit community designers. The Town will seek to strengthen its relationship to the local school system and expand the opportunities for ensuring that new neighborhoods are sited and designed in order to maximize opportunities for active trips to and from school. To date, partners with the Town include Piedmont Health, NC Prevention Partners, UNC-CH Commuter Alternatives Program, The Village Project, North Carolina Office on Disability and Health, and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. Staff is also seeking additional partners, including El Centro Latino, the Carrboro Business Association, Friends of Bolin Creek, and the Morgan Creek Valley Consortium.

Increasing access to and availability of diverse opportunities for active living. A variety of activities are envisioned to identify and remove barriers for citizens of all ages to be more active. One of these activities will be to identify barriers to physical activity among selected population groups, including residents of downtown neighborhoods and school children. Another will be to facilitate changes to the social and, where possible, physical infrastructure of the Downtown Visioning recommendations to enhance pedestrian safety. A third will be to complete plans for the Bolin Creek and Morgan Creek greenways.

Eliminating design and policy barriers that reduce choices for active living. With NC Prevention Partners, walkability assessments will be conducted throughout the Town to identify particular design and policy barriers for citizens to choose biking or walking for shopping and for travel to school and work. It is expected that greenway planning will be expanded to include neighborhood connections to recreation facilities, schools and shopping. Program resources will also be used to facilitate establishing safe-walk zones to local schools.

Developing communications strategies that create awareness and understanding of the benefits of active living. Communications strategies will include educational programs with partners to promote active living among town staff and citizens (e.g. web page of “10,000 steps, brochures, safety incentives (step-pedometers). A second communication strategy will be the development of a health series through the Recreation and Parks Department, the Department on Aging, and the Community in Schools afterschool programs at Carrboro’s elementary and middle schools.

Further details about the partnership and Carrboro’s proposed Active Living program will be presented at the Board meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

Should the Town be selected for the second round of proposals, additional staff time will be needed for proposal development and presentation to the Active Living by Design board. Should the Town’s proposal be successful, additional staff time associated with program administration should be expected. There is no funding or matching requirement for grant recipients.

ADMINISTRATION’S RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends that the Board of Aldermen adopt the attached resolution (*Attachment A*) to authorize the submittal of a proposal to the Robert Wood Johnson foundation for the Active Living by Design program.

ATTACHMENT A

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TOWN STAFF TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL TO ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN

Resolution No. 87/2002-03

WHEREAS, 60 percent of North Carolinians and 14 percent of the state's children are overweight; and

WHEREAS, barriers to physical activity have been cited as a major contributor to declining health conditions such as obesity and Type II diabetes; and

WHEREAS, Active Living by Design, a national program of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the UNC School of Public Health has been created to develop and evaluate innovative approaches to increase physical activity through community design, public policies and communications strategies; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Carrboro has an extensive history of providing a variety of means for citizens to choose active modes of transportation and recreation; and

WHEREAS, Town staff have identified a number of community partners who embrace this opportunity to focus our efforts to increase opportunities for Carrboro citizens to be active and healthier as a result of physical activity.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Carrboro Board of Aldermen that the Aldermen authorize Town staff to submit a proposal to Active Living by Design.

This is the 21st day of January in the year 2003.