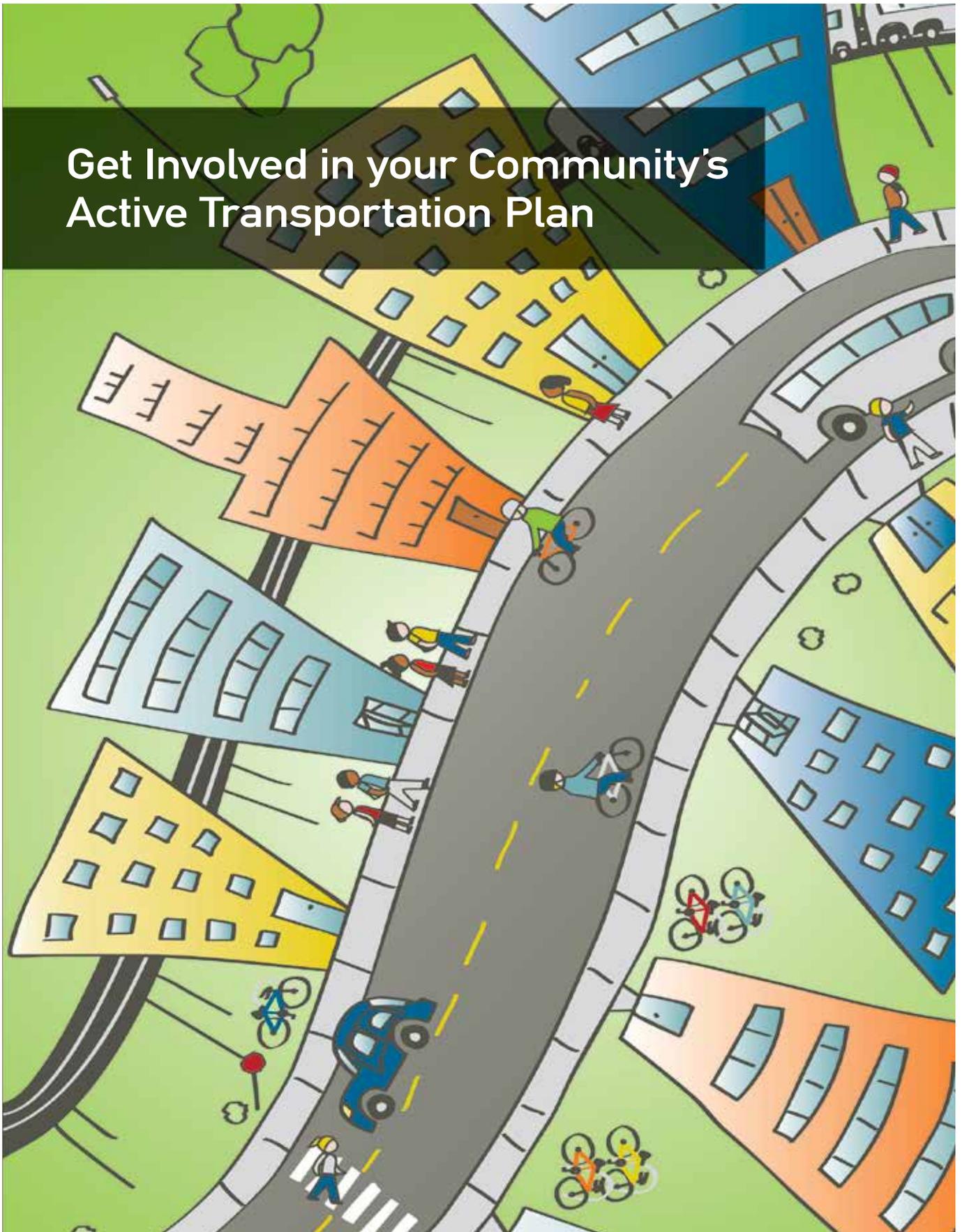


# Get Involved in your Community's Active Transportation Plan



## Help plan for active transportation in your community

Bicycling, walking and transit are great ways to get around while getting your daily dose of physical activity. Given the benefits these modes of travel have for the environment and for your pocketbook, it's no surprise that many communities are eager to make active transportation easier and more inviting.

To ensure better options for biking, walking and transit, many communities draw up a comprehensive set of strategies that outline recommendations for new policies, programming and infrastructure.

A key ingredient for any active transportation plan is public involvement. Involvement from engaged community members like you ensures the best possible results.

# Creating an active transportation plan

The Active Transportation Alliance (Active Trans) works for walkable communities, reliable transit and convenient biking options throughout Chicagoland. In addition to our advocacy work, we create transportation plans for local municipalities. Here is a brief sketch of the process we use for drawing up an active transportation plan.

## STEP 1 Set community priorities

A committee—formed by members of various agencies in your municipality—kicks off the planning process by setting goals to improve walking, biking and transit options in your community. Goals may include retrofitting unsafe infrastructure, reviewing policies that act as active transportation barriers, and making key places like parks, commercial areas and schools more accessible.

## STEP 2 Research and analyze

The Active Trans team gathers first-hand information on what it's like to be a pedestrian, cyclist and transit user in your community. We snap pictures and jot notes while analyzing safety, convenience and current use patterns.

## STEP 3 Gather input from you!

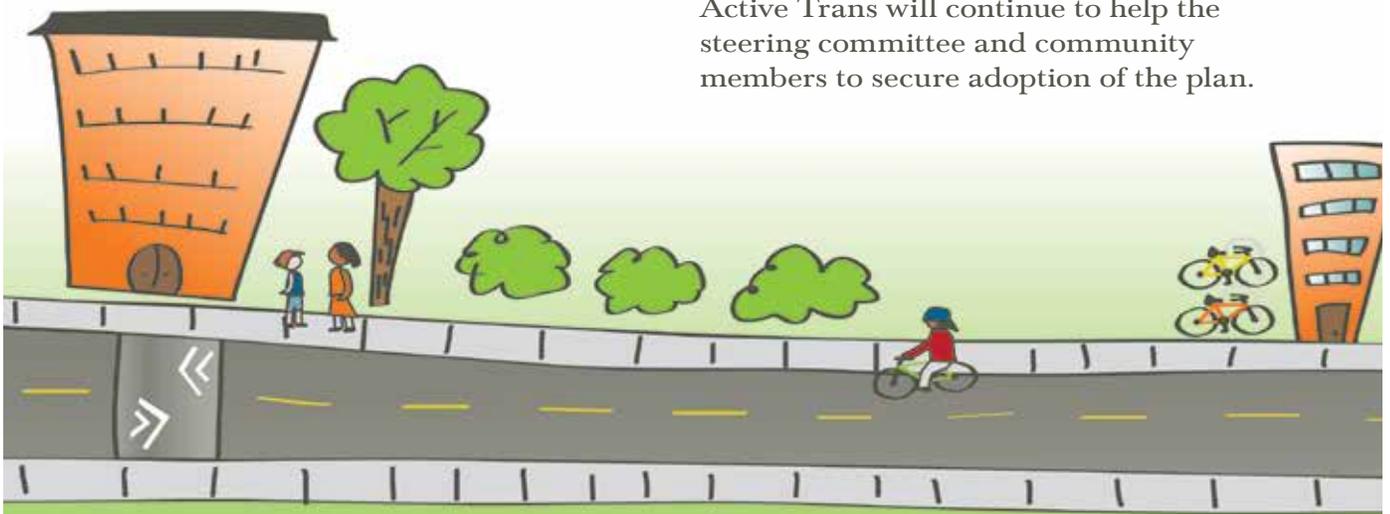
As daily users of the transportation network, your expertise is an essential part of shaping the plan. Through a mapping activity, polling questions, prioritization of key places and dialogue, your input provides crucial information for developing your community's active transportation plan.

## STEP 4 Synthesize information

With research now complete, the Active Trans team synthesizes community priorities gathered from the steering committee, fieldwork and public participation.

## STEP 5 Adopt and implement plan

Congratulations! Your community now has an active transportation plan. There is still more work that needs to be done. Active Trans will continue to help the steering committee and community members to secure adoption of the plan.



## Keep the momentum going

Once your community's plan is adopted, local residents serve as the key ingredient in bringing walking, biking and transit to the forefront of the community.

One of the most important ways to keep the momentum going is for your community to have a strong bicycle and pedestrian task force. The task force monitors implementation of the active transportation plan and builds local support for biking, walking and transit issues.

*The task force members can rally support with some of the following strategies.*

- Use social media to publicize active transportation issues and goals.
- Hold presentations and discussions at the local coffee shop, library or park.
- Host a community event to celebrate the adoption of the plan.
- Organize encouragement events throughout the year. Here are some examples of effective encouragement events:
  - » **Bike and Dine**  
Hold a progressive tour of local restaurants by bike.
  - » **Open Streets**  
Open streets to people and close them to cars so the streets become “paved parks” that are inviting to people of all ages, abilities, and social, economic, or ethnic backgrounds.
  - » **Bike to Work Day or Week**  
Encourage local employers to participate in local and regional bike to work events.
  - » **Shop by Foot and Bike**  
Organize shopping excursions that encourage residents to shop locally.

# Questions about active transportation plans

## Who is on the steering committee?

The steering committee includes key stakeholders who represent public, private and community interests. These could be municipal officials, school representatives, emergency responders, local business owners, representatives from community-based organizations and every-day road users like you.

## Will my recommendations be included in the final plan?

Public participation is considered to be the most valuable component of the plan. Your ideas, with guidance from the steering committee, will help create the final recommendations. If you participate in a mapping exercise at a public meeting or fill out an online survey, we may include your suggestions in the final plan.

## Why are policies and programs included in the plan?

Policies and programming are just as important as infrastructure to ensure safe and convenient walking and biking. Plans include comprehensive recommendations for education, enforcement and encouragement, as well as for policies that create safer walking and biking environments. For example, the plan may recommend adopting a complete streets policy that ensures transportation planners and engineers consistently design the entire roadway with all users in mind—including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

## When can I expect to see changes?

Your community's active transportation plan will include short, medium and long-term recommendations that are based on cost and complexity. Many of the short-term priorities can be accomplished within a year or two of adopting the plan and will gather greater momentum with support from your local bicycle pedestrian task force.

## Who can I contact if I have more ideas later?

With this brochure, you will be given contact information for the local bicycle and pedestrian task force, steering committee, as well as contact information for the Active Trans staff.

## Additional resources

### Learn more about the Active Transportation Alliance

Log onto [www.activetrans.org](http://www.activetrans.org) to get more details and get your community started with active living!

### Traffic safety information

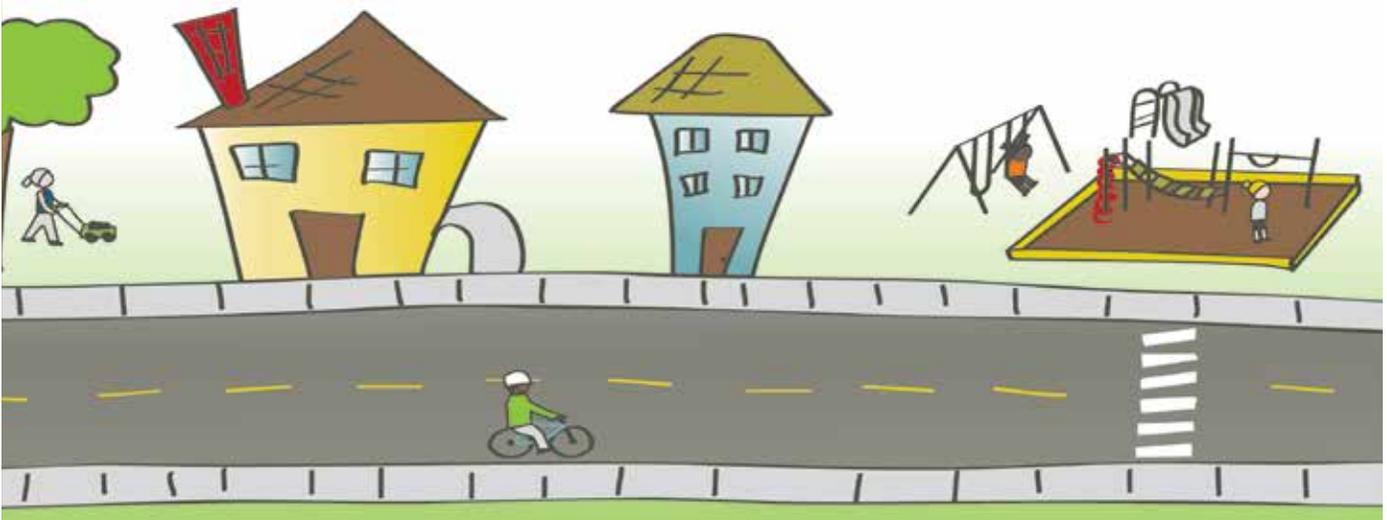
[www.cyberdriveillinois.com](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com)  
Illinois Secretary of State

### Interactive bicycling maps

[www.dot.state.il.us](http://www.dot.state.il.us)  
Illinois Department of Transportation

### Public transportation services

[www.rtachicago.com](http://www.rtachicago.com)  
Regional Transportation Authority



ADD YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION HERE

ILLUSTRATION  
Karen Schaschwary

2011, Active Transportation Alliance