
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Motion to Adopt Resolution and the Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy

POLICY CONSIDERATION: Does the City Council support the proposed policies identified by city staff in the attached resolution and Healthy Eating and Active Living policy?

SUMMARY: Last year the City Council adopted Resolution 12-077 authorizing the City of St. Louis Park to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program and directing city staff to identify best practices for further development and promotion, including adoption of an Active Living Policy.

Active Living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines and destinations, through activities such as walking and bicycling. The Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program recognizes that Active Living supports efficient and healthy development patterns.

Also, the City has partnered with Active Living Hennepin County since 2006. City of St. Louis Park understands the connections between health and the environment. It is clearly reflected in the Vision St. Louis Park, Comprehensive Plan goals, the City's support for transit, the Connect the Park! (pedestrian and bicycling improvements) initiative, partnerships with Park Nicollet and other local employers and community organizations, and the City's employee wellness program. The proposed policy has incorporated Healthy Eating, as well as Active Living policies, to more holistically address community health.

The E-Group, an interdepartmental group tasked with advancing environmental initiatives, recommends the attached Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy. This item was previously submitted for City Council review as a written report in the March 11, 2013 study session agenda.

FINANCIAL OR BUDGET CONSIDERATION: There are no new direct costs associated with policy. Individual policies, programs or strategies identified in the policy that do entail costs had previous review and support from the City Council (i.e. Employee Wellness Program).

VISION CONSIDERATION: St. Louis park is committed to being a leader in environmental stewardship. We will increase environmental consciousness and responsibility in all areas of city business.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Resolution & Policy

Prepared by: Sean Walther, Senior Planner
Reviewed by: Michele Schnitker, Housing Supervisor
Approved by:

RESOLUTION NO. __
CITY OF ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA
APPROVING A HEALTHY EATING AND ACTIVE LIVING POLICY

WHEREAS, the strategic directions from *Vision St. Louis Park* state that “St. Louis Park is a connected and engaged community,” and “is committed to being a leader in environmental stewardship. We will increase environmental consciousness and responsibility in all areas of city business;” and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the City of St. Louis Park adopted a Resolution 12-077 authorizing the City of St. Louis Park to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program and directing city staff to identify a best practices for further development and promotion, including adoption of an Active Living Policy; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Environmental Group (E Group), an internal interdepartmental workgroup, supports the Vision in being good stewards of the environment, is actively involved in environmental activities and best practices outlined in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program, and recommends the Healthy Eating Active Living Policy.

WHEREAS, Active Living Hennepin County is a partnership of cities, businesses and nonprofits working together to increase opportunities for active living through policy change and infrastructure planning. The group was launched in 2006 with funding from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota and Hennepin County; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis Park has been partner in Active Living Hennepin County since 2006; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the City of St. Louis Park adopted Resolution 08-046 in support of the mission, vision and goals of Active Living Hennepin County; and

WHEREAS, physical inactivity and poor nutrition are leading causes contributing to increasing rates of obesity and other chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, obesity is recognized by the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention as a public health epidemic that calls for preventative actions by local communities to reduce this threat to community health, well-being, and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, more than half of Hennepin County adults are overweight or obese and therefore at risk for many chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke, and, hypertension; and

WHEREAS, health problems associated with physical inactivity and poor nutrition affect Hennepin County through reduced quality of life and higher medical costs (over \$1 billion in Hennepin County per year); and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis Park has an interest to preserve, promote, and improve the health of its citizens by taking action to increase healthy eating and active living within its jurisdiction;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby declares that the City of St. Louis Park will seek opportunities and establish mechanisms to support individual, community, and environmental efforts to improve the public's health by encouraging the development and implementation of policies and practices that support and promote healthy eating and active living among citizens of the City of St. Louis Park, as set forth herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby adopts the following Healthy Eating Active Living Policy:

City of St. Louis Park Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy

May 6, 2013

Guiding Principles

1. Daily physical activity improves health and can reduce levels of obesity or chronic diseases, such as type 2 Diabetes or heart disease.
2. Built environments with accessible destinations, integrated transportation networks and inviting design promote physically active and safe options.
3. Programs and policies inclusive of all cultures and abilities can help reduce health disparities.
4. Public participation and awareness of the benefits and opportunities related to healthy eating and active living are increased through effective communication strategies.

Acknowledgement of Current Practices

The City Council acknowledges that the City of St. Louis Park has established a high quality of life for its citizens in the community and currently provides a variety of resources and services (i.e. facilities, parks, trails, sidewalks, programs, services, events, etc.) for people of all ages and abilities to lead a healthy lifestyle. The intent of this policy is for the City Council to advocate for the continued sustainability of existing offerings while recognizing opportunities to add or improve policies and practices.

Policies

I. Built Environment

The City of St. Louis Park recognizes that the built environment influences active living opportunities, and that the City of St. Louis Park influences the built environment at many scales through infrastructure investments, land use policies and regulations, and City financial assistance. The City will:

1. Prioritize access to multiple modes of transportation when selecting sites for City facilities and buildings.
2. Integrate active living elements into the design of City buildings and interior spaces (i.e. highly visible stairways, orientation to streets and sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and transit stops near main building entries, etc.).
3. Plan and construct a built environment that encourages walking, biking and other forms of physical activity.
4. Increase walking and biking connectivity between residential neighborhoods and schools, parks, recreational resources, transit service, retail and employment.
5. Support a safe and efficient regional public transit system, including dial-a-ride, bus, light rail, and commuter rail services.

6. Utilize Complete Streets principles to design and maintain streets in a manner that is appropriate to the community context and safe for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.

II. Natural Environment

City of St. Louis Park recognizes that nature plays a vital role in human health and well-being, and that the City's parks and open spaces provide access to nature for individuals in St. Louis Park.

1. Maintain Westwood Hills Nature Center as the focal point of the City's park system, providing and preserving all of the inherent healthy benefits of a natural experience within its woods, marsh and prairie environs, while promoting and supporting, through programs and leisure, varied levels of activities aimed at diverse physical abilities and ages.
2. Support efforts to improve the water quality of Minnehaha Creek and to provide access for passive and active enjoyment of this natural resource.

III. Services and Programs

City of St. Louis Park provides training, programs and services to the community and its employees in an effort to promote healthy lifestyles. The City will (continue to):

1. Evaluate and provide programs and community events that are inclusive to people of all ages and abilities, and eliminate as many participation barriers (i.e. disability, financial, etc.) as possible for the delivery of outstanding service.
2. Seek opportunities to incorporate physical activity and information at community events.
3. Offer athletics, fitness and other active living and recreation programs.
4. Manage several community gardens. Also, mentor, advise, assist and collaborate with businesses and neighborhoods in development, maintenance and management of privately-owned and operated community gardens.
5. Provide an array of volunteer opportunities that emphasize outdoors, physical activity, nature, and community (i.e. Adopt-a-Park, Citizen Assisted Lake Monitoring Program, Adopt-a-Garden, Beautify the Park, Parktacular, etc.).

IV. Promotion and Partnerships

City of St. Louis Park will promote healthy eating and active living through its publications and develop/maintain community partnerships to encourage healthy eating and active living opportunities. The City will (continue to):

1. Expand community access to indoor and outdoor facilities through joint use agreements with schools and/or other partners.
2. Help promote local events and programs that encourage healthy eating and active living.

V. Employee Wellness

City of St. Louis Park recognizes that employees that practice healthy eating and active living help to contain health care, transportation, and other costs, in addition to preventing adverse health and environmental outcomes. In order to promote wellness within City of St. Louis Park, and to set an example for other employers, the City has adopted and implemented an employee wellness program as follows:

1. Healthy eating encouragement and opportunities including staff events, vending machine contracts, lunch and learn seminars, and other events.
2. Physical activity encouragement and opportunities such as stand up desks, stability ball chairs, mapped out walking routes near city hall, encouraged use of walking meetings and stairways, fitness equipment available for checkout, onsite fitness facility, staff events that encourage wellness, and other events.
3. Ongoing support and encouragement for healthy lifestyles through promotion of events, communication and “spotlights” in city newsletter.
4. Wellness incentive policy, which provides financial rewards for completing certain wellness activities.
5. On-site screening for biometric results and flu shots.
6. Online wellness resources through city Intranet and partner with health insurer and other consultants/vendors.
7. Ongoing innovation and exploration of new well-being opportunities such as the possibility of offering an onsite clinic.

V. Healthy Food Access

City of St. Louis Park recognizes that good nutrition, in addition to physical activity, is needed to combat obesity. Therefore, the City will (continue to):

1. Periodically evaluate land use policies for health impacts, including access to healthy food (i.e. 2011 Health Impact Assessment of the Comprehensive Plan).
2. Allow, manage, or support in other ways local community gardens and farmer’s markets in order to increase access to healthy food, including fresh fruits and vegetables;
3. Set required percentages for healthy choice options for vending machines located in city owned or leased locations;
4. Encourage nutritional food options at city events, city sponsored meetings, served at city facilities and city concessions, and city programs.

Reviewed for Administration:

Adopted by the City Council _____, 2013

City Manager

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk