

**Active Living Hennepin County**  
**Key Informant Focus Group Questions &  
Recording Template**



**Active Living**  
Hennepin County

Name of person being interviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Their title/organization \_\_\_\_\_

Community they live in / work in / represent \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer/date/contact info \_\_\_\_\_

After briefly explaining the mission/purpose of our work and this interview...

1. In your opinion, what are the key issues regarding health, especially physical activity in [Hennepin County, your municipality]?
2. In your opinion, how is local government (your city, Three Rivers Parks, etc.) providing its residents with opportunities for Active Living? Are there specific actions/things your city does to promote these opportunities?
3. In your opinion how are local organizations and businesses responding to the needs of the residents of [Hennepin County, your municipality] for more physical activity opportunities?
4. When you think of opportunities for physical activity in [Hennepin County, your municipality], can you provide any examples of creative approaches to promote or support physical activity? If so, what are they -- and are they effective?
5. Does the current infrastructure in [Hennepin County, your municipality] work well for seniors and disabled members of our community? Are there any specific improvements you recommend?

6. Are there any cultural perceptions in different ethnic groups that you think impact their interest in or ability to be physically active in [Hennepin County, your municipality]?
  
7. Do you think physical activity provides community benefits or impacts the local economy? If so, in what ways?
  
8. A similar question on the built environment: How does the way communities are designed impact opportunities for physical activity, whether for recreation or transportation?
  
9. How can the built environment be enhanced to promote physical activity?
  
10. What are some of the barriers to physical activity in your city? (If they don't identify anything, then it's OK to give ideas such as policy, zoning, or physical barriers like busy streets.)
  
11. How does the concept of being physically active through walking or bicycling as a means of transportation currently resonate with the residents of [Hennepin County, your municipality]?
  
12. What policies or funding priorities currently exist that promote walking or bicycling as a means of transportation in [Hennepin County, your municipality]? What policies or funding priorities would you support in the future to make this happen?
  
13. In your opinion, what are the top three things that could be done to improve physical activity in [Hennepin County, your municipality]?

14. What advice do you have for our Active Living group to help them plan the most effective ways for people to integrate physical activity into their daily routines? Is there anything the partnership should avoid doing?

15. What is best thing that you feel [Hennepin County, your municipality] does around Active Living that you think other communities could learn from?

Other Comments:

**Thank you!**



NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: Please send a WORD document, using this template, of your typed interview notes, to Karen Nikolai and Robb Luckow within a few days of completing the interview. You may also contact us with any questions. Karen Nikolai (612-348-8089 or [Karen.nikolai@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:Karen.nikolai@co.hennepin.mn.us)) Robb Luckow (612-348-9344 [robert.luckow@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:robert.luckow@co.hennepin.mn.us))

## **Active Living Hennepin County (A short primer)**

“Active Living” initiatives create and promote environments that make it safe and convenient for people to be more physically active. In many communities around the United States, it is difficult to walk or bike to school and other important destinations. Active Living initiatives work to bring about and sustain changes in design, transportation and public/private policies to cultivate and support a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines.

AL initiatives are springing up around the state and country as highly leveraged approaches to improving individual and population health status. In Hennepin County, our Active Living initiative is fast developing with the support of county commissioners, community and business leaders, health professionals, school officials and others. Through our community engagement process, we’ll develop a countywide mission and vision, along with supporting policies.

The premise is that active living approaches such as walking and bicycling for transportation or pleasure, as well as taking the stairs, using recreational facilities and participating in other types of active living will help more people meet the Surgeon General’s recommendation of 30 minutes of moderately intense physical activity at least five times a week. This is good for people, for the county, the state and our nation.

Targeted benefits of a successful Active Living initiative include: decreased obesity and illness, safer communities, economic vitality, and a renewed sense of place and community. Successful initiatives bring together the diversity of the community to share their resources and expertise towards a common vision.

Our Active Living initiative is funded through a Blue Cross and Blue Shield grant that has allowed us to engage community leaders and assess where we’re at and what is needed to make us a leader in Active Living. Our group is chaired by Commissioner Gail Dorfman, who leads both an overall planning group, as well as the steering group developing our overall strategic direction.

As a leader and influencer of decisions in our community, your input is especially useful to us as we proceed. Thank you for helping us bring greater health and well being to Hennepin County by sharing your feedback in this interview.

## **Purposes of the Active Living Hennepin County Interviews:**

1. To introduce the Active Living Hennepin County initiative to the individual being interviewed.
2. To make connections and build relationship with key community members who will help inform and eventually help implement the Initiative.
3. To ask a series of questions and gain specific feedback that will help us evaluate the needs and readiness of our community, and determine how to best prioritize and apply the community's resources.
4. To set the stage for inviting the interviewees to become more involved in our work, especially as we begin communicating out to our residents.

## **Tips for Interviewers**

1. Please schedule 45 minutes or an hour for each interview. It may not take that long, but this will ensure you are not rushed.
2. The interview can be conducted in person in a formal or informal setting, or over the phone.
3. We recommend that you interview one person at a time so that we can get individual responses rather than syntheses. However, it can work to interview a couple of people at a time from the same organization. If interviewing more than one at a time, please record responses for each interviewee individually.
4. Within a few days of the interview, please answers into the WORD template and e-mail to [karen.nikolai@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:karen.nikolai@co.hennepin.mn.us) and [Robert.luckow@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:Robert.luckow@co.hennepin.mn.us). If it helps you, please feel free to record the interview by hand or tape, and transcribe it later into the template document.
5. Please help your interviewee feel comfortable. This is not a test 😊