A common theme among the many recreational programs across the nation is the mission behind the theme, or the purpose behind the initiative. By creating the theme, people feel included in the reason for such a program and are, therefore, more likely to use the facility or trail. For example, “WALKArlington” (Virginia) created a theme involving several different categories of people within the community in the hope that more people will be motivated to become active. Without a mission behind the initiative, people will not know the purpose of the infrastructure—Why the facility was built in the first place, and what programs are being designed for it now (“What is WALKArlington?”).

Local government parks and recreation departments are forging partnerships with community health organizations to promote physical activity within community parks. “Indy in Motion” (Indiana) is a co-initiative of the City of Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department, the Marion County Health Department, and the National Institute for Fitness and Sport. The partnership targets fitness opportunities, organized trail walks, and educational programs for families within the city’s parks system (“Inactive America: What Can Parks Do?”). Greenfield (Wisconsin) Parks and Recreation Department is another example of a multi-pronged approach to linking recreation- and health-oriented focused programs. Through a partnership with the Greenfield Health Department, the Park and Recreation Department has expanded its health-related programs and services, sponsored an annual “It’s a Walk in the Park” fitness event and fitness challenge at a local festival, and created a lighted trail system with interstate linkages (“Partnerships and Programs for Health”).

Below are national and Delaware-specific programming initiatives that promote physical activity or simply the awareness and value of the walkability of communities.

National Healthy Communities Programming Initiatives

“Activate Chester County”

Chester County, Pennsylvania
Population: 36,854
Purpose: To urge families to adopt healthy lifestyles through collaboration among hospitals, health and recreation centers, school districts, municipalities, and YMCAs for families to adopt healthy lifestyles. The program:

- Serves as a resource to improve health through education, screenings, and opportunities
for physical activity.
- Offers children a full day of physical activity and health education on “Healthy Kid Day.”
- Features a “CAN Walk” event, which requires the donation of canned goods to participate and concludes with entertainment and refreshments.
- Offers a website with online calendar of events, BMI calculation, advice on how to be active and eat smart, and a personal fitness tracker.

Sponsors/Partners: Chester County Health Department, Chester County Schools, Chester County Hospital, Independence Blue Cross, AICP, La Comunidad Hispana Inc., West Chester University, Brandywine Health and Fitness Foundation, YMCA, and United Way.

See: www.activatechestercounty.org/acc_aboutUs.html

“Livable Indiana Neighborhood Connections”

Indiana, Pennsylvania
Population: 15,016
Purpose: To promote healthy, safe neighborhoods through walking, cycling, and the use of public transit. The program urges residents to:

- Explore the town’s pre-World War II development pattern (tree-lined streets, sidewalks, and street grid system) make it an attractive walking location.
- Support the “Safe Routes to School” program, which received a $500,000 grant from PennDOT to improve curbs, crosswalks, and pedestrian refuge islands. The “Walking School Bus Program,” sponsored by Kia Motors, includes five routes to either the local elementary, middle, or high school.

Sponsors/Partners: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Kia Motors, public school districts in Indiana, volunteers who walk children to school, civic groups, community organizations, senior citizen homes, County Office of Planning and Development, and parents.

See: dspace.udel.edu:8080/dspace/handle/19716/2851 and www.education-world.com/a_admin/admin/admin350.shtml

“Shape Up Somerville”

Somerville, Massachusetts
Population: 77,012
Purpose: To prevent obesity in elementary-school-aged children. Components of the program include:

- Use of participatory process with intervention activities designed to influence every part of an early elementary school student’s day.
- Introduction to healthy eating (Eat Smart!).
• Specific changes within the before-, during-, and after-school environments with introduction to healthy eating (Eat Smart!) and increased opportunities for physical activity (Play Hard!).
• School wellness with enhancements to school food service, expanded pedestrian safety and environment policies, and city employee fitness wellness benefits.
• Reinforcement of family health through parent outreach and education.
• Facilitation of a community-based collaborative partnership (three culturally diverse urban communities).

Sponsors/Partners: Tufts University, City of Somerville, Shape up Somerville Task Force, Somerville Public Schools, Teachers, School Nurses and Pediatricians, farmers markets, restaurants, and parents.
See: nutrition.tufts.edu/research/shapeup

“The 3 E’s of Pedestrian Safety”

Chevy Chase, Maryland
Population: 9,381
Purpose: To promote a safe pedestrian environment through enforcement, engineering, and education.

• **Enforcement** – Police monitor sidewalks and high-traffic areas to enforce laws related to pedestrian safety and ensure that motorists yield to pedestrians.
• **Engineering** – These efforts focus on infrastructure and sidewalk improvements such as crosswalk markings, visibility issues, and accessibility to bus stops, medians, and signage. All future projects must have an “impact on pedestrians” statement.
• **Education** – The educational component is designed to raise awareness about pedestrian safety issues. The “Street Smart Education” program includes radio ads, printed safety tips, and a unique education program for immigrants regarding rules of the road. High school students are trained to show elementary students how to cross streets and walk to school safely.

Sponsors/Partners: County Department of Public Works and Transportation, Public School Districts, State Highway Administration, Latino Community, government agencies, local businesses

“Walk for a Healthy Community: Organizations Unite to Make a Difference”

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Population: 47,472
Purpose: To raise funds for local health and human service agencies in the capital region. A secondary goal is to energize community members to have a greater hand in their health by becoming or staying physically active. The activity:

- Features a 5K run and free one-mile fun walk.
- Raises funds for local health and service organizations to further their missions and role in promoting physical activity.
- Connects community members with the mission of local health and public service organizations.

Sponsors/Partners: Highmark Blue Shield sponsors this walk so that 100 percent of money raised goes to participating organizations. Other project partners include: Arthritis Foundation, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Capital Region, Brethren Community Ministries, Camp Curtin Branch YMCA, Central Pennsylvania Coalition United to Fight Cancer, CHANNELS Food Rescue, Community Check-Up Center (CCC), Harrisburg Mayor’s Commission on Literacy, Highmark Caring Foundation or Highmark Caring Place, HOPE Station, Hospice of Central Pennsylvania, Keystone Children & Family Services, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Mission of Mercy, Parent Works, Pennsylvania Association for the Blind, Potential Reentry Opportunities in Business & Education, South Central Pennsylvania Sickle Cell Council, and Tri-County Association for the Blind.

See: [www.walkforahealthycommunity.org/hbg](http://www.walkforahealthycommunity.org/hbg)

**Delaware Healthy Communities Programming Initiatives - Statewide**

“5-2-1 Almost None Campaign”

**Delaware (Statewide)**
Purpose: To increase awareness of the importance of children’s physical activity and nutrition. It educates parents and children of the need for five vegetables and fruits a day, two hours or less of television time, one hour of physical activity, and almost no sugary beverages. Components include educational materials, media campaign, and training.

Sponsors/Partners: Nemours Health and Prevention Services, elementary schools, and childcare providers.

“Get Up and Do Something”

**Delaware (Statewide)**
Purpose: To increase regular physical activity and improve the nutritional health of Delawareans, particularly 18- to 30-year olds. Created by the Delaware Coalition to Promote
Physical Activity and Healthy Nutrition, the initiative promotes awareness of physical activity and nutrition, provides social support for individuals going through the “stages of change” continuum, increases the proportion of physically active adults, and provides a broad source of information about physical activity. The program acknowledges that change to develop a healthy and active lifestyle requires patience, commitment, and effort. The website offers articles and quick facts about nutrition and physical activity and lists of physical activities to do involving places unique to Delaware.

Community involvement is a cornerstone of the program. Community groups and agencies are serving as leaders and resources to Delaware residents. In addition, the Delaware Health and Social Services’ Division of Public Health (DPH) and the Delaware Health Fund are offering mini-grants to community groups that are encouraging physical activity and/or healthy nutrition. The components of the program include building local capacity, providing grants, training, and social marketing through television ads, brochures, and a website.

Sponsors/Partners: University of Delaware, DPH, and Lt. Governor’s Challenge.

“Lt. Governor’s Challenge”

Delaware (Statewide)
Purpose: To encourage physical activity among inactive individuals and to help active individuals maintain or increase their activity. Program components include incentives and individual behavior change.

Sponsors/Partners: Lt. Governor’s Office, DPH, University of Delaware, American Cancer Society, YMCAs, Delaware’s Senior Olympics, and the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce.
See: apps.nccd.cdc.gov/DNPAProg/SearchV.asp?State=DE

“Walk Delaware”

Delaware (Statewide)
Purpose: To promote walking as an easy way for senior citizens to incorporate physical activity into daily living. The program challenges seniors to walk the length (96 miles) or the width (35 miles) of Delaware by walking less than half a mile a day. Logbooks are provided to track individual progress and rewards are given out through the Delaware Senior Olympics.

Sponsors/Partners: Delaware Senior Olympics, Lt. Governor’s Challenge, and the Delaware Health and Social Services’ Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD).
See: apps.nccd.cdc.gov/DNPAProg/SearchV.asp?State=DE
Brandywine Village “Main Street Community” Activity

Brandywine Village, Delaware
Population: 10,000
Purpose: To highlight the historic landscape of the Brandywine Village. The self-guided walking tour features a twelve-page guide to twenty different historical sites around the Brandywine Village area. The tour:

• Presents a designated walking route with information on historical sites.
• Provides the convenience of a self-guided activity.
• Encourages self-exploration by visitors and tourists.
• Offers a venue for school field trips to increase the physical activity of students.

Sponsors/Partners: Delaware Main Street Program, Delaware Department of Economic Development, University of Delaware, and the Council of Wilmington.

“Chesapeake and Delaware Canal Trail Concept Plan”

(future project)
Delaware City, Delaware
Population: 1,510
Chesapeake City, Maryland
Population: 802
Purpose: To enhance recreational activities along the canal by creating a multi-use trail. Plans call for:

• Constructing additional parking, rest areas, and interpretive signage, which will be integrated into the existing landscape.
• Preserving and protecting the special character and natural resources of the canal by creating a trail along the existing service road.
• Designing a trail to support low-impact recreational use that respects the canal and surrounding natural areas.

Sponsors/Partners: Congressman Castle, Project Working Group, and the Army Corps of Engineers.
“First State Heritage Park”

Dover, Delaware
Population: 32,135
Purpose: To create a free urban “park without boundaries” that links historical and cultural sites in Dover. The park opened in 2004 as a partnership among state agencies, under the leadership of Delaware State Parks, and in collaboration with the City of Dover, Kent County, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. The park:

- Features guided walking tours and self-guided audio tours, which promote physical activity.
- Connects free park site destinations through the walking tour such as Legislative Hall, Delaware Public Archives, Biggs Museum of American Art, Delaware Visitor Center and Galleries, Delaware Archeology Museum, Museum of Small Town Life, and the Johnson Victrola Museum.
- Offers special events such as festivals, unique exhibits, lantern tours, special walking tours, and holiday happenings to highlight historical sites within historic Dover.

Sponsors/Partners: Delaware Department of State, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware Economic Development Office, Delaware State Parks, and nonprofit and private-sector organizations.
See: www.destateparks.com/heritagepark/FSHP_fall07rev.pdf

“Mispillion Greenway Walking Trail and Tour”

Milford, Delaware (Kent and Sussex Counties)
Population: 6,732
Purpose: To encourage use of the walking trail and tour to promote health and fitness while showcasing Milford’s rich history. The initiative:

- Highlights historical points of interest.
- Demonstrates a connection between city parks, natural areas, historic sites, cultural areas, and open spaces.
- Promotes the use of pedestrian trail and historical walking tour.
- Provides tips for fitness walking.
- Includes a brochure describing the initiative and provides a trail map.

Sponsors/Partners: Healthy DE 2010, City of Milford Parks and Recreation Department, University of Delaware, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Governor’s Council on Lifestyle and Fitness.
See: www.destateparks.com/Activities/trails/Milfordwalkingtour.pdf
Healthy Communities: A Resource Guide for Delaware Municipalities

Rehoboth Beach Streetscape Project

Rehoboth Beach, Delaware
Population: 1,556 (year-round)
Purpose: To improve the walkability and appearance of Rehoboth Beach, tackled through a three-phase streetscape project. Streetscape improvements include:

- Adding aesthetically pleasing trash receptacles to accompany the existing, traditional white benches.
- Planting of street trees.
- Installing gray and red bricks to create paths to emulate a more natural feel than purely red brick.
- Encouraging businesses to exchange “box signs” for more artistic and visually appealing signage.
- Constructing of a new bandstand at the end of the boardwalk to draw residents, visitors, and tourists to the business district.

Sponsors/Partners: Cape Gazette, Bank of Delaware, Ocean Atlantic Agency, Comcast Spotlight, Inclind Inc., and Delaware Main Street.
See: www.rehomain.com/streetscape.html or www.rehomain.com/aboutus.html

“Walk Rehoboth”

Rehoboth Beach, Delaware
Population: 1,556 (year-round)
Purpose: To promote fitness, fun, and awareness of Rehoboth Beach’s scenic beauty and streetscape. The event, which is held each Saturday and Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, raises money for the Rehoboth Beach Public Library by charging a dollar per walk or twenty dollars for the year.

Sponsors/Partners: Rehoboth Beach Main Street and Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce.
See: www.walkrehoboth.org/Join_WalkRehoboth.html

“Walkable Communities Workshop Program”

Wilmington, Delaware
Population: 72,664
Purpose: To educate community members on the importance of walkability. The program emphasizes that everyone is a pedestrian, walking is an essential transportation mode, and walkable communities reduce pollution, enjoy economic benefits, and focus on pedestrian safety. Core aspects of the workshop include:
• Design of a pedestrian-friendly community, traffic patterns, and sidewalks.
• Participation in a walking audit of the community.
• Engagement of people in a mapping exercise where people write down their realistic visions for improving pedestrian conditions to move towards a plan of action.

Sponsors/Partners: Wilmington Area Planning Council, Delaware Department of Natural Resources, and Southbridge Civic Association.