

# Fox Valley Sustainability Network

## REGIONAL ACTIVE MOBILITY PROGRAM

### The R.A.M.P. Initiative

Because of momentum created by CMAP (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning) and others, several organizations in McHenry, Kane, DuPage, Will, and Kendall Counties have expressed an interest in developing and implementing a program to regionally increase the use of human-powered modes of transportation, otherwise known as “active mobility”, such as walking and bicycling. To accomplish this these partnership organizations are seeking to develop a Regional Active Mobility Program.

This Regional Active Mobility Program is envisioned to be an advanced regional bicycle and pedestrian plan centered around collaboration, action and impacts. The idea grew out of the Fox Valley Sustainability Network’s Transportation and Economic Development Task Force and is based on 1) the recommendations from other CMAP LTA plans such as the Fox River Corridor Plan, Aurora’s Downtown Master Plan and the Village of Carpentersville Health Impact Assessment 2) the “Trail Town Fox Valley” Big Ideas Presentation by Trails For Illinois at GreenTown 2017 and 3) the success of Aurora’s Zagster bike share program, where bicycles are made available for shared use to individuals on a very short term basis.

The program can be broken down into three main components: Bike Share, Wayfinding, and Tourism. Assistance from CMAP through its Local Technical Assistance (LTA) Program would be invaluable in adding a regional perspective and in bringing all partners together on the first two components of the program; with the third component being done concurrently and collaboratively utilizing the expertise of the project partners.

### Bike Share

The City of Aurora rolled out bike sharing with Zagster in 2016. The expansion of a bike share program through the region would be the back-bone of the Regional Active Mobility Program. In order to maximize the user experience a regional membership approach would be the most desirable. A collaboration and membership structure would be developed to facilitate vendor relations, capital expenditures, sponsorship, data gathering, and management of the system. One of the most critical elements in a successful bicycle share program is facilities planning, therefore a well thought out facilities plan would be developed prior to launching the bike share expansion and a method for continuous evaluation and modification of the facilities plan would be set up. A Membership pricing structure would be established and member

benefits, beyond just the use of the shared bikes, would be explored including roadside assistance and guaranteed ride home programs to reassure reluctant mobility users.

### Wayfinding

To encourage activity by bike share members, runners, walkers, and bicyclists alike the Regional Active Mobility Program would include a wayfinding program with consistent and user-friendly design elements throughout all the communities. The wayfinding would go beyond traditional signage to influence and enrich the user-experience to encourage more activity with programming, education, and opportunities for exploration. Programming could include pre-designated routes, fitness/commuter challenges, and walking or biking clubs. Education could include inspirational quotes, historical facts, and health benefits. And opportunities for exploration could include encouraging “side trips” with suggested alternative scenic routes and distances expressed in “walking/biking times to” points of interests, amenities, and goods and services. Recommendations for additional facilities to enhance the user experience would be explored such as seating, drinking fountains, and bicycle repair stations.

### Tourism

The first two components of the Regional Active Mobility Program lead to the third: growing mobility-based tourism and commerce. Mobility-based tourism, attractions centered around trails and other biking and walking amenities, holds a tremendous potential for increased commerce and economic development for communities. The program will include strategies, which can be collectively or individually undertaken, for leveraging the bike share and wayfinding components of the program to increase mobility-base tourism in the region. The approach is to develop a cohesive brand and marketing campaign, seek recognized designations such as “Trail Town” and “Bicycle Friendly Community”, coordinate and collaborate on special events, and identify and foster businesses and services that support mobility-based tourism. A system of gathering user experiences would also be established, including surveys and other data gathering methods, which will be used to evaluate the program and measure the impact on the local economies.

***Together we can R.A.M.P. up healthy lifestyles with this program. With the combined partnership of municipal and county governments, park districts and forest preserves, chambers of commerce and visitors' bureaus, schools and health care providers, and active mobility advocates, all eager to work together on this project, the only thing missing is the regional leadership and expertise of CMAP to make it a reality.***

## Potential Strategic Partners

- Aurora Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Active Transportation Alliance
- Aurora Bicycle, Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Board
- Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Aurora University
- Batavia Park District
- City of Aurora
- City of Batavia
- City of Elgin
- City of Geneva
- City of Joliet
- City of Lisle
- City of McHenry
- City of Naperville
- City of St. Charles
- City of Warrenville
- City of Woodstock
- DuPage County
- Elgin Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Elgin Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Fox Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Fox Valley Park District
- Fox Valley Sustainability Network
- Geneva Park District
- Judson University
- Kane County
- League of Illinois Bicyclists
- Lewis University
- McHenry County
- McHenry County Economic Development Corporation
- Oswegoland Park District
- Rush Copley Medical Center
- Shared Use Mobility center
- Sugar Grove Park District
- Sustainable Aurora
- Trails for Illinois

- Village of Algonquin
- Village of Bartlett
- Village of Big Rock
- Village of Carpentersville
- Village of Montgomery
- Village of North Aurora
- Village of Oswego
- Village of Plainfield
- Village of South Elgin
- Village of Sugar Grove
- Visit McHenry County
- Waubonsee Community College