

Improving the Built Environment in Rural Communities: From Planning & Action to Implementation

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Overview

Background

Capacity

Planning

Implementation

Sustainability

Background- Colleton County

Rural

Population:
37,585

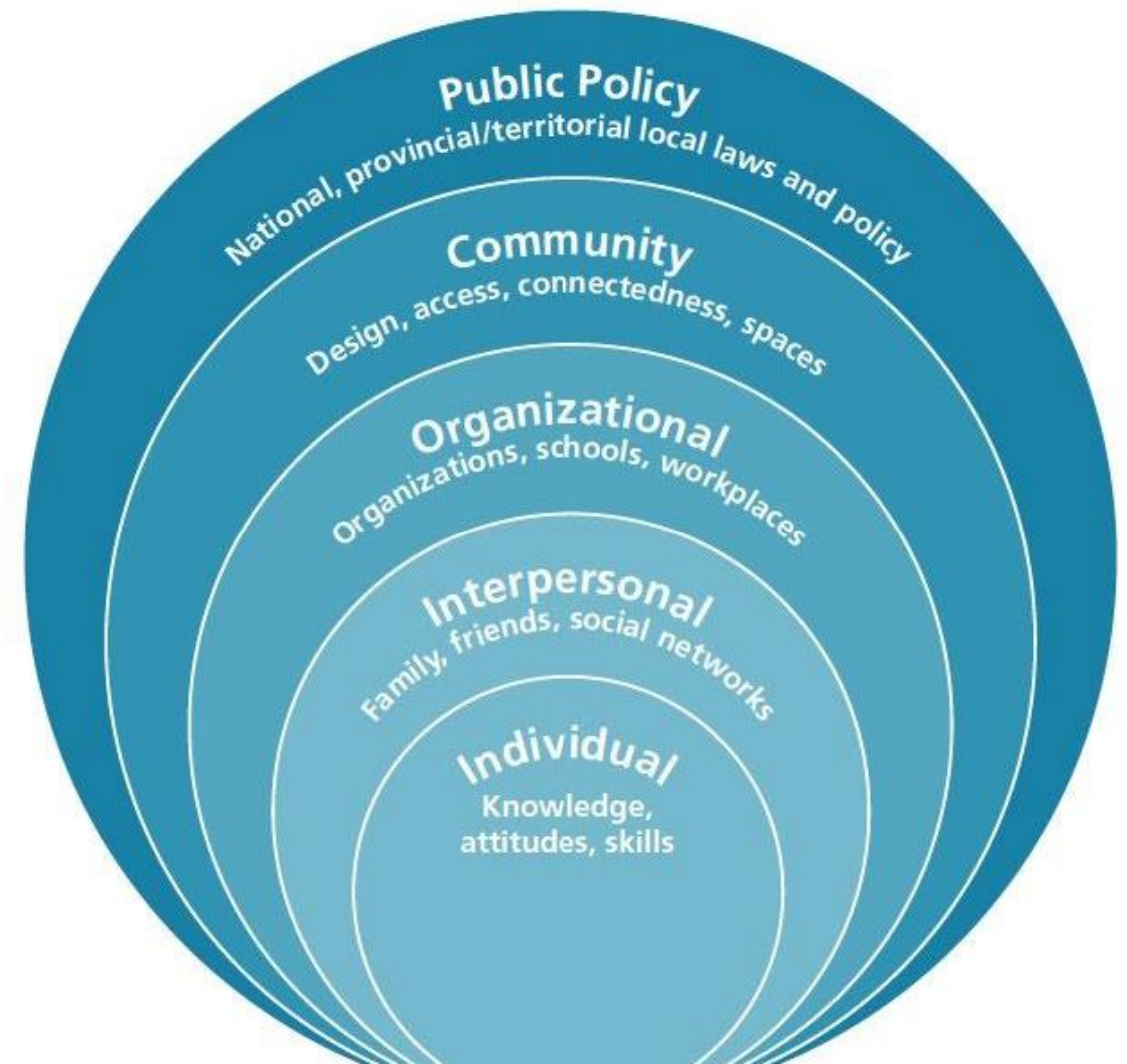
Population
Density: 832
residents/square
mile

21% poverty

High rates of
chronic disease

Capacity

- ▶ Grassroots efforts to address obesity & chronic *disease-intra/interpersonal*
- ▶ **Organizational level** interventions to address structural barriers (i.e. walkability, MAPP, CHNA), community Gardens - strategically located to be accessed by active modes of transportation
- ▶ **Policy Change:**
 - Colleton County Zoning Ordinance (2010)
 - Complete Streets (2011)
 - City of Walterboro Unified Development Ordinance (2012)



Action Planning

- ▶ Funding: SC Department of Health & Environmental Control to increase access to active travel
- ▶ Creation of Active Community Guide in South Carolina: A Grassroots Guide
<https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-012013.pdf>



Action Planning: Step 1

Evaluate Pre-existing conditions: determine what data is needed

Data Sources: DOT, census, national, state, local

Formed Community Action Group

- Partners: State and Local government
 - Community Members
 - Community Organizations/coalitions
 - Academia
 - Faith Community

Action Planning: Community Mapping : Walking & Biking Tours



- ▶ Participants: Community Action Group (CAG)
- ▶ Tours were County-wide. Allowed us to see barriers, gaps, and facilitators to active travel
- ▶ Led by County Planner

Public Input

- ▶ 3 Community Forums: Consensus building Attendees were asked to vote with a fixed number of stickers (6) on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements that they'd like to see made in Colleton),
- ▶ Pen/paper surveys




Public Input: Measures & Dissemination

Question 1: What destinations would you most like to (or do you currently) reach by walking and/or bicycling?



Question 2: What roads are most in need of safety improvements for walking? Please be as specific as possible.



Question 3: What roads are most in need of safety improvements for bicycling? Please be as specific as possible.



Greenways and trails were the most favored improvements. Shared lane markings, pedestrian crossing islands and ADA accessibility being the least requested. More bike lanes, shared-use paths, paved shoulders and better intersections for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Implementation

- ▶ Street connectivity and neighborhood density worsens as one moves out from town and city centers. This results in longer distances and the necessity to travel on higher speed and volume roadways for those travelling by bicycle
- ▶ The railway corridor between Walterboro and Highway 17 along Green Pond Highway presents a very good opportunity for a regional, greenway connection
- ▶ The surface condition and debris on some roadways make it difficult for bicyclists, who are more greatly susceptible to poor maintenance conditions
- ▶ The railway corridor between Walterboro and Highway 17 along Green Pond Highway presents a very good opportunity for a regional, greenway connection between rural Colleton County and the City of Walterboro
- ▶ Generally, pedestrians/Cyclists on Green Pond “walk the road” out of necessity. Speed limit 55MPH
- ▶ Green Pond trail will increase access to physical activity in a historically underserved community

Implementation

- ▶ Old, unused rail bed provides rudimentary infrastructure for Trail





ACE (Ashepoo, Combahee, Edisto rivers) Basin Greenway: Green Pond Walking Trail

ACE (Ashepoo, Combahee, Edisto rivers) Basin Greenway: Green Pond Walking Trail

Sustainability

- ▶ Friends of ACE Basin 501-C3 formed
- ▶ SCDHEC created resource: Creating Active Community Environments in South Carolina <https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/Library/CR-012013.pdf>
- ▶ Master Pedestrian Bicycle Plan created https://www.colletoncounty.org/Data/Sites/1/media/planning_dev/final-public-draft-web-version.pdf
- ▶ Master Pedestrian Bicycle Plan adopted by Walterboro City and Colleton County governments
- ▶ Plans to widen and improve other roadways in the County (Hwy 17, 17-A) making it easier to “walk the road”
- ▶ Health Element included in Colleton County Comprehensive Plan 2030. Focuses on how the County’s health statistics, especially around issues of obesity, cancer, inactivity, respiratory problems, and environmental justice, can be influenced through policies and strategies undertaken by the county.

https://www.colletoncounty.org/Data/Sites/1/media/comp-plan-final-draft-version-2_09092019.pdf



Thank You
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