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Community Transformation Grant  
Workshop  
Focus Group Report

May 2013



# Community Transformation Grant Workshop Focus Group Report

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## Background

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) received funds from the Affordable Care Act's Prevention and Public Health Fund to design and implement community-level programs that prevent chronic disease such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes.<sup>1</sup> In 2011, the CDC used these resources to award Community Transformation Grants (CTG) to 35 communities nationwide to implement proven strategies to improve community health and wellness related to chronic disease prevention.

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) was awarded \$1.5 million in CTG funds in 2011. It used the funding to promote improved health outcomes related to chronic disease in 14 New Mexico counties and tribal communities with the greatest health disparities and with strong American Indian, Hispanic and U.S.-Mexico border population representation. The targeted communities were selected based on population size, poverty status, racial and ethnic diversity, geographic diversity, chronic disease burden and readiness to implement prevention programs. The targeted counties were: Chaves, Cibola, Curry, Doña Ana, Guadalupe, Lea, Luna, McKinley, Rio Arriba and Socorro. The targeted tribal communities were: San Ildefonso Pueblo, Santa Clara Pueblo, Zuni Pueblo and the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

In October 2012, Nacimiento Community Foundation (NCF) was contracted by NMDOH to provide a 1 ½ day workshop. This was done in collaboration with the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (PRC) for representatives of the 14 CTG locations. NCF is a non-profit organization located in Cuba, New Mexico that sponsors the Step Into Cuba Alliance, a community coalition that focuses on promoting physical activity among community members as a way to reduce chronic disease and increase healthy lifestyles. The purposes of the workshop were to bring CTG communities together to 1) promote networking and an exchange of ideas among CTG recipients; 2) introduce them to national physical activity guidelines and examples of their implementation in Cuba, NM; and 3) provide them with tools developed by Step into Cuba and the PRC with additional funding from DOH Comprehensive Cancer. Participants would then be able to think more broadly about strategies to promote physical activity in their local communities.

The workshop was held at the Bachechi Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico on October 25 and 26, 2012. Prior to the workshop, participants were asked to assess the walkability and bikeability of their communities and inventory the locations people in their communities currently access for physical activity. Assessment tools are located in **Appendix A**. The first half day of the workshop focused on providing background information to workshop attendees to 'set the stage' for more in-depth discussions related to physical activity promotion in the individual locations scheduled to take place on the second day.

Day one activities included: reviewing the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* developed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services; reviewing the Community Guide

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/communitytransformation/funds/> Accessed 4/15/13.

([www.thecommunityguide.org](http://www.thecommunityguide.org)) Recommendations for Promoting Physical Activity; presenting Step Into Cuba's strategies for implementing the community guide, and PRC-developed materials including promotional videos and fact sheets (**Appendix B**); and facilitating a small group activity (SGA) in a focus group format to provide attendees the opportunity to discuss barriers to and resources for physical activity in their own communities. The SGA also allowed them to explore their perceptions of the local applicability of the national *Physical Activity Guidelines, Community Guide*, and the PRC fact sheets.

The second day of the workshop focused on: developing and promoting places for physical activity in local communities; advocating for pedestrian and bicycling enhancements locally; and using behavioral and social approaches to increase physical activity within local communities. The final activity was assisting workshop participants in developing individual, community-based plans grounded in the evidenced-based strategies presented and discussed during the workshop sessions.

This report presents information gathered through the SGA held on the first day of the workshop.

## **Methodology**

The PRC developed a SGA guide which included the following instructions to moderators:

- Introduce self and scribe
- Explain the purpose of the SGA
- Clarify that the SGA was not about consensus-building or making decisions
- Encourage expression of disagreement and debate
- Explain that the discussion would be recorded electronically and written notes would be taken – confirm that participants were agreeable with those conditions
- Share the four ground rules:
  - SGA would last an hour
  - Participants should talk one at a time
  - Participants should respect others and their opinions
  - Cell phones should be silenced

This was followed by an introductory question and nine additional questions designed to lead the participants in a facilitated discussion of physical activity in each community. The last question was followed by two additional probes. The SGA discussion guide is in **Appendix C**.

The SGA consisted of three focus groups of randomly assigned CTG representatives attending the workshop. Folders containing the agenda and resource materials randomly distributed at the beginning of the workshop had one of three small colored dots on the front cover – green, red or orange. Participants were assigned to groups based on the colored dots on the folders. One group had four participants; two groups had five participants.

The SGA was conducted by trained focus group moderators from the PRC. Three additional staff from the PRC acted as scribes and time-keepers for the sessions. The ground rules were written on large

sheets of paper and posted on the wall next to each small group. The moderators and scribes met with workshop facilitators to debrief immediately after the SGA was completed. They shared main ideas and themes that emerged during the discussions to assist the facilitators in conducting day two activities. The scribes' notes were typed and provided to moderators and scribes for review following the completion of the workshop.

## **Findings**

The SGA participants were from Bernalillo, Cibola, Curry, Doña Ana, Guadalupe, Hobbs, Lea, Luna, McKinley, Rio Arriba, and Socorro Counties and the Pueblo of Zuni. The summarized discussion is organized by the nine questions posed by the facilitators.

### **Introductory Question**

As an introductory question they were asked: if you could make one change in your community that would make a big difference, what would that change be? Some participants from each group identified a need for infrastructure, such as sidewalks and bicycle paths that would make physical activity in their communities more accessible. Several mentioned access to healthy food. Several also mentioned a desire to have people come together more, either through government entities working more in cooperation or having less separation between newer residents and long-established families. Other desired changes were having more of a 'vision' in terms of community growth, more available housing, addressing substance abuse within the community and ending violence.

### **Changes that Would Promote Physical Activity**

The next question explored what changes were necessary at the community level to make physical activity easier. The majority of the discussions centered on infrastructure and safety. The need for sidewalks, bike paths and designated walking trails was reiterated. Participants also talked about existing infrastructure that had fallen into disrepair and was therefore unsafe. This included broken glass and debris in parks, dead trees, and other unappealing or dangerous conditions. Various participants identified other safety concerns, such as reckless drivers, loose dogs, and potential pedophiles. In contrast, another spoke to the perception of safety, and how children would be more active if their parents could be convinced that it is okay for children to walk and bike to school and be 'free-range children.' Several participants suggested that people would be more active if employers allowed breaks or time off for employees to exercise during the day. A few others mentioned having functional walking trails in or near the community, but indicated they were not well-used because they were unmarked and people did not know of their existence.

### **Reasons Community Members Are Not More Active**

The issue of safety came up again when attendees were asked why they thought people in their community were not more active. Concerns included issues related to pedestrian safety (no sidewalks, no safe place to cross the street, speeding cars) and exposure to violence. Another issue discussed in all groups was a pervasive 'culture of inactivity,' meaning physical activity was not a priority or norm. This culture is exacerbated by technology making people 'lazy,' social and family norms that do not support

being physically active, and a general low-level of physical fitness among family and community members that make inactivity an easier choice than physical activity. However, some recognized that inactivity can also be connected to family income – lower income families often work long hours or multiple jobs or do not have access to places conducive to exercise. Some participants also connected lack of physical activity to peoples’ ideas of what constituted exercise. In other words, walking, because it is not a structured activity like an organized sport, does not ‘count’ as exercise. Several people mentioned the physical rigors of ranching and how ‘cowboys’ are one of the last remaining physically fit groups of people outside of organized sports teams. Participants shared that cowboys are highly motivated to stay fit both to be able to do their jobs and because their identity is very connected to their degree of physical fitness and suggested that this might be ‘a strength’ to build on.

### **Ways Physical Activity Makes People Feel Better**

SGA participants were asked to consider the ways that physical activity makes people feel better. Note: one group omitted this question due to time constraints. Several themes emerged during this discussion, including physical activity as a way to reduce stress and improve mental health; something that provides a personal sense of accomplishment, and something that both allows an opportunity to be more socially connected and that reinforces a sense of community connectedness when linked to other community activities, (e.g., a pet parade or cultural activities).

### **Barriers to Physical Activity**

People were asked to reflect on community barriers that keep people from being more physically active. Several participants mentioned the mental block people sometimes have against breaking routine. One person described how in her community there are concerns about being stigmatized by observers making assumptions about why one might be walking (e.g. perhaps the family car is broken down; perhaps the person walking had a fight with a family member; etc.), and that having/using a car is a status symbol. One SGA group discussed fear as a significant barrier – fear of walking alone; fear of ‘bad’ neighborhoods; fear of animals (both domestic and wild); fear for safety. Poverty was also mentioned as a barrier.

### **Ways to Address Barriers to Physical Activity**

The groups discussed a variety of ways to address barriers to physical activity in their communities. One suggestion was to focus on children and what they like to do. One member observed that if children are exposed to a variety of opportunities for physical activity they will be more likely to develop healthy, active lifestyles. One remarked that if children are engaged, parents generally become more engaged as well. Safe Routes to School programs were seen as one strategy to involve children, parents and other community members and to address environmental issues in a systematic and comprehensive way. Another engagement strategy was developing walking champions or other types of volunteers to inspire and motivate individuals and groups. Education was seen as an important component for addressing barriers. This included educating individuals on how to incorporate more physical activity into daily routines as well as educating community members about complete streets concepts and then mobilizing them to pursue policy changes that address the built environment. Participants also agreed that safety concerns must be dealt with in tangible ways, (e.g., school playgrounds should be accessible after school

and on weekends; leash laws must be enforced; law enforcement and city/county government must address issues related to pedestrian safety).

### **Resources That Support Physical Activity**

Each group was able to identify local resources that support physical activity in their communities. These included: walking trails; school yards open outside of school hours; groups and organizations for youth; local government and elected officials that support efforts to increase physical activity opportunities; donations from and partnerships with local foundations and non-profits; partnerships with academic institutions; and, community or wellness centers that provide fitness opportunities at no or low cost. The financial generosity of individuals in the community and the relationships formed within communities were also seen by several as some of the greatest resources. However one individual described a very different experience, stating that people in her community were very low-income and not able to make financial contributions.

### **Responses to the National Guidelines for Physical Activity**

The national guidelines for physical activity recommend 2 ½ hours of moderate intensity physical activity each week in sessions of at least 10 minutes. Participants were questioned about the reasonability of implementing this recommendation in their local community. Note: one group omitted this question due to time constraints. All respondents to this question agreed that this was a reasonable recommendation that could be followed by residents in their communities. Many also agreed, however, that implementation may require educating people about innovative ways to accomplish brief periods of exercise, (e.g., parking farther away from the store so more walking is required; doing jumping jacks during TV commercials; etc).

### **Responses to PRC Fact Sheets**

Participants were asked what they thought of the fact sheets and how they might use them. There was general appreciation for the fact sheets being based on science and research and containing useful information. Many were able to identify alternate, and what they considered to be more appropriate, ways to use the fact sheets aside from distributing them to community people. Ideas included using the bullet points as a basis for talking to community members; giving them to interested organizations; sharing them with program directors, local government entities and committees; using them as the starting point for newspaper articles; and, providing background information for grant applications. Some respondents were not initially convinced the fact sheets were useful, expressing that they contained too much written content, they were too complicated, and that they were not suitable for the general population.

There were a few participants during this part of the discussion that voiced an initial frustration with the first part of the workshop and its focus on cities, which they felt did not translate into practical ideas for pueblos in particular. One suggested that it would be helpful to have a workshop geared toward pueblo CTG communities. These same participants did find the workshop sessions more applicable when they focused specifically on the activities in Cuba. They perceived Cuba to be more similar to their own



communities and were encouraged by its successes in increasing physical activity within a small community.

## **Discussion**

SGA participants appeared to have a solid grasp of the complexity of addressing chronic disease through a campaign to increase physical activity. They were able to easily identify barriers to physical activity in their communities, local resources to support physical activity, and strategies that may help address some of the barriers. They discussed significant factors that must be considered when attempting to increase physical activity among community members, such as infrastructure; safety (both perceived and actual); local resources (e.g. recreation centers, potential partners, activities for youth); cultural and community norms; education, communication and engagement strategies; personal motivation; and larger societal issues such as poverty.

SGA participants valued both the national guidelines for physical activity and the information contained in the fact sheets developed by the PRC based on the Community Guide recommendations. Some were able to identify ways to use the fact sheets as they are. Others felt that the fact sheets needed modifications to make them accessible to the general public in their communities. Some participants proposed that the national guidelines for physical activity be communicated using specific examples of brief periods of physical activity so people would better understand how to implement the recommendations.

## **Recommendations**

NMDOH may want to consider the following recommendations based on the outcomes of the SGA at the workshop:

- Continue to utilize the SGA format on a periodic basis with CTG participants to foster networking and capitalize on experiences and knowledge gained throughout the CTG process
- Assess the feasibility of promoting cross-collaboration between CTG counties/American Indian communities working to address similar barriers to physical activity
- Adapt PRC fact sheets for use with local community members
- Work with CTG participants to develop local, culturally appropriate messaging on ways to increase physical activity based on the national guidelines
- Use the workshop model to develop a workshop specifically for Pueblo/American Indian communities

## **Conclusion**

The SGA format was a useful activity for the physical activity promotion workshop sponsored by NMDOH for its CTG communities. The SGA allowed NMDOH and workshop facilitators to gather community-specific information on barriers, resources and recommendations to address barriers from individuals intrinsically involved in the CTG process. It also provided valuable feedback on the national

physical activity guidelines and tools developed by the PRC. Continued periodic use of the SGA format may help inform NMDOH's implementation of the CTG in its targeted communities.

## **Appendix A: Physical Activity Assessment Tools**

- 1. Places for Activity Worksheet**
  - 1a. Path, Trail, School, Park Audit**
- 2. Highways and Streets Attracting Pedestrians Worksheet**
  - 2a. Highway and Street Walkability Audit**
  - 2b. Highway and Street Bikeability Audit**
- 3. Past or Current Activity Strategies Worksheet**

**1. Places to Bike and Walk: \_\_\_\_\_, NM**

Please list four places known to be public locations for walking. Consider including the following: public school/higher education campuses; municipal parks; walkways and open space areas; county fairgrounds, parks and open space areas; State and National Parks; National Forest and Bureau of Land Management destinations. Please add any other kinds of places in public use.

**Place 1** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/ walking

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Difficulties with use

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**Place 2** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/ walking

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Difficulties with use

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# 1.

**Place 3** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/ walking

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Difficulties with use

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**Place 4** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/ walking

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Difficulties with use

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# 1.a. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop

## How walkable and bikeable are your community places?

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Walking/Bicycling Location \_\_\_\_\_

For Walking and Bicycle Paths	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Are there trails to and from schools, places of work or shopping, separate from roadways? <b>If no, provide location where needed. If yes, is the surface all weather?</b>			
Are there trails to walk or bike for fitness or leisure near homes and places of work? <b>If no, provide location where needed. If yes, is the surface all weather?</b>			
Are there trails for people to walk their dogs? <b>If yes, provide location.</b>			
Are there bike paths, separate from traffic? <b>If yes, are they well marked?</b>			
Are trails free of cattle guards, fences, waterways or other obstacles? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Are the trails and bike paths easy to follow?			
Do drivers have clear visibility of trails and bike paths? <b>If no, list obstacles.</b>			
Have you documented all your walking and bicycle path concerns? <b>If no, what are they?</b>			
Just for Schools	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Are there safe routes for students to walk to school from a 1 mile radius of the school? <b>If no, what are obstacles?</b>			
Do the students have access to the school grounds from 3 - 4 sides of the property?			
Is there safe and secure bike parking on the school grounds?			
Do crossing guards or school monitors help students enter school grounds? <b>If no, provide location where crossing guards and monitors are needed.</b>			
Have you documented all your school concerns? <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

**1.a.**

Just for Parks	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
<p>Is there a walking path?</p> <p><b>If no, where could it be located?</b></p>			
<p>Are there sufficient benches or places to rest</p> <p><b>If no, where should they be?</b></p>			
<p>Are there any rocks, protruding tree roots, sudden drop offs or other trip hazards along the path?</p> <p><b>If yes, please describe the trip hazards and note on your map where they are located.</b></p>			
<p>Are there safe play spaces for children?</p> <p><b>If no, where could they be located?</b></p>			
<p>Are there signs directing park users to clean up after their dogs?</p> <p><b>If yes, are they easy to understand? Do people follow them?</b></p> <p><b>If no, would you suggest that signage be used and what should it say?</b></p>			
<p>Is parking adequate?</p> <p><b>If no, please explain your concerns</b></p>			
<p>Are the conditions safe for pedestrians who walk from their vehicles to places in the park?</p> <p><b>If no, why not?</b></p>			
<p>Have you documented all your park concerns?</p> <p><b>If no, what are they?</b></p>			

**2. Highways and Streets Attracting Pedestrians and Bicyclists: \_\_\_\_\_, NM**

Please list at least four highway or street areas known to be public locations for biking and walking. Consider use for shopping, errands, going to and coming from school, as well as recreation and fitness.

**Highway/Street 1** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/walking

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Difficulties with use

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**Highway/Street 2** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/walking

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Difficulties with use

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## 2.

**Highway/Street 3** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/walking

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Difficulties with use

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**Highway/Street 4** \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages for biking/walking

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Difficulties with use

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## 2.a. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop

### How walkable is your highway or street?

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway Location \_\_\_\_\_

Sidewalks	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Are there sidewalks on both sides of the street? <b>If no, where are sidewalks needed?</b>			
Are the sidewalks continuous and free of missing sections? <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Are sidewalks free of poles, signs, shrubs or other items that block the sidewalk? <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Is the surface of the sidewalk smooth and even?			
Are sidewalks free of litter, debris or snow (in winter)?			
Is the sidewalk wide enough, especially for individuals with strollers, or wheelchairs and other disabilities to feel safe? <b>Provide width: _____ ft _____ in</b>			
Do uneven driveways through the sidewalks make walking more difficult?			
Is the sidewalk separated from traffic with a buffer (separation) between sidewalk and street? <b>If yes, provide width: _____ ft _____ in</b>			
Are there separate bike paths or lanes to keep bicyclists off sidewalks? <b>If yes, do signs indicate bike paths?</b>			
Is there landscaping along sidewalk? <b>If yes, is it well maintained?</b>			
Have you documented all your sidewalk concerns? <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

**2.a. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop**  
**How walkable is your highway or street?**

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway Location \_\_\_\_\_

Intersections & Crosswalks	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Are there marked crosswalks at intersections?  <b>If yes, provide location and type of control (none, signs, traffic signal, etc.)</b>			
Are there sufficient marked crosswalks between intersections?  <b>If yes, provide location and type of control (none, traffic signal, etc.)</b>			
Are high visibility crosswalk markings used?  <b>Are they in good condition?</b>			
Are there signs alerting drivers of pedestrian crossings?			
Are there curb ramps for individuals with strollers, or wheelchairs on all corners of intersections?			
Is the landing at the crossing large enough, especially for individuals with strollers or wheelchairs to wait away from the curb and feel safe at the intersections?			
Are there medians or islands where pedestrians can wait between traffic lanes?  <b>If yes, are they raised median or islands?</b>			
Do drivers have a clear line of sight at all crosswalks?  <b>If not, list barriers.</b>			
Do pedestrians have a clear line of sight at all crosswalks?  <b>If not, list barriers.</b>			
Have you documented all your sidewalk concerns?  <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

**2.a. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop**  
**How walkable is your highway or street?**

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway Location \_\_\_\_\_

Safety	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Is the roadway free of threats from impaired drivers? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Do drivers drive at an appropriate speed? <b>List posted speed limit: _____ mph</b>			
Are there features such as speed humps or speed tables to slow traffic? <b>If no, are they needed?</b>			
Do drivers drive a sufficient distance away from walkways or bike paths?			
Do drivers yield to pedestrians?			
Do drivers obey stop signs?			
Do drivers use turn signals?			
Is truck traffic on the roadway a problem?			
Is the roadway free of blind curves?			
Are all segments of walkways visible from houses or commercial areas? <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Is there adequate lighting along walkways and bike paths? <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Does the roadway appear free of crime and / or drug activity? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Is the roadway free of aggressive, rude, loitering or threatening people? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Is the roadway free of dogs that may frighten pedestrians? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Have you documented all your safety concerns? <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

## 2.b. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop

### How bikeable is your highway or street?

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway Location \_\_\_\_\_

Sidewalks	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Is there a bicycle lane or paved shoulder on both sides of the street?  <b>If no, where are bike lanes needed?</b>			
Are the bike lanes or shoulders continuous and free of missing sections?  <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Are the bike lanes or shoulders free of poles, signs, shrubs or other items that block the sidewalk?  <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Is the surface of the bike lane or shoulder smooth and even?			
Are bike lanes or shoulders free of litter, debris or snow (in winter)?			
Is the bike lane or shoulder wide enough to safely separate bicyclists from vehicle traffic and pedestrians?  <b>Provide width: _____ ft _____ in</b>			
Have you documented all your bike lane or shoulder concerns?  <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

## 2.b. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop

### How bikeable is your highway or street?

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway Location \_\_\_\_\_

Intersections	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Is it clear how to ride through the intersections? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Are there marked crosswalks at intersections? <b>If yes, provide location and type of control (none, traffic signal, etc.)</b>			
Are there signs alerting drivers of bicycle crossings? <b>If no, provide locations where needed</b>			
Are there medians or islands where bicyclists can wait between traffic lanes? <b>If yes, are they raised median or islands?</b>			
Do bicyclists have a clear line of sight at all crosswalks? <b>If not, list barriers.</b>			
Have you documented all your intersection concerns? <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

## 2.b. Nacimiento Community Foundation CTG Physical Activity Workshop

### How bikeable is your highway or street?

October 25-26, 2012

Community \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway Location \_\_\_\_\_

Safety	Yes	No	Comments/suggestions/concerns
Is the roadway free of threats from impaired drivers? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Do drivers drive at an appropriate speed? <b>List posted speed limit: _____ mph</b>			
Are there features such as speed humps or speed tables to slow traffic? <b>If no, are they needed?</b>			
Do drivers drive a sufficient distance away from bike lanes, bike paths or shoulders?			
Are drivers courteous to bicyclists?			
Do drivers obey stop signs?			
Do drivers use turn signals?			
Is truck traffic on the roadway a problem?			
Is the roadway free of blind curves?			
Are all segments of walkways visible from houses or commercial areas? <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Is there adequate lighting along bike lanes, bike paths and shoulders? <b>If no, provide location</b>			
Does the roadway appear free of crime and / or drug activity? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Is the roadway free of aggressive, rude, loitering or threatening people? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Is the roadway free of dogs that may frighten pedestrians? <b>If no, provide locations of concern</b>			
Have you documented all your safety concerns? <b>If no, what are they?</b>			

**3. Past/Current Efforts to Promote Physical Activity in: \_\_\_\_\_, NM**

Please list past or current ideas or strategies that have been used to promote physical activity in your community. They do not have to be efforts in which you directly participated or are currently involved. Think in terms of what worked well and what may not have worked well from your point of view.

**Physical Activity Idea/Strategy 1 \_\_\_\_\_**

What worked well? Why? For whom? With what result?

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What may not have worked well? Why? With what result?

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**Physical Activity Idea/Strategy 2 \_\_\_\_\_**

What worked well? Why? For whom? With what result?

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What may not have worked well? Why? With what result?

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### 3.

**Physical Activity Idea/Strategy 1** \_\_\_\_\_

What worked well? Why? For whom? With what result?

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What may not have worked well? Why? With what result?

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**Physical Activity Idea/Strategy 2** \_\_\_\_\_

What worked well? Why? For whom? With what result?

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What may not have worked well? Why? With what result?

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## **Appendix B: Physical Activity Fact Sheets**

- 1. Access to Places for Physical Activity**
- 2. Community-Wide Campaigns**
- 3. Individually Adapted Programs**
- 4. Social Support for Physical Activity**
- 5. Street Scale Design**

# Access to Places for Physical Activity



PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER  
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National recommendations call for regular physical activity (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2008). The Guide to Community Preventive Services (Community Preventive Services Task Force) recommends successful community strategies to increase physical activity. Cuba, New Mexico, has applied many of these strategies. The Step Into Cuba program, a nationally recognized model, is under study by the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (PRC). This fact sheet, one of a series of five, shares initial findings for New Mexico community use.

## **Recommendation from the Community Guide : Create or enhance access to places for physical activity and provide informational outreach for them.**

Creation of, or enhancing access to places for physical activity involves the efforts of worksites, coalitions, agencies, and communities as they attempt to change the local environment to create opportunities for physical activity. Such changes include creating walking trails, building exercise facilities, or providing access to existing nearby facilities.

## **Evidence: Results from a Systematic Review by the Task Force**

Research demonstrates that modifying the living and working environment by creating or enhancing access to places where people can be physically active, along with providing related informational outreach activities, is an effective strategy to help people incorporate physical activity into their daily lives. This strategy benefits entire populations by targeting physical structure in the community. People who regularly use these places have improved conditioning, increased calorie expenditure, more leisure-time physical activity, greater weight loss or maintenance, and decreased body fat.

## **Cuba Strategy**

As Cuba, NM, is a rural and resource-poor community, three central strategies were chosen:

- enhancing existing locations with new trails – village park, schools, clinic, library, fairgrounds – that are safer and more attractive for walking
- planning pedestrian enhancements for village highways and streets
- planning and constructing wilderness trails close to town

## **Specific Cuba Approaches**

### ❖ “Re-leafing” and Using the Village Park as the Walking Hub

Cuba’s St. Francis of Assisi Park provided a large scenic space with little vegetation and no place to walk until the inception of Step Into Cuba. The Alliance quickly identified the park as a centrally located hub for trail and walkway development. The partnership has completed a new nature trail that has required extensive enhancement (boulders, trees, shrubs, flowers, sand pile, kiosk, benches) to create a more attractive place to walk. Many volunteer hours have gone into this effort.



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## More Information

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[thecommunityguide.org](http://thecommunityguide.org)

### ❖ **Developing a Trail Plan and Guides for Walking Places**

A trail plan showing places to be developed for walking and proposed new trails in and around Cuba has been created and revised as needed. A guide featuring 9 places for walking, walking preparation and walking safety will be completed shortly.

### ❖ **Connecting to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail**

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDT) has a 12 mile gap on either side of the Village of Cuba. Step Into Cuba – since its inception – has promoted a new segment of trail that will better connect to the community for health, recreation and economic development. Four years of planning and advocacy by Step Into Cuba and its land management and other partners has contributed to the 2012 announcement of a proposed route that will bring the CDT to within 1 mile of the county fairgrounds and provide new opportunities for hiking and horseback riding. A health impact assessment of the proposed route is planned by the University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center as the proposed segment and alternatives undergo environmental and cultural clearance (National Environmental Policy Act). Kiosks promoting the CDT have been strategically placed at the US Post Office, Public Health and Nacimiento Community Foundation (the Foundation) office and village park.

### ❖ **Creating Open Space Trails**

Creation of the Fisher Community Trail and the Rito San Jose Trail is a signature accomplishment of Step Into Cuba. Land donated to the Foundation connects the village to the nearest corner of the Santa Fe National Forest. The Fisher Trail was constructed by volunteers trained by the National Park Service, while the Rito San Jose Trail was created by volunteers in conjunction with a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) clean-up of the canyon. Sandoval County will soon construct a road turnaround and trailhead parking area.

### ❖ **Creating Joint Use Trails with the Public Schools**

The Cuba high, middle and elementary schools are located on scenic property owned by the school district and bordered by a small piece of BLM land. Cross-country trail loops were created by the coach for practice and meets. These trails are in the process of being improved and marked for community use. A walking guide and map were created for use by school students, staff and nearby community residents.

### ❖ **Working with Transportation Planners to Enhance Sidewalks**

The Step Into Cuba Alliance worked with UNM PRC consultants, the Mid Region Council of Governments transportation planner, the Village of Cuba, and the NM Department of Transportation to design a phased US 550 sidewalk renovation and propose new pedestrian walkways. The first phase was completed in the fall of 2011 and has already become a walking destination for people who work and live nearby. More about pedestrian planning is covered in Fact Sheet #4, Street Scale Design.

### ❖ **Creating Short Trails Near Worksites and Homes**

Convenient places for people to walk near home or work were difficult to find before initiation of Step Into Cuba. Short trails were planned and constructed next to the Cuba Health Clinic and Cuba Baptist Church (on clinic property) and adjacent to the Cuba library, village office, senior center, and low income housing development (on village property). Trails are signed, and maintenance is a cooperative effort between the village and clinic volunteers. An extensive clean-up of the Rito Leche, adjacent to the clinic trail was organized in 2012 by the BLM and Step Into Cuba.

# Community–Wide Campaigns



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**Recommendation from the Community Guide: Community–wide campaigns should be used to increase physical activity and improve physical fitness at all ages. Campaigns should be adapted to specific needs and interests of the target population.**

Community-wide campaigns to increase physical activity are interventions that:

- Involve many community sectors
- Include highly visible, broad-based, multicomponent strategies (e.g., social support, risk factor screening or health education)
- May also address other cardiovascular disease risk factors, particularly diet and smoking

### Evidence: Results from a Systematic Review by the Task Force

Research demonstrates that community-wide campaigns are effective in increasing physical activity and improving physical fitness among adults and children. As a result of campaigns, the following benefits are established:

- Percentage of people who report being physically active increases by an average of 4.2%
- Energy expenditure increases by an average of 16.3%
- Measured physical activity increases
- Knowledge about exercise and physical activity increases
- More people state their intention to be more physically active
- Risk factors for cardiovascular disease decrease

### Cuba Strategy

Step Into Cuba adopted an ongoing multi-component informational strategy that increases awareness and promotes availability of new trails and places to walk, worksite or other supported walking groups, and a walking champion with whom to develop a physical activity plan.

### Specific Cuba Approaches

#### ❖ Maintaining a Website for the Public

A website was chosen as an important vehicle to engage and inform the public of Step Into Cuba sponsored trails and physical activity opportunities. The site was established with the help of the program’s university partner and maintained through regular contact between Step Into Cuba Alliance leadership and the university “webmaster.” The website is established as home page at the Cuba Library where many people from the community access the internet. The website may be found at: [www.stepintocuba.org](http://www.stepintocuba.org).

#### ❖ Producing Informational Walking Guides

Walking guides have been developed to promote places for physical activity. See Fact Sheet #2, Access to Places for Physical Activity.

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### ❖ Locating Posters, Kiosks, Motivational Signs and a Traveling Exhibit in Popular Locations

Various permanent information and promotional displays are used to encourage Cuba area residents to walk, volunteer, or provide input to Step Into Cuba

- Attractive posters were developed for kiosks and display cases at the village office, clinic and US Forest Service office
- Outdoor kiosks promoting the Continental Divide Trail and Step Into Cuba activities were permanently installed at the Cuba Post Office and village park
- Signs encouraging people to walk for health or convenience were placed at popular locations such as the post office, clinic, credit union and visitor center
- A portable plan for proposed development of the village park to increase its use for physical activity is rotated on a two week cycle to various popular public places such as the schools, clinic, electric cooperative, village office and library.

### ❖ Submitting Local Newspaper Articles

Shortly after initiating program activities, the local monthly newspaper was chosen to keep the public informed of Step Into Cuba and related activities and opportunities for physical activity. Organization of submissions into a special dedicated section of the paper was chosen by the editor and has worked well. Reports of accomplishments and events, a calendar of activities, photographs and personal suggestions for health are included, as well as informational flyers as inserts. The local healthy community coordinator/walking champion, an employee of the Nacimiento Community Foundation, is usually responsible for submissions.

### ❖ Sponsoring Events for the Public

Events were sponsored and held for the purpose of gathering public input, training and rewarding volunteers, and promoting physical activity and volunteerism. Important events have included:

- Walkability workshop (4 hours) – see Fact Sheet #4, Street-scale Design
- Backcountry trail construction workshop (2 day)
- Nacimiento Community Foundation sponsored picnics and hikes where volunteers for Step Into Cuba, Cuba Farmer's Market, Checkerboard Food Pantry and Cuba Community Garden were recognized for their contributions
- Walk and Roll to School Day – Step Into Cuba volunteers, UNM PRC and school staff and students walked from school to the village park, walked on the park trail, and returned
- Moonlight Fisher Community Trail hike – the community was introduced to the new trail under the rise of a full moon
- St. Francis of Assisi Park planning meetings – the park plan was developed with assistance from graduate students of the UNM Landscape Architecture program
- Rio Puerco Watershed Clean-up – a new trail was bladed and constructed, and tires and trash were removed from riparian areas used for walking trails

**Step Into Cuba**  
A Trails, Walkways and Physical Activities Program

**LOCATION:** Village of Cuba, New Mexico and surrounding areas.

**PROJECT GOAL:** To promote a healthy lifestyle by increasing walking and hiking in Cuba and on surrounding scenic Federal lands.

**PROJECT ACTIVITIES:**

- Creating and promoting walkways and trails
- Increasing pedestrian safety and walkability
- Developing and improving St. Francis Assisi Park as a central trailhead and recreation destination
- Linking the Village of Cuba to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- Engaging individuals and organizations in a shared goal of promoting physical activity and offering social support

**PARTNERS:**

- Continental Divide Trail Alliance
- Cuba Independent School District
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Cuba
- Mid-Region Council of Governments
- Nacimiento Community Foundation
- New Mexico Dept. of Health
- New Mexico Dept. of Transportation District 6
- Presbyterian Medical Services
- Sandoval County
- Step Into Cuba Volunteers
- University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
- Village of Cuba

**Get Active, Get Involved:**  
Contact Jeanette Linville, Executive Director, Nacimiento Community Foundation at (575) 289-3718.

This poster is being provided by The University of New Mexico's Prevention Research Center, a member of the Prevention Research Centers Program, supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cooperative agreement number 5U48DP001931-02. For more information please contact the UNM Prevention Research Center at (505) 272-4462 or email [walkingchampion@stepintocuba.org](mailto:walkingchampion@stepintocuba.org)  
Ver 07-20-2011

Visit: [www.stepintocuba.org](http://www.stepintocuba.org)

# Individually Adapted Programs



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## **Recommendation from the Community Guide: Implement individually-adapted health behavior change programs to increase physical activity and improve physical fitness at all ages.**

Individually-adapted health behavior change programs to increase physical activity teach behavioral skills to help participants incorporate physical activity into their daily routines. The programs are tailored to each individual's specific interests, preferences, and readiness for change.

These programs teach behavioral skills such as:

- Goal-setting and self-monitoring of progress toward those goals
- Building social support for new behaviors
- Behavioral reinforcement through self-reward and positive self-talk
- Structured problem solving to maintain the behavior change
- Prevention of relapse into sedentary behavior

## **Evidence: Results from a Systematic Review by the Task Force**

Research demonstrates that individually-adapted health behavior change programs are effective in increasing physical activity as measured by various indicators.

- Time spent in physical activity increased an average of 35.4%
- Aerobic capacity increased an average of 6.3%
- Energy expenditure increased an average of 64.3%
- Percentage of people starting exercise programs increased
- Frequency of physical activity increased

These interventions were effective among both men and women and in a variety of settings, including communities, worksites, and schools.



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### Cuba Strategy

Step Into Cuba adapted a program initiated in Albuquerque, NM – Prescription Trails – and offered both walking prescriptions and walking champion referrals to patients at the community's single health center. This strategy was chosen in large part because the Nacimiento Community Foundation had a healthy community coordinator/walking champion on staff, two area public health nurses wanted to promote physical activity, and a physician champion coordinating the Step Into Cuba project supported the program.

### Specific Cuba Approaches

#### ❖ Prescriptions for Walking

Cuba physicians, nurse practitioners and public health nurses developed a protocol for walking prescription and referral to the walking champion with the assistance of a research faculty leader of the UNM PRC. A prescription/referral form was developed and is available to all practitioners and public health nurses in Cuba. The physician coordinator led inservice training sessions on walking prescription. When patients are referred, medical precautions and patient general goals are conveyed to the walking champion who develops a personal plan that often involves groups and places to walk with which the champion is familiar. A walking guide is in preparation, and a supply will be made available to practitioners who prescribe walking.



### STEP INTO CUBA

#### REFERRAL FOR WALKING PROGRAM

#0000

Take this referral to Anna Schulte, Step Into Cuba walking champion, at the Nacimiento Medical Foundation/Public Health Office, 6362 Hwy 550. You may contact Anna at (575) 289-3718 or [walkingchampion@stepintocuba.org](mailto:walkingchampion@stepintocuba.org) or through the Step Into Cuba website at [www.stepintocuba.org](http://www.stepintocuba.org).

Patient Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ M F  
Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Community \_\_\_\_\_


Best way to contact \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_  
Height\* \_\_\_\_\_ Weight\* \_\_\_\_\_ BMI\* \_\_\_\_\_ Practitioner \_\_\_\_\_

Special considerations for a walking program (minutes/day, health issues, goals, etc.):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The 2008 U.S. Physical Activity Guidelines recommend children and adolescents exercise 60 minutes/day and adults exercise 150 minutes/week. (For example 30 minutes/day at least 5 days/week.) Exercise should be for at least 10 minutes at a time.

\*Optional

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### STEP INTO CUBA

#### Prescription for Health:

*Get up and get moving!*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_


Start with: \_\_\_\_\_ Minutes per day  
\_\_\_\_\_ Days per week

Gradually increase to: \_\_\_\_\_ Minutes per day  
\_\_\_\_\_ Days per week

Where: \_\_\_\_\_

*(We will review this plan at your next visit!)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Health Care Provider Signature





# Social Support for Physical Activity



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## **Recommendation from the Community Guide: Build, strengthen, and maintain social networks that support increases in physical activity.**

New social networks can be created or existing networks in social settings outside the family, such as the workplace, can be used.

Typically, participants set up a buddy system and make contracts committing that both buddies will be active, or they form walking groups or other active groups to provide companionship and support while being physically active.

## **Evidence: Results from a Systematic Review by the Task Force**

Research shows that social support...

- Increases time spent in activity by approximately 44%.
- Increases frequency of exercise by approximately 20%.
- Increases aerobic capacity by approximately 5%.
- Improves fitness levels, lowers percentage of body fat, increases knowledge about exercise, and improves confidence in the ability to exercise.

## **Applicability**

These findings should be generally applicable for people of all ages and levels of activity, and in diverse settings, if the programs are adapted to the people participating in them.



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### Cuba Strategy

The rural community of Cuba, New Mexico, was able to implement the national recommendations for increasing physical activity through social support with the following strategies:

- Local walking champion
- Independent funding obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the New Mexico Department of Health
- Full-time position healthy communities coordinator

### Specific Cuba Approaches

#### ❖Walking Groups

The walking champion organizes, leads, and empowers walking groups and promotes group activity as part of the community campaign.

#### ❖Identifying Potential Groups

The walking champion has found particular groups to be most receptive to walking together: Cuba Senior Center “regulars,” employee groups (e.g., school staff, clinic staff, governmental office staffs), and student participants of a summer fitness camp organized by the champion.

#### ❖Planning for Alternate Activities

Physical activities other than walking are substituted when walking is not possible due to inclement weather. For example the walking group from the local senior center will participate in indoor games, yoga, and other activities when walking outside is impractical.

### Quotes from the Community

*“When you see people out walking and stopping and talking...we have an increased sense of community...an increased knowledge.”*

*“... it is starting with individuals and building up momentum and spreading to become social change in the community.”*

*“When I first started, there weren’t many, but now ... there are a lot of people who walk, both men and women ... it just helps to see people walking all the time.”*

**“...People are walking because of the atmosphere ...it is changing... people give other people incentive...”**



# Street Scale Design



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## **Recommendation from the Community Guide: Urban design and land use policies and practices should support physical activity in small geographic areas (generally a few blocks).**

Street-scale urban design and land use policies involve the efforts of urban planners, architects, engineers, developers, and public health professionals to change the physical environment of small geographic areas, generally limited to a few blocks, in ways that support physical activity. Policy instruments employed include: building codes, roadway design standards, and environmental changes. Design components include: improved street lighting, infrastructure projects to increase safety of street crossing, use of traffic calming approaches (e.g., speed humps, traffic circles), and enhancing street landscaping.

## **Evidence: Results from a Systematic Review by the Task Force**

Research demonstrates that there is a relationship between the perceived environment and physical activity practices or effectiveness in providing a more inviting and safer outdoor environment for activity. Overall, the median improvement in some aspect of physical activity (e.g., number of walkers or percent of active individuals) was 35%. Additional benefits may have been brought about by these interventions and include:

- Improvements in green space
- Increased sense of community and decreased isolation
- Reductions in crime and stress
- Increased walking and bicycling on urban streets (although beneficial, this may also pose a risk of increased injury to pedestrians or cyclists, due to increased exposure to motor vehicles)

## **Cuba Strategy**

Walkability of Cuba, NM, is challenged by a major highway - US 550 - that bisects the village, as well as subsidiary state highways and county and city roads without sidewalks or bicycle lanes. Two central strategies have been adopted by Step Into Cuba:

- Enhancing US 550 for pedestrian use
- Proposing new pedestrian walkways connecting key destinations along state and county roads



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### Specific Cuba Approaches

#### ❖ Providing Recommendations through a Walkability Study and Health Impact Assessment

A half-day community workshop was jointly sponsored by the UNM PRC and the Nacimiento Community Foundation to assess and compile input relating to walkability in the Village of Cuba. Findings were synthesized into a written report for distribution to planners and policy-makers. A health impact assessment was performed to promote the expected health benefits of proposed pedestrian enhancements to US 550 in Cuba. A flyer developed from the assessment was widely distributed to the community.

#### ❖ Planning a New Section of US 550 Sidewalk

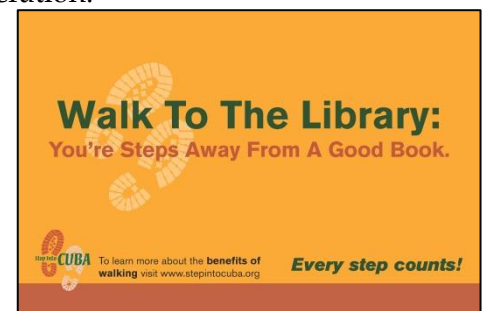
Approximately \$500,000 in New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) funding was made available for sidewalk improvement along US 550 shortly after inception of Step Into Cuba. Step Into Cuba worked closely with the Village of Cuba and planners and designers on alternative projects that would be cost-effective for improved health, safety, and appearance of the community. A final decision was made to construct a four foot wide model section of new handicap accessible sidewalk – with a curb buffer, better driveway turnouts and pedestrian curb cuts – adjacent to the existing sidewalk on the south end of Cuba. It was constructed in the fall of 2011 and has already become an important walking destination.

#### ❖ Proposing Further US 550 Pedestrian Enhancements

Following successful walkability assessment, collection of public input and planning of the new sidewalk project, further US 550 enhancements have been proposed. The NMDOT has announced the availability of \$750,000 for a second phase of sidewalk construction that will renovate the remainder of the existing sidewalk in conformance with standards of the newly constructed sidewalk segment. Need for crosswalks and traffic calming will be addressed through a crosswalk study to be performed at the same time as planning of second phase sidewalk construction. A planning partnership with the NMDOT's landscape architectural program (Context Sensitive Solutions), the Mid Region Council of Governments, and a transportation consultant hired by UNM PRC has facilitated these important developments.

#### ❖ Proposing New Pedestrian Walkways

Four new pedestrian walkways/bikeways were identified by a UNM PRC consultant and the Step Into Cuba Alliance. These would connect places such as the Cuba schools, village park, low income housing, county fairgrounds, and the proposed Continental Divide Trail segment to US 550 sidewalks. These enhancements were proposed in the form of project applications drafted with community input by the UNM PRC consultant, accepted and prioritized by the Village of Cuba, and submitted to the regional transportation planning body. After acceptance and re-ranking, they were forwarded to the NMDOT district responsible for Cuba area projects. A pedestrian safety project was immediately recommended for funding while the others remain under consideration.



## **Appendix C: Focus Group Guide**

## **Focus Group Plan**

**October 25, 2012**

### **CTG Communities Training**

**Focus Group** Participants will be representatives from 14 CTG counties attending the Training, October 25-26, 2012, at the Bachechi Center, in Albuquerque. It is estimated that 25-30 people will be attending. Attendees will break into 3 groups of 8-10 in each group for focus groups to react to and discuss questions listed below. Answers will be recorded, compiled and disseminated to all workshop participants.

#### **Preamble**

1. Introduce yourself and your scribe
2. Explain the purpose of the focus group
3. Encourage expression of disagreement and debate
4. Clarify that this is not about consensus-building or making decisions
5. Explain that our discussion will be recorded with a tape recorder and the scribe writing notes. Ask if everyone is OK with that.
6. Give ground rules:
  - a. Time – approximately 1 hour (ending at 6:30)
  - b. Talk one at a time
  - c. Respect others and their opinions
  - d. Turn cell phones off or on vibrate for emergencies

#### **Focus Group Sample Questions**

Introduction: give your name, the community you are here from and, if you wanted to make one change in your community of any kind that would make a big difference, what would that change be?

#### **Trigger question:**

- 1) If there was one change you could make in your community to make it easier to be physically active, what would it be?

- 2) Why do you think people in your community are not more active?
- 3) In what ways does physical activity make people feel better?
- 4) Can you think of any other barriers in your community to being physically active that we have not discussed?
- 5) How might you address some of the barriers to physical activity that you see?
- 6) What are some of the resources for supporting physical activity in your community?
- 7) The national guidelines for physical activity recommend 2 ½ hours of moderate intensity physical activity (such as walking) each week in sessions of at least 10 minutes. Is that a reasonable goal for people in your community?
- 8) You heard about and have copies of facts sheets based on the Community Guide Recommendations for Physical Activity. What do you think about these fact sheets?

Probes: Do you think they will be helpful in your work?

How might you use them?