New Urbanism in Action

Creating Walkability Plans for Riverside Neighborhoods

**Grant Funding:** $249,676 - State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

**In-Kind Funding:** $26,108 - County of Riverside Department of Public Health and the Riverside County Transportation Commission

**Grant Partners:** Caltrans, University of California, Riverside, (UCR) County of Riverside Department of Public Health, City of Riverside, residents and neighborhood groups.

**Grant Duration:** 1/2/2013 – 2/28/2015

**Neighborhoods:** Ramona and Arlington

**Project Goal:** The overall deliverable for this project is to produce New Urbanism walkability plans” with a five year timeline for implementation and health indicators to establish success. The goals of the plans are to increase positive health indicators in a measurable way using New Urbanism as a template to increase public participation, and to produce a lasting policy document that can be incorporated as local planning policy.

**Project Overview:** New Urbanism includes smart growth and community building ideas (parks, good schools); establishing New Urbanism ideas is an effort to reshape and fundamentally improve how a suburban neighborhood functions.

At the core of the New Urbanism framework is the importance of public/private partnerships. With this in mind, we will be seeking input from the community itself and collaborating on the promotion of policies with the potential of renewing economic dynamism, making healthy lifestyles more readily attainable, and improving environmental quality through transportation modifications (i.e., increasing options for getting around without a car).

Another area of opportunity under the New Urbanism banner is enhancing neighborhood image through aesthetic changes made possible by unlocking the redevelopment potential of the community.
A prime example would be taking advantage of the mature trees along potential pedestrian-friendly corridors. These corridors can become the “connective tissue” that brings a community together, while commercial areas, public spaces, and plazas, when made more pedestrian friendly, can become its heart.

**Grant Activities:** Will include an in-depth neighborhood analysis with traffic modeling, pollution counts, obesity/health indicators, an analysis of neighborhood infrastructure, common areas (parks, streets, etc.,) and social capital. Quantitative baseline health indicators will be established for each neighborhood. Area analysis will be used to hold a series of meetings with local officials, municipal staff, community groups, and residents of target areas (Ramona and North Side). Other public outreach will include in-depth survey work and “walkabouts” where residents will tour their neighborhoods on foot to analyze their surroundings using New Urbanism as a framework.

**Overall Project Objectives:**

- Provide a framework for planning healthy community outcomes for project areas
- Measure outstanding health indicators for project areas, and suggest five year standards for improvement
- Suggest specific structural improvements and projects within the neighborhood that will act as catalysts for healthy neighborhoods
- Recommend improvements to the existing public open space and infrastructure
- Discuss possible opportunities for park and recreation facilities
- Discuss the integration of businesses into neighborhoods to encourage walking
- Stabilize a mature neighborhood
- Analyze transit opportunities in neighborhoods as a way to reduce vehicular traffic and pollution
- Assist in reversing the outward migration of residents and the resulting deterioration of neighborhoods within a mature portion of the City
- Strengthen community pride