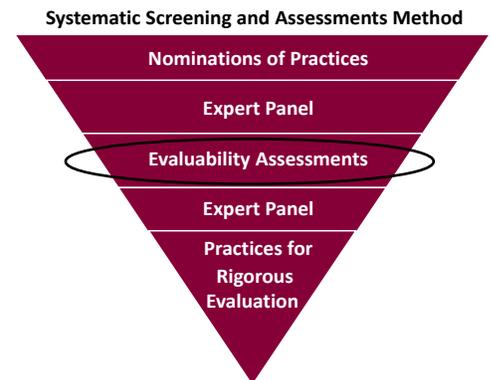


# Active Transportation Spotlight: Missouri Livable Streets Project

## Evaluability Assessment Overview

Evaluability Assessments (EAs) are a method to better understand innovative policies and initiatives being implemented in states and communities. A component of the Systematic Screening and Assessment Method (SSA), EAs provide preliminary evidence about which initiatives have the greatest potential for effectiveness and can inform subsequent evaluation activities. EAs are considered a “pre-evaluation” activity to determine whether a more rigorous evaluation is feasible or merited for a particular initiative, often saving costs and time. EAs also benefit the initiative by strengthening implementation and local evaluation.

The Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) used EAs to identify the potential promise of several nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention initiatives and their readiness for rigorous evaluation. EAs consist of a site visit to assess implementation, data availability, intended outcomes, and staff capacity to better understand an initiative or policy. Upon completion of the site visit, feedback is provided to the initiative, which includes recommendations for future evaluation.



## What kinds of Evaluability Assessments were conducted?

In 2011, DNPAO used the SSA method to learn of the potential promise of five state- and local level active transportation initiatives. Active transportation initiatives encourage active transport like walking and bicycling through the promotion of a supportive infrastructure for leisure or commute activities in multiple settings.

## Active Transportation Spotlight: Missouri Livable Streets Project

One of the five initiatives selected for the DNPAO Evaluability Assessments (2011) project was the Missouri Livable Streets Project. Started in 2010, the Missouri Livable Streets seeks to increase the number of livable streets throughout the state of Missouri.

Missouri Livable Streets, which is operated by the University of Missouri Extension, has five main components: (1) Advocacy training that targets local residents who are interested in active transportation and teaches them to promote the adoption of livable streets ordinances and policies; (2) A design manual, includes guidance for engineers and city planners to implement livable streets infrastructure; (3) Technical assistance, including phone calls, email correspondence, web postings, and site visits, that Missouri Livable Streets provides for local communities interested in getting livable streets ordinances passed; (4) A social marketing campaign that seeks to increase knowledge about Complete Streets in communities with moderate levels of support for the initiative; and (5) Missouri Compete Streets will host a televised workshop with city planners and engineers that will build bridges for communication across the two groups.

### Active Transportation Initiatives Selected (2011)

- Boston, Massachusetts Bike to Market Project
- **Missouri Livable Streets Project**
- Nashville, Tennessee Regional Transportation Plan
- Sunday Streets in San Francisco, California
- Washtenaw County, Michigan, Building Healthy Communities Initiative

Missouri Livable Streets provides for local communities interested in getting livable streets ordinances passed; (4) A social marketing campaign that seeks to increase knowledge about Complete Streets in communities with moderate levels of support for the initiative; and (5) Missouri Compete Streets will host a televised workshop with city planners and engineers that will build bridges for communication across the two groups.

## Program Goals

Initiated in 2010, the Missouri Livable Streets Project seeks to increase the number of livable streets throughout Missouri. Specific goals include:

- Increase awareness of the livable streets concept—educate people that traditional transportation design is not always right or what is needed
- Engage communities in the process of creating livable streets ordinances and infrastructure
- Get Missourians more active by using alternate modes of transport (create a new normal where, for instance, people walk to a store to buy milk), increase biking and walking trips
- Create an environment where children can safely walk to school through built environment policies
- Have livable streets principles institutionalized through ordinances and resolutions

## Program Accomplishments

Since it began in 2010, the Missouri Livable Streets Project has had numerous accomplishments. Some examples include:

- The initiative has a strong, diverse, and active advisory board that represents multiple fields affected by active transportation, and this has resulted in greater cohesion and support for the initiative's mission.
- Missouri Livable Streets has conducted four advocacy trainings at locations around the state and has planned five more trainings for future dissemination.
- A design manual has been developed to reflect guidelines presented by a number of prominent transportation organizations, such as the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials and the National Association of City Transportation officials, and can be understood by people without significant technical background in city planning.
- A media campaign has been fully developed, and Missouri Livable Streets will implement it in 10 target communities.
- Recently, the Governor signed a Missouri House Resolution to promise support to livable streets initiatives.

## Considerations for those Implementing Similar Initiatives

The following considerations were developed by the stakeholders involved in the EA conducted with the Missouri Livable Streets Project. When planning or implementing a similar active transportation initiative, consider the following:

- **Theoretical frameworks.** Use of a theoretical framework that identifies how to address active transportation issues from multiple angles over a short period of time will help to identify and prioritize program activities.
- **Stakeholder diversification.** Cultivating political will and support among a diverse group of stakeholders affected by transportation can enhance both program effectiveness and sustainability.
- **Tools.** Concrete advocacy tools for active transportation initiatives, including an advocacy manual and training for citizens, can help facilitate new advocacy activity and maximize the effectiveness of existing advocacy.
- **Outreach and education.** Creating materials such as an active transportation design manual can help inform and involve local government officials and planners with little knowledge of these types of design.
- **Communication.** Providing guidance on developing and identifying key messages for use in active transportation public education campaigns helps to create a coherent message and a shared understanding of goals.

## Evaluation Considerations

The Missouri Livable Streets initiative is currently collecting data that will contribute to evaluation efforts. Examples include advocacy training sign-in sheets, technical assistance requests, and media clippings. The initiative's partners are also collecting data such as the Missouri Department of Transportation community livable streets support survey and BRFSS perceptions on of the physical activity environment survey.

A rigorous evaluation of similar initiatives should be appropriately conceptualized and implemented. Evaluation activities for a similar program should consider the following evaluation questions:

- What changes are being made in the targeted communities in modes of transportation use, individual behavior, and built environment?
- What barriers and facilitators have been identified to implementing policies in different areas across the state?
- How have the guides helped planners, engineers, and decision makers incorporate livable streets concepts into their work and planning designs?

## Resources

- For more on the Missouri Livable Streets Project: <http://livablestreets.missouri.edu/>
- For more on Evaluability Assessments: Leviton, L.C., Khan, L.K., & Dawkins, N. (Eds). (2010). The Systematic Screening and Assessment Method: Finding Innovations Worth Evaluating. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 125.

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