Can Walking and Biking Help Sustain Rural Grocery Stores?

Marisa Jones
Safe Routes to School Partnership

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CAN WALKING AND BIKING HELP SUSTAIN RURAL GROCERY STORES?

RURAL GROCERY SUMMIT
JUNE 7, 2016

Marisa C. Jones, MS
Nutrition and Physical Activity Project Manager
Safe Routes to School National Partnership

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About the National Partnership

We are a nonprofit organization that improves the quality of life for kids and communities by promoting active, healthy lifestyles and safe infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking.
MARISA JONES
NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROJECT MANAGER AT
THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

• Based in Philadelphia, PA

• My portfolio of work at the National Partnership involves supporting communities to adopt policies that create places for people to be physically active, access nutritious foods at prices they can afford, and understand and develop strategies that look at these fields simultaneously.

• About me: I am an avid runner and have run seven marathons
YE OLD COUNTRY CUPBOARD

Limeport, PA
CAN WALKING AND BIKING HELP SUSTAIN RURAL GROCERY STORES?

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SAFE ROUTES TO HEALTHY FOOD

Hanley’s General Store
Jeffersonville, VT
Population: 746
SAFE ROUTES TO HEALTHY FOOD IN ACTION

New walking, biking, and public transit routes to healthy food stores

- In Hyattsville, MD, the city waives the fee for its Call-A-Bus program when riders use the service to reach the city’s Farmers’ Market.

Improved walking, biking, and transit infrastructure near food retail

- In Philadelphia, PA, the developer of a new grocery store worked with SEPTA to extend an existing bus line to service the grocery store.

Policies and practices that accommodate people who walk and bike to food retailers

- In Haverhill, MA, MassBike partnered with a local bike shop to host events to install bike baskets and racks for local residents, many of whom are low-income and rely on bikes to reach grocery stores.

Incentivizing active transportation to food retailers

- The Brattleboro Food Co-op in Brattleboro, VT (pop. 12,046), provides a free banana to shoppers displaying their bike helmets.

Co-locating healthy food options with existing transit infrastructure

- In Montreal, advocates worked with the Societe de Transport de Montreal to establish permanent food markets at metro stops in low-food access neighborhoods.
HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS IS A CHALLENGE IN RURAL AMERICA

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IS A CHALLENGE IN RURAL AMERICA
DISTANCE
LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE
SPEED
HIGH RATES OF INJURY AND FATALITY

ProPublica Interactive Graph with data from AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety Data
CAR CULTURE
CAN THESE TWIN CHALLENGES OFFER SOLUTIONS TO ONE ANOTHER?
RURAL AMERICANS ARE WALKING AND BIKING

Saxtons River, VT (pop. 554)

Navajo Nation
DISTANCE

In rural areas, nearly 40% of trips are shorter than 3 miles and nearly 20% of those trips are shorter than 1 mile.
PLACEMAKING

West Washington Street, Middleburg, VA, Population: 751
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Telluride, CO, Population: 2,319

Photo Credit; QT Luong, terragaleria.com
COST OF CAR OWNERSHIP

$8698
is the average annual cost
to own and operate a vehicle
in the U.S., which is
down 2%
from 2014.

DEPRECIATION
$3,654/year
42%

FUEL
$1,681.50/year
19.3%

INSURANCE
$1,115/year
12.8%

MAINTENANCE
$766.50/year
8.8%

FINANCE CHARGES
$669/year
7.7%

LICENSE, TAXES & REGISTRATION
$665/year
7.7%

TIRES
$147/year
1.7%
AGING POPULATION

Older Adult Population

Source: Geographic Comparison Tables 0103 and 0104, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
MILLENNIALS
INDEPENDENCE
UNITY, MAINE

Unity, Maine (pop. 2,100)
Photo Credit: Renaissance Planning
IDEAS FOR GROCERS

Ask and understand customer needs

- Would your shoppers ever walk/bike to the store? Why or why not?
- Do they want a bike rack or are they okay leaning their bike against the porch?

Make it easy/attractive for your community

- Amenities like air pump or bike repair supplies
- Serve as a bike rental/community bike signout spot

Use active transportation for delivery

- Save on gas costs by biking or walking to drop off grocery delivery

Partner with advocates

- You are the business voice in your community. Asking for slower speeds in town/along commercial corridors will have more resonance coming from you.
IDEAS FOR ADVOCATES

Encourage growth in town centers

• Use governmental decisions, policies, and incentives to encourage new growth to occur in town centers and commercial nodes, rather than in far flung locations

• Develop a destination. Walkable and bikeable hubs allow people in rural areas to easily walk and bicycle when they are in the town center.

Address issues with safety

• Plan for sidewalks, bike lanes, safe ways to cross streets

• Enforce speed limits

• Work with the media to ask drivers to drive more safely in town
FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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