



Making it Better
CREATING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY TOGETHER

Venture North Connects Residents to Biking and Walking Resources



Did You
Know?

Only 28% of
North
Minneapolis
residents
achieve the
recommended
daily amount
of physical
activity
(source:
Hennepin
County SHAPE
survey, 2010)

Overview

In 2011, as part of the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) initiative, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) responded to community feedback about the need for more affordable and accessible biking and walking resources in North Minneapolis by partnering with non-profit organization, Redeemer Center for Life, to launch *Venture North Bike Walk and Coffee* – a biking and walking retail store. Customers who visit *Venture North* will find an affordable selection of high quality new and refurbished bikes, helmets, locks, gear, and pedestrian accessories, as well as bike repair and maintenance services, educational classes, and community activities, such as walking and running clubs. The store also provides employment and training opportunities for youth, including a mechanics training program which teaches young adults how to repair and maintain a bike while gaining hands-on work experience.

With a location in an area of the city with high levels of chronic disease and poverty and low levels of physical activity, *Venture North* is well poised to address health disparities and support residents' efforts to be more physically active for transportation and recreation. *Venture North* serves as a local gathering point where community members can meet together to learn how biking and walking promote physical activity, good health, and a safe community.

Results and Accomplishments

Venture North Bike Walk and Coffee officially opened in October 2011 with a community celebration and kick-off event that attracted over 200 people, including Minneapolis City Council members and State of Minnesota House and Senate representatives. Recognizing that social and economic factors – including employment and income – can also impact the health of a community, *Venture North* has focused on hiring a number of North Minneapolis youth to work on the retail floor and in the repair shop. In March 2012, the store graduated its first cohort of five youth mechanics, with recruitment underway for a second cohort of 15 scheduled to start in Summer 2012.

Synergies

Venture North was designed to serve as an anchor for the biking and walking community in North Minneapolis and the surrounding neighborhoods. Throughout the project, MDHFS intentionally connected the store to other CPPW-funded biking and walking initiatives including the Nice Ride Minnesota Bike Share system, Safe Routes to School efforts at nearby elementary schools, and the Bike Walk Move media campaign. As a result, *Venture North* became a key component in a network of physical activity resources available to community residents in North Minneapolis.

Future Plans

Venture North Bike Walk and Coffee will continue to expand its inventory and services in order to attract a larger customer base, with a focus on new bikers and women (two populations that may not feel comfortable in traditional bike shops). *Venture North* will also continue to partner with other organizations in North Minneapolis to ensure that all community members have access to affordable non-motorized transportation resources and information.

For additional *Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee* reports and resources, please visit: http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/cppw/dhfs_venturenorth



For more information, contact:
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