

FRIENDS CAMPAIGN



A collaborative initiative between

Smart Coast
&
The National Center for Bicycling & Walking

Healthy Coastal Connections: a Smart Coast Project

Background

Since 2003, the Smart Coast has been promoting smart growth and livable communities. In 2008, they initiated a pilot project called Smart Walks to School where children walked with parents once a month to school from an alternative location. Next, they began promoting Complete Streets to encourage communities to increase their road access to all users.

In 2009, Smart Coast formed a partnership with the National Center for Bicycling & Walking (NCBW) who has provided technical assistance to develop and implement a multi year plan to increase walking, bicycling and more active lifestyles in our coastal region.

What we propose

Healthy Coastal Connections is a 5 year strategic and tactical plan to increase physical activity and reduce childhood obesity in Mobile and Baldwin counties. Healthy Coastal Connections (HCC) will accomplish this by closing gaps in the region's bike/pedestrian network, by supporting programs and policies that encourage more walkable and bicycle-friendly communities, and by creating a healthier, more connected region that will be accessible by all. HCC will continue to develop community consensus as we review barriers to connectivity and recommend changes to policies.

Why Now?

The coastal region of Alabama has realized steady growth in population and business investment over the past decade. While we have enjoyed economic prosperity, other issues such as traffic congestion, environmental degradation, physical inactivity, and social isolation have arisen because of development. Our region's lack of an integrated public transit/bicycling/walking network has affected the overall health and wellbeing of the citizens of the region— especially children.

Alabama has the unfortunate distinction of having the second highest rate of obesity in the nation.¹ The economic toll on Alabamians in direct and indirect medical costs is estimated to be in excess of \$1 billion per year. This includes shortened lifespan; financial stress on families caused by health care expenses; restricted mobility and the resultant social disconnect—these are but a few of the hidden costs. The effects are not borne equally: low-income and African-American communities, in particular, suffer the most. The disparity between obesity rates of African-Americans and non-Hispanic whites is striking: African-Americans have an obesity rate that is nearly 50% higher.² If current trends continue unchecked, the economic cost of obesity in Alabama will rise to \$5 billion by 2018.³ In many communities this crisis has been created by a combination of car-oriented community design, a lack of transportation options for children and adults, and individual lifestyle choices relating to nutrition and physical activity.

Children are a primary focus of the Healthy Coastal Connections because the single greatest predictor of adult overweight/obesity is childhood obesity. Experience has proven that committing to the health of children will yield long term and broad reaching benefits for all.

¹ America's Health Rankings ranks Alabama the 48th Healthiest State with over 32% of Alabamians considered to be obese in 2009. Source: <http://www.americashealthrankings.org/yearcompare/2008/2009/AL.aspx>

² The obesity rates for African-American's and non-Hispanic whites is 41% and 28%, respectively. Source: <http://www.americashealthrankings.org/yearcompare/2008/2009/AL.aspx>

³ The actual estimate for 2018 is \$5.6 billion and an adult obesity rate of 49% if current trends continue. Both figures are midpoint estimates that range from \$3.7 to 7.5 billion and 44% to 54%, respectively. Source: www.americashealthrankings.org



Accomplishments to date

1. Established a HCC Steering Committee that includes elected leaders, city planners, county planners, civic organizations, Envision staff, bicycle shop owners, architects, landscape architects, engineers, ALDOT staff, public health officials, MPO staff, and college students.
2. Spearheaded the passage of a Complete Streets Policy in Fairhope, Daphne, and Chickasaw. These are the first 3 cities in the state of Alabama to pass Complete Streets policies.
3. Engaged elected officials within Mobile & Baldwin Counties including mayors, council members, County Commissioners, Legislators, and Senators who have expressed a strong interest in the goals of HCC and have pledged their support.
4. Performed 3 intersection audits in downtown Mobile at the request of the Downtown Mobile Alliance.
5. Completed a safety audit and meeting with staff & parents at Fonde Elementary School.
6. Engaged with the Allied Health Department of U.S.A., Mobile County Health Department, and the Mobile and Baldwin Medical Alliance to solicit support for HCC.
7. Received media coverage including print and television coverage.
8. Developed a GIS (Geographical Information System) map of Mobile and Baldwin counties to help envision a plan for tackling the region's transportation (and data) gaps.
9. Submitted recommendations on the Bike/Ped Plan for the MPO
10. Reviewed streets in 3 cities for complete streets retrofits.

2010-2011 Goals

1. **Emphasize Complete Street Policy Adoption:**
Spearhead adoption of Complete Street Policies in 10 additional cities.
Identify and create at least one complete street example in each city adopting the policy by 2011.
2. **Create critical mass via Friends of Healthy Coastal Connections:**
Recruit a 500 member group to create a strong constituency.
3. **Public relations, media, and education campaign:**
Create Campaign to target behavior change in motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and law enforcement professionals.
4. **Create a coalition of medical professionals & public health representatives:**
Publically identify health & cost effects of inactive lifestyles & obesity. Encourage active lifestyles.
5. **Create Smart Walk to School Programs in both counties:**
Work with schools to promote walking to increase activity & reduce congestion

Vision for the coastal region

Smart Coast envisions a future in which everyday destinations like the school, grocery store, post office and places to play are connected by complete streets which make the trips on foot and bicycle convenient so that all ages of people can enjoy an active lifestyle.



Friends of Smart Coast And the Healthy Coastal Connections

Friend Support covers all activities for one year

Platinum Friends: \$10,000 and Up

You will be a Lead Sponsor of the Smart Walks in both Mobile County and Baldwin. Your logo will be included in advertisements and on printed materials including audio-visual presentations, placards, and on Smart Coast's website with hyperlink to your company website.

Gold Friends: \$5000-9,999

Your logo will be placed on a placard to be displayed at all meetings and workshops. Your logo will be placed on Smart Coast's website with a hyperlink to your company website.

Silver Friends: \$1000-4,999

Your logo will be placed on Smart Coast's website with a hyperlink to your company website. Your company name will be placed on a placard displayed at all meetings.

Bronze Friends: \$100-999

Its simple- being a Friend of Healthy Coastal Connections shows a grassroots interest in seeing our communities value all citizen's right to mobility and access to a more active lifestyle.

Individual Friend: \$20- 99

Your support is important to show strong grassroots interest. There is strength in numbers.

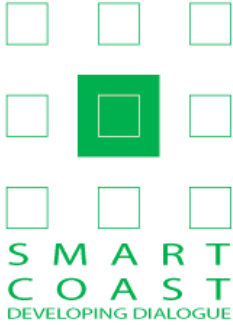
All friends receive the following:

Listed on Smart Coast website at your level of support

Receive updates to the project & e-invites to HCC planning meetings and workshop

For "Friends" Information: contact Smart Coast at (251) 928-2309, fax (251) 929-3614, or email: info@smartcoast.org





Friends of Smart Coast For Healthy Coastal Connections Confirmation Form

Company or Individual

Name _____

Contact Person _____

Title _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Office Telephone _____ Cell _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Website _____

Identify how you want your company or personal name to appear on Smart Coast website and advertisement (if appropriate):

Do you have a logo to use in conjunction with your company name? _____

Friends Levels (Check the appropriate level.)

____ Legacy ____ Platinum ____ Gold ____ Silver ____ Bronze ____ Individual Friend

Total Amount Due: \$ _____ **CHECK ENCLOSED** (Check # _____)

Date: _____

Make checks payable to: **Smart Coast, PO Box 246, Fairhope, AL 36533**





Complete Streets- Designed for all users



Smart Walks to School

