

Stories from Small Towns

Heber City (Pop. 13,000) & Wasatch County, Utah (Pop. 26,437)

Plans that began a decade ago were moving along, slowly, until people became excited about urban trails. The discussion progressed from trails in the hills and forests surrounding communities to the in-town assessment of walkability. By partnering with neighboring counties, Heber City (county seat of Wasatch County) brought in a walkable communities expert to take a walk with city planners and political leaders. Now there is more recognition of the need, and more sidewalks are appearing.



Gold Medal Mile, Wasatch County, Utah. By permission.

The 2002 Summer Games led to “gold medal miles,” miles marked for easy walking in places throughout Utah. Kids in Wasatch County rack up miles by participating.

The area gets a boost from tourism to nearby skiing destinations. Visitors to the community want access to trails and links to state parks.

The towns and county have collaborated with the school boards on addressing policies and ensuring the safety of kids walking to school.



Kids Walk to School, Wasatch County, Utah. Used with permission.

Coalitions have kept all these issues prominent even through funding stream changes. Connectivity goals have remained as leaders continued projects despite lack of funding.

Key Lessons:

- Develop relationships with stakeholders. Start with people who are already interested and include leaders in the community.
- Funding for ongoing projects can be hard to come by. Find ways to do the work anyway.

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