



Connect

SPARTANBURG

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The Serious Business of Play

“Having access to and spending time in beautiful, healthy parks correlates with our overall wellbeing. Parks give us a sense of place, of meaning, imprint on our collective memory and are a fundamental structure in creating connections in both ourselves and our greater community.”

This quote by a parks policy planner for the City of Calgary summarizes Partners for Active Living’s (PAL) motivation to build a community park and high quality gathering space on the Mary Black Foundation Rail Trail.

Thanks to a partnership with the national play-focused organization Kaboom, PAL discovered that the proposed seven-acre park

is in an area considered a ‘high-need play desert’.

PAL feels that this park will be different from others in our community because:

1. The center of our City needs a community park where children from across the County can gather together.
2. The park will provide an outlet for families with children of all ages, but especially those with older children who need amenities beyond those that are currently offered.

In a study published by Active Living Research, an arm of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, we learn that, “children with better access to parks and recreational resources are less likely to experience significant increases in attained Body Mass Index.”

“The center of our City needs a community park where children from across the County can gather together.”



A few of the features included in our new community park include:

- Paved and natural trails
- A soccer field
- Fitness stations
- A picnic place in a trolley type setting
- An amphitheater
- A treehouse park
- A playground obstacle course

To date, PAL has raised \$782,000 thanks to support from Mary Black Foundation, Balmer Foundation, Foundation for the Carolinas, Women Giving for Spartanburg, Wades Restaurant, Junior League of Spartanburg, White Oak Manor, Dave Edwards, Romill Foundation, and a number of individual donors.

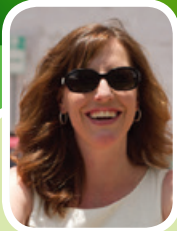
Are you interested in learning more or contributing, visit www.active-living.org and click on the park drawing! ■



Letter from:

The Director

PAL Board of Directors
Outlines Priorities



You've heard the quote, "a goal without a plan is just a wish." At

Partners for Active Living, we've got plenty of things on our wish list – but we've also got a blueprint to put our plans into action. A few months ago, I had the pleasure of joining the PAL board of directors to help develop a strategic plan for the next three years. Shaped by our mission to inspire a healthy and active community through policies, programs, partnerships and places, the objectives that follow will guide our work for the next few years.

Partners for Active Living will:

- I. Increase the number of venues for outdoor activities by completing 15 continuous miles of trails in Spartanburg and Forest Avenue park (see front page) by June 2019.
- II. Improve health of students in 8-9 targeted schools.
- III. Promote active living and community connectivity through ongoing programs.
- IV. Increase unrestricted funds to 30% of the annual budget resulting in a 3-month operating reserve.
- V. Strengthen the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the Board of Directors to enable it to fulfill the mission.

Thank you to our donors, funders, past & present board members, PAL staff, and community partners for supporting this collective vision. We would not be setting these bold goals without you!

Sincerely,

Laura Ringo,
Executive Director

FOCUS ON: Whole Health for Young Children Includes Outdoor Play

Across America today, children's health, development, learning, and well-being have been seriously compromised by decades of changes that have dramatically altered childhood. Key among these changes is a significantly reduced amount of time spent outdoors, which is linked to a number of other detrimental trends. Experience in the field and child development research shows that all children need and benefit from more time outdoors; it is critical for their health, self-concept, and future school success. Partners for Active Living is collaborating with local and regional partners to pilot a program aimed at improving the quality of outdoor spaces at Spartanburg County child-care centers thus increasing the amount of active outdoor time for young children in our community.



The Natural Learning Initiative (NLI) was founded by NC State's College of Design in 2000, to promote the importance of the natural environment, particularly among children. In 2006, Preventing Obesity by Design (POD) was launched as a program of the NLI to address the childhood obesity epidemic. By creating engaging Outdoor Learning Environments, designed to support cognitive



Big Blue Marble Academy
Boiling Springs, SC

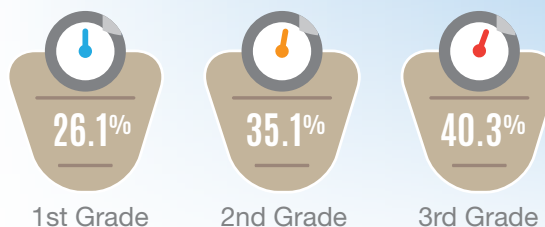
and social development in young children, POD installations provide easy-to-access opportunities for hands-on experiences and physical activity that connect children to nature and maximize their learning outcomes and social development.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) engaged NLI to create demonstration Outdoor Learning Environments for 5 Spartanburg childcare centers that were chosen through an application process. The partnership for the pilot project includes SCDHEC, NC State University (NLI), Clemson University Department of Landscape and Design, the SC Department of Social Services, Partners for Active Living, and the Spartanburg Childhood Obesity Task Force. The participating centers are Big Blue Marble Academy in Boiling Springs, Ida Thompson Child Development Center in Spartanburg, Kids First in Chesnee, Miss Tammy's Little Learning Center in Landrum and Unique Kids in Greer. ■

"...all children need and benefit from more time outdoors; it is critical for their health, self-concept, and future school success."

by the numbers:

Spartanburg Student Body Mass Index Report 2015*



*Percentage of Overweight and Obese Students, Grades 1-3.
Number of Students Measured: 89%.





PAL VOLUNTEERS HELP STEER BCycles Program

Spartanburg BCycle— the first bike-sharing program in the southeast, and one of the world's smallest—requires a significant amount of attention. Besides the normal wear and tear on the bikes, the docks themselves require upkeep. Fortunately, for PAL, we've got some cracker-jack volunteers who go the extra mile to keep our BCycle stations up and running!

Rich and Cissy Byrd, Ronnie and Zoe Smoak and Vince Barnhill are all experienced cyclists and mechanics.

When the Smoaks and the Byrds aren't out riding in week-long bike tours, these Spartanburg next-door neighbors can be found at the Bicycle station not far from their own backyard. They see their service to the program as a way to support PAL's mission and provide the expertise they can.

Vince is a long-term Spartanburg resident who has been active in Spartanburg's cycling community for over 30 years. He's also been a long-time PAL supporter and volunteer.

We are thrilled to have the support of all our volunteers.

To learn more or sign up for Spartanburg BCycle, visit <http://Spartanburg.bcycle.com> ■




Drayton Trails Funding

► The newest stretch of trails in the Drayton community are just the tip of the iceberg in a complex and comprehensive plan that calls for an additional 22 miles of connected pathways around town. Pacolet Milliken Enterprises, TMS Development, Montgomery Development, and Spartanburg County all contributed funds to the completion of the trail. In addition, the crossing of Drayton Avenue required permission of the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and will use funds from State Representative Derham Cole and the Spartanburg County Transportation Committee.

did you know?

About Hub Cycle:

- 10- Years in Operation
-  Bikes -550+-
- 1,000+- Borrowers
- PAL's cost per Rental -**\$134-**
- 63- Annual Volunteer Hours





Friendly Spaces,
Happy Places



Drayton Trails Open

**Great news
for trails in
the County!**

Have you visited the new trails at Drayton Mills? Part of our larger plan to add 22 miles of new trail to connect to our existing 10 miles of trails, the new trails center the development at Drayton

Mills, and provide opportunities for all to enjoy the scenic beauty along the Lawson's Fork Creek. The historic mill pond on the upper section offers a glimpse into the mill history.

If you're looking for Fitbit points – the Upper Drayton Trail is 1.2 miles while the lower Drayton loop is 1 mile. The paved asphalt surface is perfect for walking, running or cycling. While you're out there, be sure to check out the number of large hardwoods, the scenic and historic quality of the mill pond, and listen for the gentle murmur of the Lawson's Fork creek as it heads toward the coast. With plans in place to connect the Drayton Trail to SPACE's Cottonwood Trail – we're excited about the path forward! To check out a map of Drayton Trails, visit:



Drayton Trails, visit:

<http://www.active-living.org/spartanburg-county-trails> ■

Get Out and EXPLORE!

The Spartanburg Walkers, led by Reta Cooper, has been active since 2012 and has over 300 registered members. Some walks are a little more fast-paced and some are a little slower, but all are rated easy. Among the places they walk are Croft State Park, Drayton Mills Trail, Cottonwood Trail and USC Upstate.

Check out all the opportunities on Meetup at www.meetup.com/SpartanWalkers/#upcoming
All are welcome!

 **partners for
active living**
www.active-living.org

About Partners for Active Living (PAL):
Partners for Active Living transforms Spartanburg County into a vibrant, healthy, connected community where we live and grow.



get moving

- **Friday Lunchtime Rides**
Meet at First Presbyterian Church at the Family Life Center at Noon
- **PAL & RJ Rockers Runs**
Meet at RJ Rockers Brewery on Tuesday's at 6:00 pm for a 5k run
- **GHS Turkey Day 8K**
Start at Morgan Square on Thanksgiving morning for a 7:00 am registration

For more event information, visit www.active-living.org or call 864-598-9638.

staff members

Laura Ringo
Executive Director

Ned Barrett
Trails Coordinator

Liz Perry
Healthy Kids Coordinator

Lindsey Graham
Resource Development
Coordinator

Joe Baideme
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