For vibrant, livable communities
What we do
We help clients assemble the elements of an active culture by first assessing and understanding what the community, organization or place has to offer and then we connect those existing elements with the access, organization, plan and programs that are needed to develop a fully functioning culture on the ground.

Active Strategies provides the following products & services:
UNIQUE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC IMPACT APPROACH:

- Extensive experience in the outdoor recreation and trails industry

- Active Strategies Principals have lead successful, on the ground, long-term outdoor community based initiatives - in Asheville, NC and Dayton, OH

- Established as a key advisor to national trail organizations

- Working locally and nationally on community initiatives
Who’s in the room?

- Professional Trail Builders
- Outdoor Recreation Businesses
- Government Agencies
- Land Managers
- Outdoor Programmers
- Designer & Planners
- Non-Profit
“THERE’S AN ECONOMIC BATTLE GOING ON NATIONALLY!”

The competition is about economic relevance and the success of community’s ability to attract the vital businesses and the work force they seek!

- Talent recruitment and retention
- Economic diversity
- Quality of life
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion
- Place Activation
“QUALITY OF PLACE IS THE DRIVING FORCE IN TODAY’S ECONOMY”

- People and the businesses and capital that follow them are chasing quality of place first and foremost!

- 9 of 10 of the top ten growth states in 2016 were also in the top ten states with the most public land

- Evidence of this emerging trend is apparent in the pattern of US economic & demographic growth
Areas That Use Land Conservation and Public Lands Access as a Catalyst for Vibrancy are growing
EVIDENCE OF THIS EMERGING TRENDS IS APPARENT
in the pattern of U.S. economic & demographic growth.

Famous destination communities like:

are renown for their ability to attract a creative work force, and for the growth that has occurred because of their efforts.
More relevantly

THE SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS OF COMMUNITIES LIKE

are transforming their rustbelt images and economics through the creation of park lands, greenways, and outdoor infrastructure essential to a great quality of life.
SMALL COMMUNITY OUTDOOR RECREATION STRATEGIES

• **COPPER HARBOR, MI** – 20,000 visitors/year

• **ALLEGANY, PA TRAIL TOWNS**
  https://www.trailtowns.org/Great-Allegheny-Passage

• **SOUTHWESTS VIRGINIA** – Integrated outdoor recreation initiative with anchor areas

• **CROSBY, MN** – Expected Impact $21 Million from Cuyuna Trail System

• **JOHNSON CITY, TN** – Developing an Outdoor ED Strategy
Communities Are Using Outdoor Recreation As A Catalyst for Vibrancy, Growth and Brand Identity
OUTDOOR INDUSTRY'S IMPACT!

THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY GENERATES:

$887 BILLION IN CONSUMER SPENDING ANNUALLY

7.6 MILLION AMERICAN JOBS

$65.3 BILLION IN FEDERAL TAX REVENUE

$59.2 BILLION IN STATE AND LOCAL TAX REVENUE

OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ADDED TO GDP IN 2017 BY US DEPT OF COMMERCE

www.outdoorindustry.org
Outdoor Recreation is Big Business
STATE
OUTDOOR RECREATION
INDUSTRY OFFICE
MOVEMENT
Trails Are At Their Zenith
Outdoor Recreation Oriented Development
Outdoor Recreation Oriented Development
Outdoor Recreation Oriented Development
Outdoor Recreation is a Major Component of Rural Prosperity Initiatives

Research: Mountain biking boosts rural Oregon economies

Posted by Jonathan Maus (Publisher/Editor) on May 22nd, 2013 at 12:36 pm

Research shows that the three-day Mountain Bike Oregon event pumps $1.2 million into the Coosville economy.

Where timber once ruled the economy, mountain biking is providing new hope. That’s the story for a growing number of rural communities throughout Oregon. The trend isn’t new, but it’s maturing to the point where policymakers can no longer ignore it. On the heels of a major report from Travel Oregon that showed a $400 million annual economic impact from bike-related travel, Linfield College Professor (and bike race promoter) Jeff McNamee is garnering headlines for his research on...
Understanding that Active Outdoor Lifestyles = Improved Public Health

**Bicycling in Northwest Arkansas**

Provided $137 million in benefits to the economy in 2017

- $86 million in health care-related costs
- $51 million in business benefits

Source: Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Northwest Arkansas
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
WHY OUTDOOR RECREATION?

• Outdoor Recreation is colorful, visual and easy to brand

• Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure is relatively inexpensive

• Outdoor Recreation encourages sustainability and conservation

• Land and water-based strategy that fits in Rural areas

• Millennials and Gen Z are drawn to it

• Outdoor Recreation Industry is one of the largest in the US

• Quality access to outdoor recreation improves public health outcomes;

• Outdoor Recreation access demonstrates increased Real Estate values

• Outdoor Recreation has significant workforce development opportunities
A DEEPER LOOK INTO THIS PHENOMENON REVEALS....

It is really about which communities can develop a rich set of **ACTIVE OUTDOOR AMENITIES** that can essentially create a new community **NARRATIVE** and **IDENTITY**.
The proof is in the successful communities large and small, urban and rural, all over the country, that are using active strategies to remake their communities and image.
We are witnessing the catalytic impact the emergence of

ACTIVE CULTURE

can have on a community

A growing active culture:

Brings people together in new ways........Creates excitement in the community.

Excitement can turn into new ideas, and support for new community initiatives.
WHAT IS CULTURE?

CULTURE: Acquaintance with and taste in fine arts, humanities, and broad aspects of science as distinguished from vocational and technical skills; a person of culture
THE CULTURE FACTOR

CULTURE: The set of values, conventions, or social practices associated with a particular field, activity, or societal characteristic
How do you create an outdoor community and culture where there isn’t one?

- Process starts during visioning.
- Meet residents where they are!
- Phasing of infrastructure build- start with gateway trails & progression while making a “splash”
- Soft opening - early access for vols/advocates.
- Engage local outdoor community groups in entire process.
ACCELERATING AN OUTDOOR CULTURE & ECONOMY

The Three Dimensions of Access:

**Infrastructure**
Physical space to Do it

**Activation**
Physical space programs, events, community Engagement, local Orgs, etc.

**Brand**
Promoting the culture and access to both locals and tourists.

Building access to active living and the outdoors is really about constructing the physical and cultural ecosystem of community vibrancy...

Physical access...trails for example is the first step... but activating the community around that infrastructure is the key to change and ultimately branding your community as active
INFRASTRUCTURE

• Can’t have outdoor recreation without a place to do it

• Physical Access is only 60-70% of the equation

• VITAL to outdoor community

• DIVERSITY of outdoor recreation opportunities (kayaking, mtb trails, camping, disc golf, etc)

• PROGRESSION makes sure everyone, regardless of ability, can get involved and participate

• CONNECTIVITY is key! How are your community’s outdoor recreation elements tied together
INFRASTRUCTURE

• DIVERSITY of opportunities (kayaking, mtb trails, camping, disc golf, etc),
INFRASTRUCTURE

- **PROGRESSION** makes sure everyone, regardless of ability, can get involved and participate.
INFRASTRUCTURE

• **CONNECTIVITY** is key! How are your community’s outdoor recreation elements tied together
• **DENSITY** of Access (easy to get to, close to town, accessible without car or short drive are also key)
“If you build it, WILL they come?”

Provides awareness, creates excitement, builds momentum, and fosters the engagement necessary to support a significant project or initiative.

- Critical to maximizing a project’s ROI

- Impacts economic, tourism, health, grassroots business development, and quality of life benefits across the entire region.

Our process empowers teams and communities to take ownership of initiatives and activate themselves, creating momentum that will continue long after we are done.
COMPONENTS OF A COMMUNITY ACTIVATION INITIATIVE

-A UNIQUE AND CUSTOMIZED EFFORT FOR EACH COMMUNITY OR REGION THAT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

• Community Outreach, Advocacy, and Engagement
• Market Analysis, Benchmarking, and Community Assessment
• Community Activation, Strategic and Operational Plan
• Community/Region Branding and Promotion
• Organizational Capacity Development and Implementation

This process strives to create a Model Outdoor Community
How Do You Activate?

Strategies we have implemented:

• Promoting the creation of high-quality physical **ACCESS** like trails, greenways, whitewater parks, and more

• Developing destination quality outdoor specific **EVENTS AND FESTIVALS** that bring community members and organizations, businesses, and visitors together

• Engaging the community and activating local evangelists through **MARKETING** and promotions

• **EDUCATING** the community to the world of outdoor recreation through progressive skill development programs to build their own active lifestyle

• Using outdoor assets to build the outdoor **ECONOMY** through active commerce, gear design and manufacturing, and supporting workforce development
Bring Community Leaders Along

Bring non-riders along on benefits to the community

• Make the economic, health, and branding case for Outdoor Recreation in your community.

• Create opportunities to engage and mingle the outdoor and political community.
Create the Outdoor Experience!

Like any other demographic, outdoor enthusiasts look for certain amenities & assets that make a community a destination:

- Spectrum of accommodations
- Amenities - restaurants, shopping, bike shops, gear and service
- Music and arts culture adds to the vibe!
- Connectivity is key
- Diverse Outdoor Activities, ex. Most mountain bikers also like to hike, paddle, fish, etc.
Develop Community Wide Engagement Strategy

• Create a strategy to take full advantage of your trails and outdoor rec facilities

• Develop a full progression of programming... from the novice to the seasoned adventurer.
  • Include skills clinics, group/social programs, stewardship/volunteer days, events & races

• Youth, family, and diversity opportunities are fundamental to engaging a broader audience and benefit entire community
Advocacy: Committed volunteerism, local leadership, and advocate for future of outdoor community

Immersion: Part of the community as an engaged member, episodic volunteerism, potential committee member

Access: To skills, trails, and community. Developing identity as a mountain biker and community, program/event participant, and social media follower

Attraction: Fun and exciting opportunities to learn about sport and becoming familiar with the community.

Outreach: Broadening connections with larger audiences and groups on their turf. Sharing value and opportunities to get involved in trails community
Develop A Full Progression

Cyclical vs Vertical.

Advocacy

Immersion

Outreach

Access

Attraction
COMPONENTS OF A MODEL OUTDOOR COMMUNITY/DESTINATION

- Diversity and Quality of Access
- Public lands and conservation
- Community activation
- Hospitality and “Third Place” incubation
- Outdoor economic and workforce development
- Brand identity
- Quality of life and Outdoor Culture

Creating a destination is a complex and integrated effort. It requires a phased and purposeful effort to assess assets and fill gaps.
Growing an **ACTIVE** culture will change how a community is **PERCEIVED** and how residents **PERCEIVE** themselves.
Branding - Empower your community to tell their story

Our goal is for the community or organization to gain a fresh perspective and be armed with a solid brand identity to rally around, take pride in, and benefit from.

How do we develop brands?

We create strong branding, narratives, and promotional materials so you can tell the story and make sure people are outside and having fun.

- Effective and repeatable key stories to tell
- Training the team and community on how to best promote the new strategy and trails
- Promotional materials
- Visual branding
- Merchandising design to help promote the brand
More than just a logo!

Successful community Brands convey a vibrant, active culture that is uniquely theirs!

A growing ACTIVE CULTURE brings people together in new ways..... Creates excitement in the community. Excitement can turn into new ideas, and support for new community initiatives.
Integrate the brand

Leverage your unique value proposition
  • Blend your brand into trail and outdoor network
  • Tie in to the Larger Community Initiative
  • Push it outside of the “choir”
  • Be Persistent - Create a sustainable brand
  • Make it real - Great brands have “street cred”
Culture is Brand!
Your Communities Culture is Your Brand Identity

The End Result

Boost tourism, retain and recruit creative businesses and workforce, and improve your quality of place with your enhanced brand.
“It is not good enough to be a great place to live, work, and play, you have to be known as a great place to live, work, and play.”
-Rock Stone