What does Highway 61 have to do with my health?
A lot of the space and resources in our region are dedicated to public roads and streets. It’s important that when we design and operate those streets and roads that we not only consider cars, but also the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. We believe that we can plan and operate our local transportation systems in ways that will meet the needs of automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists alike. Moving Matters will work within the community to create conversations about how we can re-prioritize safety and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities—especially our children and seniors—who walk and bike along our public roads and streets, while at the same time accommodating the needs of automobiles.

Why does the Clinic care about community design and transportation policies?
The Sawtooth Mountain Clinic believes there is a connection between community design, transportation policies and health. If we create environments where it is safe and pleasant to be physically active in our daily lives, we will be more active. That active lifestyle, in turn, brings with it health benefits that are good for each of us as individuals and as a community. Studies have repeatedly shown that people who are physically active live longer and have a lower risk for heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers. In addition, vibrant, active communities create more opportunities for positive social interactions and relationships, which improve health! The clinic is committed to helping envision and create a more active and healthy community, for all community members.

Who is supporting this effort?
This project is a partnership between Sawtooth Mountain Clinic and many local organizations that recognize the benefits of walking and biking to community health, economic health, transportation, tourism and maintaining vibrant towns and cities. Partners of the Moving Matters project include: Active Living Steering Committee, City of Grand Marais, Cook County, Grand Portage Reservation Tribal Council, the townships of Lutsen, Tofte, and Schroeder and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). Funding for this project is provided in part by the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.

Why should I get involved? And how do I get involved?
This project will be successful if our community is fully engaged and involved in the process. It is important that the voice of the community is heard by our elected officials so they understand and appreciate the needs and priorities of the people. Sharing your experiences and ideas will help us create safer streets, a healthier community and a place where we all want to live, work and play.

There will be opportunities through this three-year project to be involved, with community meetings, fun events, pedestrian/bicyclist counts, and more. To get on our list, email movingmatters@boreal.org, ‘like’ us on Facebook, or visit the clinic website at www.sawtoothmountainclinic.org.