Dear Healthy Community Design News subscribers,

The News is a bit late this month because I just returned from the mecca of active transportation: Amsterdam. How exciting to be in a city where pedestrians, public transit, bicyclists and autos live in relative harmony; where physical activity is incorporated into everyday activities; where bicycles outnumber people! Despite my hearty eating, I didn't gain a pound because I walked everywhere thanks to Amsterdam’s compact, mixed-use density. I also rode bike paths that took me from the city center to the countryside (and windmills) in about 40 minutes.

Feel free to contact me (CGreen1@cdc.gov) with submissions to Healthy Community Design News that have both a national and international perspective. Your suggestions and feedback are always welcome, too. Until next time - keep up the great work!

---Charles Green, www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces

Urgent Deadline (September 8): $25,000 Scholarships for Students

The Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH), through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), has funds available to support up to six scholarships of $25,000 each for students currently pursuing their doctorate degrees. The scholarship recipients will conduct doctoral-level studies, related to the efforts of CDC/NCEH, that include assessment and secondary research that examine the relationship between public health and two key areas of study: Community design and climate change. During their studies, the students will receive guidance and input from CDC/NCEH experts in these fields. Details are available at http://www.asph.org/document.cfm?page=751&JobProg_ID=19.

You may be disappointed if you fail, but you are doomed if you don’t try.
---Beverly Sills

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Conferences September/October 2009

September 15-16, 2009, Promoting Environmental and Policy Change to Support Healthy Aging Research to Practicum Symposium
Chapel Hill, NC
prc-hanconferences.com/2009-conference

September 18-21, 2009, American Society of Landscape Architects Annual Meeting and Expo
Chicago, IL
http://www.asla.org/2009meeting/

October 1-2, 2009, Community Indicators Consortium 2009 International Conference
Bellevue, WA
http://www.communityindicators.net/conference2009.html

October 13-16, 2009, The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials 2009 Annual Meeting
Tysons Corner, VA
http://www.astho.org/?template=2009_astho_annual_meeting.html
Toronto, Canada
   http://www.citiesalive.org/

October 26–28, 2009, National Environmental Public Health Conference: Healthy People in a Healthy Environment
Atlanta, GA

### Job Opportunities

- **Project Manager, Health Impact Assessment Project, Washington, DC**
  (Application deadline unknown)

- **Senior Associate, Health Impact Assessment Project, Washington, DC**
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### Training Opportunities

- **Land Trust Alliance Rally 2009**
  October 11–14, 2009, Portland, OR

- **Conservation Fund: GIS Tools for Strategic Conservation Planning**
  October 27–30, 2009, Shepherdstown, PA

- **IMPACT - International Health Impact Assessment Consortium Comprehensive HIA Training, November 9–13, 2009, Liverpool, England**

- **Planning for Healthy Places with Health Impact Assessments, American Planning Association and the National Association of County & City Health Officials, ongoing, online**

- **Health Impact Assessment in Practice Virtual Learning Environment, NHS Health Scotland, ongoing, online**

### Resources

#### Call for Papers/Ideas

**Deadline: August 14.** The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) has asked CDC to help incorporate health into CNU’s 18th annual conference, to be held in Atlanta May 20–22, 2010, and themed “New Urbanism: Rx for Healthy Places.” Health concerns will be integrated into the various program tracks at CNU 18, including transportation, suburb retrofitting, green design, public spaces and quality of life issues. CDC liaisons will help review all submissions. Ideas for sessions are due by August 14 at [http://www.cnu18.org](http://www.cnu18.org). A call for academic papers to be considered for presentation can also be found at this link.
**Deadline August 18.** The American Planning Association’s Planning & Community Health Research Center invites all to submit a proposal for a session, training workshop, poster, facilitated discussion, or technology showcase related to planning and health at the 2010 National Planning Conference in New Orleans (April 10-13, 2010). All proposals must be submitted online by August 18, 2009. For more information and instructions, please visit [http://www.planning.org/conference/proposals/index.htm](http://www.planning.org/conference/proposals/index.htm).

**Deadline: November 15.** The 48th International Making Cities Livable Conference on True Urbanism: Planning Healthy, and Child-Friendly Communities, to be held in Charleston, SC, October 17-21, 2010, is seeking papers that focus on ways to improve children's health and development by improving the built environment. For more information on submitting a 250-word abstract for consideration before November 15, 2009, go to the Call for Papers Guidelines at [http://www.livablecities.org/conferences/forthcoming-conferences/18.html](http://www.livablecities.org/conferences/forthcoming-conferences/18.html).

**News**

**Oregon Study: Reducing VMT Would Have Significant Health Benefits Overall**

(Upstream Public Health, May 2009)

[http://www.upstreampublichealth.org/transportation.html](http://www.upstreampublichealth.org/transportation.html)

A study conducted by Upstream Public Health, Oregon Health & Science University, Human Impact Partners, and a health and transportation expert advisory committee found that:

- Implementing a combination of policies is the best way to promote the positive health benefits of alternative forms of transportation.
- Creating affordable neighborhoods that are high-density, mixed-use, and highly connected will make people more active, decrease air pollution, and reduce car crash fatalities.
- Employer parking fees would promote health more than a gas or a vehicle-miles-traveled tax because it would actually shift people away from driving to public transit.
- Driving-related taxes may disproportionately impact low-income, elderly or disabled individuals. If taxes are put into place, significant revenues from them should be re-invested in low-income communities through strategies such as improving access to public transit and building affordable housing in centrally-located neighborhoods.

**New Report Presents a New Vision for Transportation Development in the 21st Century**

(Convergence Partnership, July 2009)

[http://www.convergencepartnership.org/site/c.fhLOK6PELMF/b.5327643/k.BF0B/Transportation_RX.htm](http://www.convergencepartnership.org/site/c.fhLOK6PELMF/b.5327643/k.BF0B/Transportation_RX.htm)

“*The Transportation Prescription: Bold New Ideas for Healthy, Equitable Transportation Reform in America*” , a report by PolicyLink and Prevention Institute and commissioned by the Convergence Partnership, is a guide to how healthy, equitable transportation policies can improve the quality of life for everyone, and in particular for vulnerable communities.

**Biking Rules Announces PSA Contest (Submission deadline August 31)**

[http://bikingrules.org/psa%20](http://bikingrules.org/psa%20)

Biking Rules is seeking original moving or still public service announcements that help promote bicycling and improve the public image of cyclists. Winners receive cash and...
prizes. Video PSA winners also receive a screening at the Biking Rules Film Festival in New York City November 2009.

Childhood Obesity Research Poll Shows Environment, Physical Activity Matter
(Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, July 29, 2009)
http://www.rwjf.org/pr/product.jsp?id=46432

Recently, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation asked Web site visitors and subscribers to choose the most influential childhood obesity research for the past year. The results are in, and the five articles receiving the most votes demonstrate the perceived importance of environment.

People Who Bike or Walk to Work Are More Fit, Less Fat than Drivers
(University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, July 10, 2009)
http://uncnews.unc.edu/content/view/2695/71/

Incorporating even relatively short bouts of exercise into a daily commute appears to deliver significant rewards, according to a new study from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

JAMA Commentaries

http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/302/3/315

“Health is determined not only by genetics and personal choices but also by policies and environmental factors. Public health and medicine need to engage more proactively in policy decisions, and HIAs provide a great vehicle for doing so. In addition, greater awareness and use of HIAs could be achieved if legislators, funders, donors, and foundations would incorporate HIAs in the planning of projects they support.”

http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/302/6/683

Katz suggests that the use of structural interventions could increase activity and improve diet. Interventions include zoning regulations that would create urban neighborhoods where retail service and public facilities are proximal to homes; building codes that would widen sidewalks; infrastructure improvements such as creation of walking trails within parks. The table in the article cites several other structural interventions for encouraging physical activity.

Journal Articles

Seeking and Valuing Win-Win Built Environment Investments for Healthy and Sustainable Travel
Given the societal concerns with global climate change and the epidemic of physical inactivity, policy makers are searching for effective and economically viable strategies that can help reduce auto dependency and increase biking and walking. This study aims to identify and evaluate win-win built environment improvement strategies that would simultaneously promote sustainable and healthy travel behavior. Specifically, the paper describes an econometric analysis framework capable of differentiating the built environment elements that result in substantive effect from those that lead to complementary or synergistic effects. It discusses the application of this modeling method to identify the impacts of various built environment factors on individuals’ daily travel distances by motorized versus non-motorized modes. Furthermore, the paper presents a quantitative assessment of the economic return of promising built environment improvement strategies by estimating and comparing the associated health benefits against construction costs. The results indicate that increasing length of bike lane in neighborhood has complementary effect; that is, people would walk/bike more but would still continue to drive at the same rate. Two win-win strategies were found to give the substitutive effect. One is increased regional retail accessibility and the other is increased prevalence of sidewalks within 1 mile neighborhood buffers. Our benefit-cost analysis showed that, by an investment of around $450M that makes sidewalks available to all the residents in Dane County, the combined benefits from increased physical activity and reduced emissions is estimated to be around $91.65M per year. While concrete sidewalks have an expected service life between 20 and 40 years, our estimated benefit-cost ratio of 1.73 over a ten year life-cycle demonstrates sidewalk provision as a cost effectiveness investment.


In the United States, health disparities in obesity and obesity-related illnesses have been the subject of growing concern. To better understand how obesity-related health disparities might relate to obesogenic built environments, the authors conducted a systematic review of the published scientific literature, screening for studies with relevance to disadvantaged individuals or areas, identified by low socioeconomic status, black race, or Hispanic ethnicity. A search for related terms in publication databases and topically related resources yielded 45 studies published between January 1995 and January 2009 with at least 100 participants or area residents that provided information on 1) the built environment correlates of obesity or related health behaviors within one or more disadvantaged groups or 2) the relative exposure these groups had to potentially obesogenic built environment characteristics. Upon consideration of the obesity and behavioral correlates of built environment characteristics, research provided the strongest support for food stores (supermarkets instead of smaller grocery/convenience stores), places to exercise, and safety as potentially influential for disadvantaged groups. There is also evidence that disadvantaged groups were living in worse environments with respect to food stores, places to exercise, aesthetic problems, and traffic or crime-related safety. One strategy to reduce obesity would involve changing the built environment to be more supportive of physical activity and a healthy diet. Based on the authors’ review, increasing supermarket access, places to exercise, and neighborhood safety may also be promising strategies to reduce obesity-related health disparities.

OBJECTIVE: This study assessed the environmental characteristics of ten universities, comparing the extent to which physical infra-structures are able to support a route-based walking intervention.

METHOD: Following protocol standardization between and within sites, major pedestrian routes at main suburban campuses in seven countries (Australia, Canada, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Spain and the United States) were audited by researchers using an established inventory (March-June 2008). The inventory assessed key characteristics (e.g. size and employee number) and nine specific items (pedestrian facilities, vehicle conflicts, crossings, route-maintenance, walkway width, roadway buffer, universal accessibility, aesthetics and cover), scored on a five-point scale (1=very poor; 5=excellent). Item scores for each route, were combined and weighted, to provide indicators of low (score of 20-39), fair (score of 40-69), or good (score of 70-100) physical infra-structure support.

RESULTS: Sites varied in area (range of 7-1000 acres) and employee numbers (range of 700-7500 employees). Audits reported good support for route-based walking at seven sites (overall route score range=72.5+/-13.9-82.2+/-17.4), fair support at two sites (overall route score of 69.1+/-11.7 and 61.7+/-14.6), and low support at one site (overall route score of 22.1+/-7.3).

CONCLUSIONS: Study methods highlight a valuable audit process, while findings identify the need to improve aspects of physical infra-structure at sites where the built environment may be less conducive for route-based walking.

Job Opportunities

Project Manager, Health Impact Assessment Project, Washington, DC
(Application deadline unknown)

The Pew Charitable Trusts, an independent nonprofit, is driven by the power of knowledge to solve today’s most challenging problems. Pending funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the Health Impact Assessment project will be a four and a half year effort to promote the use of health impact assessment (HIA) as a tool for evidence-based policymaking to improve human health. This position has an end date of January 31, 2014. The project may be extended pending the success of the project and additional funding.

The project manager will oversee the day to day operations of the project, manage the grant solicitation and review process for the demonstration projects, and supervise all contracts with vendors. In addition s/he will coordinate meetings and conferences with grantees and policymakers, manage training/technical assistance contractors and serve as the liaison with RWJF grants administration staff. The successful candidate will offer at least eight years of professional experience in project management and public policy with a background in public health/health policy preferred. Familiarity with HIA or other forms of policy assessment a plus. A Masters degree in public health, public policy, or a related field required.
The project manager, Health Impact Assessment Project position reports to the project director, Health Impact Assessment Project and will be based in Pew's Washington, D.C. office. This position is contingent on expected funding and if approved, would result in a start date of early to mid-August for the successful candidate. For more information on the position, visit http://jobs-pct.icims.com/jobs/1802/job.

A Senior Associate, Health Impact Assessment Project, Washington, DC
(Application deadline unknown)

This position, based in Pew's Washington, D.C. office, will report to the project manager of the Health Impact Assessment project. The senior associate will work closely with the project director, manager and other team members to advance the project's objectives. The successful candidate will spend approximately half of her/his time as a liaison to the demonstration project grantees and the other half her/his time on policy analysis, including summarizing best practices, writing policy briefs and papers, educating policy-makers and helping conduct two federal HIAs. This position has an end date of January 31, 2014. The project may be extended pending the success of the project, board approval and additional funding. The ideal candidate will have four to eight years experience in public policy or non-profit arenas. Background in project start-up, grantee management, and/or policy analysis preferred. More information on the position is available at http://jobs-pct.icims.com/jobs/1819/job.

Training Opportunities

Land Trust Alliance Rally 2009
October 11-14, 2009, Portland, OR
http://www.landtrustalliance.org/learning/rallyl

The land conservation learning experience includes 100+ seminars and workshops with expert faculty, field trips, and special government partner sessions. Cost is $295-$510.

Conservation Fund: GIS Tools for Strategic Conservation Planning
October 27-30, 2009, Shepherdstown, PA
http://www.conservationfund.org/course/gis_tools_strategic_conservation_planning

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center and The Conservation Fund offer this course to teach students how to apply GIS tools, methodologies, and analyses to strategic conservation planning using a “Green Infrastructure” approach. Cost is $550.

IMPACT - International Health Impact Assessment Consortium Comprehensive HIA Training
November 9-13, 2009, Liverpool, England
http://www.liv.ac.uk/ihia/training.htm

The 5-day training is for those whose current and future work is likely to require an understanding of the theory and practice of health impact assessment, for both commissioners and practitioners. Course fees range from £795 to £995.

Planning for Healthy Places with Health Impact Assessments, American Planning Association and the National Association of County & City Health Officials, ongoing, online
http://professional.captus.com/Planning/hia/default.aspx

This free e-learning course explains the value of conducting an HIA and the steps involved in conducting it. Throughout the course, examples of health impact assessments have been
highlighted and discussed. The course is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Health Impact Assessment in Practice Virtual Learning Environment, NHS Health Scotland, ongoing, online

The aim of this free, downloadable course is to present examples of approaches to HIAs and increase participants’ confidence in doing HIA in practice. The course is designed for practitioners with some existing awareness of HIA, but limited experience.

Resources

CDC’s Healthy Places Web site
www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces

The federal Web site discusses health issues related to land use and offers a variety of federal and nonfederal resources on built environment and health.

EPA’s Smart Growth
http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/index.htm

The EPA smart growth program helps communities improve their development practices and get the type of development they want. EPA works with local, state, and national experts to discover and encourage successful, environmentally sensitive development strategies.

Academic Research Related to Safe Routes to School
http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/mediacenter/229925

This research compilation includes a representative review of academic research exploring many of the issues addressed by Safe Routes to School programs. Research topics highlighted in this section investigate relationships between:
- Physical activity, academic achievement, and obesity;
- The impact of the built environment on active travel;
- The effects of active transport on air quality and the environment; and
- Issues related to pedestrian and bicycle safety, traffic congestion, and transportation.

Active Strategies for Healthy Communities Toolkit
http://www.leadershipforhealthycommunities.org/content/view/352/154/

The policy options and resources within the Leadership for Healthy Communities Action Strategies Toolkit represent a collection of current best approaches that have been identified, evaluated and selected by Leadership for Healthy Communities and the 11 policy-maker organizations participating in the program.

Smart Growth Leadership Institute Toolkit
http://www.smartgrowthtoolkit.net/

The Toolkit is designed to help community leaders review and revise their land use policies, zoning and development codes and project design standards. It includes step-by-step
“audits” of policies and codes, as well as a scorecard for evaluating proposed development projects.

Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food—Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences: Report to Congress
http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AP/AP036/

The report summarizes findings of a national-level assessment of the extent and characteristics of food deserts, analysis of the consequences of food deserts, lessons learned from related Federal programs, and a discussion of policy options for alleviating the effects of food deserts. Overall, findings show that a small percentage of consumers are constrained in their ability to access affordable nutritious food because they live far from a supermarket or large grocery store and do not have easy access to transportation.

CDC's Community Health Resources

The online resource helps you plan, implement and evaluate community health interventions and programs to address chronic disease and health disparities issues. You’ll find links to hundreds of useful planning guides, evaluation frameworks, communication materials, behavioral and risk factor data, fact sheets, scientific articles, key reports and state and local program contacts. Built environment is included in the resource.

ACSM American Fitness Index Community Action Guide
http://www.americanfitnessindex.org/guide.htm

The ACSM American Fitness Index™ (AFI) program can help city planners, policy makers, health educators, and other professionals understand how the health of the city, its residents, and community assets that support healthy lifestyles compare to other cities nationwide. The AFI data report includes health indicators such as the percentage of people who exercise regularly, maintain a healthy weight, eat the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables, have access to health care, have health insurance, and don’t smoke. Environmental factors included the availability of parks, walking/bike trails, and public transportation. The AFI Community Action Guide is designed to serve as a companion tool to the ACSM American Fitness Index™ data report (http://www.americanfitnessindex.org/report.htm).

Measuring Urban Design Qualities: A Field Manual

The manual provides a qualitative introduction to several key urban design qualities from the urban design literature, and guidance on how to objectively measure each quality for a typical street.

Active Living Research Literature Search Database
http://www.activelivingresearch.org/litdb/papers.php?action=search

The database features papers which study the relationship between environment and policy with physical activity and obesity. The purpose of the searchable database is to make detailed information on study characteristics and results accessible to all and to improve the use of studies for research and policy purposes. The papers in the database are limited to those with physical activity, obesity or sedentary behaviors as outcomes and environment or policy correlates. At the moment we do not include other health outcomes, such as diet or depression.
Healthy Community Design and Access to Healthy Food Legislation Database

This database by the National Conference of State Legislatures collects, tracks, and summarizes state legislation that either seeks to increase access to healthy food or opportunities for physical activity in one’s daily routine. Examples of such policies include farm-to-school and farmers’ market programs, bicycle and walking paths, grocery store development, and transit-oriented development, as well as many others. The database can be searched using state, topic area, year, bill type, text search, bill status, and bill type to craft your search. Multiple options from a search area, such as Alaska and Vermont, can be selected by holding down the shift key while selecting an individual state. This database is typically updated bi-monthly January through May, and monthly the remainder of the year.

NACCHO’s Community Design/Land Use Planning Web page
http://www.naccho.org/topics/environmental/landuseplanning/

The National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) has developed this Web site in their effort to bring local health departments into the land usage decision-making process. The site includes a free online health impact assessment (HIA) course; a toolkit where local public health professionals and planners can share resources and tools for land use planning, model practices in community design and land use planning; and Webinars and presentation materials on HIA, built environment, and collaboration.

Local Governments and Schools: A Community-Oriented Approach ICMA and the Smart Growth Network (2008)

This guide provides local government managers with an understanding of the connections between school facility planning and local government management issues. It offers strategies for how local governments and schools can bring their respective planning efforts together to take a more community-oriented approach to schools and reach multiple community goals—educational, environmental, economic, social, and fiscal.

International Association for Public Participation Toolbox
http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/06Dec_Toolbox.pdf

An easy reference guide that looks at a spectrum of public participation techniques, what they require, and how each might benefit or harm your project.

Treat the earth well. It was not given to you by your parents. It was loaned to you by your children.
---Kenyan proverb

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