Healthy Community Design News

July 2012

Dear Healthy Community Design News Subscribers,

Denmark is building superhighways—for bikes! The first superhighway, 11 miles long, opened in April. The brainchild of city planners, it is the first of 26 routes scheduled to be built to encourage more people to commute to and from Copenhagen by bicycle. The Capital Region of Denmark, a political body responsible for public hospitals as well as regional development, has provided $1.6 million for the superhighway project. Read about this planning and public health partnership at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/18/world/europe/in-denmark-pedaling-to-work-on-a-superhighway.html?src=me&ref=general.

Dr. Arthur M. Wendel, Team Lead for CDC’s Healthy Community Design Initiative, is guest columnist in the July/August 2012 issue of the Journal of Environmental Health. Wendel describes health impact assessments (HIAs) and how they are instrumental in building healthy and safe community environments. He also provides tools and resources created by the Initiative to help environmental health practitioners engage in HIAs. The article is available at http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Docs/JEH/2012/July-Aug_Wendel-HIA.pdf.

Until next time, keep up the good work!

--Charles Green, CGreen1@cdc.gov
www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces

“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood.”
---Daniel Burnham

Conferences, August 2012
August 6-9, 2012, National Council of State Legislators (NCSL) Legislative Summit
Chicago
http://www.ncsl.org/meetings/legislativesummit12/overview/general.aspx

August 12-15, 2012, Institute of Transportation Engineers 2012 Annual Meeting and Exhibit
Atlanta
http://www.ite.org/annualmeeting/

August 29-31, 2012, 12th International HIA Conference
Quebec, Canada

**Webinar**

*Tuesday, July 31, 2012, 2 p.m. - 3:15 a.m. EST / 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. PST, Healthy Food, Healthy Economies (Policylink and its Partners)*

https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/showReg?udc=sptyk26urbmb&msource=healthy

The Webinar will explore why and how supporting efforts to improve food security and healthy, local foods can strengthen our communities. Brought to you by the Food and Agriculture Policy Collaborative, this webinar will feature industry-leading speakers and data points to help you make the case in your own community.

**Funding and Award Opportunities**

**Building Capacity for Health Impact Assessments at State/Territorial Health Agencies Request for Proposals,** Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (deadline July 31, 2012, 5:00 p.m. PST)

http://www.astho.org/Display/AssetDisplay.aspx?id=7201

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Environmental Health/Healthy Community Design Initiative (CDC/NCEH/HCDI) will fund and support up to four (4) state or territorial health agencies (STHAs) to conduct one Health Impact Assessment (HIA) by May 31, 2013. The primary purpose of this RFP is to build capacity for conducting HIA among STHAs through a hands-on, project-oriented approach. HIA targets can originate from a variety of sectors, but those with an environmental health focus will be given preference (i.e. transportation, land use, housing, parks, agriculture, or energy).

Four awards of up to $15,000 are available to four STHAs to conduct an HIA. In addition, some applicants may be eligible to receive HIA training from
ASTHO/CDC prior to project implementation. The project duration will be from August 15, 2012 through May 31, 2013. Additional funding may be leveraged from other programs within the state to supplement this initiative.

Any STHA is eligible to apply, though preference will be given to those with a demonstrated need and readiness to undertake a project within the timeframe. Preference will also be given to HIA projects that feature environmental health topics. Applications from STHA partner organizations will also be considered if the applicant demonstrates that the project will build significant HIA capacity at the STHA. If the application is from a partner organization, a letter of support from the STHA is required.

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance, National Park Service (deadline August 1, 2012)

http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/contactus/cu_apply.html

Every year, the National Park Service helps hundreds of locally driven projects that create opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation, connect youth with the outdoors, and connect communities to parks. No funding is provided but experienced staff provide guidance to communities so they can conserve waterways, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. The project applicant may be a state or local agency, tribe, nonprofit organization, or citizens' group.

Health Impact Assessment Call for Proposals, Health Impact Project (deadlines: Program grant brief proposals September 14, 2012; September 28, 2012 Demonstration Project Grant Proposals September 28, 2012; Informational web conferences begin August 1, 2012)

http://www.healthimpactproject.org/project/opportunities

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, announced a call for proposals for grants to conduct health impact assessments (HIAs). HIAs identify and address the health impacts of decisions in other sectors.

The call for proposals will support two kinds of awards: demonstration project grants of up to $75,000, which will each fund a single HIA to inform a specific upcoming decision on a proposed policy, program, plan, or project; and HIA program grants of up to $250,000, which will allow organizations with prior experience to conduct at least two new HIAs and to develop stable HIA programs that endure beyond the conclusion of the grant period.

Three web conferences are scheduled in August for information for applicants. The first is scheduled for August 1st. The web conferences will cover information applicants will need, and they will also include a chance to ask questions about the application process.
Convergence Innovation Fund: Promoting Health and Equity through Built Environment and Healthy Food Access Policy, Convergence Partnership (deadline August 9, 2012, 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time)

http://www.convergencepartnership.org/site/c.fhLOK6PELmF/b.8110763/k.4722/Innovation_Fund_Call_for_Proposals.htm

The Convergence Partnership invites local and regional philanthropic institutions to submit proposals that will support the launch of new grant making initiatives to enhance the built environment and/or expand healthy food access in low-income communities and communities of color to improve health and promote equity. The Innovation Fund provides 50 percent matching dollars, up to $200,000 total, for a three-year period. The goal is to engage philanthropic institutions in creating robust and sustainable support for multifield policy and environmental change efforts emphasizing equity and community partnership.

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Call for Papers and Manuscripts and Submissions

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and International City/County Management Association: Brownfields 2013 - Call for Session Ideas (deadline August 1, 2012)

http://www.brownfieldsconference.org/en/call_for_ideas
Conference organizers are seeking ideas for educational sessions related to current and emerging topics in the areas of brownfields redevelopment and land revitalization. In particular, they are looking for session ideas within the following general “tracks” or topic areas:

- Technical assistance;
- Financing brownfields redevelopment;
- Real estate development;
- Planning for a better environment;
- Community;
- Redevelopment and revitalization;
- Liability and enforcement; and
- Data, research and public health.

*International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* - Call for Papers (deadline August 31, 2012)

Special Issue: Assessment, Management, and Policy-Making for Environmental Pollution Related to Land Use and Land Cover

- This special issue focuses on data acquiring/retrieval, application of qualitative/quantitative models, and epistemic/ontological reasoning that relates environmental pollution and risk assessment to the description of land cover and management/policy-making of land use.

- Research papers on concise and novel techniques that encompass current developments of such studies are particularly welcome. Submitted papers should not have been published previously, nor be under consideration for publication elsewhere. Authors are encouraged to send their tentative title and short abstract by email for approval to the Editorial Office at ijerph@mdpi.com.

- Website: [http://www.mdpi.com/journal/ijerph/special_issues/landuse_landcover](http://www.mdpi.com/journal/ijerph/special_issues/landuse_landcover)

U.S. Play Coalition 2013 Conference on the Value of Play - Call for Presentation Submissions (deadline October 4, 2012, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time)

[http://usplaycoalition.clemson.edu/conf2013_proposal.php](http://usplaycoalition.clemson.edu/conf2013_proposal.php)

This year’s theme is “Take Action.” The conference is seeking presentations and posters that focus on play advocacy/policy, play practice/programs, play research, and other play-oriented research topics. The conference will be held February 17-20, 2013, in Clemson, South Carolina.

*International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* - Call for Papers (deadline October 31, 2012)
Special Issue: Health Benefits of Nature

- Research has shown that separation from nature is implicated in declining physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing. This issue will highlight research evidence to confirm such links, as well as strategies which have been, are being or could be applied to address the problems associated with nature deprivation and/or to capitalize on human links with nature.

- Research papers, analytical reviews, case studies, reflections on practice (clinical or non-clinical), policy analysis and frameworks for action are solicited.

- Website: www.mdpi.com/si/ijerph/nature/

Collaborative Special Issue on Sustainable Design and Construction for two journals, Sustainability and Buildings- Call for Manuscripts (deadline November 30, 2012)

Sustainability is an international, peer-reviewed open access journal of environmental, cultural, economic and social sustainability. Buildings is an international scientific open access journal on building science, building engineering and architecture.

- Please visit the Instructions for Authors for the appropriate journal before submitting a manuscript:
  - Sustainability: http://www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability/instructions

- Authors are encouraged to send their tentative title and short abstract by e-mail for approval to the Editorial Offices at sustainability@mdpi.com or buildings@mdpi.com.

- If you have questions, please contact the Editorial Offices at sustainability@mdpi.com or buildings@mdpi.com.

Job Openings

Associate Project Director for an NIH-funded, Longitudinal Study of Childhood Obesity in Five NJ Cities, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ (no closing date)

The associate project director (research analyst) will provide research support and coordination to a major study addressing the impact of changes in the environment on childhood obesity. Funded by the NICHD (NIH), the research
follows a panel of children in five New Jersey cities over five years. The associate project director will be responsible for collecting data on changes in the food and physical activity environment in the cities and coordinating other data collection for the project.

**Specific Responsibilities:** Working with senior research faculty and staff on the project, the associate project director will develop and implement a systematic strategy for monitoring selected changes in the environment. In so doing, s (he) will establish and maintain routine contact with local government officials and community organizations in each of the five cities to elicit information on environmental change. Responsibilities also include collection and maintenance of all project-related files and documentation, including records in compliance with regulations regarding research with human subjects. Coordination functions include maintaining communication with team members across two universities, organizing team meetings, and assuring attentiveness to the work plan and deadlines. The associate director will also be expected to contribute to writing interim and final project reports and communication with funders. Opportunities will be afforded to develop advanced analytic skills, work closely with policy-makers, and participate in policy briefings, academic presentations, and publication of research findings.

**Qualifications:** The position requires a master’s degree in urban planning/urban affairs, public health, health promotion, policy analysis/administration, a social science or a related field, and approximately three years of research experience in health or health services research. Additional graduate courses, up to a PhD, may be substituted for one year of experience. We are seeking someone who is well-organized, has a significant grounding in research methods, and possesses strong interpersonal, time management, and written and oral communications skills. Knowledge of PC applications (e.g., MS Word and Excel) is essential, while familiarity of statistical analysis software (SAS or SPSS) would be helpful. Content knowledge related to childhood obesity prevention, evaluation of policy and environmental interventions, and urban affairs is desired. Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications, and a generous benefits package is included.

For application information and questions contact For further information, contact: Michael Yedidia, Ph.D., Professor, Center for State Health Policy Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, & Aging Research, Rutgers University, (848)932-4645, myedidia@ifh.rutgers.edu.

**Communications Manager, Prevention Institute, Oakland, CA (no closing date)**


Prevention Institute is looking for a seasoned Communications Manager who is deeply committed to improving health and safety and reducing inequities through a focus on prevention. Working under the leadership of senior staff,
this position directs the institute's strategic communication efforts and is responsible for continuing to build our national visibility as a leader in primary prevention. This position is ideally suited for an agile and persuasive writer and communicator who possesses strong management skills and thrives in a team oriented and fast paced environment. The institute's approach is interdisciplinary in nature, addressing health and social issues such as community health and health reform, violence and injury prevention, and improving food and activity environments.

News

Presenting: The 15 Hottest cities of the Future (Business Insider, June 26, 2012)


Although it’s hard to predict what the future holds, this list provides 15 cities that will most likely be great to live in. The list takes the following into consideration: job growth, population growth and demographics, affordability, livability, and the health and well-being of the residents. It also considers how the city is innovating in terms of technology, sustainability, culture, and more.

The Beijing Bicycle: A Requiem (New Geography, June 23, 2012)

http://www.newgeography.com/content/002928-the-beijing-bicycle-a-requiem

In China, the bicycle is becoming an endangered species. As the country grows in wealth, the young and prosperous citizens dream of Honda scooters and small cars. Wonderful bike cities such as Hanoi have given way to congestion, pollution and noise. As the years go on, Beijing is becoming more and more like New York City with obesity creeping in from American fast-food restaurants and bicycle transportation on the wane.

Subdivisions Go Urban as Housing Market Changes (USA Today, May 15, 2012)

http://www.usatoday.com/money/economy/housing/story/2012-05-15/housing-fills-in-urban-areas/54979594/1

The trend toward inner-city living continues to grow especially in Young Millenials and empty nesters. This new wave of home buyers has no desire to live in traditional subdivisions without any urban amenities. Builders are tending to invest in old industrial warehouses or foreclosed properties such as golf courses and reversing 60-year-old development patterns.
**Kids Who Get Driven Everywhere Don’t Know Where They’re Going**  (*The Atlantic Cities*, May 07, 2012)


Researcher Bruce Appleyard found that children “who had a ‘windshield perspective’ from being driven everywhere weren’t able to accurately draw how the streets in their community connected, whereas children who walked or biked to get around produced detailed and highly accurate maps of their neighborhood street network....Appleyard followed up with the children in the heavy-traffic neighborhood after improvements were made to pedestrian and bike infrastructure. Not only were they able to draw more detailed maps, they were happier with their environment.”

**Environmental Factors Spread Obesity, Study Shows.** (*Science Daily*, June 14, 2012)

http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/06/120614131207.htm

Because obesity is related to increased calorie intake and physical inactivity, prevention has focused on changing individuals’ behaviors. However, prevalence of noncommunicable diseases shows spatial clustering, and the spread of obesity has shown “high susceptibility to social pressure and global economic drivers.” The analysis shows that spatial fluctuations in food economic activity are linked to obesity and diabetes.


Dee Merriam, a planner with CDC’s Healthy Community Design Initiative, explains the importance of parks and green infrastructure in helping curb the high rates obesity and depression, and the effects of climate change.

**Walkable, Greener Neighborhoods Key to Safer Future Cities.** (*Technologist*, June 14, 2012)

http://www.txtechnologist.com/2012/walkable-green-neighborhoods-key-to-safer-future-cities

Some good news for the burgeoning population of urbanites around the world: safer streets with less crime won’t require huge investments in new technologies. Instead, urban planners and researchers say that controlling crime in the future means looking to the past and up into the trees.

**Can Our Smart Phones Convince Us to Walk More?** (*The Atlantic Cities*, June 8, 2012)

http://www.theatlanticcities.com/commute/2012/06/can-technology-convince-us-walk-more/2223/
Citizens of the United States walk less than citizens of any other industrialized nation. At a recent symposium, “Walking and the Life of the City” research was presented that suggests that augmented reality (AR) may hold the key to encourage pedestrians to travel beyond their cognitive maps. AR applications in smart phones and computers make walking lively, fun, and explorative again.


http://urbanland.uli.org/Articles/2012/April/ul/NyrenULX?utm_source=uli&utm_medium=blast&utm_campaign=06042012

These days, recreation centers go far beyond their traditional use and often serve as a social hub, incorporating educational programs and health care services and hosting community meetings and performances. The ten contemporary facilities on the list exemplify the hybrid nature of recreation centers, building on the synergy of shared uses and providing daylit, flexible communal spaces to tempt people away from their electronics and help them connect in the real world.

**Opinions from Around the World**


One blogger suggests expanding our thoughts on physical ownership of place as a way to counter NIMBYism.


http://www.theatlanticcities.com/design/2012/06/grave-health-risks-unwalkable-communities/2362/

“Safe, walkable neighborhoods are not just an amenity, they’re a matter of life or death.”

**Journal Articles**

Gallos LK, Bartfeld P, Havlin S, Sigman M, Makse HA. **Collective behavior in the spatial spreading of obesity.** Scientific Reports. 2012; 2. doi: [10.1038/srep00454](http://www.nature.com/srep/2012/120614/srep00454/full/srep00454.html)
The researchers' study of the spatial patterns of the spread of obesity found a relationship between the prevalence of obesity and the growth of the supermarket economy.


ABSTRACT: Access to parks and recreational opportunities contributes to physical activity and positive health outcomes. But who is responsible for building the healthy city, particularly where resources are limited? While neoliberal state restructuring and fiscal austerity measures have increased the responsibility of nonprofit organizations in local services provision, little is known about their role in promoting healthy urban environments. This article investigates the role of nonprofits in supporting parks and physical activity in Southern California and analyzes the relationships between levels of voluntary-sector activity and the socio-demographic, economic, and fiscal characteristics of municipalities. Results indicate that nonprofits are unevenly distributed and more active in affluent, fiscally stronger, suburban, conservative, and white municipalities, reproducing intra-urban differences underlying health disparities.


ABSTRACT: Youth sexual risk behavior is often described in social terms, and there has been limited attention to date on how measures of the built environment, including access to municipal services, impact sexual risk behavior, particularly in resource-limited countries. Using the Cape Area Panel Study, we assessed the impact of neighborhood conditions (six single items and a built environment index (BEI)), net of individual socio-demographic factors. The results suggest that built environment factors are associated with sexual risk behavior. Also, the magnitude of associations between built environment factors and sexual risk behavior was more pronounced for females than for males.


ABSTRACT: Recent trends towards the intensification of urban development to increase urban densities and avoid sprawl should be accompanied by research
into the potential for related health impacts from environmental exposure. The objective of the current study was to examine the effect of the built environment and land use on levels of environmental noise. Two different study areas were selected using a combination of small area census geography, land use information, air photography, and ground-truthing. The first study area represented residential land use and consisted of two- to three-story single-family homes. The second study area was characteristic of mixed-use urban planning with apartment buildings as well as commercial and institutional development. Study areas were subdivided into six grids, and a location was randomly selected within each grid for noise monitoring. Each location was sampled four times over a 24-h day, resulting in a total of 24 samples for each of the two areas. Results showed significant variability in noise within study areas and significantly higher levels of environmental noise in the mixed-use area. Both study areas exceeded recommended noise limits when evaluated against World Health Organization guidelines and yielded average noise events values in the moderate to serious annoyance range with the potential to obscure normal conversation and cause sleep disturbance.

Resources

http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/tiap20/30/1

The premiere issue of this journal is available online for free. Articles focus on the state of the art in environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment, policy assessment, social impact assessment, health impact assessment, and sustainability assessment.


The forthcoming book “offers a guide to this urban cycling renaissance, with the goal of promoting cycling as sustainable urban transportation available to everyone. It reports on cycling trends and policies in cities in North America, Europe, and Australia, and offers information on such topics as cycling safety, cycling infrastructure provisions including bikeways and bike parking, the wide range of bike designs and bike equipment, integration of cycling with public transportation, and promoting cycling for women and children.” Co-editor John Pucher discusses one of his chapters on childred and cycling in a European Cyclists’ Federation interview, available at http://www.ecf.com/news/childrenrcycling/.

Report examines how improving the design of our cities and the way they function—from transport networks, to the availability of parks and sporting grounds, to the architecture of public spaces and buildings—makes it easier for people to connect with each other. The report shows how even tiny changes, such as installing a few benches at the edge of a public area or converting an unused lot into a ‘pocket park,’ can make urban spaces more welcoming.

ParkScore (The Trust for Public Land)
http://parkscore.tpl.org/

This resource allows you to search through and compare city’s ParkScores, which are determined by acreage, access, and service and investment. It also includes maps, statistics, and park facts as well as tips for improving a ParkScore.

The linked burdens of obesity and diabetes (ESRI)
http://storymaps.esri.com/stories/diabetes/

A story map that links obesity and diabetes and provides county statistics.

Mapnificent (Google)
http://www.mapnificent.net/

An application that shows areas you can reach with public transportation in a given amount of time as well as many other features such as intersecting time-based maps.

Planning in America: Perceptions and Priorities (American Planning Association)
http://www.planning.org/policy/economicrecovery/

A June 14, 2012, survey by the American Planning Association of 1,300 Americans asked "Which of the following do you want your local planners to spend their time on?"

When asked “What makes an ideal community?”, respondents answered as follows:

- having locally-owned businesses nearby (55 percent);
- the ability to grow old in the same neighborhood (54 percent);
- availability of sidewalks (53 percent);
- energy-efficient homes (52 percent);
availability of transit (50 percent); and
neighborhood parks (49 percent).


This report summarizes efforts made by metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to integrate public health factors and considerations into their transportation plans. Additionally, the report offers options through which an MPO can work with its Council of Government (COG) to integrate nontransportation planning activities into the transportation and public health discussion.

“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”
---Immanuel Kant

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