Dear Healthy Community Design News subscribers,

I am invigorated by the convergence of public health and built environment taking place at respective national planning and health conferences. I just attended CDC’s National Environmental Public Health Conference in Atlanta October 26-28. Some of the healthy community design topics included:

- How community unity can lead to a walkable, bikeable, human-scaled neighborhood in a reinvigorated post-Katrina New Orleans.
- Addressing the transportation and mobility issues to prevent older adult pedestrian injuries.
- Exploring how recreational space’s promotion of health - physical, social, and mental - can concurrently promote resource conservation, pollution prevention, and environmental management and can contribute to the simultaneous advancement of these societal goals.
- Characteristics of successful brownfield redevelopment projects.
- Examining the macro-level community design decisions impacting health, identifying key policy opportunities, critical strategies and core organizational elements for local health to positively shape the built environment.
- Identifying policies and legislation that can best influence the design, promotion and implementation of laws that lead to a more healthful community.

The next public health and built environment convergence I will attend is the CDC-sponsored New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Seattle, Washington February 4-6, 2010 (http://www.newpartners.org/). The conference theme is “Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities.” If you are there, please stop by CDC’s Healthy Community Design booth and say hello.

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

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

Our privileges can be no greater than our obligations. The protection of our rights can endure no longer than the performance of our responsibilities.

---John F. Kennedy

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Washington, DC

http://www.trb.org

February 4-6, 2009, 9th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth: Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities

Seattle, Washington

http://www.newpartners.org/

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**Funding Opportunities**

Deadline December 15:  2010 U.S. Forest Service National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost Share Grant Program

http://www.fs.fed.us/ucf/supporting_docs/9_22_09_2010%20RFP.pdf

The $900k grant program seeks innovative research, collaborations, and programs that examine and advance: the use of urban trees and natural resources in mitigating climate change impacts, or expanding our knowledge of adaptation of the urban forest to climate change effects; and the role of urban forests to promote physical and mental health. Any non-Federal organization, operating within the United States or its territories, may apply. Funds are to support urban and community forestry projects that have a national or widespread impact and application. All grant funds must be matched at least equally (dollar for dollar) with non-Federal source funds. This match may include in-kind donations, volunteer assistance, and private and public (non-federal) monetary contributions.

No Deadline: Health Impact Project Call for Proposals for Health Impact Demonstration Projects

http://www.healthimpactproject.org/call

The Health Impact Project call for proposals (CFP) is seeking applicants to undertake health impact assessment (HIA) demonstration projects. The goal of the CFP and subsequent HIAs is to demonstrate the effectiveness of HIAs and promote their incorporation into local, state, tribal, and federal decision-making. Government
agencies, educational institutions and nonprofit organizations are encouraged to apply. Successful applicants will receive grants of $25,000 to $150,000.

Call for Papers/Ideas

Deadline: December 1, 2009. The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) invites academic paper submissions for presentation at the 18th annual CNU to be held in Atlanta May 19-22, 2010. Organized with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “New Urbanism: Rx for Healthy Places,” will explore the opportunities and challenges of designing and developing communities that promote healthy lives. Papers offering research on the relationship between the built environment and public and personal health are strongly encouraged. Submit online at www.cnu.org/callforpapers. Submissions should be no longer than 2400 words, excluding endnotes, and all papers must also include an abstract not to exceed 100 words. Submissions must represent original work, cannot have been previously published, and must be written in English. CNU is also seeking reviewers, especially those with a health research background. Interested reviewers are asked to e-mail a short paragraph describing their areas of expertise to callforpapers@cnu.org.

Deadline: March 1, 2010. Public Health Reports (PHR) is inviting manuscripts for a Special Supplement on Healthy People in a Healthy Environment. PHR will accept submissions based on original, not previously published, findings on programs, policies, measures, outcomes, and strategies that can be used to improve public environmental health science and practice. The journal is seeking manuscripts that include the following topics:

- Healthy Places: Research and programs related to healthy communities, schools, and housing; indoor and outdoor air quality; land reuse and revitalization; and the built environment.
- Sustainability and Public Health: Public health’s engagement with a variety of sustainability initiatives. These can include efforts to mitigate or adapt to climate change, green health-care, and energy initiatives, and other sustainability programs.

The editors encourage a broad range of manuscripts, especially those reporting on vulnerable populations and other groups disproportionately impacted by unhealthy environments or failed policies. Articles in PHR are typically 3,000-4,000 words in length. Longer manuscripts, when appropriate, will be considered. The anticipated publication date for the Special Supplement is Spring of 2011. Manuscripts should be sent electronically to manuscripts@publichealthreports.org or by mail to: Public Health Reports, 7774 Heatherglen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45255. Information on the journal is available at www.publichealthreports.org.

News

ASPH/CDC Environmental Health Scholarship Program Announces Recipients http://fridayletter.asph.org/article_view.cfm?FLE_Index=10910&FL_Index=1589

Six doctoral-level students have been selected to receive scholarships of $25,000 each for the 2009-2010 academic year. Scholarship recipients will have the opportunity to pursue their doctoral-level studies while receiving guidance and input from CDC experts in two key areas of study: the relationship between public health and community design; and, the relationship between public health and climate change.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that 30 years ago it was common to see children walking or bicycling to school. Today, according to a study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, less than half of the students who live within a mile of school go there even one day a week by walking or bicycling. A relatively new Federal program, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), addresses several of these challenges through three key goals: encouraging children to walk and bicycle to school; improving their safety along the way; and reducing traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution near schools—all helping to create livable communities.

Green Spaces Improve Health (BBC News, October 15, 2009)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8307024.stm

Researchers from the VU University Medical Centre in Amsterdam found that living near a green space has its health benefits, particularly for those living less than a kilometre (0.62miles) from a green space. The study was published in J Epidemiol Community Health. 2009 Oct 15 (Maas J, et al. Morbidity is related to a green living environment)

Built to Heal: Measuring the Health Impact of Land Use (Sustainable Industries, November 2, 2009)
http://www.sustainableindustries.com/greenbuilding/68569307.html?viewAll=y

With a steeper poverty rate, lower life expectancy, and higher rates of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and asthma than the rest of the county that surrounds it, West Oakland is one of several locations in the San Francisco Bay Area where community groups, city officials and project developers are pioneering the use of Health Impact Assessment as a way to calculate the health effects of land-use decisions, with the goal of promoting health and mitigating negative impacts.

LEED 2009 for Neighborhood Development Rating System Passes

The LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system passed the U.S. Green Building Council’s ballot and has received approval from their partner organizations the Congress for the New Urbanism and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The rating system now represents two-and-a-half years of market and user feedback.

Reburbia Winners Announced
http://www.re-burbia.com/

The competition called for design solutions that would address the problems that plague present-day suburbia by envisioning different scenarios for the future. Proposals tackled McMansions, big box stores, strip malls, parking lots and more with design fixes ranging from community agriculture and algae-based biofuels to transplanted tract developments and zeppelin-based transit.

Journal Articles and Reports


The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and fire marshals from across the country have partnered together on an
Emergency Response & Street Design Initiative. This initiative is aimed at reconciling the growing desire for appropriately-sized and connected streets with emergency responders’ access needs.

Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States (MMWR, July 24, 2009)
http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5807a1.htm

CDC’s recently released recommended strategies to prevent obesity include such community design recommendations as: Improve geographic availability of supermarkets in underserved areas; improve access to outdoor recreational facilities; enhance infrastructure to support biking and walking; support locating schools within easy walking distance of residential areas; and improve access to public transportation.

Commentary

Health Impact Assessment: Promoting Health Across Sectors, by Dr. Andrew Dannenberg (Northwest Public Health Journal, Fall/Winter 2009)

“In recent years, there has been increasing recognition in the US that land use and transportation planning decisions can have a substantial impact on the public’s health. With this growing recognition has come increased use of Health Impact Assessment (HIA)... More work is needed to identify best practices, build capacity, and increase funding sources for conducting HIAs. Bills encouraging or requiring the use of HIAs have been introduced at the federal level and in several states. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts plan to launch a national initiative this fall that will help advance the field of HIAs.”

How to Get More Bicycles on the Road by Linda Baker (Scientific American Magazine, October 16, 2009)
http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=getting-more-bicyclists-on-the-road

“An emerging body of research suggests that a superior strategy to increase pedal pushing could be had by asking the perennial question: What do women want?”

Book Review

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/books/review/Byrne-t.html?_r=4&fl=demc=b

“Mapes ...details how cities from Amsterdam to Paris to New York to Davis, Calif., have developed policies encouraging cycling in recent decades, and how other towns are just beginning to make way for bikes. He lays out in an easily digestible way a fair amount of material on trip patterns, traffic safety and air pollution. He quotes the relevant studies and shows how those studies have been either heeded or ignored.”

Training Opportunities

Smart Growth School 101
Starting with the basics, the SMART GROWTH SCHOOL addresses the needs of those who plan and design our cities. Students will be given the practical tools needed to move from auto-oriented and greenhouse gas-producing sprawl to pedestrian and transit-oriented neighborhoods, towns, and cities. $695-$885.

Context Sensitive Solutions Workshop
December 7, 2009, Portland, Oregon
http://cssnationaldialog.org/schedule.asp

The one-day workshop will provide transportation agency employees and managers, government decision makers, community groups and future transportation professionals the opportunity to learn more about Context Sensitive Solutions (www.contextsensitivesolutions.org) and how it can improve transportation processes and outcomes. Workshop participants will draw from the case studies to identify and understand effective strategies tailored to the regional context. Free.

The Built Environment Assessment Training (BEAT) Institute
June 13-18, 2010, Philadelphia, PA
http://www.med.upenn.edu/beat/index.shtml

The Built Environment Assessment Training (BEAT) Institute is a week-long institute designed to train investigators and practitioners tangible skills that can be used to measure many of the aspects of the built environment that are believed to have an effect on health. $400 with a limited number of tuition/travel scholarships available. Application deadline is January 20, 2010, and all applicants will be notified of selection by March 15, 2010.

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
Growing Smart, Living Healthier: A Guide to Smart Growth and Active Aging
http://www.epa.gov/aging/bhc/guide/

This U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidebook is intended for older adults who are interested in how our communities work and how we might help them become more ‘age-friendly.

Slide World
http://www.slideworld.net/

This research-sharing platform is a useful tool for finding articles, presentations and slides on various topics including health and built environment. Slideworld is founded by a group of health care professionals and web enthusiasts who believe research knowledge should be freely available to all.

Health Impact Assessment Collaborative
http://www.hiacollaborative.org/home

The San Francisco Bay Area Health Impact Assessment Collaborative is a group of academic, government, and non-profit HIA practitioners who have joined together to be more effective in conducting HIA, engaging stakeholders in partnerships, providing training, and helping to develop policy. The Web site features examples of completed case studies, training and education opportunities, tools you can use to conduct HIA, policies we have advanced, and how our work has engaged diverse stakeholders in HIA partnerships. The Web site also has a discussion board whose purpose is to provide a forum where members of the public can post questions and read through answers from HIA practitioners.

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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 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.

Smart Growth Schools
http://www.smartgrowthschools.org/

The Web site is designed to make it easier for people to understand how they can improve their communities and schools by considering issues that are oftentimes ignored in the school planning process. These issues pertain to the intersection between Smart Growth and K-12 schools. Key elements of the Web site include Smart Growth Schools Report Card, listserv, resource links, seminars, and workshops.

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.

Association of State and Territorial Health Officers Smart Growth Toolkit
http://www.astho.org/Programs/Environmental-Health/Built-and-Synthetic-Environment/Smart-Growth-Tool-Kit/

The Smart Growth Tool Kit is meant to provide state and territorial health officials with an easily accessible guide for information on different smart growth principles as well as real life examples of what different communities around the country are doing. For each unique category below there is a brief description of its importance to public health. Case studies and other resources are also provided for states and localities to better understand the concept of smart growth and develop model practices for their own communities.

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.

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.

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.

American Planning Association Planning and Community Health Research Center
http://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/research/index.htm

Working with a global network of research fellows and partner institutions, the American Planning Association conducts collaborative, multidisciplinary research aimed at addressing today's pressing health issues through city and regional planning. Current projects include: Creating Community-Based Brownfields Redevelopment Strategies; Complete Streets; and Family-Friendly Communities. Past projects include: Planning and Designing a Physically Active Community; Growing Smart; and Healthy Communities Through Collaboration.

The world is moved not only by the mighty shove of heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker.
---Helen Keller
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