Dear Healthy Community Design News subscribers,

I had the privilege of helping organize a Healthy Community Design Expert Workshop at CDC September 21 and 22. Nineteen design and land use experts from around the country came together to dialogue about establishing a practice of considering health impact when making land use, transportation planning and other community design decisions. Because CDC recognizes that collaboration among multiple sectors is critical to making healthy community design and land use decisions a standard practice, the agency brought together top thought leaders whose organizations represent those who play a direct role in creating the built environment through action and policy -- developers, architects, planners, builders, academia, public health professionals, and government officials. The workshop discussion and recommended next steps will be released in a report later this year. In the months ahead, participants will continue to refine action steps for expanding awareness of the health impact of community design decisions and identify the research needed to support these steps. Organizations represented at the workshop included the American Planning Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, The American Institute of Architects, the National Association of Home Builders, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Congress for the New Urbanism, Urban Land Institute, International City/County Management Association, Local Government Commission, National Association of City and County Health Officials, National Conference of State Legislatures, Regional Planning Association, U.S. Access Board, U.S. Green Building Council, and Health Impact Project (a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts).

Check out this two-minute video of a unique, fun experiment in Sweden that got commuters to take the subway stairs instead of the escalator: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LXh2n0aPyw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LXh2n0aPyw).

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](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces)

Being defeated is often a temporary condition. Giving up is what makes it permanent.

---Marilyn vos Savant
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Training Opportunities

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

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Funding Opportunity

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.

Call for Papers/Ideas

Deadline: November 15, 2009. 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.

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**

Sires Introduces Urban Park Legislation to Congress (Vocus/PR Web October 9, 2009)
[http://www.prweb.com/releases/nrpa/urban_park_summit/prweb3016934.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/nrpa/urban_park_summit/prweb3016934.htm)

On October 7, Rep. Albio Sires of New Jersey's 13th District introduced the Urban
Revitalization and Livable Communities Act (H.R. 3734) to Congress. The act provides
federal assistance grants (which must be matched with local funds) to rehabilitate and
develop urban parks and community recreational infrastructure, and for the continued
investment in programs that address such national issues as juvenile delinquency and issues
affecting at-risk youth.

**Majority of Americans not Meeting Recommendations for Fruit and Vegetable
Consumption** (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, September 29, 2009))

No U.S. state is meeting national objectives for consumption of fruits and vegetables,
according to the first report to provide state-by-state data about fruit and vegetable
consumption and policies that may help Americans eat more fruits and vegetables. The
report “State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables, 2009” was released by the Centers
for Disease Control and Prevention. The report highlights environmental causes such as lack
of access to a variety of high-quality, affordable fruits and vegetables.

**Journal Articles and Reports**

Active Transportation: Making the Link from Transportation to Physical Activity and Obesity
[http://www.activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR_Brief_ActiveTransportation.pdf](http://www.activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR_Brief_ActiveTransportation.pdf)
The research brief summarizes the latest peer-reviewed research that demonstrates the potential impact of infrastructure investments and other transportation programs on walking and bicycling for transportation, and on related health outcomes.

How Neighborhoods Can Reduce the Risk of Obesity (Rand Research Brief RB-9267, 2007)  
http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB9267/

Key findings in the report are:

- Neighborhood parks promote exercise, especially among residents who live within a mile of a park.
- School playgrounds are an underused resource for weekend exercise.
- Having four or more different types of businesses in a neighborhood can increase the number of walking trips among residents.
- In neighborhoods where residents are willing to help each other, children are less likely to be overweight.

http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bpl/josh/2009/00000079/00000007/art00004

An Albuquerque, New Mexico, elementary school partnered with University of New Mexico researchers and conducted a Walking School Bus (WSB). The purpose of this article is to examine the feasibility of implementing a WSB. This pilot study featured 2 WSBS conducted for 10 weeks with kindergarten through fifth-grade students from a predominantly Hispanic elementary school. Qualitative and quantitative data, including coordinator field notes, attendance records, surveys of student and parent satisfaction, and a focus group, were used to evaluate feasibility. Student and adult participants expressed a high degree of enthusiasm regarding their involvement in the WSB. Participants uniformly indicated that the WSB provided a supportive and safe environment to promote social interaction and physical activity. Conducting a WSB in an urban, underserved school district is feasible but requires attention to ensure participants’ involvement and safety. In particular, it is recommended to begin the planning process early to enhance investment from key stakeholders. Conclusion: Effective, low-cost interventions are increasingly desired as solutions to the problem of obesity. The WSB has emerged as a promising strategy to address obesity and encourage partnerships across different social levels. Further research is necessary to assess the logistical challenges associated with conducting a large-scale WSB trial and whether such efforts lead to reductions in obesity risk factors.

Health Planning Policies: A Compendium from California General Plans (Public Health Law and Policy, Updated 9/25/09)  
http://www.phlpnet.org/healthy-planning/products/healthy-planning-policies

The compendium excerpts language from general plans that have gone a step beyond the traditional to build healthier communities, reflecting the growing diversity of strategies for integrating health into planning.

Opinion
Translation At Good Speed: Transportation policy shouldn’t be reduced to average commuting times, by Alex Marshall (Governing.com, August 2009)

http://www.governing.com/node/2926/

“[P]olicy makers often present transportation as if it can be effectively summarized in miles traveled per hour, average commuting times, cost per passenger, or capacity figures. All of which is unfortunate, because how a transportation system feels determines how and whether it is used, as well as its long-term potential.”

Book Review

My Kind of Transit: Rethinking Public Transportation in America by Darrin Nordahl (reviewed by Tim Halbur (Planetizen, October 5, 2009)

http://www.planetizen.com/node/40970

Author Nordahl believes “If transit is to become an attractive alternative to the automobile, the ride itself must offer an experience to passengers that they cannot get within the solitude of their cars.”

Training Opportunities

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

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 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.

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/](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 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**  

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](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](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 only way in which one human being can properly attempt to influence another is by encouraging him to think for himself, instead of endeavoring to instill ready-made opinions in his head.
---Leslie Stephen

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