Bridging the Gap Between Health and Planning/Policy

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What Gap?

- Americans are less active than anywhere else in the world
- We have more access to low nutritional value / high calorie density foods
- 7 out of 10 people die of chronic diseases
- Chronic diseases account for 75% of the 2.2 Trillion annual health care costs in the U.S.
- Physical inactivity alone accounts for about 2.4% of U.S. health care costs, or approximately $24 billion per year.
Where is the Gap?

• 33.1% of older adults are obese in the U.S.
• 17.1% of older adults are obese in Europe

Why?
• Because it is EASY to be inactive and eat poorly in the U.S.
The Issues…

• Health
  – Obesity
  – Chronic Disease
  – Safety

• Economic Issues

• Working with Health Professionals
Obesity as an indicator of health...

“People didn’t just wake up in 1980 and decide they were going to get obese”

–Dr. Bill Dietz, CDC
 Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
(*BMI ≥30, or about 30 lbs. overweight for 5’4” person)
How are we doing?

No Leisure Time Physical Activity Nationwide

Median %

Years

Health

• Adults who bike or walk to work:
  – More physically fit
  – Lower cholesterol, blood pressure, fasting insulin levels
  – Lower BMI
  – Lower risk of chronic disease

  – Only 16.7% of people in study were active commuters

People Want to be Active

- 52% of Americans want to bike more
- 55% of Americans want to drive less and walk more
- About 1/3 of Americans do not drive

Surface Transportation Policy Partnership poll, 2003
Inadequate Access for the Active
Inadequate Access for the Active
Is it safe?
The “healthy” trip decision hierarchy

Walk
Bike
Transit
Drive

Fenton, 2005
Reducing Traffic

Of all trips taken in metro areas:

- 50% are three miles or less
- 28% are one mile or less
- 65% of trips under one mile are now taken by automobile
Safety

Europe has more bike and pedestrian travel...

Pucher, AJPH Sept 2003
Safety

...and far fewer deaths.

Deaths per 100 Million km Traveled

- USA
- Germany
- Netherlands

Pucher, AJPH Sept 2003
In spite of themselves…
Incomplete Streets Are Unsafe

Pedestrians and Bicyclists...

- Receive 1% of Federal Funding
- Represent 10% of Trips
- Suffer 13% of Fatalities

FMIS, NHTS, FARS federal databases
Top Pedestrian Complaints

Percentage of Pedestrians Experiencing Problematic Streets

- Too Few Sidewalks
- Insensitive Drivers
- Poor Surface

2002 National Transportation Availability & Use Survey
There was an old lady...

- An 82-year-old woman received a $114 ticket for taking too long to cross a street in the San Fernando Valley, Calif.

- High school students couldn’t make it in time, either.
Active living and other public health efforts to change the built environment

Existing Conditions → ? → Safe, Active and Healthy Communities
Active living and other public health efforts to change the built environment

Existing Conditions

Land Use & Transportation Planning Process

Safe, Active and Healthy Communities
Factors that influence the choice to walk for exercise or transportation

- Psychosocial variables
- Behavioral setting (environment)
  - Culture
  - Policy
  - Other
- Density
- Diversity
  - Land Use Diversity and Density
- Design
  - Quality of Connectivity
  - Connectivity
- Destination Attractiveness

Factors include density, diversity, and design elements that affect the attractiveness and connectivity of the environment, influencing the choice to walk for exercise or transportation.
We can help

• Small impact
  – Intersections

• Medium impact
  – Street/community changes
  – Sidewalks

• Large impact
  – Policies
  – Master Plans
Traffic calming
Planning and Policy

• If you want people to go somewhere, give them somewhere to go.

• If you want people to go somewhere, make it easier for them to get there.

• Support, support, support!
A change in driving habits?

- Number of miles travelled has increased steadily since the mid 1970’s
- A small drop off in the middle of 2008
- What happened?

TRAFFIC VOLUME
Moving 12-Month Total, All Roads

Billions of Miles

Source: Federal Highway Admin.
Complete Streets

- Make it possible for people to travel, whatever their mode
EXECUTIVE ORDER

ACCOMMODATION OF BICYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

RESPONSIBLE CITY AGENCY: Planning, Transportation, Engineering, Airport

KEYWORDS: Transportation, Bicycle, Pedestrian, Safety, Complete Streets

Preface

The benefits of bicycling and walking span across many aspects of our daily lives. The social and environmental benefits include healthier citizens and the improved health of our community through a substantial reduction in air pollution. A transportation system that encourages bicycling and walking can also save money, reduce traffic congestion, build community, and improve the overall quality of life. Therefore, Salt Lake City supports the concept of Complete Streets, requiring the accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the planning process by providing the following policy.

All transportation facilities in the public right-of-way owned by Salt Lake City on which bicyclists and pedestrians are permitted by law, including, but not limited to streets, bridges, and all other connecting pathways, shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so that users, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.

Therefore, I enact this Executive Order:

1. General

1.1 Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in the City’s new construction and reconstruction projects in the public right-of-way, subject to budget limitations, unless one or more of the following three exemption conditions are met:

   a) Bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the street or facility. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right-of-way or within the same transportation corridor.

   b) The cost of establishing bike lanes or sidewalks would be excessively disproportionate to the need or proper use. A Complete Streets
Think creatively

- Car shares allow for people to live without a car, but have the use of one if needed
- Bike rentals are a common way to help impulse travelers
- Bike “garages”
Health and Transportation Equity

• Current plans place emphasis on automobile rights
• Gentrification
• SAFETEA-LU
• 2000 FHWA Guidance:
  “Bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist.”
  
  [Link](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/design.htm)
Who will spend more time shopping?
Who will spend more time shopping?
If you can’t safely get there, you won’t shop there

Switch the parking lots for new construction
And that is just physical activity!

- Number and proximity of unhealthy food choices
  - LA County moratorium
- Access to healthy food options
- **Market**
Working with Health Professionals

• Take a planner to lunch day
  – Subject matter expertise
    • Learn each other’s lingo
• Healthy Community Organizations
• HIA
• Advocacy groups
  – Cheap, motivated labor (shhhhh....)
• Think public health, physicians, community clinics, etc.
Health Impact Assessment

City of Spokane Downtown Plan Update
Rapid Health Impact Assessment Results
Chapter 5 Multi-modal Transportation Pedestrian Strategies

A rapid HIA was conducted that looks at policy statements supporting multimodal transportation, specifically bike and pedestrian connections, which are found in Chapter 6 of the 2008 Spokane Downtown Plan Update. This was a collaborative effort between the City of Spokane Planning Department, Spokane Regional Health District, and the Land Council.

Findings and Recommendations

Impacts on Health Determinants:

- **Air Quality**: Improving pedestrian facilities allows for more people to take trips without automobiles. A reduction in the number of vehicle trips decreases emissions, leading to improved air quality conditions.
- **Noise**: Automobiles are strong contributors of noise. Improving pedestrian conditions allows for more people to utilize forms of active transportation. Less automobiles should help reduce noise levels in downtown.
- **Safety**: Increasing traffic calming techniques, lighting, and pedestrian crossings while maintaining the Centennial Trail should all help improve the physical safety of pedestrians in downtown Spokane. Decrease liability and pedestrian collisions, and reduce the level of crime.
- **Mental Health**: Improving pedestrian conditions will lead to a more pedestrian-friendly downtown. Walkable communities are thought to have enhanced community well-being, which can have positive impacts on mental health.
- **Parks and Natural Space**: Improving pedestrian conditions will improve access to parks and natural spaces in and around downtown.
- **Private Goods and Services**: Improving pedestrian conditions will lead to better access to public goods and services provided in downtown.

Enabling access
- Employment
- Shops
- Recreation
- Social support
- Health services
- Countryside

Road traffic injuries
- Air pollution
  - Carbon monoxide
  - Nitrogen oxides
  - Hydrocarbons
  - Ozones
  - Carbon dioxide
  - Lead
- Noise pollution
- Stress and anxiety
- Danger
- Loss of land and planning blight
- Severance of communities by road

Constraints on mobility access and independence
- Reduced social use of outdoor space due to traffic and streets

Continued...
Health Impact Assessment
Healthy Community Awards

• Awards are given to communities who place health as a priority

• Award levels recognize policies, infrastructures, and outcomes

• [www.health.utah.gov/ahy](http://www.health.utah.gov/ahy)
Public Health is…

“what we as a society do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy.”

1988 Institute of Medicine report
“The Future of Public Health”
Resources

- www.healthyplanning.org
- www.thecommunityguide.org
- www.health.utah.gov/obesity