Building Healthy Places

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Urban Land Institute
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ULI Building Healthy Places Initiative

- Through the Building Healthy Places Initiative, ULI is leveraging the power of its global networks to shape **projects and places** in ways to improve the health of **people and communities**.

- Share insights & knowledge of members
- Form & strengthen strategic partnerships
- Shape places & policies in ways that promote health
- Improve understanding of financial & regulatory dimensions
Public health impacts of the built environment

- Physical activity
- Obesity and chronic disease
- Pedestrian injuries
- Asthma and respiratory diseases
- Child development
- Crime and violence
- Elder health and mobility
- Water quality and quantity
- Mental health
- Health disparities
Best Practices for a Safe, Healthy, Active Community

Lessons from History

- 19th & 20th century many cities faced epidemics of infectious disease: tuberculosis, cholera, yellow fever, etc.
- Epidemics were mitigated through changes in public infrastructure
  - Aqueducts for fresh water
  - Parks for fresh air and open space
  - Rail lines relieved overcrowding and provided reliable transportation
Understanding Today’s Obesity and Chronic Illness Epidemic

- Today, approximately two-thirds of U.S. adults and one-third of U.S. youth are obese or overweight.
- Medical costs attributable to obesity are approximately $147 billion per year.
- By 2030 86% of adults will be overweight or obese with a total attributable healthcare cost of $860-956 billion per year.

Center for Disease Control, NYC Department of Health
Colorado Concerns about Childhood Obesity

- In 2004, 28.4% of children in Colorado were overweight or obese.
- In 2011, 31.4% of children in Colorado were overweight or obese.
- Obesity rates are even higher for ethnic and minority children.
- 33% of Hispanic children in Colorado are overweight or obese.

Source: Colorado Child Health Survey
Understanding Health

Benefits of Physical Activity

- Better Cognitive Function
- Reduced Depression
- Improves Self Esteem
- Lowers Cardiovascular Risk Factors
- Decreased Risk of Colon And Breast Cancers
- Strengthens Bones
- Academic Achievement
- Stress Management
- Prevention of Weight Gain
- Weight Loss When Combined with Diet
- Lowers Risk of Type-2 Diabetes
- Lowers Risk of Falls by Improved Balance
Physical Activity

- Physical activity, once part of our normal lives has been designed out of daily routines.
Barriers to Walking

Walking is often difficult, dangerous or unpleasant.
Schools on the Fringe

- **Then:** Schools were the social and physical center of the community

- **Now:** Schools are on the edge of town, too far for kids to walk
Is this better for children?  Or is this?
“I like playing indoors because that is where all the electric plugs are.” – a 4th Grader in San Diego, California
Advisory Service Panels

- Arvada, CO – Suburban community
- Lamar, CO – Small town
- Westwood, CO – Urban neighborhood
Lessons Learned

• Every community has different assets and challenges
• To get the attention of public officials the healthy communities issue must be linked to economic and/or community development.
• Creating healthy communities is only partially about the built environment. It is also about programs and activities.
• Generally speaking people won’t walk unless there are 2 things:
  1. Attractive destinations to walk to, (like a healthy downtown)
  2. The walking route must be safe and interesting
• Many of the design principles for healthy communities are the same as the principles for “smart growth” (connected streets, mixed uses, access to green spaces, compact development, etc.)
• Access to green space and recreation facilities, such as bike trails, walking paths, fitness centers increase property values
Healthy Places Create Real Estate Value

• Numerous studies show that the demand for walkable, mixed use design far outstrips current supply

• There is a growing demand for small town/village living especially among retirees, empty nesters, young professionals and single people.
Parks & Recreation, Good for Business
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

- “Greenways and trails have been a significant factor in revitalizing the city’s blighted industrial waterfront areas.”

- Tom Murphy, Mayor of Pittsburgh -2006
Mineral Belt Trail – Leadville, Co

- Mineral Belt Trail helped generate a 19% increase in sales tax revenue from Leadville businesses
Walkability and Green Space Create Value

National Association of Realtors & the National Homebuilders Association – residential properties realize a 10 to 25% gain in value the closer they are located to greenspace
Community Amenities
Sought by Homebuyers

- Walking Trails/Bike Paths - 36%
- Parks & Natural Areas - 26%
- Playgrounds - 21%
- Day Care Center - 14%
- Soccer Fields - 9%
- Golf Course - 6%

- April 2004
  National Association of Realtors
Best Practices: Guidelines for Designing a Healthier Communities

**Guidelines**

1. Prioritize walking and biking as safe, viable, and enjoyable
2. Strive for excellence in sidewalk design
3. Calm traffic to maximize safety for all users
4. Improve bicycle infrastructure and amenities
5. Ensure walkable, bikeable access to recreational facilities for all community members
6. Design parks and recreational spaces for a variety of interests, cultures, and age groups
7. Provide amenities at parks and recreation facilities to encourage longer stays, including lighting, benches, shade, water fountains, and restrooms where
8. Strive for design excellence in creating play spaces for children
9. Encourage access to fresh, healthy foods for all community members
Programing for a Healthy Community

- Walking school buses
- Citywide walking challenge led by city leaders
- Set monthly walking goals
- Create walk to school days
- Support Safe Routes to Schools Program

Walking School Bus, Takoma Park, MD
Programming for a Healthy Community

• Create a “Sunday Streets” or “Ciclovia” program

• Temporarily Close streets on weekend to allow for a car-free environment

• Festival atmosphere focused on physical activity

• Encourage shops & businesses to participate
“An active student is a better learner”

Wellness Coordinator
Jefferson County, CO Public Schools
Childhood Obesity/Nature Deficit Disorder
VMT & Obesity have risen together

Sources: Centers for Disease Control, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, U.S. DOT, Federal Highway Administration, Annual Vehicle Distance Traveled in Miles & Related Data
THE ROLE OF Communities IN PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

WALKABLE COMMUNITIES
People who live in walkable neighborhoods are 2 times as likely to get enough physical activity as those who don’t.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
Teens who live in poor or mostly minority neighborhoods are 50% less likely to have a recreational facility near home.

JUNI USE
The number of children who are physically active outside is 84% higher when schoolyards are kept open for public play.

TRAILS
People who live near trails are 50% more likely to meet physical activity guidelines.

## Open Space Preservation
### US Voter Referendums 1998-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Approved</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>$8.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1.8 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>174</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.9 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>162</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>111</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>6.7 billion</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7.3 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.0 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1479</td>
<td>1217</td>
<td><strong>$48.9 billion</strong></td>
</tr>
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On election day 2010, voters across the US once again demonstrated their commitment to supporting public investments in parks and natural areas. Despite some of the worst economic circumstances in history voters approved 29 of 35 state and local land conservation measures generating over $2 billion in new funding.
On election day 2012, voters across the US once again demonstrated their commitment to supporting public investments in parks and natural areas. Despite political disagreements on many issues voters in both red and blue states approved 46 of 57 state and local land conservation measures generating over $2 billion in new funding.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where do you find green space in cities?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Abandoned lots = community gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Old landfills = public parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Abandoned rail lines = rail trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rooftops = Gardens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Decking Highways = New green space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Daylighting streams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Removing parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sharing School yards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abandoned Lots

Abandoned lot, Philadelphia, PA

Tot Lot, Philadelphia

Abandoned lot, Detroit, MI

Community garden, Detroit
Removing Parking

Providence Riverwalk – Before

Providence Riverwalk - After

Ellis Square – Before

Ellis Square - After
Decking Highways

Riverwalk Plaza, Hartford

Freeway Park, Dallas

Sculpture Park, Seattle

Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston
Abandoned Rail Lines

High Line, NYC – Before

High Line, NYC - After
Urban Rail Trails

Capital Crescent Trail, Bethesda, MD

Bicycle Freeway, Minneapolis, MN

Bow River Bike Path, Calgary, AB

Burke Gilman Trail, Seattle, WA
Stream Daylighting

Seoul, Korea – Before

Seoul, Korea - After
Rooftop Parks & Gardens

Vancouver, BC

Chicago, IL
Urban River Restoration

Los Angeles River – Today

Los Angeles River - Tomorrow
Landfills

Landfill, Virginia Beach, VA

Mt. Trashmore Park, Virginia Beach
How Does Green Space Effect Public Health?

It gets children outdoors into nature.
Green Space & Mental Health

10 COMMANDMENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH

1. Think positively; it's easier
2. Cherish the ones you love
3. Continue learning as long as you live
4. Learn from your mistakes
5. Exercise daily; it enhances your well-being
6. Do not complicate your life unnecessarily
7. Try to understand and encourage those around you
8. Do not give up; success in life is a marathon
9. Discover and nurture your talents
10. Set goals for yourself and pursue your dreams
Views of Nature Shorten Hospital Stays

Source: American Academy for the Advancement of Science
Business Recruitment

- There are 3141 counties in the US
- There are 25,375 towns in the US
- They are all competing for a small number of plants, factories or distribution centers
### Economic Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>20th Century Model</th>
<th>21st Century Model</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Public sector leadership</td>
<td>• Public/Private Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shotgun recruitment strategy</td>
<td>• Laser recruitment strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Low cost positioning</td>
<td>• High value positioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cheap labor</td>
<td>• Highly trained talent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Key infrastructure = roads</td>
<td>• Key infrastructure = education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on what you don’t have</td>
<td>• Focus on what you do have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Driven by transactions</td>
<td>• Driven by an overall vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distinctiveness has value

- “Sameness is a minus not a plus in today’s world”
- If you can’t differentiate your community you will have no competitive advantage.
Best Practices: Guidelines for Designing a Healthier Lamar

Four areas of focus

Walking and biking
Recreation spaces
Healthy food access
Programs
10. Programs

Which incorporate healthy activity into every day lives

5-2-1-0
Get Lean Lamar
Exercise Vouchers
Recreation Library
Worksite Wellness
Walkability Audit