

PROGRESSIVE PLANNING

The Magazine of Planners Network

Planning for The Active City



Photo by Ann Forsyth

Urban Planning For Active Living: Who Benefits?

By Kristin Day

The US population is heavier than ever, with obesity and overweight reaching alarming levels. Inadequate physical activity explains at least part of this trend. As Thomas Halton explains elsewhere (see "Obesity Epidemic" in this issue), 22 percent of US adults today do not participate in regular leisure-time physical activity. The health implications of this are grave, though insufficient physical activity does not affect all groups equally.

According to Pratt, Maceral and Blanton (see "Resources for Active Living" in this issue), low-income communities and some communities of color are especially at-risk. [Cont. on page 7]

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ROLE OF URBAN
DESIGN

•

BLADENIGHT
IN EUROPE

•

DESIGNING
COMMUNITIES WITH
HEALTH IN MIND

•

MORE...

The SEVENTH GENERATION

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."
- From the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy

The Environment's Role in Physical Activity: Necessary but Not Sufficient

By Ann Forsyth
Theme Editor Anne Lusk

Americans are getting fatter and exercising less. As Thomas Halton outlines in this issue, this has human costs; overweight and lack of exercise contribute to a variety of chronic diseases. Given the multi-billion dollar cost of health care, there are major economic costs as well. While a number of genetic and biological factors affect weight, for most individuals overweight is a result of taking in too many calories and expending too few. This is hardly news, and much money and effort has been expended to encourage, exhort, cajole and educate people to eat less and exercise more. That people don't seem to be getting the message has encouraged those in the public health arena to look to the physical environment for ways to eliminate barriers to exercise and provide more supportive environments for physical activity. Increasing physical activity even a small amount, enough to lower obesity only a few percentage points, would save billions of dollars annually and also reduce the long-term suffering caused by chronic diseases. This could have a great impact on low-income people and people of color, since a disproportionate number of individuals in these populations are victims of such health problems.

Obesity awareness has brought new attention to the built environment. For the first time in years there is significant funding available to evaluate the human dimensions of urban environments across the US. (In the interest of full disclosure, I am the recipient of some of that funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with public health colleagues Katherine Schmitz and Michael Oakes.) Politicians, civic groups and the general public are getting interested in their neighborhoods, town centers, parks and trails. The buzz seems to validate the interests of planners, who have long advocated for design of healthier cities: more vibrant public spaces;

better parks and trails; improved transit systems; and more supportive environments for children, youth, people of color and low-income populations. The emphasis on the infrastructure required for physical activity has the potential to link advocates for open space, public health and community redevelopment into a powerful coalition promoting investment in the civic infrastructure of US cities and the revitalization of public space. Planners are at the center of attention, and activists look to them for partnership and even leadership.

This issue on the Active City, guest edited by Anne Lusk, examines the potential of this renewed interest in the physical city to create positive changes in the built environment. It also examines some of the limits of the current debate.

In recent media coverage of this issue, and in the pronouncements of some designers and planners, there has been a tendency to get caught up in the oversimplification that sprawl makes people fat. From a public health perspective, there is certainly enormous excitement about the possibility that the environment has some small, but significant, effect on physical activity when education has seemingly stopped making a difference. Yet perhaps it is too easy to slip into a mode of thinking that enthusiastically embraces *environmental determinism*, which sees the environment as the key dimension.

As Kevin Krizek points out in his article: "We intuitively know that people have a harder time walking or cycling where opportunities for these options do not exist. ...But while improved conditions may be necessary, they are not sufficient for households to adopt healthy lifestyles." Krizek, as well as Paul Schimek, both present this more complex picture, explaining how research to date has shown that other factors—including affluence, gas prices, the difficulties of driving, culture and personal preferences—are critical to whether people will walk or cycle.

[Cont. on page 6]

PROGRESSIVE PLANNING

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GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Progressive Planning seeks articles that describe and analyze progressive physical, social, economic and environmental planning in urban and rural areas. Articles may be up to 2,000 words. They should be addressed to PN's broad audience of professionals, activists, students and academics, and be straightforward and jargon-free. Following a journalistic style, the first paragraph should summarize the main ideas in the article. A few suggested readings may be mentioned in the text, but do not submit footnotes or a bibliography. The editors may make minor style changes, but any substantial rewriting or changes will be checked with the author. A photograph or illustration may be included. Submissions on disk or by email are greatly appreciated. Send to the Editor at tangotti@hunter.cuny.edu or Planners Network, c/o Hunter College Dept of Urban Planning, 695 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021. Fax: 212-772-5593. Deadlines are January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.

UPCOMING SPECIAL ISSUES [Articles welcome]:

2004 Elections and Convention Cities -- New York City and Boston
Planning, Food Production and Consumption

The Key to Good Health is Not in the Ignition: Portland, Oregon Tries New Tool to Reduce Car Travel

By Lavinia Gordon

For years Portland has received kudos for its innovative and successful transportation and land use policies. Portland boasts of a vital downtown, a nationally recognized urban growth boundary, an award-winning light rail and transit system and as being the birthplace of the first modern streetcar in America. The city's zoning code discourages excessive parking and promotes density around regional and town centers, and *Bicycling Magazine* has rated Portland the best cycling city in the US every year since 1995.

Despite all this, more and more Portlanders are driving alone in their cars. Total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Portland metropolitan area has more than doubled since 1980. Per capita VMT has increased from twelve miles per person per day in 1980, to twenty-one miles per person per day in 1998. Every day Portland residents drive their automobiles over 27 million miles, the equivalent of fifty-six round-trips to the moon!

The Health Connection

All this driving has serious side effects, in Portland as in other parts of the US. Transportation is by far the largest contributor to global warming and air pollution in the Portland region. Cars and trucks are expected to account for 43 percent of all local greenhouse gas emissions in Multnomah County by 2010. Transportation sources are also the biggest contributors (38 percent) of local air pollutants such as ozone and carbon monoxide.

It is no coincidence that our continuing infatuation with the automobile is coupled with dwindling physical activity and increasing obesity rates. Oregon now has the distinction of being the "fattest" state in the West. Over 60 percent of adult Oregonians and 49 percent of Oregon's youth are overweight. As discussed elsewhere in this issue, obesity is linked to a number of chronic diseases.

The link between physical activity and health is finally getting attention. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that behaviors linked to inactivity and diet account for 300,000 deaths per year. This is the second largest cause of death after tobacco that results from a modifiable behavior.

Large foundations that focus on health, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, are directing much of their charitable giving to programs that encourage people to be more active.

There is No Silver Bullet

Short of perhaps raising gas prices to \$5/gallon, there is no single remedy to our love affair with the automobile. Most of us have a need for an automobile some of the time. We just need to stop and think each time we reach for the keys. A city that has a wide range of alternatives makes driving "smarter" more feasible.

Portland has many of the essential elements for sustainable mobility: reasonable housing density and street connectivity, an excellent transit system, bike lanes and sidewalks that support biking and walking, a regional carpool system (including online ride-matching), taxicabs and car sharing (Portland was the birthplace of car sharing). If Portland has most of the essential elements to support sustainable transportation, why are more and more people driving alone in their cars? Portland is experimenting with a program that may provide some answers.

TravelSmart

The City of Portland Transportation Options Division, with its funding partner TriMet, is conducting a pilot project to test the concept of "individualized marketing" to encourage biking, walking, transit and carpooling. Called TravelSmart, this innovative program creates a dialogue with people about their travel needs.

TravelSmart is based on the premise that a large percentage of people drive alone in their cars due to purely subjective reasons. While a large proportion of people have the means to bike, walk, carpool or take transit, misperceptions about the transportation system get in the way. Individuals may think it takes longer to use an alternative transportation mode than it actually does. They may not know that a bus is five minutes from their door and can take them directly to where they want to go. Or they may not know where their bus stop is, or how to buy a ticket or where the nearest bike lane is. Some people are simply afraid because they have never done it (biked,

walked, taken transit, carpoled) and want someone to show them how.

TravelSmart is the brainchild of Werner Brog, founder of Socialdata in Munich, Germany. TravelSmart uses survey techniques to identify individuals who are interested in changing their travel behavior and then initiates a conversation with them to find out what types of information or training they want. Trained staffpersons make home visits to those who want specific help with walking, biking, transit or carpooling. People who are not interested are left alone.

Individualized marketing has been used successfully in Europe and Australia. In South Perth, Australia, a large-scale project that contacted 35,000 people achieved a 14 percent reduction in car travel, and biking, walking and transit usage all increased as a result.

Launching the Portland Pilot Project

In September 2002 the first test of TravelSmart in the United States was launched in the southwest Portland neighborhood of Multnomah Hillsdale. This neighborhood has a population of about 14,000 people, a density of about five to seven persons per acre and a median household income of about \$50,000. The neighborhood has good transit and benefits from two well-developed and inviting town centers, but because it is hilly and without many sidewalks, it poses a challenge to cyclists and pedestrians.

The first step in the pilot project was to conduct a baseline survey of the target population. The survey provided detailed information about travel behavior in the pilot area. There was a 65 percent response rate to a mail-back travel diary sent to 1,200 randomly selected households. The survey found that 64 percent of the trips in the target area were by people driving alone in their cars, 10 percent were walking trips, 5 percent were public transit trips and 1 percent was bike trips. The remaining 19 percent were trips by passengers in cars.

Many people are surprised that work trips make up such a small percentage of overall trips; in the test pilot area, work-related trips make up only 25 percent of all trips. This is fairly representative of the region as a whole. The large majority of people's trips are for shopping or for leisure activities (56 percent in the target area). TravelSmart is one of the few transportation demand management tools that address the non-work trip.

Trip distances are also of interest. Of all trips from the target area, 12 percent are less than half a

mile and 22 percent are less than one mile. Almost one-half of all trips (46 percent) are less than three miles. At the same time, most people say they are willing to walk a half-mile and many say they are willing to walk a mile.

Individualized Marketing

While the surveys are essential to evaluate the impact of TravelSmart, the heart of the program is the second phase—individualized marketing. Individualized marketing takes the first 600 households responding to the baseline travel survey and segments them into groups based upon their responses,

This "intervention" is where the dialogue happens with participants who want information and training. About 41 percent of those contacted were interested in finding out more about transportation options. They received the information they needed, either by mail, telephone or personal at-home visits. People already using environmentally-friendly modes (26 percent) were given a small reward. The remaining 33 percent who didn't want to participate were not contacted again.

Preliminary Results

In May of 2003, results from the first "after survey" of the Portland TravelSmart Pilot Project were announced. The pilot showed that car travel in the target area decreased by 8 percent, and travel by environmentally-friendly modes increased by 27 percent; those vehicle trips were shifted to walking and public transit. Of the gains made in environmentally-friendly modes, they occurred across all age groups and all types of trips—work trips, leisure trips, shopping, etc.

These preliminary results are both promising and consistent with pilot projects in Europe and Australia that use individualized marketing to reduce car travel. The government of Western Australia has invested over \$10 million in TravelSmart programs. It is so convinced of the economic benefit of TravelSmart that it has diverted capital funds originally intended for highway construction to large-scale individualized marketing campaigns to reduce car travel.

If They Build it Will They Come?

Is it enough to simply build better transportation infrastructure and provide better service? Some would argue that building more bike lanes and light rail lines and providing more frequent transit service is the key to increasing biking, walking and transit.

[Cont. on page 9]

7th Generation [Cont. from page 2]

Articles by Kristin Day, Anne Lusk, Paul Schimek and Larry Frank also relate systematic differences in the relationship of low-income people and people of color to the physical environment as compared to other populations. While such populations walk more for transportation, they are less likely to do many forms of physically active exercise. Overall, they may not get the recommended amount of daily physical activity and their health problems are on the rise. Creating favorable densities and street patterns, however, is not likely to be crucial for these populations, which often already live in neighborhoods with relatively high densities and good transit infrastructure. Instead, as Day explains, “insufficient parks, high crime and fear for safety, pollution, lack of jobs to walk to, dirty streets and sidewalks and residential overcrowding that limits opportunities for exercise at home,” as well as other social and economic factors, are vitally important. The media focus on suburban development patterns and middle-class concerns has obscured this point. Some planners have been happy to play along to avoid having to grapple with the situation of the entire population, and some activists have been suspicious of those who argue that the nature of the problem is very complex, since this dilutes the message activists need to promote.

As a further complication, implicit in the debate is an assumption that it is possible to change the built environment on a massive scale. Certainly the built environment is constantly being renewed, but ownership patterns and street layouts are fairly stable. While trails can be challenging to site in neighborhoods, Schimek points to the parallel and perhaps even more difficult task of increasing density in many parts of the US, particularly if higher density development comes with less off-street parking than is the norm for new development. As Karla Henderson argues, even the usually non-controversial public parks, which provide the infrastructure for physical activity, face significant challenges in sustaining their funding for maintenance and recreation programs. More hopeful may be the social marketing of the kind described by Lavinia Gordon, which seems to be able to encourage people to get out of their cars—though perhaps not onto their feet—and change their relationship to the environment without actually changing the environment at all.

Certainly, as Mark Fenton outlines, there are many tried and tested planning and design strategies to increase physical activity in streets and neighbor-

hoods, humanizing these places at the same time. Three articles on trails—by Lusk, Phil Ganezer and Smita Mittal and Stephen Luoni—show how such activity-oriented design is being promoted. Important new strategies include: phytoremediation, to deal with contamination of rail corridors; designs to accommodate multiple modes in the same right-of-way, though not necessarily on the same pavement; and attempts to link trails to destinations relevant to low-income communities and communities of color.

This interest in physical activity is providing funding for research, a public forum for publicizing and discussing results, programs such as Safe Routes to School, and some funding to test innovative designs. BladeNight, as described by Lusk, demonstrates how car-dominated streets can be humanized and used by 20,000 skaters once each week, in the process helping to improve the health of the population and modeling a way to better share existing resources.

Overall, the relationship between the physical environment and physical activity is a complex one, obscured by some of the recent hype. Obviously the environment *does* matter to the health of the public, and it *is* important to advocate for better public infrastructure for walking, cycling, roller blading, Tai Chi and so many other potential physical activities. And planners can capitalize on the public interest raised by the obesity debates to focus attention on creating healthier cities and regions and more vital public places. But *how* the environment matters is a complex issue. It is not a simple case of if you build it, they will exercise.

Research studies are demonstrating in the situation in cities today and what doesn't work. In addition to this research, planners can work with public health professionals, transportation officials, parks and recreation professionals and the public to fund and test new models as pilot projects. Many environmental and health activists are now looking to planners as potential allies in creating this physical activity infrastructure. Progressive planners can contribute an important voice—advocating for better public infrastructure for all people, raising awareness of the limits of environmental interventions in social issues and advocating for the specific needs of low-income populations and people of color.

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Day [Cont. from page 1]

Among high school students, for example, participation in vigorous physical activity is lower among black (54%) and Hispanic (60%) students than among white students (67%). Black and Hispanic adults are also more likely to be inactive than are white adults. People with lower family incomes and lower levels of education are more likely to get too little physical activity. In fact, nearly half of those individuals with less than a high school education report no regular leisure-time physical activity; by comparison, less than 20 percent of college graduates are similarly inactive. US patterns of physical activity are similar to those in other developed countries.

These numbers may not tell the whole story, however. National health surveys, such as the BRFSS (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System), emphasize traditional “leisure-time” physical activity—reflecting a class bias that assumes physical activity to be an aspect of leisure or recreation, rather than a product of manual work or a function of everyday life, e.g., walking or bicycling for transportation.

So while measurement may be one problem, it is broader than this. Though physical activity and overweight/obesity have not been systematically studied for diverse populations, low-income groups and some communities of color clearly face additional jeopardy for health problems that are tied to low levels of physical activity. According to the Centers for Disease Control, for example, one in two Latino children born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes during their lifetimes, due largely to high obesity rates among Latinos.

The last decade has seen growing interest among planners and public health professionals in how the physical environment supports or impedes physical activity. Prompted by researchers, advocacy groups and public health institutions, the resultant “active living” agenda blames contemporary US urban design for limiting our opportunities to walk, bicycle and conduct physical activity as part of our everyday lives. Until now this agenda has been developed largely in the context of middle-class, suburban communities, where large blocks, separated land uses, low densities and absent sidewalks make it nearly impossible to walk or bicycle to school, shopping or jobs. These features do not, however, characterize the neighborhoods where many low-income and black and Hispanic residents dwell. The pressing need to increase physical activity among these communities suggests that a refocusing of the active living agenda is necessary to ensure that its considerable

energies and resources directly benefit these groups.

To help the active living agenda assess its focus, I offer three questions for consideration and further research: 1) is the physical environment the problem in low-income communities and communities of color?; 2) are we looking at the right aspects of the physical environment?; and 3) how can we understand physical activity and active living from the perspectives of low-income communities and communities of color?

Is the Physical Environment the Problem?

The active living agenda recognizes that obesity results from many factors, including nutrition and lifestyle as well as a poorly designed physical environment. Active living advocates argue that modern conveniences—lawn mowers, microwave ovens, dishwashers—reduce our daily energy expenditures. Our dependence on our cars, in particular, eliminates a key source of regular physical activity. If our communities were redesigned, the argument goes, we might be more inclined to walk and bicycle to our destinations, thereby getting more exercise and improving our health.

The causes of physical inactivity warrant further consideration because they vary among groups based on race, ethnicity and income. High-tech, labor-saving devices and sedentary occupations, for example, may be less of a cause of inactivity among low-income populations than among more affluent groups. Dependence on cars also differs by race and income levels. The 2000 census shows that more black and Hispanic workers travel to their jobs by walking, bicycling or using public transportation (16% and 14%, respectively), compared to non-Hispanic white workers (6%). More likely than high-tech conveniences, it seems, limited leisure-time physical activity in poor communities may be associated with limited time to exercise because individuals are holding two or more jobs and dealing with high caregiving burdens. Planners and public health professionals must be careful not to generalize from middle-class populations and places; we need more research to understand whether the physical environment is a primary cause of physical inactivity in poor communities and communities of color.

Are We Looking at the Right Aspects of the Physical Environment?

Until now, the active living agenda has focused most attention on the design attributes of middle-class, especially suburban, environments that may limit opportunities for everyday physical activity. Such stereotypical suburban environments feature shopping malls surrounded by seas of parking; ⇒

large street blocks and curvilinear streets that make it difficult to get directly where you are going; low densities; a rural imagery that foregoes sidewalks; long distances from homes to shops, jobs or schools; and prominent garages that produce boring streetscapes.

Such physical features may indeed limit opportunities for walking and bicycling in the suburbs. Many of these features have little to do, however, with the design of urban settings, which in the US continue to be occupied disproportionately by low-income residents and by people of color. Indeed, many older urban environments boast an impressive array of the very features that are hypothesized to support physical activity—grid street patterns that increase connectivity, high densities, public transportation, sidewalks and a mix of land uses. Other physical features may better explain lower rates of active living in low-income, urban environments—insufficient parks, high crime rates and fears for safety, pollution, lack of jobs to walk to, dirty streets and sidewalks and residential overcrowding that

Planners and public health practitioners who hope to increase physical activity in communities of color must begin by understanding active living from the perspectives of these communities.

limits opportunities for exercise at home. Aesthetic issues certainly matter, but they are likely to be overshadowed by more pressing barriers that limit accessibility or compromise safety.

The problems of cities are not new, and the causes are also well-known: lack of affordable housing, too few jobs in city centers, private disinvestment, and financially-strapped city coffers. The active living agenda could harness its considerable political and media power to bring attention to these conditions and to demonstrate links between poor quality urban environments and the expensive health outcomes of inactivity. Such strategies might generate new interest in addressing the longstanding problems that face older US city centers.

In built-out cities and impoverished rural areas, design and planning solutions to support physical activity will require extra creativity and resourcefulness. Here, the need to increase physical activity competes with a range of other pressing needs—for schools, jobs, housing, safety. The city of Santa Ana, California, for example, faced with an extreme shortage of park space for its low-income, young population, recently decided to convert one of its

existing parks to a badly needed school site. New resources to increase physical activity will not be easy to identify. The best will stretch limited resources and will address multiple needs at once: community gardens that produce a source of income and fresh food; joint usage agreements to open school playing fields to community members; neighborhood watch patrols that encourage residents to walk. Usually, these solutions will not be glamorous; they will not involve expensive, high-speed rail or magnificent new parks or facilities. The scale of intervention is likely to be local and the cost of projects is likely to be modest, though still potentially hard to finance. In terms of social justice, however, these investments are easier to support than the retrofitting of middle- and high-income suburbs at the public's expense.

How Can We Understand Active Living from the Perspectives of Diverse Communities?

To date, most public health research assumes a "barriers" approach to understanding active living in diverse communities. This approach assumes a shared definition of active living, and presumes that characteristics of individuals, groups and environments function to limit participation. Usually, such research finds that low-income populations and communities of color face extra barriers to physical activity—additional caregiving responsibilities, heightened health concerns, lack of energy and time. While helpful, this approach falls short in that it does not acknowledge the unique forms that active living may take in each community. It also does not harness the wide range of resources that diverse communities might marshal to encourage physical activity.

Planners and public health practitioners who hope to increase physical activity in communities of color must begin by understanding active living from the perspectives of these communities. Such "culturally competent" planning starts by identifying and learning more about the specific community to be served rather than planning for some hypothetical "norm" and modifying the plans (or not) to fit "exceptions" to that norm.

To understand the meaning of active living for a specific community, researchers and practitioners must work with communities to identify the groups' relevant history and life experiences, their positive and negative assets, their beliefs and values and their activities and preferences, especially regarding physical activity. How, for example, could the strong family ties that characterize most Latino cultures serve as the basis of family-centered strategies for physical activity? How may fears of race crime and harassment limit physical activity in "wilderness settings" for black Americans? How

might park design support the practice of Tai Chi among older Chinese-Americans? In interviewing Latino parents in Pico Rivera, California, about their children's travel behavior, we learned that these parents, most of whom walked their children to school, aspired to someday being able to drive their children instead. The lack of drivers' licenses and limited access to cars forced these parents to let their children walk, but they feared for their children's safety in doing so. As this example suggests, planners should not assume the universality of middle-class ideas about the "goodness" of walking and bicycling. For groups that have had few alternatives, these transportation modes may have varied meanings and implications.

Communities themselves should be centrally engaged in identifying and developing strategies for active living. The Active Living by Design program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation offers a good model of what this might look like. This program provides modest funding and significant technical support to communities that demonstrate a commitment to increasing active living. The program seeks to support communities that have both grassroots and top-level commitment to this goal, and that have developed an agenda of activities that will work in their particular site. Ideally, community involvement would look more like community members planning and implementing active living activities, and less like community "input" or tokenism.

The active living movement succeeds in tapping a widespread, middle-class discontent with harried lifestyles and placeless communities—a nostalgia for another, perhaps imagined time, when life was less busy and more local in its orientation. In this other time, children walked to school each day and parents did not worry about child abductions or

Gordon [Cont. from page 5]

Few would dispute that improved and better bike lanes, safe sidewalks with good connectivity, more frequent transit service and new light rail lines go a long way toward encouraging alternative modes of transportation. But if people don't know how to use these alternatives or where they are, or are just plain timid about trying something new, the capital investment in transportation infrastructure will never be fully utilized.

The key to TravelSmart is providing specific information to those who want it, while leaving in place those who don't. TravelSmart is about encouraging a lot of people to make small changes in the way they travel, which makes a big difference in the long run. Almost everyone takes one or two trips per week where they can leave their car at home.

spend their time chauffeuring children from one activity to another. A day's errands could be handily accomplished by a stroll to the market and a stop at the local post office. In this time before homeowners' associations and three-car garages, homes were smaller and closer together, and neighborhoods were more distinctive and interesting. Neighbors were more inclined to walk in them and less likely to park in front of the TV for hours each evening without even having to get up to change channels.

We must remind ourselves that the development and design of US suburbs was motivated, in part, by a desire to escape dense, urban areas and the "problems" with which they were associated. Suburban development has had long-term implications for race and class justice in the US. We are still struggling with its effects. We cannot in good conscience now commit our resources to changing these suburbs into cities while neglecting our existing urban centers.

Urban environments present tremendous potential for supporting active living; these places are, after all, the models for the reform of suburban design that is the heart of the active living movement. The positive characteristics of urban environments provide an excellent foundation upon which to build, ultimately making city centers into places where residents have places to walk and bicycle to, and pleasant and safe routes to get there. The active living agenda has made great strides in a short time by insisting that we can change how we design our cities to support the kinds of lives we want. This vision of the "good life" can be broad enough to include the communities that need active living the most.

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Portlanders will know more about the capacity of TravelSmart to increase biking, walking, carpooling and transit when the final survey results are analyzed in January 2004. Plans are also underway to launch a large-scale TravelSmart project next spring to coincide with the opening of the new Interstate MAX light rail line in North Portland.

Lavinia Gordon is a project manager for the Transportation Options Division for the City of Portland, Oregon. She manages projects to reduce car travel and encourage transportation alternatives such as biking, walking and transit. Lavinia has worked in the area of transportation demand management for the Portland Department of Transportation for over twelve years.

America's Obesity Epidemic

By Thomas L. Halton

Obesity in the United States has truly reached epidemic proportions. Currently two out of every three Americans are overweight and 30 percent are obese. Minority groups are particularly affected by this epidemic. Obesity is associated with a variety of adverse health effects including: premature death, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. The majority of these cases are due to energy imbalance, specifically an increase in caloric intake and a decrease in physical activity. The focus of public health programs aimed at preventing obesity must emphasize dietary change and increased levels of physical activity. Of paramount importance to the latter is a commitment by our cities to provide adequate and safe facilities in an effort to encourage physical activity.

Obesity is defined as an excess accumulation of body fat, also known as adipose tissue. Adipose

The situation truly seems to be going from bad to worse, and sadly the children in this country are not faring any better.

tissue is a normal part of the body and serves many useful functions. It is the principal mechanism of energy storage in humans, and also insulates the body and cushions and protects vital organs. Obesity is associated with increased adipose cell size and in persons with extreme obesity, increased fat cell number. The body fat percentage in obese people can range from 2-70 percent of total weight. It seems as though the body has an almost limitless capacity to store excess energy.

In order to truly define obesity, one must first understand how it is measured. The most common method is the body mass index or BMI. The BMI is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by his/her height in meters squared. Body mass index is well correlated with levels of body fat. It is also highly related to health risk. In general, a BMI below 25 is considered "normal" or "healthy." A BMI between 25.1 and 29.9 would classify a person as "overweight". Finally, a BMI of 30 or greater would be considered "obese."

Prevalence

Every few years the Center for Disease Control conducts a National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) to assess a variety of nutritional and health parameters among Americans. Participants in NHANES are randomly selected non-institutionalized members of the US population. Each selected participant submits to a detailed household interview as well as a physical examination. Height and weight are recorded for each participant and BMIs are calculated. The results from the latest NHANES (1999-2000) have been published and the news is not good. Sixty-four percent of US adults, two out of every three, are considered overweight or obese, with a BMI of 25 or greater. Of these, a startling 30 percent are obese, with a BMI greater than 30.

While these numbers are frightening in and of themselves, a cause for greater concern is the upward trend in recent years. For example, the previous NHANES was conducted between the years of 1988-94 (NHANES III). Fifty-six percent of those sampled at that time were overweight, while 23 percent were obese. In the short span of time between these two surveys, obesity increased 7 percent. The situation truly seems to be going from bad to worse, and sadly the children in this country are not faring any better. According to the latest NHANES, 15 percent of children are overweight, more than double the rate in the 1970s.

There appear to be differences in rates of obesity based on race and ethnicity, with minority groups showing higher prevalence. This is especially true among women. According to the latest NHANES, African American females suffer the highest rates of obesity at 51 percent, followed by Mexican American females at 40 percent and then white females at 31 percent.

Cost

The economic effects of this epidemic are considerable. According to The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the estimated total cost of obesity in this country is \$122.9 billion per year. Of this number, \$64.1 billion is attributed to direct costs of the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of obesity. The remaining \$58.8 billion is attributed to the indirect costs associated with the value of foregone wages of

those unable to work and the foregone value of future earnings due to premature death.

Health Effects

When BMI rises above 25, a wide variety of health consequences may result. In general, the more severe the overweight, the greater the risk of obesity-related disease. The Surgeon General of the United States cites the following statistics and risks as being associated with overweight and obesity.

Premature death: Obesity is responsible for approximately 300,000 premature deaths per year in the US. Even a slight weight gain of 10-20 pounds will increase risk. Those with a BMI greater than 30 have a 50-100 percent increased risk of premature death from all causes compared to those with a more healthy weight.

Heart disease: Rates of heart disease increase with BMIs over 25. Obesity is often accompanied by high blood pressure, increased triglycerides, decreased HDL cholesterol and insulin-resistance, all of which are established risk factors for heart disease.

Type 2 diabetes: Over 80 percent of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight. A weight gain of 11-18 pounds increases a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes to twice that of those with a healthy weight.

Cancer: Overweight and obesity are associated with certain forms of cancer, including endometrial, colon, gallbladder, prostate, kidney and postmenopausal breast cancer.

Other effects: Other reported adverse effects of overweight include sleep apnea, asthma, arthritis, reproductive problems, gall bladder disease, incontinence, increased surgical risk and depression.

Causes

For many years, obesity was believed to be caused by a combination of ingesting too many calories and expending too few. While this is still true for the majority of cases, it is now apparent that obesity is more complex and deeply rooted in a variety

of biologic systems. Genes seem to play a role, as might metabolic and endocrine abnormalities and psychological factors.

Still, for the vast majority of cases, a lack of physical activity and overeating are the culprits. While portion sizes in this country seems to be ever increasing, physical activity is on the decline. According to the latest Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 54 percent of the US adult population does not meet the recommended thirty minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week. In fact, one in four reported absolutely no leisure time physical activity at all!

It is probably safe to say that in America, the recent increases in the prevalence of obesity are most likely caused by energy imbalance and not genetic factors. After all, just how much do genes change in a period of twenty to thirty years? Therefore, dietary change and physical activity should be the major focus of public health programs aimed at preventing obesity. And since decisions about physical activity are influenced by environmental factors, we must make efforts to ensure that our cities have adequate, safe facilities that will encourage it. For example, a lack of adequate sidewalks or bike paths will influence the decision to walk or bike to work.

In conclusion, obesity is on the rise in this country and the effects on our health and even our economy are considerable. While much is yet to be learned about the causes of obesity, it is safe to say that the majority of cases are due to energy imbalance, primarily eating too much and exercising too little. Levels of physical activity in this country need to change if we are to win the war against obesity. Providing adequate and safe facilities in our cities and towns is an important step toward the goal of increasing physical activity among our population.

Thomas L. Halton holds masters degrees in exercise science and human nutrition. He is a certified nutrition specialist and is currently pursuing his doctor of science in nutritional epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health.

Progressive Planning UPCOMING SPECIAL ISSUES

(Articles welcome)

**2004 Elections and Convention Cities -- New York City and Boston
Planning, Food Production and Consumption**

See page 3 of this issue for submission guidelines.

Engineering Physical Activity Back Into Americans' Lives

By Mark Fenton

In recent months Americans have heard from the Surgeon General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and no less than the President himself that this nation is in the midst of an obesity epidemic. Unfortunately, while rightly acknowledging the great personal and social costs of the epidemic, none of them have offered particularly enlightened solutions to the problem. In particular, none have proposed bringing to bear any of the myriad policy tools available to them, nor have they championed the types of state and local activities that make a difference at the community level. Fortunately, creative solutions are being pursued in cities and towns across the country.

The Problem with How They See the Problem

Given the incessant media attention, most people now recognize that obesity is a result of a chronic caloric imbalance—eating more calories than you burn on a regular basis. Over the past decade the public health community has seen this epidemic looming and has warned of a commensurate rise in cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension and a host of related complications. Certainly there's been focused discussion on the need to improve Americans' nutritional habits. Specific initiatives are also being launched to encourage people to get more exercise. America on the Move, for example, is a program designed to get people to wear pedometers (hip-worn step counters) so that they become aware of and try to increase their daily step totals. More daily steps means more physical activity, goes the thinking, and thus less obesity.

Sadly, almost two decades worth of experience suggests we'll be fighting a losing battle if the goal is simply to get people to "exercise" more. The Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health, published in 1996, concluded that Americans should accumulate at least thirty minutes of physical activity every day to reduce their risk for chronic disease and an early death. Yet the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) collects annual survey data suggesting that only about 25 percent of the US population gets that much leisure-time physical activity (in other words, conscious exercise), while nearly 30 percent of the adult US population is essentially sedentary, getting no activity at all during the day. Even more disturbing, despite

admonitions to "just do it" and "feel the burn," those numbers haven't budged for well over a decade. So, we've been talking about exercise, and we're talking about it more now than ever, but apparently we're not prepared to do any more of it, no matter how much we're told we should.

This article is based on the premise that there's a missing link, specifically that the real problem isn't restricted to a lack of exercise, but also to a continually declining amount of routine physical activity. Not only do we have power devices—from lawn mowers to washing machines, elevators to automobiles—to do all of our work for us, Americans rarely walk or bicycle anywhere anymore. While the number of walking trips (as a percentage of total trips) were roughly cut in half from 1977 to 1995 based on US Department of Transportation Data, automobile trips rose to become almost 90 percent of all trips. Over nearly that same time span, the rate of obesity in the US rose from about 12 percent to over 30 percent of the adult population—i.e., nearly one-third of US adults are now considered obese by medical standards. (For more detailed or state-specific health data, go to www.cdc.gov/nccd-php/dnpa.)

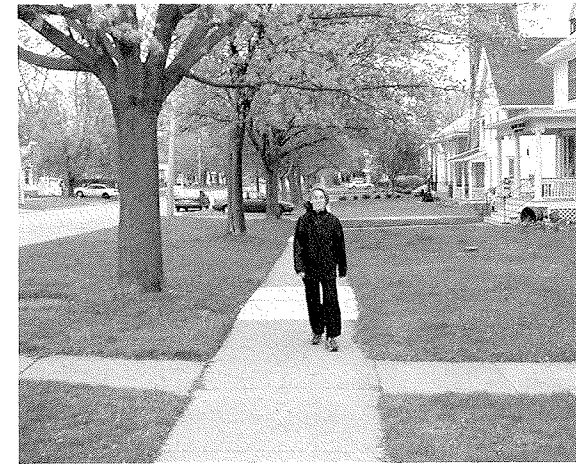
Given that it is unlikely that Americans are ready to forego automatic garage door openers and washers and dryers, and that there is no evidence we're inclined to increase our more structured exercise, it looks like we would do well to build more routine walking and bicycling into our daily lives. This is the opportunity our national leaders are missing. (For example, why aren't they discussing dramatically increasing federal transportation enhancement funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of the war on obesity?)

Thankfully those involved in local land use and transportation planning have taken up the call. Even better, in many communities coalitions of planners, engineers, health professionals, educators, elected officials, concerned citizens and others are joining the movement—some under the banner of smart growth or sustainable development, but more and more simply out of a recognition that our very health and well-being are at stake. (For extensive evidence and resources in

creating active environments, see www.activelivingbydesign.org.)

Planning more Physically Active Settings

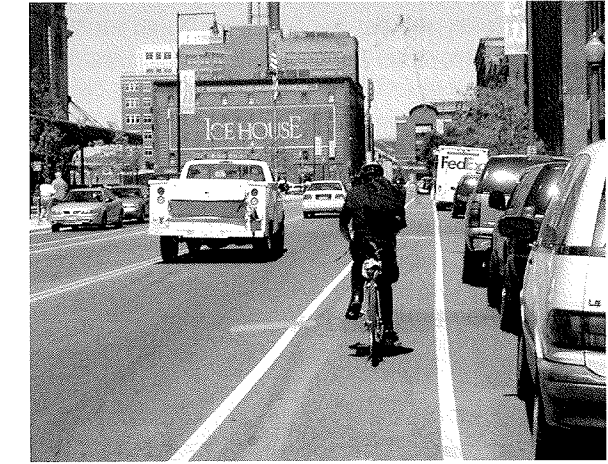
To really impact physical activity, we're not just talking about more playing fields, basketball and



tennis courts. These are great for exercisers, and certainly should be widely available in every community, but they alone won't get enough people moving to truly make a difference. It's not even about more parks and purely recreational trails, though they also have great merit. What is needed are settings where people will walk and bike simply because it is safe and, for at least some trips, actually more convenient than driving a car. An extensive research literature in planning and transportation (and a growing body of research in public health) suggests five simplified elements can be used to describe places where people are more likely to walk and bike as a matter of course. (For

more details and further resources on these and other ideas go to the Local Government Commission at www.lgc.org.)

1. Continuous networks. The pathways, trails and lanes for walking and cycling must be complete and



create an effective network. Generally the best sidewalks are wide and separate from traffic (above, left), while blocks are short and intersections frequent, providing numerous route choices. Bike lanes provide safe riding in areas of higher volume traffic (above, right, Denver). The ideal result is that the walk or bike distance between two points isn't dramatically longer than the straight line (or "as-the-crow-flies") distance.

2. Land Use. There are two keys here: Communities (or at least neighborhoods) must be compact enough that total travel distances aren't too great. And there must be a high mix of uses, with res- ➔

Get On the PN Roster

In 1998 PN published its last PN Roster. We plan to develop a new roster in the upcoming year. We are exploring options for a password protected version on the web but there will possibly be a print version. For those of you who remember the old rosters, they were terrific networking resources. We will use the PN address list as the basis for the roster but it is much better to have more information about each member, particularly a brief bio. Remember, PN is a network and it is only as strong as its members.

To make sure you have the best possible information, please fill in the following:

Name:

Phone:

Organization:

Fax:

Address:

Email

City:

URL:

State:

A brief statement describing your work,

Zip:

interests, and/or activities in 50 words

Country:

or less.

Send it to: pn@pratt.edu (preferred) OR Fax to 718-636-3709
OR mail to Planners Network, 379 DeKalb Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11205

idential, retail and commercial activities, schools, recreation and transit access all interspersed, and thus within walking and biking distance of one another.

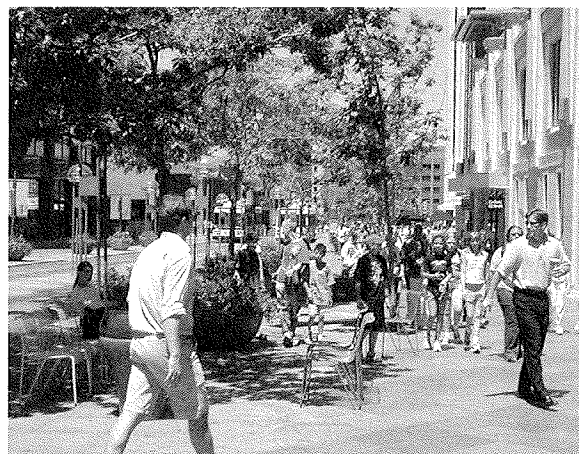
3. Safety. People must feel safe both from crime and from traffic when walking or biking. This requires that elements of both the social and built environments be favorable. For example, there should be



minimal illicit activity and lots of lighting, as well as separation of walkways from travel lanes and slow traffic speeds.

4. Site Designs. Even if sidewalks are available and safe and destinations are plentiful, people will not walk to uninviting buildings, especially if they are set well back from the road behind acres of parking (above, left) But buildings near the street with obvious entrances, many windows and bicycle parking are not only more inviting to pedestrians and cyclists, they also provide comfort to those simple walking past (above, right, Brockport, NY).

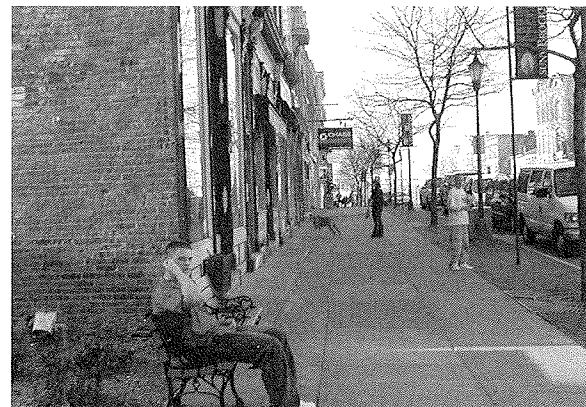
5. Civic Commitment. Though the softest of the bunch, this may be the most important for long-term, large-scale change. Everyone from elected officials and bureaucrats to the average citizen has to embrace the idea of a more walkable community—and vote with their feet! The best measure of a successful pedestrian environment is whether



you see people out and about on foot (below, left, 16th Street Mall in Denver, CO; below right, Park Avenue in Brockport, NY).

How to Build More Active Communities: Creative Approaches and New Partners

In the planning field, many are developing and testing tools and approaches around zoning and site requirements, the two areas most planning entities



control. The following strategies show great promise in helping to create places where more people are likely to walk and cycle.

- Require the network. Mandate sidewalks in all development, and bicycle lanes where appropriate. (See the "Pedestrian Facilities Users Guide" and the "Bicycle Lane Design Guide" at www.pedbikeinfo.org.) One approach is to construct sidewalks and bike lanes opportunistically—say, when streets are being paved or sewers redone. Note that in many communities health officers review all development plans (often as oversight of water and sewer issues), meaning they can and should be an ally in supporting completion of the bike and pedestrian network.

- Slow down traffic. Simple traffic calming tools—for example, narrower lanes (opposite page, top left, Charleston, SC), median islands, chicanes and speed tables—have been shown again and again to



slow speeds in residential and downtown areas, to the benefit of both pedestrians and drivers. Though not always in a planner's purview, this is a critical adjunct to the other activities described here.

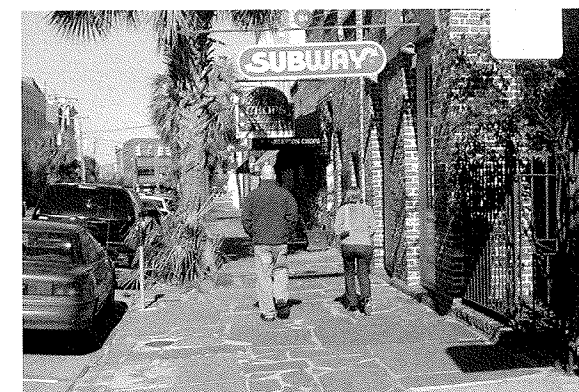
- Mix uses. Zone for corner stores or small business



districts in neighborhoods, and encourage upper floor apartments above first floor retail or businesses.

- Preclude drive-through retail settings. Don't allow fast food or other services to cater entirely to automobiles at the expense of bicycle and pedestrian traffic. Even fast food outlets and national retailers can succeed, in fact thrive, in more appealing and functional settings (below, Charleston, SC).

- Increase residential and business densities. One approach is to simply reduce lot sizes, but you can go further by providing density bonuses to developers. These allow an overall greater number of units if built in a more compact pattern



that encourages biking and walking while preserving open space. Even in already-developed, low-density suburbs you can encourage apartments over garages, in basements, as "garden apartments," etc.

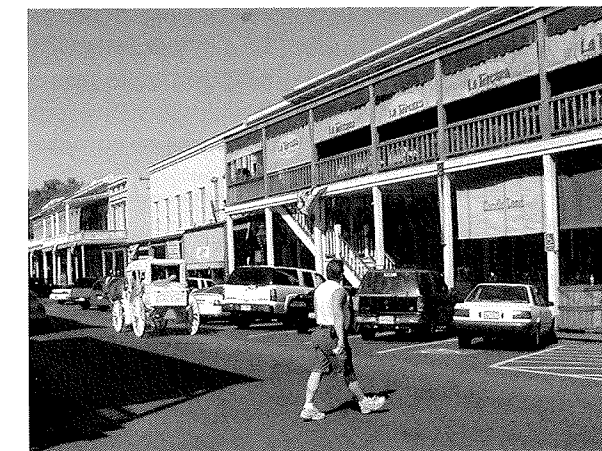
- Set maximum setbacks. Suburbs have typically had minimum setbacks, requiring that structures be greater than some minimum figure from the front lot lines. This generally undermines pedestrian friendliness in two ways. First, a building set far back from

the sidewalk provides little of the oversight or comfort that makes a sidewalk an inviting place to be, and second, parking is often placed on the lot between the sidewalk and the building, making for more challenging bicycle and pedestrian access. Whenever possible, bring building fronts to the sidewalk edge.

- Reduce or eliminate on-site parking requirements. Wherever possible maximize on-street parking or shared parking between and behind—but not in front of—buildings. Diagonal parking, for example, increases capacity over parallel parking and can also serve to narrow the travel lanes (below, Old Town Sacramento). Ideally, give bicycles the very best parking spaces.

So if All this Works, Who Needs the Healthy Community?

What's so unique about this? Most of these suggestions you'd find in any smart growth manifesto, or in



guidelines for creating a New Urbanist or more sustainable community. This argument adds two key ideas to those approaches.

First, we must wear the mantle of public health advocates when making the case for more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly settings. The focus of the argument for better bike and pedestrian facilities at the beginning of this article was to help people be more physically active, and thus to help fight the very real obesity epidemic. But there are two further health arguments. As automobiles are among the greatest contributors to air pollution in this country, replacing some number of car trips with walking or cycling trips can dramatically help improve air quality, and thus health. Also, reducing bicycle and pedestrian crashes, injuries and fatalities is a key goal, and is a result of better-designed facilities. This argument is especially critical around schools, where child-pedestrian traffic is likely to be greatest.

Second, we must use the skills and infrastructure of the public health community to advance the ⇒

cause. Health advocates tend to be skilled at working in and even facilitating multi-disciplinary teams because it's so often required in their work. Whether collaborating with travel authorities when trying to contain an infectious disease outbreak, hydrologists and engineers to maintain clean water supplies, or education officials and parents to assure vaccinations are complete, public health officials are accustomed to crossing boundaries. Thus, they are ready and willing allies in creating more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly communities, once the clear connection to their goals—more physically active and thus healthier citizens—is made. Here are several examples of specific initiatives to launch in your community.

National: Walk to School Programs. Sometimes called Safe Routes to School, the approach is often to build interest among children and parents with an event on International Walk to School Day (usually the first Wednesday in October), and then build a coalition to improve safety and increase routine walking by building better facilities where needed. School or commu-

nity health officers are often integral to such efforts. (See www.walktoschool.org for details and a national event registry.)

State: Michigan Active Community Awards. The Michigan Department of Community Health encourages communities to do an online self-assessment of "activity-friendliness." It covers a variety of areas including land use and planning, non-motorized transport facilities and safety, parks and recreational programming, schools, worksites and public transportation. The assessment asks communities for intended next steps and provides a score. It both recognizes success (Michigan's governor personally handed out the 2003 awards) while identifying the areas needing improvement. It also begins a process by forcing communities to pull together an interdisciplinary team simply to complete the survey; that team can become the basis for on-going work. (See www.mihealthtools.org/communities for the survey and information.)

Local: Bike/Pedestrian Network Building. There are numerous examples from visionary communities nationwide of efforts to complete their bicycle and

pedestrian networks. These include passing bonds to underwrite sidewalk and trail construction, or aggressively pursuing "road-diets," the conversion of four-lane roads to two-lane roads that have a turn lane, with the leftover space dedicated to bike and pedestrian right-of-way. One especially creative approach: towns that purchase homes at the end of cul-de-sac streets when they go on sale, construct cut-through pathways to adjacent streets, parks or trails, and then resell the homes with the pathway easement owned by or permanently deeded to the town. It's a powerful way to increase bike and pedestrian access in otherwise impenetrable dead-end neighborhoods. (See www.walkablecommunities.org and www.pedbikeinfo.org for detailed design and engineering information, resources and an extensive image library.)

Whatever avenues you pursue, keep in mind all of your potential allies. In Cohasset, MA it has been the health officer, not planners or bike advocates, who has led the charge to get local conservation funds put in place for a feasibility study of a trail along an historic rail corridor. Perhaps the health officer in your community is equally enlightened.

And what about you? Quite simply, you should put up or shut up. The final but perhaps most effective way to create a more active community is to get involved personally. It's easy to visualize this happening at four levels; everyone can start at the first, but for greatest effect you should work all the way to the fourth.

1. Be a role model. Forego at least one car trip every

day, and bike or walk instead. Even better, walk a child to soccer practice, or walk with friends to dinner or a movie to broaden your impact.

2. Be a lone voice. Show up at planning and zoning meetings, ask questions and at least make people explain why things are being done the way they are.

3. Infiltrate existing entities. I ran for my local planning board and find that nothing is as effective as being on the "inside." Simply put, if all I do is get the sidewalk network closer to completion in my community, it will be time well spent. But it's clear one could have an impact working on the zoning or planning boards, school or town council, recreation or conservation commissions—in other words, any one of myriad elected or appointed boards.

4. Create a new coalition. Cross disciplines. Get public safety, health, transportation, planning, public works, education and other officials together with citizen advocates, and make the creation of more walkable and bike-friendly settings a community-wide focus.

*Mark Fenton is physical activity program manager at the University of North Carolina's Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (www.pedbikeinfo.org), host of the PBS TV Series "America's Walking," (www.pbs.org/americas-walking) and author of *The Complete Guide to Walking for Health, Weight Loss, and Fitness* (Lyons, 2001). Contact him at mark.fenton@verizon.net. All photo credits, Mark Fenton.*

Planners Network Student Campaign

Planners Network is launching a new student outreach campaign, and we invite all interested students to get involved. The Planners Network 2003-2004 Campus Drive aims to raise student awareness about progressive planning and provide support for students to organize local progressive planning events and initiatives.

The campaign hopes to demonstrate that, contrary to what students hear from professional planning associations and many professors, there is a viable alternative to the mainstream planning establishment and that planners can indeed be advocates for social change. We are therefore inviting students to join PN and establish local PN chapters, to better incorporate progressive principles and ideas into planning education and to create focal points for local planning action.

Students are encouraged to take action at both the local level and in the broader context of Planners Network, through a variety of activities:

- organizing panel discussions, workshops, design charettes, a speaker series, or other events;

- producing newsletters, articles, or other publications;
- working with faculty to develop a more progressive curriculum;
- engaging in critical projects related to local planning issues;
- contributing to the PN magazine, newsletter, listserv, or website;
- planning a workshop or event for the June 2004 PN conference in New York City.

Students who join PN and form a local chapter will be eligible to receive financial support and other benefits. PN can provide up to \$500 per campus for student events, along with copies of *Progressive Planning* magazine, brochures, and student orientation materials. New chapters may also benefit from reduced PN membership deals, publicity on the PN website, and opportunities for networking with other progressive planning students and PN members.

Students at 14 universities have already started local organizing – for more information or to get in touch with a chapter near you, please email pnstudents@yahoo.com!

--Josh Lerner
For Planners Network

SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!!!

Beginning in October we have started a monthly email newsletter for PN members to keep the networking going. The e-letter will have member updates, jobs, conferences and other announcements. Often PNers in the same city ask us how they can get in touch with other PNers, and the best we can do is send them names and addresses. Email is also the best way to let you know when your membership/subscription has to be renewed. If you don't want to receive the e-letter, we can keep you off that list, but please send us your email address so we can contact you when we need to.

**Send to pn@pratt.edu
and in the subject line put "subscribe to e-newsletter."**

Designing the Active City: The Case for Multi-Use Paths

By Anne Lusk

More people walk and bicycle in cities worldwide where destinations such as grocery stores, post offices or coffee shops are accessible by sidewalks, roads for bicycling and separated multi-use paths. Examples abound in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and China. In America, the

nations. Special design emphasis should be placed on creating multi-use paths that lead to frequently used services and retail locations in suburban and low-income minority residential areas because these populations are more negatively affected by obesity and its associated consequences.

Background

The recent report "Measuring the Health Effects of Sprawl: A National Analysis of Physical Activity, Obesity and Chronic Disease" by Sprawl Watch and the Surface Transportation Policy Project suggested the creation of dense amenity-filled neighborhoods with sidewalks and bicycle lanes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a report titled "Creating a Healthy Environment," which included these recommendations: "... (4) providing sidewalks and pedestrian walkways; (5) providing crossing guards and bike paths in areas where most pedestrians are children (e.g., near schools, parks and playgrounds), and (6) providing overpasses, underpasses or tunnels for pedestrians and bicyclists to bypass particularly dangerous roads and intersections." Both of these reports recommend sidewalks and side-of-the-road bicycle lanes, with mention of bike paths for children. There are important differences, however, in the safety profile and user population of side-of-the-road bicycle lanes or striped lanes and separate dedicated multi-use paths.

In the US, where few separate multi-use paths exist, bicyclists are twelve times more likely than car occupants to be killed compared with the Netherlands and Germany, according to John Pucher and Lewis Dijkstra (see "Resources for Active Living" section in this issue). Furthermore, American bicyclists are three times as likely to be killed in a bicycle accident as Dutch bicyclists and two times as likely to be killed as German bicyclists. In contrast to the US, the Netherlands and Germany are building separate facilities for bicyclists to increase physical activity and reduce the chance of death. From 1978 to 1996, the Dutch, a population that already had miles of separate paths, more than doubled their network of bike paths and lanes. From 1976 to 1995, the Germans almost tripled their bikeway network.

The Issues

Even with data that documents bicyclists' deaths, it is a challenge to defend the creation of multi-use paths in the United States. Critics of multi-use paths correctly point out that bicycling on the road can be safer for skilled and high-speed bicyclists than bicycling on separate dedicated multi-use paths, a result of the number of users and curb cuts on paths. Separate paths can also be less safe than is often perceived due to an underreporting of pedestrian and bicycle injuries. This underreporting is the result of a variety of factors including the inability of the police to record the accident if there is no injury or at least \$500 worth of damage, the involvement of children who do not report the accident to an adult, and the generation of data that is then not processed and thus available for analysis. America's built environment is also more spread out than in European countries—meaning that distances are longer—and more European communities have flat terrain, mild climates and traffic calming. Finally, it is expensive to obtain land and build separate multi-use paths, whereas many communities already have sidewalks for pedestrians and roads for bicyclists. However, for the 65 percent of the population that is overweight and struggling with diets, gyms, surgery and pills, the multi-use path options could be critical.

Therefore, in addition to providing sidewalks for pedestrians and safe side-of-the-road facilities for bicyclists, an important strategy is to provide safe separate dedicated multi-use paths for walkers, bicyclists, joggers and in-line skaters that would be built closer to high population densities and lead to purposeful destinations. Walkers who wish to avoid in-line skaters or bicyclists should continue to stay on pedestrian dedicated sidewalks. Bicyclists who prefer to bicycle on the side of the road should continue to be encouraged to bicycle on the road with safe side-of-the-road provisions. Design innovations could also, though, be considered to bring multi-use paths closer to where people live and to encourage everyone, particularly individuals who are sedentary, to engage in physical activity.

Why Multi-use Paths?

The populations most negatively affected by obesity are individuals who live in suburban developments that discourage physical activity and minority and low-income individuals who have few physical activity resources. White suburban middle-income populations have indicated their preference for multi-use paths and even use these facilities. Still, multi-use paths should not be automatically built for minority populations under the assumption that what is acceptable to one population is acceptable to other populations.

The situation is a complex one. The Chicago Lakefront Trail and the West Orange Trail near Orlando, Florida are adjacent to low-income minority residential neighborhoods and yet these residents do not use the paths in numbers proportionate to their population density. The Shelby Walk, an inner-city Safewalk built ten years ago in Nashville, Tennessee on a low-income neighborhood sidewalk, does not have a large population that walks to the planned destination, Shelby Park, a traditional park with a pond and ball fields. An African-American resident of Detroit, Michigan commented that in car-dependent Detroit, African-Americans do not want to walk because to walk implies they are poor, don't have a car, have to walk or have to take the bus. Corliss Wilson Outley, an African-American professor at the University of Minnesota, found that African-American children do not always want to do the same physical activities as non-minority children and wish instead to maintain their own sense of identity. Low-income minority residents also face issues of overwork, crime, no funds to purchase athletic equipment, difficulty in storing equipment, a family history that might not include physical activity and lack of information about resources and how to take advantage of them.

However, even with this understanding, multi-use path designs near low-income minority popula-

Photo by Arthur Ross



Monona Terrace in Madison, WI

focus has been on sidewalks for walking, road lanes for bicycling, and recreation-based separate multi-use paths, such as often-distant rail trails and riverside greenways, for walking, bicycling, jogging and in-line skating. To enable all Americans to engage in physical activity as part of their daily routine, the country needs to provide: 1) sidewalks for walking; 2) safe roads for bicycling; and 3) *safe separated multi-use paths—for walking, bicycling, jogging and in-line skating—that are also close to home and lead to purposeful desti-*



Washington D.C., New York Avenue proposal

tions can be justified based on other observations. Though the low-income populations in Nashville do not walk on Shelby Walk toward the intended destination of Shelby Park, they walk in the other direction to the grocery store. The residents also walk to Shelby Place, a gazebo park the neighbors have adopted and planted with flowers. Numerous minority residents in Nashville flock to Shelby Bottoms and its five-mile paved greenway where children bicycle and in-line skate beside their parents. In Boston, minority children use the Southwest Corridor multi-use path, ⇨

Image courtesy of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

even though it is bereft of purposeful destinations and its communicated landmarks are the cross-streets.

While there are formal and informal groups that organize participation in local activities, such as soccer and softball, these opportunities rarely provide the near-daily and year-round kinds of exercise that is needed. Furthermore, they are usually

The Need for New Designs

America has design models for building rail trails (paths on abandoned railroad beds) and greenways (multi-use paths) along rivers or lakes, but the nation has yet to expand its design repertoire and incorporate multi-use paths in suburbs or already built cities. For people who live in suburbia, design solutions should be considered to integrate separate multi-use paths with sidewalks, streets, front yards, backyards, alleys and playgrounds. For inner-city minority and low-income populations, efforts should be expended to determine how to build multi-use paths close to these populations. In the city it is prohibitively expensive to demolish buildings to construct paths; the most affordable place to locate a multi-use path is on a redesigned sidewalk, road, park or vacant lot, or through a building.

What follows are a few design alternatives that have been tested or are being used in Europe and the US to build multi-use paths in congested areas. These designs are intended to be part of an extended multi-use path system and not, for example, a way to direct road bicyclists to a short two-way multi-use path on the edge of the road and then integrate the bicyclists immediately back into a road system. These designs also do not preclude necessary sidewalks that are dedicated solely to pedestrians or side-of-the-road facilities that should always be available for bicyclists. Instead, the consideration of these designs is a step toward creating an environment in America that contributes to good health for all populations.

Multi-use Paths on Facilities

Erlangen, Germany

A bicyclist, jogger, in-line skater or walker can more safely travel on a Woonerf, a street that is closed to all but residential traffic. This example in Erlangen, Germany features parking on one side and bollards that separate the residential cars from foot powered traffic. Though the surface shown in this photograph includes brick pavers, a smooth surface is preferable for accessibility and in-line skating.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Minneapolis closed a street to cars and allowed pedestrians, buses and bicyclists into the now popular Nicollet Mall. Some streets in the US failed as pedestrian zones because all users, except the pedestrian, were excluded. The 16th Street Mall in Denver, Colorado has provisions for buses and pedestrians but does not allow bicyclists or skaters into the corridor. Minneapolis' more European model encourages engagement in physical activity as a routine part of the day.

Multi-use Paths beside Facilities

Paris, France

Paris has an extensive system of off-road multi-use

paths in the heavily built and historic city. One provision is a two-way path between a sidewalk and a road with bushes as a visible and psychological separation from the traffic. To bicycle against traffic can be troubling, especially for skilled bicyclists, so the separation by shrubs provides a degree of removal.

Leuven, Belgium

Pedestrians on a sidewalk, two-way bicycle traffic on a red-surfaced corridor, and parallel-parked cars are all accommodated between the historic buildings and the street. Pavers provide space for passenger-side car doors to open and bulbouts with bushes and trees enhance the ride and the street. Bollards further separate the rider from the parallel-parked cars and raised pavers deter cars from parking on the median.

Multi-use Paths over Facilities

Chicago, Illinois

The Chicago Lakefront Trail skirts Lake Michigan but is also bounded by Lakeshore Drive's heavy traffic. While tunnels and bridges are options for crossings, tunnels increase vulnerability and bridges involve an incline. Bridges can, however, serve several purposes: provide safe travel for path users; improve the driving experience with cascading flowers; flatter the city skyline; and offer elevated vantage points to path users.

Washington, DC

The Metropolitan Branch Trail is a rail trail that goes from Union Station near the Capitol to Silver Spring, Maryland. A new subway station was planned in the corridor and, rather than sever the path, the two facilities were merged. The trail now runs on top of the station and wide elevators take bicyclists from the trail to the trains.

Multi-use Paths through Facilities

Madison, Wisconsin

The existence of a path and a competing use for the land does not mean the elimination of one for the exclusive use of the other. In Madison, Wisconsin the new Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center includes a path, which pre-dated the convention center, built adjacent to the building and out

over the water. There is a pedestrian zone near the water with paver stones dividing the pedestrians from wheeled path users. An elevator accommodates bicyclists and others who wish to get to what had once been an inaccessible downtown lakefront.

Erlangen, Germany

Incentive or bonus zoning, used often in urban environments such as New York City, allowed developers to build additional floors of office buildings in exchange for open public plazas, available to pedestrians but no other users. Often, these public plazas

Photo by Anne Lusk



Multiple uses on Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, MN

restricted to individuals with particular schedules, skills and group affiliations. Many physical activities require the expenditure of significant amounts of time and money to acquire specialized skills or equipment, such as tennis, golf or rowing, or to

Photo by Anne Lusk



Multi-use paths in Paris

access specialized facilities, such as indoor tennis courts and gyms. In contrast, multi-use paths are free, accessible, inclusive and only require shoes. Free bicycles and helmets can be donated and even in-line skates can be acquired affordably through community programs.

Photo by Anne Lusk



Bike/pedestrian bridges on Chicago's Lakefront Trail

traveled through building courtyards and provided enhanced passage for pedestrians wanting to get to the other side. Similar design innovations could be provided for bicyclists, in-line skaters and joggers through buildings as a form of public space that is then available to all populations.

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Planners Network 2003-2004 Campus Drive

A new student outreach campaign to raise student awareness about progressive planning and provide support for students to organize local progressive planning events and initiatives.

More details on page 16 of this issue of Progressive Planning.

The San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway

By Phil Ganezer and Smita Mittal

In autumn of 2005, Los Angeles will see an unused railway reincarnated. Upon completion, this railway will be a very long, linear parkway/recreation area and a transportation corridor linking colleges, dense residential neighborhoods, major employment centers, an enormous outdoor recreational area and an airport. Its new identity: the San Fernando Valley Metro Rapidway (MR).

The opportunity to tie together all these destinations is why the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), the transportation planning and operating agency for Los Angeles County, will convert an abandoned right-of-way (ROW) it acquired from the Southern Pacific Railroad into a thirteen mile transportation/greenway featuring a bus-only road, parallel bike-pedestrian paths and substantial landscaping. The MR will provide new transportation and recreational facilities while creating access for patrons to many important destinations along its east-west path.

Busways have many advantages, including amenities similar to rail transit. Furthermore, construction of busways is initially less capital- and time-intensive than rail, but like rail, travel times are minimized and consistent, independent of traffic conditions.

As a major transportation corridor carrying tens of thousands of people each day, the new busway will attract patrons from the surrounding communities. Its greatest impacts, though, will be changing regional traffic patterns and attracting crowds of people to an area that was for decades ignored and perceived as vacant land. People will be attracted to the MR not only to ride the bus but also for recreation: to ride bikes, take walks and relax in the park-like atmosphere.

Busway within a Greenway

The urban design concept for the MR could best be termed "a busway within a greenway." Thirteen miles of continuous ROW provide an opportunity to create a huge linear greenbelt across the Valley. Because the design of the busway lanes would typically occupy only twenty-six feet of a 100-foot wide ROW, ample width is available for landscaping, as well as for parallel bicycle/pedestrian paths. By exploiting the large width of the ROW to accommodate these features, patrons will feel like they are riding through a park, with the dense urban landscape concealed.

The design of the bicycle-pedestrian paths is focused on commuters, so it runs straight and does not meander. A straight path means cyclists may safely ride at higher speeds. The path is ten feet wide, five feet for each direction of travel. Through most of the length of the MR, an abutting five-foot wide path exclusively for pedestrians is provided. The ROW width narrows substantially in a few short segments where MTA was forced to engineer a single, shared pedestrian-cyclist path. Users may gain access from each cross-street. Fences that create a barrier between the path and the busway are designed to provide safety without restricting access to open landscaped areas. Additionally, bicyclists will safely travel through cross-streets using traffic signals synchronized to protect them from nearby street traffic. Finally, decorative stamped and textured treatments plus the usual crosswalk striping will accentuate pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

Two other long, regional bike paths will connect to this bike path. One path, extending through the San Fernando Valley approximately fourteen miles west-northwest from the MR's eastern terminus, is built within the ROW for the regional commuter rail (Metrolink) line between Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. The second path runs generally south, along the Los Angeles River, and will eventually connect to downtown Los Angeles at full build-out. Together, these three paths create bicycle access to a large portion of Los Angeles County by providing cyclists several alternative, long, safe routes devoid of motorized vehicles.

Users of this path will find themselves separated from traffic, isolated by ground covering, trees and shrubs. They will hardly notice the adjacent busway because: buses produce no bells, horns or whistles; will run at intervals of five to ten minutes; are only 60 feet long; emit little pollution; and generate minor wind, which is mitigated by fencing. Riding along this path or on the bus will be similar to riding in a park absent the presence of softballs and bar-be-cue smoke.

The eastern terminus of the MR lies in the main commercial district of North Hollywood at an MTA facility that integrates a subway station, a bus terminal and a park-and-ride lot. This facility contains bike lockers and racks and is very close to a large regional park. It is also located in an urban redevelopment district where planning and design are being completed for dozens of acres of high-quality office

space, local and regional retail shops, restaurants and hundreds of units of medium-rise residential dwellings. The western terminus of the MR is located at Warner Center, an established mixed-use center containing retail space, housing and offices. Warner Center has the distinction of being LA County's third largest employment site.

Along the route, land uses in the adjacent neighborhoods are predominantly residential and commercial, with numerous schools, hospitals, industrial and recreation sites along the way. Notable destinations include: two community colleges, Van Nuys Airport, the Valley area government center and an enormous open space recreational site called the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area. The latter includes soccer and baseball fields, tennis courts, an artificial lake, hiking trails, biking trails, golf course, Japanese gardens and a velodrome (bicycle race track).

Modeled after the new "bus rapid transit" concept, the MR decreases travel time by limiting stops to approximately one per mile, and separates buses from adjacent street traffic, eliminating delays due to traffic queuing and congestion. Moreover, it employs a special system, called Signal Priority, which causes traffic signals to be delayed long enough to permit an approaching Rapidway bus to cross the intersection.

Need for the MRT

The San Fernando Valley is home to over 1.3 million people, and if considered as a separate city, would constitute the sixth largest city in the country. The San Fernando Valley began its development as a major suburb of Los Angeles in the 1940s. In the early 1990s, employment in the Valley expanded rapidly. Employment growth in the Valley through 2020 is forecast to be on par with that for the City of Los Angeles, which is expected to increase 30 percent between 1994 and 2020. Employment in the East and West Valley is expected to increase 22 and 42 percent respectively in the same time period.

Rapid population growth experienced in recent years by the Valley has been forecast to continue for the next two decades. A 29 percent population increase in the East Valley and 22 percent increase in the West Valley is projected between 2000 to 2020.

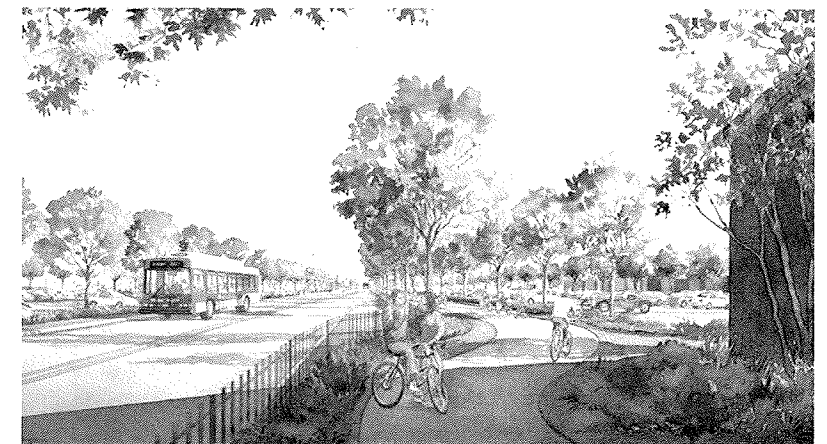
The Valley is served by five major freeways under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and an arterial and local street system under the jurisdiction of several cities, primarily the City of Los Angeles. During the morning and evening peak traffic periods, many of the freeways and arterials in the Valley are operating at or near capacity in the peak direction of travel. Increasing the capacity on these freeways and

roadways is very difficult due to limited available land. To expand would require extensive property acquisition, which is very expensive and politically untenable.

Today a trip along the MR route takes at least fifty minutes during rush hour using existing express buses, even longer on a local bus. Moreover, travel times will increase as projected growth exacerbates congestion. For example, average freeway speeds are forecast to decrease from 35 mph today to 20 mph in 2020. A trip on the exclusive busway will take about thirty-five to forty minutes between Warner Center and North Hollywood today, even during rush hour. And the busway trip will still take only thirty-five to forty minutes in 2020, even while other facilities that are vulnerable to the effects of growth become more congested and slow down.

Exclusive Design for the Valley

The Rapidway design highlights the uniqueness of the ROW as it crosses through the neighborhoods of the San Fernando Valley. The typically 100-foot wide ROW wide provides an opportunity to design the MR like a typical rail alignment in terms of its exclusive right-of-way and stations. The Rapidway will feature many amenities to ensure user safety and comfort such as: canopies to shelter patrons from the elements, seating, lighting, public art, security cameras, fencing, soundwalls, emergency phones and pedestrian crossings. It will run entire-



Reseda, CA Rapidway bus/bike node concept

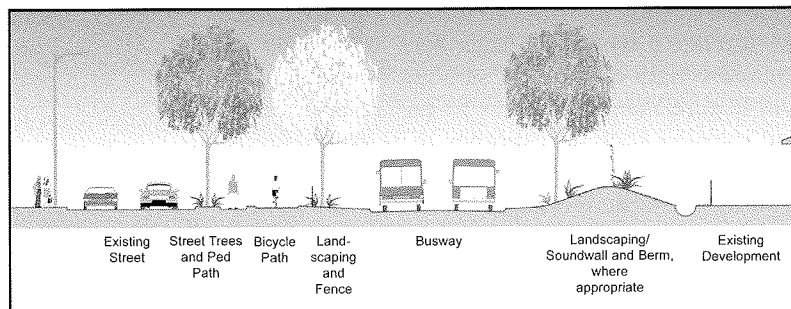
ly at-grade with only thirty-three street crossings, all controlled by traffic signals, striping, signage and pavement markings.

Buses will be newly designed, low floor, 60-foot articulated vehicles powered by environmentally-friendly clean fuel, compressed natural gas (CNG). MTA already has the largest clean fuel fleet of buses in the nation. Bus repairs and periodic maintenance will be performed at existing MTA facilities, thus avoiding the costs and problems associated with a new service facility. ⇔

Image courtesy of Gruen Associates/George Bungarua

More than 4,000 trees will be planted within the ROW as a part of the busway project, and existing trees will be preserved wherever possible. Selections of drought-tolerant landscape species will beautify the ROW and screen the busway from the surrounding uses while enhancing the surrounding neighborhoods. Native species will be featured as much as possible.

Each station planned for the busway will provide patrons with amenities typically associated with rail transit: canopies over every platform, seating, lighting, bicycle racks and lockers and ticket vending machines. Other security features will include security patrols by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, closed-circuit television monitoring and emergency phones. Every station will be equipped with an Advanced Travelers' Information System (ATIS); electronic signage that will inform travelers of the wait-time for the next bus and provide other real-time operating information. Five of the stations will integrate plaza areas where kiosks will be permitted so that vendors may enliven the atmosphere, selling



Typical right-of-way for Rapidway

coffee, newspapers, hot dogs, flowers and other items. Occasionally these plazas will be used for seasonal events and other performances.

Station design will establish a unifying theme throughout the line, giving the busway corridor a clear visual and functional impression in the context of the Valley. However, each station will have a unique character drawn from the surrounding neighborhood, typically reflected in the landscaping plant material and/or public art displays. MTA is holding numerous community outreach meetings so the adjacent neighborhoods collaborate in the selection of these elements.

In some locations, where homes are close to the ROW, MTA is constructing soundwalls. These walls, typically located on top of earthen berms within the right-of-way and set back from property lines, are designed so they do not create shade where it is unwanted. The cross-section of the busway shows how the soundwalls would screen homes from the busway. Landscaping will be installed and maintained on both sides of these soundwalls.

The busway will include over 3,000 new parking spaces at five stations in addition to existing park-and-ride facilities. These spaces will be provided to patrons free of charge. Park-and-ride lots will be landscaped and provided with lighting.

Transit in LA

An extensive system of rail transit was developed for travel between newly constructed suburbs throughout Los Angeles County in the first half of the twentieth century. Housing tract developers worked to create rail lines so they could proclaim convenient public transit as a selling feature of the new homes they were offering. After WWII the automobile became the preferred method of travel and during the decades following the war that rail system deteriorated and eventually was removed from service.

The popularity of the automobile made the transit on these ROWs obsolete, yet the continued popularity of the automobile now makes transit imperative. Angelenos are clearly fed up with traffic; they list pollution and traffic among their top five concerns in recent surveys. Continued population growth bringing with it traffic jams and pollution, coupled with cultural change, is creating an opportunity for the MTA to pursue alternative transportation solutions. Few of the abandoned rail routes are today usable for transit, unfortunately.

The dedicated busway concept is new to Los Angeles and will provide a very different experience from that of riding the train or bus or driving a single-user automobile on the freeway. The success of the MR will be pivotal to future construction of similar facilities and will depend upon using the old—bus travel, unused rail ROW, bicycle path, landscaping—in a new way. Ultimately, it will be measured not by the number of people carried, or the average trip, but by how much patrons enjoy the experience (and the rate at which they switch from using a car). How very L.A.

Phil Ganezer has worked seven years for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and is currently a project manager in the Planning Department. His current position includes oversight of numerous transportation-related projects being planned or under construction in the San Fernando Valley and North County L.A. He also performed long-range financial analyses and negotiated long-term real estate development agreements (transit-oriented development) for the MTA.

Smita Mittal is an intern at the MTA. She was previously an executive in a technology company and just received her MBA from California State University, Los Angeles.

Bicycle Promenade:

New Solutions for Intermodality in Rails-to-Trails

By Stephen Luoni

Bicycle Promenade, designed by Luoni Gold Design Studio, was the winner of the Gainesville Eco-History Trail Design Competition sponsored by The National Endowment for the Arts New Public Works Program last summer. The Gainesville Eco-History Trail is a three-mile long rail right-of-way through a small community of 100,000 in Florida, bordering a mix of residential, industrial, institutional and commercial land uses common in a traditional urban context.

Bicycle Promenade is a feasible alternative to conventional rails-to-trails asphalt paths, promoting enhanced social and physical activity. Although converted railroad corridors are intended for a range of physical activities, these corridors are often brownfield sites. The standard solution to the brownfield dilemma is to cap the right-of-way with an uninhabitable thorny-vegetative cover and a straight asphalt path, typically ten feet in width. The result is an uninviting path built primarily for speeding cyclists that confines public access to only 25 percent of the reclaimed right-of-way. Instead, *Bicycle Promenade* employs proven phytoremediation ("phtyo" meaning plant) technologies to remove soil and groundwater contaminants, allowing 100 percent use of the ground surface for a variety of physical activities, socializing, parking, educational information and bicycling, all within the same budget. Mounds of arsenic-laden soil are shaped and seeded with the brake fern, *pteris vittata*, an efficient biominer of arsenic. Other areas are planted with deep-rooting trees like willows, cottonwoods and poplars, which absorb contaminated groundwater plumes to prevent their migration into the aquifer below. *Bicycle Promenade* is a recombinant infrastructure, accommodating various paces of movement, forms of social exchange, diverse physical activities and regenerative urban landscape ecologies.

Two Intrinsic Problems of Rails-to-Trails Projects

Rails-to-Trails projects pose two inherent design difficulties. First, most rail right-of-ways are brownfield sites with toxic soils and groundwater plumes harboring a variety of pollutants deposited over long periods of time. Second, the path-determined logic of the standard trail design unwittingly promotes high bicycling speeds and discourages other uses. Rail brownfields have resulted from railroad companies' broadcast of herbicides containing metals (arsenic in the case of the Gainesville Eco-History Trail) along

the right-of-way for weed maintenance. Industries bordering right-of-ways also dumped their discharges into these unregulated corridors, not unlike the way in which rivers were once used as sewers. Though metals become toxic as they concentrate, they are considered to be less harmful than other industrial discharges since metals bind to the soil, creating a stationary problem. Rather than remove the metals, trail builders abate the problem with asphalt paths and vegetative caps to prevent direct human contact with the contaminated soil. Vegetative caps are planted with thorny specimens designed to discourage occupation of trail sections not capped by an asphalt



Image courtesy of
Luoni Gold Design Studio

path. This results in a homogenous corridor, conducive to high cycling speeds, and underutilization of the remaining right-of-way. Considering that the Gainesville Eco-History right-of-way is up to 130' wide and in the central city, these land use practices are a poor model of urban redevelopment.

In another missed opportunity, the technical design standards employed for most trails address only one mode of locomotion, the bicycle. Like restricted highways, the typical rails-to-trails project is designed as a command-and-control infrastructure, unwittingly maximizing speed while marginalizing pedestrian and related physical activity. This is ironic since many rails-to-trails are funded from grants to enhance intermodality in transportation networks. Though it may appear that the right-of-way's linear geometry leaves limited design options, many have enough width to combine cycling with paces more suitable to walking, jogging and skating. Other outdoor public spaces like gardens, greenways, linear parks, river walks, *woonerfs*, parkways and plazas, for example, successfully intertwine various paces of movement. ⇨

Since the uneven pace in movement among adjacent modalities in rails-to-trails design has not been widely explored, *Bicycle Promenade* addresses this with a braided movement system as part of a larger multivalent solution for rails-to-trails projects.

Bioremediation Infrastructure: From the Industrial to the Public

Bicycle Promenade is a phased regenerative ecological infrastructure, converting hazardous industrial landscapes into a functional urban ecosystem hospitable to human occupation. The proposal is initiated with a bioremediation program to mitigate contaminants?in this case, arsenic and chlorinated solvents?that accumulated from the right-of-way's industrial past. A subsequent successive landscape management scheme will be implemented, culminating with the introduction of a climax ecosystem through the city center.

Mitigation

Key bioremediation strategies in *Bicycle Promenade* rely on innovative phytoremediation technologies developed over the last decade, which are less expensive than standard remediation techniques. Phytoremediation is the process of combining microbial and plant enzymes to remediate soil and water of contaminated organic and inorganic compounds. Depending on the type of contaminant and prescribed plant, treatment regimes can involve hyper-accumulation, transpiration, stabilization, extraction, rhizofiltration, or neutralization of contaminants. Phytoremediation strategies allow occupation while they work and average one-fifth the cost of conventional treatment technologies that heat, vacuum or filter the soil.

Soil along the Gainesville Eco-History Trail is contaminated with arsenic at an average rate of 6ppm; the current federally designated safety threshold is 5ppm (the Clinton administration safety threshold for arsenic was 1ppm). Researchers at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences recently discovered that the brake fern *pteris vittata* absorbs arsenic at 200 times the quantities concentrated in surrounding soils. The only known hyper-accumulator of arsenic, *pteris vittata* will be planted along the right-of-way, harvested and incinerated under hazardous waste protocols. Since arsenic resides in the soil's top layers, mounds consisting of the arsenic-laden soil are shaped, sequestered and seeded with the brake fern, opening the entire right-of-way for occupation. The brake fern is such an efficient biominer that 2 percent of the plant is comprised of arsenic, making reclamation of arsenic from the plant feasible for its laboratory market value. Further research is necessary to determine the number of harvests required before the soil is remediated to safe levels. At the Gainesville Eco-History Trail over 4,000 fern mounds of different

shapes, sizes and arrangements will be used, yielding a highly braided trail design with rich spatial sequences and modal overlaps.

Both the soils and groundwater plumes in the Gainesville Eco-History Trail adjacent to a pesticide company are also contaminated with chlorinated solvents at 10,000 times the concentration of established safety thresholds. While chlorinated solvents in isolation are benign, their interaction with organic media like soil and water create highly volatile carcinogenic compounds. This contamination is particularly troubling because municipal drinking water in Florida is supplied by groundwater sources and determined by groundwater quality. Since finding legal and environmental resolutions to this matter will take years, a phytostabilization strategy that isolates chlorinated solvents is proposed to provide immediate remediation. Through natural hydraulic control known as "solar pump and treat," phreatophyte trees—deep-rooting trees like willows, cottonwoods and poplars—will capture contaminated groundwater plumes for transpiration at rates of 50-300 gallons/day or up to one million gallons/year per acre. Their absorption processes create an underground cone of depression, preventing further migration of contaminated groundwater into the aquifer. While research has yet to determine impacts on the food chain, the contaminant load is transferred from the groundwater to the tree where its deleterious effects are stabilized. A dense phreatophyte grove will provide much needed shade, and, counter to the movement systems of the trail, function as a formal alley to promote greater social gathering.

Management

Bicycle Promenade implements a successive landscape management scheme to "grow" the promenade. The pioneer stage of landscape succession is the bioremediation phase outlined above. Once several harvests have removed the arsenic, fern mounds may be incrementally reshaped and/or replanted with pioneer grasses and shrubs as new habitat islands. These planting schemes would consist of indigenous, rare plant communities able to withstand drought/inundation cycles and strong direct sun, and able to survive with little maintenance. Subsequent mid-succession and mature plant communities organized around native climax hardwoods and the long leaf pine would emerge over the long-term to provide shade and enhance urban biodiversity.

Aside from the portions devoted to skate parks and automobile parking, most of the trail would be surfaced with a fine coarse granular stone currently being specified for new cycling trails and that costs less than half the price of asphalt with equivalent maintenance. It makes an ideal permeable surface for filtering stormwater runoff, and coupled with the

proposed stormwater gardens, creates effective treatment regimens for stormwater runoff. *Bicycle Promenade* is also a municipal stormwater management infrastructure, allowing Gainesville to meet its capacity requirements necessary for future growth.

Civilizing Mobility

Greater human interconnectivity in transportation systems can leverage social capital with beneficial multiplier effects related to environmental stewardship, neighborliness, urban reinvestment, and particularly, health and physical activity. Akin to the beach as a public space, *Bicycle Promenade* accommodates the rationalized mobility of bicyclists and runners, while celebrating the libidinal civility of strollers, recreationers, picnickers, activists, dandies and sunbathers. These forms of human behavior follow social patterns. Recreation is social; trends, interests and techniques in physical activity undergo cycles of popularity akin to the impulses in fashion. Greater sociability is the first requisite for compelling greater physical activity. Capitalizing on the sociability of recreation, *Bicycle Promenade* proposes movement systems sympathetic to use as pedestrian and recreational systems.

The recombination of landscape, infrastructure and city gives rise to an invented family of pedestrian systems beyond the standard trail. In *Bicycle Promenade* they include habitat islands, green streets, combined parking/recreation meadows, skateboard meadows, stormwater block gardens and industrial wetlands. For instance, a proposed three-block long urban "green street" incorporates the railroad right-of-way and adjacent oversized parking lots to create an integrated matrix of automobile parking, stormwater gardens, pedestrian space, bicycle paths, rest stop hammocks and an outdoor museum. Animating the promenade's surfaces at night, the outdoor museum projects from city streetlights historical photographs depicting everyday life along the railroad. Composed as a garden, the rails-to-trails-to-streets functions as a series of outdoor landscaped rooms, calming traffic without the use of bumps, humps, roundabouts, signs and other engineering devices. The green street combines the functions of a transit thoroughfare with a public forum for neighborhood festivals, a farmers market and playgrounds. The logic of this "shared street" allows the pedestrian to claim the street with the same authority as the motorist and cyclist. The street becomes ecological.

Bicycle Promenade is an infrastructure that accommodates different stakeholders. The promenade responds to sports enthusiasts who see the right-of-way as an ideal extension of the regional bicycle network. African-American neighborhoods that once drew their livelihoods from the railroad envision the right-of-way as an interpretative pedestrian space cel-

ebrating their role in Gainesville's development. For others, the promenade can be a greenway dedicated to recapturing the biodiversity compromised by industrial and urban growth. In braiding different programs, *Bicycle Promenade* can promote greater participatory decision-making in its maintenance and administration.

Status

The City of Gainesville has not secured purchase of the right-of-way as negotiations with CSX have dragged on for years. Once Gainesville announced its intention to develop the right-of-way as a rails-to-trails project, the railroad doubled its price to over \$2 million. Governor Jeb Bush has intervened, hoping to personally negotiate a deal with CSX on behalf of the city. Complicating the negotiations further, CSX recently has insisted on maintaining partial ownership of the right-of-way with the right to reactivate the line should rail travel become feasible again. This is not unreasonable, given that other rail companies are contemplating line reactivations in response to the nationwide revitalization of cities. However, rail-sharing programs devised between cities and railroads are allowing rails-to-trails projects to proceed.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to realizing *Bicycle Promenade* in Gainesville is the city's inability to administer the construction and administration of a recombinant system. Because *Bicycle Promenade* is a combined brownfield remediation system, stormwater system, recreation and park system, neighborhood redevelopment system, street/parking and transportation system, and an interpretive historical system, the city's bureaucracy of specialized departments is not hospitable to such integrative design thinking. This is especially true of Gainesville's Public Works Department, physically and culturally distant from the Planning Department, yet in charge of the city's physical infrastructure. The ambiguity of design in city planning and city administration charts a general trend in those professions, which historically have lacked solid positions regarding the humanistic design (vs. regulation) of physical environments. On an optimistic note, various local citizen groups and national non-profit foundations have informally expressed a strong interest in providing both political and financial support for the project. Non-profit foundations in particular are interested in supporting integrated public works projects as models for both "smart" development and fiscal rationalization in city budgets. The likely avenue for realizing *Bicycle Promenade* will be grassroots support and political leadership willing to champion the idea and the project.

Stephen Luoni is a principal in Luoni Gold Design Studio in Gainesville, Florida and the Director of the University of Arkansas Community Design Center.

The Complex Role of Urban Design and Theoretical Models of Physical Activity

By Kevin J. Krizek

There is considerable enthusiasm among individuals in research, advocacy and policy circles for the idea that “good” urban design will positively contribute to levels of physical activity. The enthusiasm demonstrated by such perspectives is refreshing; most agree it is critically important to support planning efforts that make physical activity and “active travel” easy, available to diverse and increased populations and more attractive. At the same time, however, it is important to be aware of the false expectations of such planning initiatives, particularly the potential of urban design, by itself, to strongly influence levels of physical activity. The caution presented below warns us that the magnitude of the independent effect of urban design on physical activity may be less significant once other issues are accounted for.

Ecological Models of Behavior

The primary reason for this caution is guided by theories of behavior from public health but also informed by recent urban planning research about travel patterns. Colleagues from the field of public health provide us with highly disciplined models to guide our understanding of human behavior. A set of theories heavily relied on are referred to as social ecological models. An underlying theme of ecological models is that there are a variety of context—individual, interpersonal, organizational and community—that operate at multiple levels to influence action; behavior does not occur within a vacuum. Environmental contexts (i.e., urban design characteristics such as street design, mixed land uses, public spaces, sidewalks, bike lanes) are particularly difficult to pin down because they invoke behavioral decision-making on a variety of levels. This draws attention to questioning how and in what manner our beloved urban designs relate to the multiplicities of human behavior.

Much of the excitement about the potential of urban design to affect physical activity levels sees design as a relatively simple intervention operating in transparent manner. Providing environmentally supportive physical environments through good urban design, it is thought, will lead to increased physical activity. This is akin to the mantra, “if you build it, they will come.” We are learning, not surprisingly, that things are not that simple. Analyzing a single policy or environmental change without

fully capturing other important influences may lead to errant conclusions and even overstate outcomes about that policy or environmental change. These premature conclusions hold particularly true for matters related to where people decide to live and work, what they consider supportive urban design and how they engage in active travel. How these dimensions relate to one another is more suggestive of a tightly spun web that incorporates many factors; trying to unravel that web by isolating and pulling out the urban design thread is a particularly complex endeavor.

Urban Travel and the Complexity of Urban Design in Ecological Models

Consider the battery of recent research examining relationships between urban form and household travel. Findings from this body of research tell us with some certainty that households living in more urban and mixed-use communities tend to walk, use transit, or bike more than their suburban counterparts. We also know that when suburbanites drive, they are behind the wheel for longer distances than urbanites. While this is encouraging news for planners and other environmentalists, this research does little to inform us about the likely consequences that would result from building more urban and mixed-use communities. Why? Because, in part, most of this research to date does not adequately rely on ecological theories of behavior and does not account for the complex manner in which urban design plays out.

Self-Selection and Other Factors Influencing Behavior

A primary outcome of urban form-travel research suggests there is a healthy dose (pun intended) of self-selection in who lives in urban, mixed-use communities, i.e., people who like to walk, cycle or use transit choose to live in places more conducive to such behavior. The same holds true for families who move to a neighborhood where they have convenient access to a rail-trail or a walking path—this is an option they prefer to have. This suggests that differences in travel between households with different neighborhood design should not be credited to the urban design alone; the differences should be attributed to self-selection. In other words, people who are likely to walk choose to locate in a given neighborhood where they have a

better chance of engaging in active travel, and by their habitual walking the environmental effects are magnified.

The effects of urban design versus other factors such as attitudes or choice of lifestyle need also to be disentangled. These effects of the latter are myriad and important, but incorporating them into analyses is complicated because they are so difficult to measure. As a result, these factors too often go not only undiscovered but also unacknowledged! Some factors may come in the form of what statisticians like to refer to as “latent” (or not directly observable) variables. These latent variables relate to concepts such as how we learn our preferences toward travel and/or neighborhoods (e.g., through school, through our parents), the influence of others on our residential decisions (e.g., neighborhood groups, image considerations), our sensitivity to other relevant public policies or services (e.g., schools) or the culmination of each in the form of our overall lifestyle choice. Ecological models suggest that these other and larger factors are significant. The important point is that the relative magnitude of the independent effect of urban design on physical activity may become marginalized once these other factors are accounted for.

Allow me to explain the above in a bit more concrete terms. Efforts to use urban design to induce unwilling auto-oriented, physically inactive households to be more active may be futile for at least two reasons. First, the auto-using behavior of these adults may be a function of their overall preference for auto-oriented behavior or certain built environments. These preferences are typically those of the adults in the households since they are driving (again, pun intended) forces behind decisions about where to live or how to travel, thereby often excluding or overriding the choices or preferences of children. To twist a popular adage, “you can take the family out of the suburbs but you can’t take reliance on the Chevy Suburban out of the family.” Second, it is unlikely that physically inactive households would locate in neighborhoods that prize opportunities for physical activity. This in turn sug-

gests that the success of the “physically active city” may be limited to the relatively small numbers of people who currently live in or would move to neighborhoods with “physically supportive” urban design. The new urbanists and others suggest that this population is sizable and there is considerable latent demand for such physically active neighborhoods. While this may be the case, more evidence is needed.

Necessary but Not Sufficient

“Good” urban design is critically important to the overall health of our cities. A considerable population currently lives in environments that simply do not provide attractive options for active travel. We intuitively know that people have a more difficult time walking or cycling where opportunities for these options do not exist. Reconciling these instances by creating and enhancing environments where individuals have choices for different modes of travel should be a top priority.

But while improved conditions may be necessary, they are not sufficient for inducing households to adopt healthy lifestyles. Other factors have equal if not greater importance and thus the “healthy” inquiry into more complex causal links lives on. The effects of such improvements will be modest, however, so it is important that we do not develop unrealistic expectations of such interventions. Rather, it suggests that working to create a healthy city is a complex endeavor. To better know the myriad ways in which urban design plays out requires a fuller understanding of how urban design relates to basic preferences, learned behavior and lifestyles. This knowledge will allow policymakers to promote initiatives that will have a long-term impact and create healthier preferences and behaviors overall. A more thorough understanding will therefore assist policymakers to construct more informed policies about our built environment.

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HOLD THE DATES

The 2004 PN conference is tentatively set for New York on June 17-20, sponsored by Pratt Institute and Hunter College.

Watch the pages of Progressive Planning and the PN website and listserve for more details.

City Planning: A Tool to Promote Physical Activity

By Paul Schimek

Over the past decade, the medical community has reported mounting evidence linking physical activity and health (see the article by Thomas Halton in this issue). What is the role of urban planning in promoting such activity? A century ago, urban reformers promoted parks, playgrounds, and ball fields to provide recreational opportunities in crowded urban areas. A half-century ago, aided by new urban expressways and easy mortgage terms, the white middle-class moved to new suburbs, partly in search of open space and recreational opportunities. As expressways extended further away from the urban core, metropolitan areas began to sprawl. Today's new urbanist planners decry the resulting pattern of widely dispersed settlement that essentially makes access to an automobile necessary, increases trip distances and makes walking unpleasant, a result of a lack of sidewalks and street lights, fast traffic and dangerous road crossings. Given these changes, it is no surprise that walking for transportation has declined.

The link between urban form and physical activity has become a hot topic, aided by a \$70 million investment from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to find and implement strategies for "Active Living by Design." The hope is that by changing the physical environment, people will incorporate physical activity such as walking, bicycling and climbing stairs in their daily routines. This goal is in line with the recommendations of the Surgeon General, which call for at least moderate physical activity at least five days per week. Further, it is hoped that environmental intervention will have long-term impacts, in contrast to the limited and short-lived effects of many encouragement and promotion efforts.

Getting Exercise from Transportation

Most people walk during the day, if only from the parking lot to the office. Public transit users generally walk more. Attention has been focused on trips that are walk-only or bicycle-only, as revealed in transportation data. Walk-only trips account for less than 10 percent of daily journeys in the US, and their share has declined in the past forty years. Bicycle trips account for less than 1 percent of daily trips. Although households were already highly motorized in the US in the 1950s and

1960s, the last few decades has seen almost complete individual motorization. Whereas in the 1960s many adults (especially older women) were not licensed drivers, today the licensing rate approaches 100%. In fact, the number of motor vehicles available to households has recently surpassed the number of licensed drivers. Those without automobiles, who tend to be of the lowest income levels, are the most likely to walk and bicycle for transportation in the US today.

Planners have frequently noted that many auto trips are short enough so that they could be readily made on foot or by bicycle. An oft-cited figure is that more than 40 percent of urban trips are less than two miles. However, it is also true that US adults under 65 travel an *average* of thirty miles per day, a distance that is quite difficult to reach without access to a personal automobile.

Promoters of active living by design look longingly at places like European cities, where there is much more walking and cycling for transportation. Even considering only the US, there is strong evidence of a link between population density and increased walking (and cycling to a lesser extent). Therefore, making development more compact, mixing different types of land uses and providing better facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists along European patterns is seen as a key strategy in promoting walking and cycling for transportation.

Determinants of Physical Activity

As noted elsewhere in this issue, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reports that one-quarter of the population gets no leisure-time physical activity, and less than one-half gets the minimum recommended amount. In contrast to the sharp recent rise in obesity and overweight, however, there has been no major change in reported exercise rates since the earliest data available (1986). Thus an increase in calorie consumption may be more important than changes in physical activity as an explanation of the change in body weight.

Although walking and cycling are not very popular as transportation modes in the US, they are among the most popular forms of exercise. The prevalence of leisure-time physical activity is

strongly related to race and class. The CDC reports that only 13 percent of college graduates, but nearly half (46%) of those without a high school degree, are physically inactive. The pattern by household income is similar. Blacks (33% inactive) and Hispanics (36% inactive) are much less likely to be active than whites (23% inactive) and those of other races (25% inactive, mostly Asians).

Thus, while lower-income, minority residents of high-density areas are among the most likely to walk for transportation, they are among the least likely to jog or cycle for fitness. One environmental explanation for this paradox is the continued segregation of African-Americans and, to a lesser extent, other minorities in high-crime neighborhoods. People are less likely to go for a morning jog if they fear getting mugged. For women, the risk of crime is even more of a deterrent to outdoor exercise. Still, obesity has been increasing as the crime rate has been falling. Successful promotion of physical activity in these neighborhoods may require an increase in public safety but obviously there are additional factors that explain the relationship between socio-economic status and physical activity.

The CDC does not specify which forms of physical activity are most popular, however, another survey shows that by far the two most popular locations for exercise are at home or on public streets and sidewalks. Private gyms and public parks are much less frequently used. The lack or cost of special fitness facilities is therefore not necessarily a major obstacle to increased physical activity.

The Role for Environmental Intervention

Is better city planning the best tool to promote physical activity? There are a number of reasons to be skeptical. We know that high population density is associated with more walking and cycling for transportation. The prevalence of these transport modes, however, may have less to do with their greater attractiveness in these places than with the difficulty of motoring. The few places where significant numbers of people walk for transportation in the US (Manhattan, San Francisco, central Boston and a few other downtowns) are also places where car parking is expensive and traffic moves slowly. In Europe, driving in cities is often similarly inconvenient and car ownership and use is much more expensive to boot. Increasing residential density and mixing uses in newly developed areas—while maintaining the current planning requirements for ample free parking and very wide streets—may not succeed at reproducing the level of walking in old high-density areas. There is also evidence that only a minority of people in higher-density areas get the recommended

amount of physical activity. Changing settlement patterns overnight would not necessarily produce the desired increase in exercise.

Furthermore, there is often great resident opposition to higher density development, either in greenfields sites or as infill. Getting that development without also providing ample off-street parking is even more difficult for abutters to accept. Finally, any change in development patterns will have only an incremental influence on urban form. Major changes in settlement patterns can take decades or more.

Environmental interventions may be more effective on a micro-scale. Many of our major streets are unfriendly to pedestrians and cyclists. These roads can and should be improved whenever they are created or rebuilt, as is suggested by others in this issue. Rates of cycling and walking *for transportation* may be lowest in low-density suburban and rural areas, but these areas in many cases already have better conditions for walking and cycling than urban areas (less traffic, more scenic environments, less crime); and they may have more cycling and walking or running *for fitness*. Thus providing more sidewalks and bicycle paths is unlikely to cause a shift from auto trips to bicycle and pedestrian trips (see also article by Anne Lusk in this issue).

Promoting Physical Activity

Measures to promote cycling have particular potential for increasing physical activity. Unfit people can readily start cycling and gradually increase intensity as they get in shape. Cycling is enjoyable and can be done alone or in groups. Cycling is also a good form of transportation. Even in low-density suburbs, where distances are too great for walking, they are easily cyclable. In denser areas, cycling can be as fast or faster than motoring.

There are, however, barriers to cycling that go beyond the physical environment. Most roads are already suitable for cycling, despite popular impressions to the contrary. Removing defects such as holes, ridges and drain grates with slots wider than a bicycle wheel, and adjusting traffic signal detectors so that they are sensitive to bicycles would improve cyclists' safety and comfort.

The major obstacles to increased cycling are fear, loathing and ignorance. Would-be cyclists fear being on the road, and a militant minority of motorists harass cyclists, thereby reinforcing those fears. Most people do not recognize that being a proficient bicycle driver requires the skills of being a proficient motor vehicle driver, and some additional skills besides. These [Cont. on page 42]

Parks and Recreation in Active Cities

By Karla Henderson

Physical activity and active lifestyles are essential to the quality-of-life of Americans. In addition to urban planners, architects, landscape architects, public health professionals, trail advocates, health officers and transportation planners, one of the groups that has had active living as part of its goals for over a century is the community of (public) park and recreation. While many professionals affiliated with city form can design, fund and oversee construction of infrastructure for physical activity, infrastructure needs to be maintained over its lifespan. With regard to recreational facilities, such maintenance and inclusion can be capably handled by park and recreation professionals. Tax-assisted park and recreation agencies are a resource in every community, although they often compete with planning department for public dollars and attention. Park and recreation agencies, however, can facilitate and help maintain active lifestyles.

Park and Recreation Traditions

In the US Constitution's preamble, the "right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" is often interpreted as the mandate for the government's involvement in facilitating open spaces, park and recreation programs and facilities. Setting aside and developing these necessary park lands by the government began over 100 years ago. The urban reform movement of the late nineteenth century was a response to tenement overcrowding, morbidity, crime and communicable diseases. This social settlement movement combined community development, residential redesign and recreation services to address the city's ills. Associated with the women's suffrage movement, the Mother's and Children's movement developed policies to protect working children and to support schools and playgrounds. In 1904, the first publicly funded playground program started in Los Angeles to provide everyone with access to recreation amenities. Many of these early initiatives, including equitable access to resources, better urban designs for health, routine physical activity and youth play are the current hallmarks of park and recreation professionals.

While other professions that emerged at this time also dealt with the physiological and psychological health of the population (e.g., health officers, urban planners, transportation specialists, teachers, police, home economists and nutritionists),

the park and recreation professionals had to continually defend their role to the broader public. In periods of fiscal restraint, funds for park and recreation have been the first to be eliminated. For example, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, established from the proceeds of offshore oil leases under the premise that what you take from the land you give back to the land (in the form of park and recreation resources) has been earmarked for other purposes by Congress.

New Initiatives in Park and Recreation

To better explain and defend the value of parks and recreation, recreation professionals have emphasized a benefits-based approach that focuses new energy on the relationships of public recreation and parks to health and physical fitness. Research has shown that community supports—e.g., active neighbors, safety considerations and the presence of sidewalks, trails and recreation facilities—contribute to active and healthy communities. Several studies have shown that children are more physically active when outdoors, and that their physical activity levels are often correlated to the number of play spaces near home and how frequently they are used. Furthermore, outdoor areas are more likely to be used if they are aesthetically pleasing (e.g., tree-lined paths rather than empty lots). A recent national phone survey conducted for the American Public Health Association by Widmeyer Polling and Research found that 75 percent of adults believe that parks and recreation must play an important role in addressing the growing obesity trend in America. In most communities, these outdoor areas and indoor community facilities are operated and maintained by park and recreation departments.

The National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) is the professional voice that represents over 108,000 outdoor public park and recreation facilities and 65,000 indoor facilities in the United States. Health is a core value and benefit of park and recreation programs, and NRPA has a commitment to provide information resources, public visibility, policy, research and programmatic resources to help local agencies focus strategically on this important public interest. A new initiative called "Hearts N'Parks" is a national community-based program sponsored by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institutes of Health (NIH) and NRPA. The purpose

of this program is to reduce the growing trend of obesity and risk of coronary heart disease by encouraging people of all ages to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, follow a heart-healthy eating plan and engage in regular physical activity while taking part in local park and recreation department programs.

Planners can learn from the NRPA's effective public campaigns. In the past ten years, members of the National Recreation and Park Association have articulated the importance of community recreation through the "benefits are endless" campaign. These benefits are frequently identified as contributing to positive physiological, psychological, economic, environmental and sociocultural outcomes. The NRPA has argued that recreation centers, parks, trails and greenways offer opportunities for physical activity that are not only enjoyable, but that can reduce stress. The mandate of public recreation is that opportunities are made available for all people, regardless of socioeconomic status or physical ability.

Inclusive Recreation

Inclusion and accessibility are the focus of all public park and recreation agencies. Park and recreation programs have begun to address how people with disabilities and low-income minorities, for example, might become even more active. These frequently underserved groups, as well as some ethnic minorities and youth in high-risk communities, may have social, psychological and/or cultural issues to which public recreation staff are sensitive. Within any cultural group, however, a great deal of variation exists. The citizen advisory and policy boards of many local public park and recreation agencies have made efforts to solicit information and listen to the myriad of interest groups in the community. In addition, for those individuals who cannot afford registration fees associated with some programs, reduced fees or scholarships may be available.

Inclusion means to create an environment where all people feel they are welcome and can access the support they need for leisure participation. Older adults are an example of another group that public park and recreation agencies are targeting to include in their programs. Older adults in particular want safe places for physical activity, such as walking paths and malls. Research conducted by Geoffrey Godbey and his associates at Penn State University showed that over one-half of older adults said they used local parks and stayed for an average of two hours, and over two-thirds said they were physically active while at the park. Walking has been the most frequently mentioned physical activity done by older adults, and park

and recreation departments in many areas of the US have sponsored walking programs that appeal to people of all ages.

Current Issues

Probably the number one subjective benefit of public parks and recreation is fun and enjoyment. Many organizations offer opportunities for physical activity and many of those activities are fun, staff in park and recreation emphasize people having fun in safe environments.

One hundred years ago no one would have realized how much time Americans would spend indoors, how much work would be done by machines, and how much stress we would have in our daily lives. Factors such as single-use zoning, which prevents the mix of housing with stores, offices and other places of work; the increased population and population density that can make exercise difficult; and the distribution of free time, which is often in small rather than large chunks, contribute to both physical and emotional inactivity in cities. Outdoor recreation spaces, in particular, can provide a peaceful environment in which to invigorate the soul. Indoor spaces can provide opportunities to participate in activities with the social support of family, neighbors and friends.

As is true in any organization, the benefits of parks and recreation do not just happen. In today's society, staff in park and recreation departments must be attuned to issues of perceived and actual physical and psychological safety. One of the major barriers to involvement in physical activity for both youth and adults is the perception of safety. Some parks in urban centers are not safe and may become a place for illegal recreation more than positive outcome-oriented recreation. Efforts are being made to provide and maintain greater security, lighting, aesthetics and pleasing landscaping to mitigate the perceptions or realities of danger in parks as well as public indoor recreation spaces.

While recreation facilities can be built through a one-time capital campaign, the resources must be maintained over the lifespan of the facility, which can be extended by decades if quality maintenance exists. Budgetary constraints create critical problems when more recreation needs exceed resources. In the future, public parks and recreation must create new venues for the active city, but also ensure that current facilities are up to code, safe and accessible. Without concerned managers and committed, caring leaders, recreation resources may not be physically or emotionally safe. Educated and highly trained staff who are given the opportunity to be [Cont. on page 35]

BladeNight in Europe: A Weekly Event

By Anne Lusk

A number of European cities—the larger German cities of Munich, Berlin, Duesseldorf, Dresden and Mainz/Wiesbaden and the smaller German communities of St. Georg and Norderstedt, plus Amsterdam and Paris—host “BladeNight.” On BladeNight, a group of in-line skaters travel together on a designated and approved route with BladeGuards and police in attendance. Started in Munich on July 18, 1999 as a demonstration for skating rights and, more specifically, a demand for access to smooth pavement for in-line skating, BladeNight is now held weekly in some cities. On BladeNight one might find twenty to thirty kilometer “runs,” different courses that take about two hours, generous sponsors, novice and higher-speed expert events, trained and uniformed BladeGuards, and participants of all ages,

lack of “crumple zone” or cushioning metal that surrounds the car driver.

In June of 2000, the first Berlin “parade” took place. Intended as a demonstration as in Munich, 300 participants skated 12.5 kilometers along certain roads. At the end of that month, another “run” was held with 300 participants who traveled 15.4 kilometers. By July, the skaters were covering 23.2 kilometers and even skated two hours in the rain from start to finish. These regular runs continued and on October 15th, an event was organized that included a slower speed run to encourage participation by novices. Nine hundred people skated.

By the summer of 2001, the BladeNight organizers in Berlin were meeting with Senate Administration officials, police and traffic engineers. During that same summer, a press reporter from Paris traveled to Berlin to skate and cover the event for the French newspaper Liberation. Berlin now hosts a regular BladeNight every rain-free Sunday. The event starts at 7:00 PM and includes four different routes ranging from fifteen to nineteen kilometers as a way to encourage family members and novices to also participate. In Berlin, skates can be rented on Saturday and Sunday at the zoo so people can test if they want to participate in a BladeNight. Sometimes trucks provide music and nearby establishments broadcast the local radio station for the skaters. Paris now hosts BladeNight events on Friday nights and closes roads along the Seine many Sundays for in-line skaters.

BladeNight in Berlin now requires 300 trained BladeGuards with 150 BladeGuards per event. These guards must be eighteen years of age or older and have their own sports equipment. As a BladeGuard, they can purchase skates from a sponsor for half-price. The BladeGuards are trained at the local ice skating stadium on a two-hour course. The BladeGuards meet at noon to prepare for a run that starts in the evening. In advance, they are given identical and official helmets, blaze jackets or vests, instructions and coupons for beverages and meals. There are four teams of BladeGuards, each with a leader; one team rides in the front, another in the

back, and the other two on either side. Police on motorcycles provide an escort for the run and car drivers wait until the parade is past. Some roads are closed for the skaters to pass and some traffic lights flash yellow. At the end of a run, the team leaders host a party for the BladeGuards.

Munich has been hosting BladeNight for five years and nearly a million people have participated in fifty-one runs. On average, 20,000 skaters participate in each run and the activity is perceived as the largest individual leisure sport offered in Europe. The event is considered healthy fitness training for 20,000 regular customers. The benefits of the event listed include environmental awareness and citizen participation, and there are partnerships with the City of Munich, police, Bavarian Red Cross and the General Automobile Association. Though critics have suggested that BladeNight is now a heavily sponsored event, the photographs of BladeNight show sleek, skilled skaters and hesitant novices with their children. Instructions are given to assist newcomers and a raised arm hand gesture is a shared signal to communicate danger. SpeedNights are now organized in

Henderson [Cont. from page 33]

Certified Park and Recreation Professionals (CPRP) are necessary to facilitate the growing demand and interest in urban opportunities for physical activity. Although part-time and seasonal workers are important, creative and innovative professional staff will continue to be needed to facilitate physical activity opportunities for everyone. As federal and state governments abdicate more power to local governments, the contributions that public park and recreation organizations make to address the needs and interests of local citizens becomes even more pressing. Unfortunately, without financial resources the potential will not be realized.

Healthy Living as Everyone's Responsibility

The value of public recreation facilities is their potential to contribute to healthy individuals and communities. Although many of the services provided by urban park and recreation departments have physical health benefits such as decreased risk of heart disease, mental health benefits such as stress reduction, and social benefits that include social interaction and socialization, the benefits need to be better understood. As park and recreation staff, advisory boards and citizen participants think about these local services, the notion that public recreation providers are in the “health and wellness” business must be reinforced. Issues such as availability and access to facilities and programs, support for personal transportation, incentives for participation and educational or behav-

Berlin on every other Friday night for skaters who wish to travel at a faster speed.

Started as a single demonstration, BladeNight is now a weekly event that fully accommodates a wide variety of users who all engage in healthy physical activity. The benefits of BladeNight are multiple. The host city benefits from the press associated with the event and the economic development it spurs. Social capital is built, beginning with the BladeGuards early in the day and continuing to build throughout the run. The alternative way of using the road encourages people to rethink the otherwise exclusive use by automobiles of a domain that is owned by the public.

Anne Lusk, Ph.D., is a visiting scientist at the Harvard School of Public Health. She has spent considerable time in Europe studying the facilities to determine if there are lessons that can be applied in the US. Information about BladeNight can be found on the internet (see box). Apologies are offered if some of the information is slightly misrepresented due to a web translation.

Information about Bladenights in Europe can be found by going to google.com and using the translation. To see masses of skaters, type in “**skateclub.de**” (no space between skate and club and click on translation).

To see a beginning Bladenight in Norderstedt with novice skaters and children, type in “**bladenight junge union**” (no space between blade and night and click on translation), and then click on **gallery**. For historical context in Munich, type in “**muenchner blade night**” and click on **program**, then **history**. To learn about the beginnings in Berlin, type in “**berlinparade.de**” (no space between berlin and parade) and click on **history**.

sexes, abilities, nationalities and income levels. Other cities are planning to start regular BladeNights next summer.

BladeNight was a response to issues of access skaters in many European communities struggled with. While there were ample provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists on brick pavers or cobblestone sidewalks and bicycle routes, there were few to no smooth surfaces available to in-line skaters (see article by Anne Lusk). The only smooth surface on which to skate was the road, and skating in the road can be as unsafe as bicycling in the road due to the

ioral change programs can be addressed by local park and recreation agencies partnering with other community organizations. For people to become more physically active, supportive and inclusive environments that are well-maintained and that integrate the settings, facilities, and programs must be available. Park and recreation agencies offer unique opportunities that can be multiplied when partnered with other community agencies and organizations.

Park and recreation programs exist in cities, small towns and rural areas across the United States and these agencies have been in existence for over a century. Because they are locally-based, great variety exists across agencies, but all share a commitment to healthy living and equitable access to exercise, sport and fitness. These public opportunities, however, do not just happen. There are numerous barriers and constraints at-play, and no magic solutions have yet been found yet to curb the obesity epidemic and to ensure that citizens are living active lives. Public park and recreation agencies, however, as providers of both programs and spaces for activity, have major contributions to make in facilitating active lifestyles for all community members.

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Designing Communities With Health in Mind: The Basis for Effective Interventions

By Larry Frank

Introduction

In the past thirty years, in metropolitan areas where most Americans now reside, there has been a steady reduction in the proportion of travel made using human power, i.e., walking and biking, in favor of travel that relies on private vehicles. Not only has there been a reduction in the infrastructure to support walking and biking, a highway-oriented investment regime has created market signals that have spurred development at or near freeway access points. The result has been an increase in the distances between households, places of employment, retail and commercial destinations, which has made walking for utilitarian or transportation-related purposes difficult. For most suburban residents, the increased distances between homes and parks and other

There are likely to be many surprises and complexities about the ways in which our physical environment impacts how active we are and our overall health.

open space destinations has increased the time it takes to get to these places, and drastically reduced the likelihood that travel will occur on foot or by bike. For example, in Seattle the distances traveled to recreate are nearly three times greater for residents of the newest subdivisions than for their more urban counterparts. While we are learning more about the relationship between the physical environment and walking, there is far more that we do not know. The environment may matter a lot for suburban white men, but for other groups the effects of the physical environment on health are not so clear.

What We Know

Over the latter half of the twentieth century, researchers have become increasingly able to measure and document how the design of our physical environment affects our behavior in systematic and predictable ways. While much of this work is incredibly intuitive and seemingly obvious, there has been considerable debate amongst scholars and practitioners over the reliability and

validity of such findings. Earlier research showed that certain levels of residential density were required for transit to be viable, and these levels were used to assess the merit of major "new starts" for rail investments by the (then called) Urban Mass Transit Administration. Research has since shown that the distances between residences, offices and commercial districts, and the "route directness" of travel on the street network between these locations, influences travel. Until recently, findings were primarily limited to car and transit modes; results on pedestrian and cyclist behavior have been nearly non-existent due to lack of data.

In 1996, "Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General" was released. This report documented the relationships between our activity levels and health, noting that one of the factors thought to impact levels of physical activity was the way in which communities were designed. This was the same year Peter Engelke and I were contacted by the CDC to do a state of the practice review on how the built environment affects physical activity. In 1998 my co-author, Peter Engelke, and I completed "How Land Use and Transportation Systems Impact Public Health: A Literature Review of the Relationship Between Physical Activity and the Built Environment." In this report, two linkages were documented, *first* how land use and transportation investments impact the choice to walk and bike as forms of moderate activity, and *second* how physical activity impacts health. At that time, there was virtually no research that demonstrated how the built environment impacted health.

Since the late 1990s a great deal of anecdotal evidence, and more recently some significant findings, have indicated that community design is a reasonably good predictor of obesity—which in turn is a good predictor of morbidity and mortality. More specifically, the likelihood of being obese (having a body mass index of thirty or greater) is highest in the most sprawling environments. Findings released in our book *Health and Community Design: The Impacts of the Built Environment on Physical Activity* show

that the proportion of obese white males in Atlanta increased from 13 to 23 percent as residential density went from more than eight to less than two dwellings per residential acre. These 2001 results were part of the Atlanta based SMARTRAQ program (www.smartraq.net), which provides a cross-disciplinary model of collaboration at the community, regional and state level linking transportation, land development, air quality and public health. SMARTRAQ results suggest that the environment that makes us fat also makes us drive and pollute more. For example, average miles of travel per capita increased significantly from 28.1 to 42.3 miles and the average grams per capita of harmful nitrous oxides (NOx) emissions increased from 21.5 to 28.5 grams as residential density changed from over 8 dwellings per acre in urban areas to under two dwellings per acre in suburban areas of Atlanta. (Regression analyses controlling for household size, income and vehicle ownership showed significant relationships between density and obesity, miles of travel and grams of NOx.)

What We Do Not Know

A great deal remains to be understood about how the built environment affects physical activity, weight and public health. While we have only begun to scratch the surface thus far, it is encouraging because it demonstrates the need for increased collaboration between city planning and public health. As always, however, the dirt is in the details. There are likely to be many surprises and complexities about the ways in which our physical environment impacts how active we are and our overall health. For example, considerable disparity exists across lines of gender, ethnicity and age over how community design impacts physical activity and BMI levels. Whereas white men appear to be highly sensitive to changes in urban form, activity and obesity levels of women and blacks seem less affected by urban form. Other research suggests considerable disparities across age and income. Therefore, the effectiveness of a given set of strategies to promote physical activity requires careful consideration of targeted populations. Finally, research to date shows stronger linkages between urban form and obesity than can or is explained by levels of physical activity. This suggests that there are other characteristics of the built environment that also affect obesity. These other characteristics include the kinds of foods available—at what costs and how nutritious—and the fact that we self-select our environment based on our attitudes and pre-dispositions to walking or driving.

Perhaps even more critical is the ability to achieve transportation, environmental and public

health benefits from the promotion of more compact and walkable environments. While this again may seem intuitive, it is not a forgone conclusion that policies promoting consolidation of development into compact centers at once increases walking and physical activity while reducing vehicle usage and exposure to harmful pollutants. Increased density often comes with increased exposure to harmful air toxics from vehicle exhausts. Yes, compact development may promote physical activity, reduce miles of travel in cars and reduce criteria air pollutants at the regional scale. But the immediate exposure to smaller particulates and air toxics in these walkable, more congested centers may not decline, which is a distinct health consideration.

Conclusion

Evidence is emerging that demonstrates multiple linkages between community design and public health. One of these linkages is between the built form and physical activity and health, and another linkage is the built environment and travel choice, vehicle emissions and health. Considerable opportunities exist to promote public health by making specific changes to the built environment that promote physical activity and theoretically reduce auto dependence and air pollution. However, it is also possible that certain policy prescriptions may be ineffective, and even counterproductive. Additional work is required to understand unique lifestyle characteristics of specific populations and how these unique groups relate with the built environment. More refined and objective measurement of land use- and transportation-related accessibility and physical activity is needed to be able to develop meaningful policy guidance or effective health promotion interventions based on community design principles.

Dr. Frank is the Bombardier Chairholder in Sustainable Urban Transportation Systems in the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. He is the principal investigator of SMARTRAQ, or Strategies for Metropolitan Atlanta's Regional Transportation and Air Quality, and is Co-PI on a US National Institutes of Health project with Dr. James Sallis (PI) and Dr. Brian Saelens (Co-PI).

Island Press recently published a book that he, Peter Engelke (George Washington University), and Dr. Tom Schmid (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) recently completed titled, Health and Community Design, The Impacts of The Built Environment on Physical Activity.

PN UPDATES

Ermínia Maricato, who was a speaker at the Planners Network Conference in Lowell, Massachusetts in 1999, has been appointed executive secretary of the Ministry of Cities in Brazil. The Ministry of Cities was established by the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and is responsible for the design of the National Urban Development Policy, as well as the housing, environmental sanitation, transportation and urban mobility sector policies. The Ministry will be sponsoring a National Cities Conference in October 2003.

Amy Laura Cahn was in the occupied territories this past summer. She describes some of her impressions of the impact of the new apartheid wall on the town of Qalqiliya: I try to imagine traveling through Worcester (Massachusetts, my home town, with a bit more than twice the population of Qalqiliya). I drive down Salisbury Street towards Holden, but before I reach the edge of the city I am met by a series of roadblocks, trenches people deep, pyramids of razor wire, and electrified fence. I back up and drive in the opposite direction and it is just the same. In the third and fourth directions, I am further trapped in by the most intimidating slab of concrete one could ever imagine, with sniper towers imbedded into it every quarter of a mile. Imagine for yourself what that might feel like and imagine further what it would mean if these barriers were cutting you off from your only source of income; from family members; from access to schooling or healthcare or the olive trees that have been in your family for a hundred years; or from the main water sources for drinking water and irrigation... Since the wall construction began, 4,000 people have left Qalqiliya, a city of 42,000 and an additional 2,000 heads of household have left to find some source of income. A Qalqiliya historian told us last night that this is the "empty abdomen" policy of transfer, to drive people from their homes one more time.

Walter Thabit writes about the Summer 2003 issue: This is one of the more cohesive issues of the magazine. The new name fits like a glove. I liked many of the pieces, though flundering around fits a few of them as well. I especially enjoyed Renee Tobak's piece because it gave a crystal clear example of the difference between capitalism and socialism. MCM = the use of money to produce commodities so as to make

more money. In socialism, CMC = people producing commodities for use, exchanging them for money to buy commodities they don't have. Now I know what it's all about. I enjoyed Jill Hamberg's article a lot, but regretted that she was unable to give us an idea of the scale and/or scope of the housing problem in Cuba. Nevertheless, well done. Incidentally, if I were to contribute to this issue (for which I was and am totally unprepared), it would be to show how the Soviet Union was unable to satisfy the demands for housing any better (and probably a lot worse) than the US. There is also so much tied up in the way of big bureaucracies and their management styles which can get in the way of the best intentions of policymakers.

PNer **Hazel Gunn** wrote to call our attention to a major omission in the list of Resources on Marxism, Socialism and Planning. *The Union of Radical Political Economy* has published many articles on these topics in its journal, including many by PNers. These can be found at www.urpe.org.

Planetizen Award for PN Website

Planetizen, the planning and development network best known for its regular email-based news digest, recently voted the Planners Network web site as being one of the 50 most important urban planning and development websites. The citation highlighted the magazine archives. See <http://www.planetizen.com/sites/#publications>. In a recent weekly update, Planetizen featured Tom Angotti's 7th Generation article from the last issue of PP.

Student [Dis]Orientation

This September, with support from the new PN student outreach campaign, members of PN and the Toronto organization Planning Action organized a joint student [Dis]Orientation in Toronto. The event brought together students from five local universities and others interested in planning to discuss how to navigate through planning education and practice, and shape it into a force for justice and equity. More information is available at www.planningaction.org.

Planners Network Goes Local

In conjunction with the student outreach campaign, Planners Network members have recently begun to organize new local chapters in a variety of cities and universities in North America and beyond. Elsewhere, existing local groups are linking to

Planners Network by becoming local affiliates. Local chapters and affiliates are independent groups that determine their own structure and activities. Planners Network simply provides a forum for networking and some limited resources and support. If you are interested in connecting with or organizing a local group, please contact [pnstudents@yahoo.com](mailto:pstudents@yahoo.com) or one of the local chapter contacts below:

- *University of California (Los Angeles)*: Stefano Bloch (stefano_bloch@hotmail.com)
- *University of Washington (Seattle)*: Katie Sheehy (north@u.washington.edu)
- *University of Michigan (Ann Arbor)*: Joe Grengs (grengs@umich.edu)
- *University of Texas (Austin)*: Russell McDowell (rustymac@mail.utexas.edu)
- *Chicago*: Lee Deuben (ldeuben@hotmail.com)
- *New York City*: Cynthia Golembeski (cag2029@columbia.edu)
- *Clark University (Worcester, MA)*: Saeed Bencie (sa_bencie@yahoo.com)
- *Concordia University (Montreal)*: Amy Siciliano (asicilian@graffiti.net)
- *Dalhousie University (Halifax)*: Lilith Finkler (lilithfinkler@hotmail.com)
- *Toronto*: Barbara Rahder (rahder@yorku.ca)
- *Istanbul*: Beril Celik (berilcelik@yahoo.com)
- *Philippines*: Clare Amador (camador@mail.aim.edu.ph)

Steering Committee Changes

Two new and dynamic members joined the PN Steering Committee at the PN SC meeting in New York City on July 28. Norma Rantisi and Josh Lerner are both from Canada. Thanks to Norma, we now have a new PN e-newsletter, which she created in 7-8 weeks. This year we started a student outreach campaign, and we're also working with members to set up over 10 new local PN chapters.

If It Isn't in the Issue, Place it Here

We hope the E-Newsletter will be a great place for us to interact with each other. Send in updates about yourself and your work, notices about jobs, events, publications, and grants of interest to progressive planners, and we'll compile them monthly (maximum 100 words please). Have a message or opinion you want to get out? Write it up (maximum 250 words; longer pieces may be considered for the magazine). Send these items to PN E-Newsletter Editor Norma Rantisi at nrantisi@alcor.concordia.ca.

Save the dates: June 17-20, PN Conference in New York City

It's time for another exciting PN conference that will

bring together grass roots activists, professionals, students and academics in an open dialogue about burning issues facing progressive planning today. The focus of the conference will be on rebuilding communities in the US and abroad, with sessions on community building efforts in post-disaster and post-conflict societies from Lower Manhattan to Chinatown and the Lower East Side; from the Occupied Territories to Baghdad and Beirut; and other urban places touched by war. Hunter College and Pratt Institute will co-sponsor and host the conference sessions and events in Brooklyn and Manhattan. We will have our first organizing meeting on Friday, November 7 at 6:30 pm at Pratt Manhattan (144 W 14th St., near 7th Avenue). If you have suggestions and/or would like to participate in organizing the conference, please join us on November 7th, or contact Ayse Yonder <ayonder@pratt.edu> or Tom Angotti <tangotti@hunter.cuny.edu>.

OBITUARY: EDWARD W. SAID (1935-2003)

Edward W. Said, Professor of English and Comparative literature at Columbia University in New York, passed away on September 25, 2003. Said is the well-known author of many influential books, translated into several languages, including *The Question of Palestine* (1980), *After the Last Sky* (1986) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1992). Best known among his works is *Orientalism* (1978), which examines how ideological representations of the Orient in Western scholarship were linked up with colonial political domination and which has been credited by many with helping to launch the field of post-colonial studies. Said was also well-known for his role as a leading public intellectual and was the most eloquent and influential advocate in the West for Palestinian independence. He was born to a Palestinian Christian family in 1935 in Jerusalem, then part of British-ruled Palestine. He spent his early years living in Jerusalem and Cairo before immigrating to the US in 1951, where he pursued his higher studies at Princeton and Harvard. He wrote in the Egyptian *Al-Abram Weekly*: "I have been moved to defend the refugees' plight precisely because I did not suffer and therefore feel obligated to relieve the sufferings of my people." As indicated in a recent exchange on the PLANET listserv, his insights have shaped the development of a number of planning-related books, such as Janet Abu-Lughod's *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities* (1999); Kay Anderson's *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (1991); Ruth Fincher and Jane Jacobs' *Cities of Difference* (1998); Jane Jacobs' *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City* (1996); and Anthony King's *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World-Economy* (1990).

Look for tributes to/reflections on Said in upcoming issues of the *Progressive Planning* magazine.

RESOURCES

PUBLICATIONS

"The Poorest Become Poorer" (Summer 2003) is available from the Fannie Mae Foundation, 4000 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Washington D.C. 20016, Tel.: 202.274.8000. For more information, visit www.fanniemae.foundation.org/programs/papers.shtml.

"Developing Organizational Endowments in the African American Community: Building for the Future" (July/August 2003) is available from The Aspen Institute, One Dupont Circle NW, #700, Washington, D.C. 20036, Tel.: 202.736.5800, nsrf@aspeninstitute.org. For more information, visit www.nonprofitresearch.org.

"Shaping the Future of American Youth: Youth Policy in the 21st Century" (82 pp., 2003), ed. Anne Lewis, is available (\$8) from the American Youth Policy Forum, 1836 Jefferson Pl. NW, Washington D.C. 20036, Tel.: 202.775.9731. For more information, visit www.aypf.org.

"New Child Care Resources Are Needed to Prevent the Loss of Child Care Assistance for Hundreds of Thousands of Children in Working Families," by Sharon Parrott & Jennifer Mezey, is an August 2003 report from the Ctr. on Budget & Policy Priorities & the Ctr. for Law & Social Policy. Available (possibly free) from CLASP, 1015 15th St. NW, #400, Washington D.C. 20005, Tel.: 202.906.8000.

"Communities Sustain Public Health Improvements Through Organized Partnership Structures" is a 10-page, April 2003 pamphlet, available from The Kellogg Foundation, One Michigan Ave. E., Battle Creek, MI 49017-4058, Tel.: 269.968.1611. For more information, visit <http://www.wkkf.org>.

"Neighborhoods & Health: Building Evidence for Local Policy," by Kathryn Pettit, G. Thomas Kingley & Claudia Coulton, is an August 2003 Urban Institute report, summarizing a 5-city (Cleveland, Denver, Indianapolis, Oakland, Providence) project. The report is available at <http://www.urban.org>.

"America's Newest Working Families: Cost, Crowding & Conditions for Immigrants," by Barbara Lipman (July 2003) is available from the Center for Housing Policy, 1801 K St. NW, #M.100, Washington D.C. 20006.1301, Tel.: 202.466.2121, nhc@nhc.org. For more information, visit <http://www.nhc.org>.

"Residents at Risk: A Profile of Ida B. Wells & Madden Park," by Susan Popkin, Mary Cunningham & William Woodley, is an August 2003 Urban Institute report on the results of HOPE VI public housing redevelopment. The report is available at <http://www.urban.org>.

"Discrimination in Metropolitan Housing Markets: Phase 2. Asians & Pacific Islanders," by Margery Austin Turner, Beata Bednarz, Carla Herbig & Lee Seon Joo (July 2003), is available from The Urban Institute, 2100 M St. NW, Washington D.C. 20037, Tel.: 202.261.5709, pafairs@ui.urban.org. For more information, visit: <http://www.urban.org>.

"University + Community Research Partnerships: A New Approach," edited by Jacqueline Dugery and James Knowles (2003), is available from the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, 5 Boar's Head Lane, #100, Charlottesville, VA 22903, Tel.: 434.971.2073. For more information, visit www.pew.partnership.org.

"Shaping City Center Futures: Conservation, Regeneration and Institutional Capacity" is a detailed account of the evolution of the Grainger Town initiative, a project to regenerate the 19th century core of the city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne. Copies of the report can be obtained at a price of \$28.00 from: GURU, School of Planning and Architecture of the University of New Castle. For more information, email Elizabeth.Storey@ncl.ac.uk or phone 0191.222.5648.

Census Data: A set of complete 2000 Census demographic data packages (described as "comprehensive, easy to use, inexpensive"), some with time series data from the 1970, 1980 and 1990 Censuses. For more information, phone

Resources for Active Living

Special Issues of Journals

American Journal of Health Promotion. Special issue on Health Promoting Community Design, September/October 2003. Richard Killingsworth (Editor), JoAnne Earp, Robin Moore (Associate Editors). Copies can be ordered for \$24.95 at www.healthpromotionjournal.com or see www.healthpromotionjournal.com/publications/journal/ib2003_09.htm for contents.

The American Journal of Public Health, Special Issue on the Built Environment and Health, September 2003. www.ajph.org/future/93.9.shtml.

Progressive Planner, Special Issue on Auto Dependency, Fall 2002. Individual copies \$10, multiple copies \$8 each. See page 43 for ordering information.

Websites

Active Living by Design
www.activelivingbydesign.com

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control, Physical Activity
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/

Reports

McCann, Barbara C., and Reid Ewing. 2003. *Measuring the Health Effects of Sprawl: A National Analysis of Physical Activity, Obesity and Chronic Disease*. Smart Growth America and Surface Transportation Policy Project. Copies can be obtained at www.smart-growthamerica.org. Hard copies can be obtained for \$15 by calling or writing SGA, 1200 18th St. NW Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202.207.3350 or by emailing sga@smartgrowthamerica.org.

Jackson, Richard J. and Chris Kochtitzky. Undated. *Creating a Healthy Environment: The Impact of the Built Environment on Public Health*. Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse Monograph Series. Available at www.sprawlwatch.org/health.pdf.

800.577.6717,
e-mail info@usa.census.org, or visit
<http://www.usa.census.org>.

EVENTS / CONFERENCES

Invitation to Host a Presentation by the City Repair Project. This November, two members of the City Repair Project will be touring the East coast, sharing an interactive slideshow presentation about their work. They are looking for groups who

US Department of Health and Human Services. 1996. *Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

Articles

Day, K. & U. Cohen. 2000. The Role of Culture in Designing Environments for People with Dementia: A Study of Russian Jewish Immigrants. *Environment and Behavior* 32, 3: 361-399.

Hill, J. and E. Melanson. 1999. Overview of the Determinants of Overweight and Obesity: Current Evidence and Research Issues. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* 31, 11: Supplement, S515-S521.

King, A.C., C. Castro, A.A. Eyler, S. Wilcox, J. F. Sallis, and R. C. Brownson. 2000. Personal and Environmental Factors Associated with Physical Inactivity Among Different Racial-Ethnic Groups of US Middle-aged and Older-aged Women. *Health Psychology* 19, 4: 354-364.

Pate, R., M. Pratt, S. Blair, and 17 others. 1995. Physical Activity and Public Health: A Recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Sports Medicine. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 273, 5: 402-407.

Pratt, M., C. A. Macera, & C. Blanton. 1999. Levels of Physical Activity and Inactivity in Children and Adults in the United States: Current Evidence and Research Issues. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* S526-S533.

Pucher, John and Lewis Dijkstra. 2003. Promoting Safe Walking and Cycling to Improve Public Health: Lessons From the Netherlands and Germany. *American Journal of Public Health* special issue above.

would be interested in hosting a presentation. The group facilitates projects with communities to design and build their own public gathering places. If interested in hosting a presentation, visit www.cityrepair.org for more information.

November 13.14. Multifamily Housing Development Workshop, Los Angeles. The Urban Land Institute Multifamily Housing Workshop will cover the basic principles for successfully designing and developing multifamily residential proj- ➡

ects with an emphasis on garden apartments. Topics covered will include project feasibility, site planning and product design, financing and investment, marketing and leasing, operations and management and specialized development and investment opportunities. For more information, phone 800.321.5011.

November 13.15. Building and Re.building Traditional Neighborhoods, Seaside, Florida. This conference takes you on a step.by.step journey through the development and redevelopment process, including case studies of urban, suburban and exurban New Urbanist communities. For more information, phone 850.231.2421 or visit www.the-seasideinstitute.org.

November 14. Asia 2020: Building the Cities of the Future, Hong King. The annual Urban Land Institute conference. For more information, phone 800.321.5011.

December 5. 10th Anniversary Great Cities Winter Forum, Chicago. This event is sponsored by the University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute. For more information, contact the Great Cities Institute, 312.996.8700, gcities@uic.edu.

December 5.11. International Symposium on Urbanism: New and Green, Havana, Cuba. For more information and registration details, visit www.cubanow.org.

FELLOWSHIPS/GRANTS

The Ford Foundation's Knowledge, Creativity and Freedom (KC&F) Program is exploring the possibilities of a grant making initiative entitled

Schimek [Cont. from page 31]

skills can readily be mastered, but like swimming or skiing, require instruction for best results. The most important methods to increase bicycle use are to improve bicyclist behavior through training and traffic enforcement and to improve motorist behavior through public awareness and traffic enforcement. Key methods to implement these policies are to remove discriminatory laws; train the police in bicycle laws and enforcement methods; create an advertising campaign about the rights and responsibilities of cyclists; provide bicycle training classes for adults and children; and enforce traffic and drunk driving laws and prosecute offenders.

Physical activity habits are often developed in childhood, yet the number of teens participating in physical education classes is declining. One survey found that fewer than 20 percent of children in grades 7 to 12 had physical education classes even

Replenishing Democracy which aims to identify and support university/college student organizations or groups which are actively involved in projects that develop the progressive meaning of democracy and deepen democratic participation. These projects might be campus.based (working with students and student issues) or they might be linked to broader societal activities and/or organizations. Interested parties are encouraged to contact: Elora H. Chowdhury, Consultant, Knowledge, Creativity and Freedom Program, The Ford Foundation, 320 E. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017; Tel.: 212.573.5317; Fax: 212.573.4746; e.chowdhury@fordfound.org

The CUPPA Distinguished Graduate Scholar Award Program at the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs (CUPPA) of the University of Illinois at Chicago. Available to highly qualified doctoral applicants for up to four years of tuition.free education and salaries of up to \$15,000 per academic year for work as research assistants. To learn more, contact: Charles J. Hoch, Professor and PhD Program Director, Graduate Program in Urban Planning and Policy; 312.996.2156, or Michael Pagano, Professor and Director; Graduate Program in Public Administration; mapagano@uic.edu; 312.355.4681. Application deadline : January 15, 2004.

INTERNET RESOURCES

About Planning, www.aboutplanning.org is an internet clearing house for information about websites, publications, essays and news related to land use planning, growth management, comprehensive planning, smart growth, new urbanism and other planning issues.

one day per week. Providing organized physical activities in the afterschool hours seems like a promising method of increasing fitness among adolescents, providing life skills and habits and perhaps reducing anti-social behavior among teens. Cycling class could be one potential solution, serving the unique dual-role of sport and transport.

Finding and remedying the specific barriers to physical activity, especially for women, minorities and the poor, and promoting the development of physical activity habits among adolescents may be a more effective strategy than overcoming the substantial political and institutional barriers inherent in reshaping US settlement patterns.

Paul Schimek (schimek@alum.mit.edu) is a cycling instructor certified by the League of American Bicyclists and was formerly the bicycle program manager for the City of Boston.

JOIN PLANNERS NETWORK

For three decades, Planners Network has been a voice for progressive professionals and activists concerned with urban planning, social and environmental justice. PN's 1,000 members receive the Progressive Planning magazine, communicate on-line with PN-NET and the E-Newsletter, and take part in the annual conference. PN also gives progressive ideas a voice in the mainstream planning profession by organizing sessions at annual conferences of the American Planning Association, the Canadian Institute of Planners, and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning.

The PN Conference has been held annually almost every summer since 1994. These gatherings combine speakers and workshops with exchanges involving local communities. PN conferences engage in discussions that help inform political strategies at the local, national, and international levels. Recent conferences have been held in Holyoke, MA; Rochester, NY; Toronto, Ontario; Lowell, MA; East St. Louis, IL; Brooklyn, NY; and Pomona, CA.

Join Planners Network and make a difference while sharing your ideas and enthusiasm with others!

All members must pay annual dues. The minimum dues for Planners Network members are as follows:

- \$25** Students and income under \$25,000
- \$25** Subscription to Progressive Planning only
- \$35** Income between \$25,000 and \$50,000
- \$50** Income over \$50,000, organizations and libraries
- \$100** Sustaining Members -- if you earn over \$50,000, won't you consider helping at this level?

Canadian members:
See column at right.

Dues are deductible to the extent permitted by law.

PN MEMBERS IN CANADA

Membership fees by Canadian members may be paid in Canadian funds:

- \$35 for students, unemployed, and those with incomes <\$40,000
- \$55 for those with incomes between \$40,000 and 80,000
- \$75 for those with incomes over \$80,000
- \$150 for sustaining members

Make cheques in Canadian funds payable to: "Planners Network" and send w/ membership form to: Barbara Rahder, Faculty of Environmental Studies
York University
Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3

If interested in joining the PN Toronto listserv, include your email address with payment or send a message to Barbara Rahder at [<rahder@yorku.ca>](mailto:rahder@yorku.ca).

PURCHASING A SINGLE ISSUE

Progressive Planning is a benefit of membership. If non-members wish to purchase a single issue of the magazine, please mail a check for \$10 or credit card information to Planners Network at 379 DeKalb Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11205. Please specify the issue and provide your email address or a phone number for queries. Multiple back issues are \$8 each

Back issues of the newsletters are for sale at \$2 per copy. Contact the PN office at pn@pratt.edu to check for availability and for pricing of bulk orders.

Copies of the PN Reader are also available. The single issue price for the Reader is \$6 but there are discounts available for bulk orders. See ordering and content information at <http://www.plannersnetwork.org/htm/pub/pn-reader/index.html>

PLANNERS NETWORK ON LINE

The PN WEB SITE is at: www.plannersnetwork.org

The PN LISTSERV:

PN maintains an on-line mailing list for members to post and respond to queries, list job postings, conference announcements, etc. To join, send an email message to majordomo@list.pratt.edu with "subscribe pn-net" (without the quotes) in the body of the message (not the subject line). You'll be sent instructions on how to use the list.

Progressive Planning ADVERTISING RATES:

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Send file via email to [<pn@pratt.edu>](mailto:pn@pratt.edu), or mail camera-ready copy, by January 1, April 1, July 1 and October 1.

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In This Issue

Upcoming Conference
in New York

•

PN Student Campaign

•

Resources for
the Active City

Your Last Issue?

Please check the date on your mailing label. If the date is **more than one year ago** this will be your last issue unless we receive your annual dues **RIGHT AWAY!** See page 43 for minimum dues amounts.

And while you're at it send us an UPDATE on what you're doing.

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