Transportation Policymaking: Collaborating for Health

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• “Think and Do” tank
  – Thinking
    • Wellness is more than absence of sickness
    • Health is largely produced outside the health sector
    • We can do more together than separately
    • There should be “health in all policies”
NYAM

• “Think and Do” tank
  – Doing
    • Healthy Aging: Age-Friendly NYC
    • Obesity Prevention: Designing a Strong and Healthy New York
2 Issues, 1 Conclusion

• Aging
  – More and more people are getting older
  – Sickness and frailty in old are preventable
  – We need to intervene in the environmental conditions that cause disease, injuries and frailty

• Obesity
  – More and more people are overweight and sicker
  – Obesity and diet-related illnesses are inevitable
  – We need to intervene in the environmental conditions that lead to poor food access and low levels of physical activity
Why transportation is particularly important to us

• Directly shapes activity and social connectivity

• Direct Investment in the Built Environment
  – 2012 Transportation Bill $105 billion vs. Prevention and Public Health Fund: $12 billion (and shrinking)

• Residents really care about it
Age-friendly New York City

- The New York Academy of Medicine
- The Office of the Mayor
- The New York City Council
In NYC, by 2030 the 65+ population is expected to increase by 47%.
A Life Course Approach to Active Aging

Early Life
Growth and development

Adult Life
Maintaining highest possible level of function

Older Age
Maintaining independence and preventing disability

Disability threshold

Range of function in individuals

Rehabilitation and ensuring the quality of life

Source: Kalache and Kickbusch, 1997
WHO Domains of City Life

Outdoor space & buildings
Transportation
Communication & information
Housing

Respect & social inclusion
Social participation
Civic participation & employment
Community support & health services
Based on the Perspectives of Older Adults Themselves

• Consulted with more than 2,000 older adults
  • 14 neighborhoods
  • 5 languages
  • 10 immigrant groups

• Expert Roundtables
• Mapping
• Literature Review
Challenges shared by older adults:
  • Stairs
  • Few places to rest
  • Insufficient time to cross the street
  • Unclear communication
  • Adapting to changes in service and weather
Age-friendly New York City Commission
Age-friendly Transportation Solutions

- 3,000+ bus shelters with seating and signage, paid for by advertising
- Hundreds of street crossing times extended
- School buses used for 500+ grocery store trips
- 1,000 benches installed with older adult input
- Streets and signage changed in the 5 neighborhoods with the most pedestrian accidents
- Taxi vouchers instead of access a ride
- 311 system for reporting issues with sidewalks/potholes etc.
Evaluation

In the first 5 neighborhoods with improved street design:

- pedestrian crashes decreased between 9% and 60%
- non-pedestrian motor vehicle crashes decreased between 23% and 46%.

Design changes expanded to 25 neighborhoods
Obesity in NYS
Designing a Strong and Healthy New York

- DASH-NY Policy Center
  - Policy research and analysis
  - Policy surveillance
  - Evaluation
- DASH-NY Coalition
Strong and Healthy Communities Campaign

DASH-NY proposes policy-level changes to end obesity

1. Our communities encourage daily physical activity
2. Our food system brings health food to all our neighborhoods
3. Our health care system works to prevent illness
4. Public and private investments prioritize health improvements
DASH-NY Advisory Group Members

**Healthcare**
- American Academy of Pediatrics - District II
- American Cancer Society - Eastern Division
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- National Association of Hispanic Nurses New York
- New York Health Plan Association
- New York State Association of County Health Officials
- New York State Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians
- New York State Department of Health
- New York State Dietetic Association

**Healthy Partnerships**
- American Association of Retired People of NYS
- Association of New York State Youth Bureaus
- Broome County Strategic Alliance for Health
- Empire State Future
- Healthi Kids Policy Team of the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund National Public Policy Office
- NAACP - NYS Conference
- National Urban League
- New York State Office for the Aging
- United Way of New York City
DASH-NY Advisory Group Members

Active Communities
- Parks and Trails New York
- Transportation Alternatives
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development – Sustainable Housing and Communities
- YMCA of New York State

Food Systems
- Hunger Action Network of NYS
- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Built Environment Group
- New York City Office of Food Policy
- New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
- New York State Food Policy Council
- New York University Obesity Prevention Research Network
- RWJ Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity
Obesity Interventions

• Share the Road Media Campaign
• Complete Streets policy formulation and implementation
• Alternative subdivision standards
• Pedestrian Safety Action Plan
• Bicycle Routes and Walking Paths
• Rail Trails
• Lighting
• Crosswalk project
• Signage linking roads to public spaces
Feedback

“I feel very fortunate that we have forward-thinking transportation partners who are working towards many of the same goals that we are looking to accomplish. It really helps to have a strong and vocal voice from all of our partners and to have a unified message.”
What messages helped you get decisionmakers board?

- Economic benefits & community revitalization
- ADA compliance
- Safety for all roadway users
- Pride in our communities
- Inclusion for all our community members
- “It’s the right thing to do”
- Obesity stats (1 mention)
Collaboration between sectors is possible

Collaboration is essential
  – Arguments are needed from multiple domains

Both “top down” and “bottom up” strategies are needed
  – Need buy-in from the top
  – People are experts on their own lives and needs

Addressing problems in partnership requires “win-win” solutions
• Identify new needs and new markets
• Sharing of best practices
• Way to stay current in the face of significant demographic shifts
• Government assessment across departments optimizes resources

• Can be used to solve other issues
Transportation is an Ongoing Priority for Public Health

- Prevention and Public Health Trust Fund
  – Community Transformation Grants
- National Prevention Strategy
- Healthy People 2020
- American Public Health Association
- NYS Prevention Agenda
Information and tools are available at:

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