



Assessing the Built Environment through the Transportation and Urban Planning Process and the Factors that Impact Community Health

Learning Objective:

This session will describe the Built Environment as it relates to the process of transportation and urban planning and the factors that impact community health.

MODERATOR

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SPEAKER 1

Proposed Presentation Title:

Ensuring Quality of Life through the Transportation and Urban Planning Process

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Brief Presentation Summary:

Transportation planning is an important first step in the development of a proposed infrastructure project or system of projects and services. This requires effective collaboration and communication between transportation planners and engineers with governmental entities and community leaders to shape the built environment. The planning and evaluation process involves a transdisciplinary approach that considers the sociopolitical, environmental and economic impacts of sustainability. Through the use of quantitative and qualitative analyses and proactive public engagement, the positive and negative impacts of a project can be determined. This presentation will focus on the active role of transportation planning to improve health and quality of life in a community through the appropriateness of an infrastructure projects, facility design, land use, safety, and mitigation of environmental impacts, performance metrics and enhanced mobility of motorized and non-motorized options needed to meet the demands of a growing population.

SPEAKER 2

Proposed Presentation Title:

Health Impacts and Transportation Decision-Making: Environmental Nexus

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Brief Presentation Summary:

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the regulatory process that guides the evaluation and disclosure of potential environmental impacts of a proposed action on humans and the environment. This is especially true for transportation infrastructure actions that use federal money or require federal permits; projects such as new highways, passenger rail lines, major bridges and airports. Traditional social, economic, and environmental analyses include assessments of noise, air quality and potential exposure to special or hazardous waste. In addition, livability, community culture, neighborhood cohesion, and public place-making have been important considerations during the assessment of the impacts and benefits of new transportation projects. The inclusion of social determinants of health has resulted in both transportation and environmental planners identifying the linkages between public health and good transportation decisions. Looking at transportation challenges with new eyes, we can realize a more significant role in modifying professional perspectives. This presentation will provide an explanation of the NEPA process as a vital step in transportation infrastructure planning and design process by considering potential health impacts.

SPEAKER 3

Proposed Presentation Title:

Sustainable Cities Initiative

The Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) at the University of Oregon has pioneered a radically simple collaborative engagement and learning model – the Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) – that holds promise for the future of higher education and communities across the country. The SCYP model is based on a yearlong partnership between a college or university and a city where existing courses are directed towards that city’s ‘real-world’ sustainability and livability projects and plans. Although similar to many service-learning courses throughout the country, what distinguishes the SCYP model is the focus on sustainability and the breadth and scale of engagement. In any given year, an SCYP program is directing between 20-35 courses and more than 500 students across a range of disciplines towards its partner city. This scale of engagement creates a high level of attention, focus, and activity from the faculty, students, university administrators, elected officials, city staff, and citizens. It also leads to a substantial and palpable advancement of projects and to a robust learning environment for students.

In 2010, the New York Times called SCYP “perhaps the most comprehensive effort by a U.S. university to infuse sustainability into its curricula and community outreach”, and in 2013, the Chronicle of Higher Education declared the program “one of higher education’s most successful and comprehensive service-learning programs”.

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SPEAKER 4: Presentation & Interactive Group Activity

Proposed Presentation Title:

A Life Course Perspective of Chronic Disease and the Impact of Surface Transportation

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Brief Presentation Summary:

Transportation is a vital component to community sustainability in terms of accessing health care, education, employment, leisure activities, and social networks. Transportation mode choice is correlated with life trajectory events such as employment and education, which are interconnected with maximizing individual utility. Thus, activity patterns, personal decision processes, behavioral rules and the travel environment characterize a person's behavior with respect to the multidimensional nature of choice and the development of chronic disease. This presentation focuses on a proposed theoretical framework based on a socio-ecological model that demonstrates the synergy of risk and protective factors involved in the development of chronic disease over the life course and the impact of surface transportation. This process oriented approach demonstrates the synergy of risk and protective factors involved in the development of chronic disease accounting for the psychological/behavioral, social and biological contexts over time beginning with preconception and extending through to old age. The emphasis is on individual choice and how choice sets in motion one's life trajectory and social well-being. Thus, the choice of transportation modality is dependent upon place of residence (urban, suburban or rural) in which an individual may choose to walk; bicycle; use public transit, rail; or drive a motor vehicle. These choices are influenced by the availability of transportation alternatives within a community, perceived personal and budgetary constraints, attitude, habit and educational information. This poster graphically depicts the manner in which human utility and the interplay of life stressors manifest in the body as chronic disease.