Rendering Courtesy of the City of Tumwater, WA
Health & Community Design

Determinants of Health

- Genes & Biology
- Physical Environment
- Clinical Care
- Health Behaviors
- Social & Economic Factors

Source: 2018 Washington State Health Assessment
Making Community Design a **Health** Priority…

Est. 18%+ of State and Local Spending -$12-15 Billion Annually:

- Highways/Roads/Streets
- Community Development
- Parks, Recreation, Natural Resources

Source: US Census State and Local Government Finance
Establishing a Health Agenda for Community Design...

- **Reducing Environmental Exposure:**
  Preventing, mitigating and reversing chemical and microbial pollutants in the built environment that harm public health.

- **Enhancing Healthy Natural Systems:**
  Preserving and enhancing air quality and existing ecosystems that relieve stress, accelerate recuperation, support mental health, and encourage healthy lifestyles.

- **Increasing Safe, Healthy, Active Living:**
  Increasing exercise, recreation and other daily activities that lower the risk of cardiovascular disease and other chronic disease; Improving safety and reducing injury and crime; Increasing access to healthy food.

- **Emergency Preparedness:**
  Strengthening adaptive capacity to climate impacts and risk management frameworks to reduce exposure and sensitivity to hazards like flooding, wildfires, infectious disease.

- **Social Equity:**
  Strengthening equity, connectedness, inclusion, civic participation to increase happiness and ensure communities function more effectively through housing and public space design.

(Source: Healthy Community Goals: APHA, AIA, APA, ULI)
During the period ending in 2015, Washington residents spent 52% of their monthly income on housing and transportation combined, and transportation costs alone were 21% of median income. Combined housing and transportation costs are up from 47% for the period ending in 2011. [4]
20% OF ALL TRAFFIC FATALITIES
The Young & Aging – Most at Risk [1]

- Over 700 children involved in bicycle and pedestrian traffic crashes annually in WA
- Adults 65+ are 13% of the population, but 25%+ of pedestrian fatalities.

Number of pedestrian collisions and fatalities compared to population by age group

- Percent of all pedestrian collisions
- Percent of pedestrian fatalities
- Percent of total population
A study of 33 California cities found that adults who drove the most had obesity rates (27%) that were three times higher than those who drove the least (9.5%). [5]

Driving is a risk factor for obesity
Community Design provides the Building Blocks of Health

In Washington...

- **1.76% White populations** living in high poverty neighborhoods
- **4.23% Latino populations** living in high poverty neighborhoods [7]

People who live in high-poverty neighborhoods have less access to jobs, services, high-quality education, parks, safe streets, and other essential ingredients of economic and social success that are the building blocks of good health.
Health & Community Design

- **One in 9 people** in Washington live below poverty level.[2]

- **Housing stock** in Washington is over 60% detached single family and primarily older 3+ bedroom homes.[2]

- **Pedestrian & bicyclist traffic deaths and serious injuries** doubled since 2013 and are nearly a quarter of all traffic deaths.[3]

- **59% of pedestrian & bicyclist traffic deaths and serious injuries** occurred high poverty neighborhoods. [3]

- **Health care expenditures** growing at 7% annually in Washington.[6]
Life Expectancy Rates

- **Life expectancy** can vary 10 years across neighborhoods a few miles apart. [4]
Median Household Spending

Transportation

Housing
Washington State is Growing Fast

State Population:
Est 8 million by 2026
Est 9 million by 2037

City Population:
Est. 5.5 million by 2026

Actions we are taking today...

- Developing a finer grained scale of data
- More cross disciplinary data sharing
- Modernizing Washington’s Planning & Community Design Laws in support of the Health Agenda
- Supporting Washington’s colleges and universities training planners and urban designers in their integration of the Health Agenda
- Collaborating to translate the Health Agenda into local, regional, and state development standards, contracts, plans & policies
Current Projects:

🌟 Health Impact Assessments

- Washington Tracking Network (WTN) Data for Planning
- Washington’s Roadmap for Growth
- State Highway Safety Plan Steering Committee
- Automated Vehicle Working Group – Safety Subcommittee
- Complete Streets Awards
- Outreach and Technical Assistance
Leaving you with 5 questions to consider...

• Can cities and regions prosper more fairly?
• Is the "affordable" housing crisis in desirable places solvable?
• Are cities prepared for significant demographic, cultural and climatic changes coming in the near future?
• Should urban plans and projects be scrutinized for public health impacts?
• Should transportation planning reorient from cars to people?

“To be effective, urban planning needs to dig deeper than obscure code, pretty pictures and jumbling data. It needs to make a difference in the lives of all people.”

-Norman Krumholz, Urban Planning Professor & Former APA President
References

Questions?

Rad Cunningham, MPH, MPA
Senior Epidemiologist – Built Environment Section
Environmental Public Health
Washington State Department of Health
rad.cunningham@doh.wa.gov