Beyond the Boundaries of Transit, Partnering to Improve Social Determinants of Health

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More than 80% of the nearly $3.5 trillion spent on medical care each year in the U.S. is spent on treating chronic diseases related to the conditions where we live, learn, work, play and age:

- **Economic stability** (access to employment opportunities, equal pay)
- **Neighborhood and built environment** (affordable housing, safe streets & parks)
- **Education** (access to quality early care and education, high school graduation)
- **Social and community context** (social cohesion, exposure to violence, racism)
- **Health and health care** (access to primary and mental health care)

Transportation options are connected to all these issues.
Non-Clinical Factors Impact Our Health and Well Being

- **Socioeconomic Factors**
  - Education
  - Job Status
  - Family/Social Support
  - Income
  - Community Safety

- **Physical Environment**

- **Health Behaviors**
  - Tobacco Use
  - Diet & Exercise
  - Alcohol Use
  - Sexual Activity

- **Health Care**
  - Access to Care
  - Quality of Care

Source: Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement. Going Beyond Clinical Walls: Solving Complex Problems (October 2014)

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Latinos Face Transportation Inequities

“The State of Latino Housing, Transportation, and Green Space: A Research Review” by Salud America! at UT Health San Antonio

- Lack of affordable housing
- Suburbanization of jobs and poverty
- Spatial mismatch of jobs/workers
- Inadequate transit service
- Lack of safe sidewalks and bike lanes

Limited access to jobs, education, health care, and social networks.

Higher rates of pedestrian fatalities, asthma, obesity, and diabetes.

Source: Institute for Health Prevention Research at UT Health San Antonio.

https://salud.to/healthequity
LATINOS REPORT
PUBLIC TRANSIT ROUTES ARE

UNRELIABLE

SUSPENDED WITHOUT NOTICE

RUNNING INFREQUENTLY

NOT GOING WHERE PASSENGERS NEED

NOT RUNNING AFTER BUSINESS HOURS

UNSAFE

Source: Institute for Health Prevention Research at UT Health San Antonio.
Improving transit to address the social determinants

- Providing Affordable Mobility
- Adopting Universal Design
- Ensuring Equity in the Shifting Mobility Landscape
- Eliminating Bias Against Women
- Addressing Mobility Needs in Today’s Service Economy
- Developing an Inclusive Transit System

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Making Transit Affordable

- Public transportation as the “Great Equalizer” and provides:
  - Access to jobs, education, health and opportunity
- Low-income fare programs for qualifying individuals
  - Transit systems in Denver, New York, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle and the San Francisco Bay area
- Fare-capping policy
  - persons paying on a trip-by-trip basis are offered the same discounts as those paying for monthly or weekly transit passes [Portland was the first to do it].
  - As more agencies adopt reloadable farecards that track people’s rides, fare-capping should become standard practice.
- Free-fare programs
  - Columbia, South Carolina will implement a fare-free service at the beginning of 2020 and KCATA is studying it.
Adopting Universal Design in Transit for persons aged Eight-to-Eighty

Make transit stations more functional for a wider range of people, based not only on disability, but also factors such as age and size.

Create environments that are usable by more and more of the population.

More of the population can benefit from universal design, whether from longer life spans, better outcomes for diseases or less injury.

APTA “Principles and Best Practices for Implementing Universal Design in Transit” is complete and pending final approval. Its release is within the next few weeks.

Source: Art Guzzetti, American Public Transportation Association
Ensuring Equity in the Shifting Mobility Landscape

• The transit industry is also devoting considerable attention to the concept of “Mobility-as-a-Service.” (MaaS)

• APTA is now developing recommended practices to help transit agencies be “MaaS-Ready”.

• Transit agencies are well on their way to figuring out how to accomplish that through call centers and sales agreements with merchants.
• Transit services typically connect to hospitals, hotels, colleges and schools, each of which serve as major sources of employment for women.

• The book “Invisible Women” published earlier this year describes how our transit system is biased against women.
  • Subtle and not-so subtle reasons involve car seats; taxis; strollers; design of vehicle interiors; parking lots that are not child friendly, and bike share bikes with no child seats.
  • Rooted in vehicles facilities and services designed for men and the male body.

• A 2019 study by the University of Southern California found women were half as likely to take advantage of a new light rail line near late hours in large part because of concerns about safety.
  • There are also real fears against walking at night. This is a huge limitation on their freedom and mobility.

• Strategies to mitigate the safety concerns of women include:
  • Adding additional lighting in and around transit stations & shelters.
  • Having more transit staff on hand at stations and on vehicles.
  • Allowing bus drivers to drop-off closer to their destinations at night.

“most transit riders in the United States are women (55%)”

^ Source: APTA’s “Who Rides Public Transportation”
Addressing Mobility in Today’s Service Economy

- Transportation planners and engineers have long held up work commuting as the standard by which to base planning decisions.
  - Yet many of the job opportunities in the service economy require mobility in the off-peak, in the evening, at nighttime, or during weekends.
  - Public transportation authority of Pinellas County, Florida created a special “late-shift” program with private partners Uber, United Taxi and the wheelchair accessible Care Ride for low income workers.

- On September 4 APTA released a report “Supporting Late-Shift Workers: Their Transportation Needs and the Economy.”
  - Underscores the importance of public transportation in serving the late-shift economy, to better understand the needs of late-shift commuters and the ways public transit providers and decision-makers can improve commuting options for this growing segment of the U.S. workforce.

Supporting Late-Shift Workers
Their Transportation Needs and the Economy

Late-shift workers in growing industries such as food service, health care, construction, education and finance need convenient and affordable transportation to and from jobs during non-traditional hours.

17% • the percentage of Americans in metropolitan areas who arrive at work between 4 p.m. and 6 a.m.
$28B • the amount that late-shift public transit commuters bring home in annual wages.
$84B • the annual business sales facilitated by late-shift public transit commuters.
12% • how much less the median wage or salary is for late-shift workers compared with their daytime peers.

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Adopting Inclusive Transit

Focus on improvements to bus systems people use before projects like suburban rail lines.

Pursue progressive fare policies to reduce financial burdens on low-income transit riders.

Conduct focused outreach in impacted communities, speaking their language rather than “planner speak.”

Pursue transit-oriented development with strong affordability requirements that limits displacement.

Financially support mitigation of reconstruction impacts on small – and local – businesses.

Track and share fare-evasion enforcement data by race and income.

Source: Inclusive Transit Report by TransitCenter
Transit enables access to food by supporting efforts to reduce food deserts

COMMUNITY-BASED FOOD ACCESS EFFORTS

Since 2009, SEPTA customers and employees have donated more than 164,000 POUNDS OF FOOD and approximately $67,500 which is the EQUIVALENT TO more than 299,000 MEALS.

COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS
As a way to encourage Philadelphians to discover new types of produce sold at the farmers markets, the Food Trust has organized pop-up cooking demonstrations. Frankford Transportation Center, Allegheny Depot and Olney Transportation Center have provided cooking demonstrations for customers – many of whom are SEPTA customers and employees.

WALNUT HILL COMMUNITY FARM
The Walnut Hill Community Farm, located on a SEPTA property next to 46th Street Station on the Market-Frankford Line in West Philadelphia, has been run by The Enterprise Center since 2010. The farm generates fresh, local produce for community members and has distributed thousands of pounds of food to CSA participants.

SEASONAL FARMERS MARKETS AT KEY TRANSIT HUBS
in partnership with The Food Trust and The Enterprise Center

Courtesy of Erik S. Johanson, SEPTA Director of Business Innovation
Transit enables economic stability and social well-being

The Regional Transit Authority of New Orleans on 9/1/19 made weekends service enhancements that begin at 6:00 a.m. (from a 10:30 a.m. start) that service riders in the Algiers and New Orleans East areas.

In Cleveland, Ohio, the Greater Regional Transit Authority $200 million, 7.1-mile 24/7 Healthline Bus Rapid Transit corridor, and the project included another 2.3 miles of dedicated bus lanes on downtown St. Clair and Superior avenues, for a total of 9.4 miles is behind the $9.5 billion ROI return.
By adopting a people first philosophy, transit can help address social determinants and enable communities to thrive!

Transforming the conditions in which people are BORN, GROW, LIVE, WORK and AGE for optimal health, mental health & well-being.

Source: Let’s Get Healthy California, Achieving Health & Mental Health – Equity at Every Level³
Thank You!

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