Health and health equity as urban planning outcomes

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Why the healthy city?
Life expectancy, 2019

Source: Riley (2005), Clio Infra (2015), and UN Population Division (2019)

Note: Shown is period life expectancy at birth, the average number of years a newborn would live if the pattern of mortality in the given year were to stay the same throughout its life.
Adult Obesity Prevalence by State, 1995

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Adult Obesity Prevalence by State, 2000

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Adult Obesity Prevalence by State, 2005

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Map showing obesity prevalence by state with color coding for 10% - 14.9%, 15% - 19.9%, 20% - 24.9%, 25% - 29.9%, and 30% - 34.9%.]
Adult Obesity Prevalence by State, 2010

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Adult Obesity Prevalence by State, 2015

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Adult Obesity Prevalence by State, 2017

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Public policy, economy, natural environment

Living, learning, and working environments

Behaviors and resources

Individuals

- genetic factors
- age
- sex

Figure adapted from Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

McGinnis JM, Williams-Russo P, Knickman JR. The case for more active policy attention to health promotion. Health Aff (Millwood) 2002;21:78-93

McGinnis JM, Foege WH. Actual causes of death in the United States. JAMA 1993;270:2207-2212
Why the healthy city?

Cities are the sites that modulate our exposures to the material, social, environmental, and behavioral determinants of health.
Why the healthy city?
“First, health is among the most important conditions of human life and a critically significant constituent of human capabilities which we have reason to value.

Any conception of social justice that accepts the need for a fair distribution as well as efficient formation of human capabilities cannot ignore the role of health in human life and the opportunities that persons, respectively, have to achieve good health – free from escapable illness, avoidable afflictions and premature mortality.

Equity in the achievement and distribution of health gets, thus, incorporated and embedded in a larger understanding of justice.”

Amartya Sen
We are biological and social creatures

We carry our histories in our bodies. How would we not? We carry with us the conditions under which we were conceived, under which we grew...

You start to see biology as [an] …expression of the social conditions in which we live.

-Nancy Krieger (Unnatural Causes)

Health is politics by other means

-Alondra Nelson (Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination)
Public health as social justice

• Public health provides an alternative to ‘market-justice’

• Public health is not ‘an instrumental or technical activity,’ but an ‘ethical enterprise’

• Control hazards, not the “behavioral defects” of those damaged by the hazards

• Collective action, not individual choice

• Fair distribution of burdens, not equal share of burdens
Why the healthy city?
Changing the context to make default decisions healthy

Socioeconomic factors

Long-lasting protective interventions

Clinical interventions

Counseling and education

Individual effort

Population impact

Public Health Impact Pyramid

Health + Planning

Medical approach: Treat the sick
Health: a population perspective

Population approach: Shift the curve
Good news on the social determinants of health

<table>
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<th>Invest in...</th>
<th>To fight...</th>
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<tr>
<td>Walkability, active transport</td>
<td>Physical inactivity, anxiety/depression, obesity, injury</td>
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<td>Economic opportunity</td>
<td>Diabetes, morbid obesity, low birthweight</td>
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<td>Healthy food access</td>
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<td>Stable affordable housing</td>
<td>Depression, medication non-adherence, teen pregnancy, overall poor health</td>
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<td>Green housing</td>
<td>Asthma, endocrine system disruption, sleep dysregulation</td>
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<td>Parks, green space</td>
<td>Physical inactivity, all-cause mortality, asthma</td>
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<td>Air quality</td>
<td>Cardiovascular disease, respiratory diseases, cognitive decline</td>
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<td>Environmental resiliency/climate readiness</td>
<td>Renal failure, injury, psychological distress</td>
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</table>
Why the healthy city?

Because we can do it!
But how?
Why the healthy city?

Cities are the sites of production for health and disease

Health equity data will tell you what you need to know about the distributions of risks and resources; health equity will create equity in other arenas

We can change health by changing the context

Do this in partnership with those who are experiencing health inequities themselves!