creating healthy & sustainable communities

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March 6 2009
Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute
Land Use Decisions Have Climate Consequences
Land Use Decisions Have Health Consequences

Source: http://flickr.com/photos/betta_design/921940289/
Land use decisions have multiple health implications.

- Physical Activity
- Fatal and Non-Fatal Injuries
- Respiratory Health
- Social Connectedness
- Mental Health
- Nutrition
- Water Quality
Climate change is bad for people.

“We need to... convince the world that humanity really is the most important species endangered by climate change.”

—Margaret Chan, MD, Director-General, World Health Organization

“Climate change is one of the most serious public health threats facing our nation. Yet few Americans are aware of the very real consequences of climate change on the health of our communities, our families and our children.”

—Georges Benjamin, MD, Executive Director American Public Health Association
Climate Change = rising temperatures

Extreme heat stress

Summer 2003: 34,000 heat deaths in France alone
Urban Heat Island can add 7° – 12° F

Thermal Satellite Image of Phoenix, AZ Night Surface Temperature
Climate Change = droughts and floods

Water and food scarcity
Climate Change = reduced air quality

Air pollution = asthma, cardiovascular disease

Pollens = allergies, respiratory problems
Climate Change = stronger storms and rising sea levels

Injuries, fatalities
Climate Change = disrupted ecosystems

New opportunities for diseases to thrive

Prediction:
Because of Climate Change, Vector distributions will increase in latitude and altitude
What about...climate change, land use, and health?

Health Impacts of Land Use

Health Impacts of Climate Change
Land use to promote health has “co-benefits” in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Design for health and climate change

1/3 of Americans who use public transit to get to work meet their daily requirements for physical activity by walking as part of their daily life, including to and from the transit stop.

Source: The American Public Transit Association
Zoning and General Plan Policies can...

Support mixed-use developments that connect people to transit and services and promotes healthy living

Source: Affordable Housing Design Advisor

Source: Congress for the New Urbanism
Increased public transit
Places where people want to walk
Hospitable and safe bikeways
Slowing down cars
Street trees and urban vegetation
Healthy, local food
Model Policies

- Vision Statement and Community Health
- Physical Activity and Transportation
- Access to Healthy Food
- Protection from Pollution
- Mental Health and Social Capital
- Access to Health Services

Includes ideas for implementation and measurement!
Why should we work together?

- Problem requires immediate action – all hands on deck
- Public health is still not a traditional land use partner – we must be interdisciplinary to address issues
- Increased community and political capital