

Economic Benefits Webinar

August 9, 2012

Questions from Attendees and Answers provided by our Speakers:

Can you elaborate or postulate as to why there is premium pricing on walkable properties? Why do people have to pay more to live healthier?

Everyone should have access to healthy places to live. Zoning laws tend to make it prohibitive to build walkable neighborhoods. A lot of housing studies show that younger people who want vibrant urban settings and older folks wanting to not drive are keeping the demand for walkable neighborhoods high. Demand is outstripping supply.

Outdated zoning dissuades walkable neighborhood development. And it should not exclude lower-income families from affording these walkable areas. It's very important that zoning to avoid pushing poor people out. Walkable areas with higher prices can make the case for us needing to have more supply of lower-income housing in those walkable communities.

Reserving a certain percentage of housing by developers for working-class families is one way to increase access for all to walkable neighborhoods.

School siting can impact walkability as well with housing located in relation to schools. We can benefit from more economic data on what it costs to build a mega-school on the edge of town (far from housing) -- school districts save their funding with siting schools that require lots of car travel.

Health impact assessment can help with assessing costs like traffic accidents, busing costs, sewer/water lines, traffic congestion, etc. We need a more comprehensive model to compare true costs renovating existing school w/building new - this could help a school district understand the outcomes of decision to build a mega-school at the far edge of town.

Please discuss how parents driving their kids to school impact the work availability schedules and the economic impacts of this work schedule limitation on both employers and families

Parents are doing more driving these days vs. many years ago. The extra trip to get their kid to school does have an economic impact - 25% of traffic is caused by parents driving kids to school. This is another economic addition to the fact that we need to put schools in walkable places, and build them so that access is safe and walkable and reduces dependency on driving to get to school

Is the data available for the expected reduction in economic costs for each specific pilot community, specifically Sheboygan, WI.

Candace ran models for 4 different communities. Email her, and she can provide specific data.

Simply adding bike lanes to highspeed arterials does not make them bikeable; how many parents will allow their kids to use these lanes.

Safe Routes to School advocates and encouraging communities to reduce traffic speeds from 40mph, and increase safe crossings. These are our focus.
Bikeways along arterials should be avoided -- we see a higher risk with crossing arterials.
Best scenario would be to slow arterials down.

Is there a deadline for spending the Safetea-lu money? South Carolina has been allocated \$14 million, but has only spent 75,000.

Some DOTs have been sitting on dedicated federal funds for SRTS; advocates need to understand what is holding up the DOT with obligating \$. SC advocates should explore what the application for funding looks like, and be sure to move forward by contacting Robert Ping to determine what specific steps to take in working with your DOT.