

Bringing HIA

HEALTH **IMPACT** ASSESSMENT

to Columbia / Boone County

**Key Findings and
Recommendations
February 4, 2013**

Agenda

1. Introduction to the Columbia Transit System Health Impact Assessment project
2. Overview of health impact assessment
3. Key findings and recommendations

Columbia/Boone County HIA Project

Funding: Missouri Foundation for Health, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Implementation: HIA Partner Team, advocacy and community organizations, local government



What is a Health Impact Assessment?

A systematic process that:

- Determines the potential effects of a proposed policy, program, plan, or project on the health of a population.
- Considers the distribution of those effects on a population.
- Provides recommendations on monitoring and managing those effects.

HIA Benefits

Involves a broad range of impacted populations

- Community members, business leaders, policy and decision-makers.

Promotes meaningful cross-sector collaboration

- Builds relationships among partners through process.
- Highlights the social determinants of health.
- Increases the likelihood of routine consideration of health.

Project Goals

Demonstrate potential of HIA to positively influence citizens' health by:

1. Conducting a pilot HIA on health impacts of expanding public transit in Columbia.
2. Initiating discussions with government stakeholders on the potential to sustain HIA practice in Columbia/Boone County.

Columbia Transit System HIA

How will expanding Columbia Transit services impact community health?

1. Physical activity
2. Exposure to outdoors
3. Accessibility to health care, employment, education and healthy food
4. Creation of a livable and sustainable community

Demographic Characteristics	All Respondents (n = 201)	Frequent Bus Riders (n = 131)	Infrequent Bus Riders (n = 70)
Gender	47.7% male 52.3% female	37.1% male 62.9% female	46.6% male 53.4% female
Race/ethnicity			
Black/African American	49.3%	57.3%	45.7%
White	26.5%	22.9%	38.6%
Latino	9.6%	13.0%	5.7%
Other	4.6%	4.7%	5.7%
Age, Mean (SD)	36.0 (12.0) years	35.7 (10.9) years	36.3 (13.7) years
Location of survey			
Social services	19.2%	21.4%	20.0%
Health services	18.3%	17.6%	22.9%
Downtown	11.9%	14.5%	10.0%
Library	11.0%	13.0%	8.6%
On the bus	6.8%	10.7%	1.4%
Retail	6.8%	9.2%	4.3%
School/university	9.1%	3.8%	21.4%

Key Findings of Public Transit Expansion

1. Users accrue more physical activity.
2. Improved access to health care and employment, potentially health care benefits and stress reduction.
3. Improved access to healthy food options, especially for residents of food deserts.
4. Greater community cohesion, social capital and public health resulting from increased social interaction.

Recommendations

- Physical Activity
 1. Ensure bus routes promote ridership in densely populated areas.
 2. Promote collaboration between Columbia Transit and the health department to produce social marketing materials describing the physical activity benefits of bus use.
 3. Ensure there are bike racks at major Columbia Transit hubs.
- Exposure to the Outdoors
 1. Maximize access to parks when new bus routes are designed.
 2. Post bus routes and timetables at parks already serviced by existing bus routes.

Recommendations

- Accessibility to Health Care

1. Maximize access to health care facilities when designing new bus routes.

- Accessibility to Employment

1. Create a “Transit Access To Employment” group to address barriers to accessing employment.
2. Appoint a community business member to the Public Transportation Advisory Commission.

Recommendations

- Accessibility to Education
 1. Assess the need for transportation among potential students of GED or job training classes and determine where these students reside.
 2. Coordinate bus routes and add evening hours to locations that educate many of these students.
- Accessibility to Healthy Food
 1. Continue the farmer's market bus route and collaborate with the health department to promote the route to residents of food deserts.
 2. Maximize access to stores with healthy food options when designing new bus routes.
 3. Coordinate with Columbia Public Schools to transport students to after-school activities.

Recommendations

- Creation of a livable and sustainable community
 - Perception of crime
- 1. Audit current bus stops to determine if they are near undesirable locations.
 - Bus and bus stop characteristics
- 1. Create an “adopt-a-bus stop” program to address undesirable conditions.
- 2. Solicit feedback about perceived safety from transit user focus groups and incorporate into training for bus drivers.

Recommendations

- Creation of a livable and sustainable community
 - Social capital
- 1. Promote partnership between Columbia Transit and Community Development Department to review zoning procedures that would promote transit-oriented developments along transit corridors.
- 2. Create a taskforce to research regulations to promote active transportation in central Columbia.

Columbia Transit System HIA

Conclusion:

- The HIA discovered positive health impacts that are linked with expanded transit services.
- These impacts are likely to occur with transit expansion, but may not be as significant depending on the magnitude of transit expansion, which is difficult to determine.

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