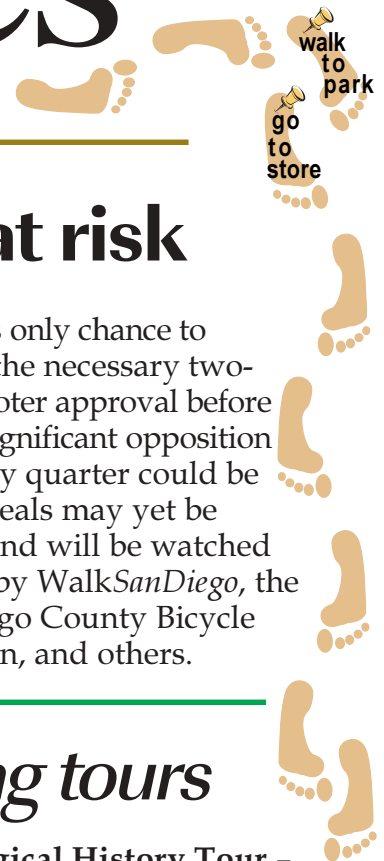


FootNotes

A Regional Coalition Promoting Walkable Communities



TransNet pedestrian funding at risk

The renewal of the region's half-cent sales tax dedicated to transportation reached another milestone this month when the San Diego Association of Governments voted 18-1 to approve a list of projects for the 40-year extension of the tax, set to expire in March 2008.

But late opposition from a majority of the County Board of Supervisors, which supports shifting more funds to highways, puts the package for pedestrians, bikes, and smart growth incentives in jeopardy.

Due to the presidential election, November 2004 is considered the best and

perhaps only chance to muster the necessary two-thirds voter approval before 2008. Significant opposition from any quarter could be fatal. Deals may yet be struck and will be watched closely by WalkSanDiego, the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition, and others.

Summer warms up with walking tours

Summertime...and the walking is easy with WalkSanDiego.

This summer's walking tours include:

- **Utility Art Box Project Tour** - 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, July 17 (*meet at the Uptown Partnership, 3108 Fifth Avenue, Suite B*). Tour Uptown's skillfully painted utility boxes in Bankers Hill, Hillcrest, and Mission Hills, and meet five of the artists.



A fitness walk in Balboa Park kicked off this summer's walking tours June 12.

- **North Park's Magical History Tour** - 10 a.m. to 12 noon Saturday, July 24 (*meet at the pedestrian plaza on the southeast corner of 30th & University*). North Park is famous for its historic bungalows, but the neighborhood also boasts many historic commercial buildings. Explore them with WalkSanDiego and North Park Main Street.

- **Beach to Bay Walk, Mission Bay** - 9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, August 14 (*meet at the entrance to the Giant Dipper Roller Coaster, Belmont Park, 3190, Mission Blvd.*). Imagine a sidewalk as the street in front of your house! Explore the unique lanes and funky homes of Mission Beach, and cool your toes in the ocean afterward.

- **The Trails of Aviara, Carlsbad**- 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Saturday, September 11 (*meet at Daybreak Community Church, 6515 Ambrosia Lane, Carlsbad*). Experience how Carlsbad's Aviara community interweaves trails with sidewalks to link homes with Batiquitos Lagoon and each other.

Neighborhood Notes

Some of our latest efforts to make neighborhoods more walkable

Valley Center: Town Center vs. Strip Mall

A member from Valley Center called for help on the design of a key retail center that will define this bucolic community for decades to come. As a result, on May 10 WalkSanDiego board member Charles Rynerson testified before the Valley Center Planning Board regarding the design of a new retail center located in the very heart of the community.

At issue was the design — a conventional strip mall vs. a pedestrian-friendly town center. Charles pointed out ways to make the current design more pedestrian friendly and pointed out that the current site plan turns the back of stores toward adjacent parcels slated for future development.

Unfortunately, the Planning Board and the developer didn't see the value of taking extra time to create a real sense of place. And WalkSanDiego didn't have the resources to conduct an effective campaign to sway them. The board voted on May 24 to go ahead with the car-oriented strip mall design — a lost opportunity.

A Vision for Carlsbad Village

The City of Carlsbad's very active Chamber of Commerce has been working hard to spur revitalization of Carlsbad Village and understands that pedestrian friendliness is a key element of success. In March, the group invited WalkSanDiego to give our popular "Walkable Communities 101" presentation to its Downtown Revitalization Committee.

Inspired by the presentation, the committee asked for a proposal to perform further work with the committee, to help determine pedestrian improvement priorities for the area.

In the meantime, WalkSanDiego has scheduled a walking tour on September 11 to help raise our profile in the area and to celebrate Carlsbad's achievements in developing its trail system linking open spaces with neighborhoods.



A raised refuge island and crosswalk similar to this one is being planned for Adams Avenue.

Protected Crosswalk on Adams Avenue

Trolley Barn Park on Adams Avenue in San Diego is a source of great pride to the University Heights and North Park neighborhoods. However, crossing Adams Avenue can be a challenge, especially for slow walkers and children.

At the request of WalkSanDiego member Ernie Bonn, WalkSanDiego suggested a design for a raised refuge island and crosswalk at Florida Street and Adams. City engineers and the local planning group approved the concept and are working now on a final design and cost estimate.

Obesity costs outweigh cost of bike/pedestrian trails

A study published in the April issue of the American Journal of Public Health reports that the amortized cost of bicycle/pedestrian trails in Lincoln, Nebraska, was \$235 per user. By contrast, per capita annual medical cost of inactivity was \$622.

The authors conclude that construction of trails fits a wide range of budgets and may be a viable health amenity for most communities.

North Park to implement historic plaques and interpretive walking tour program

by Scott A. Shepard, Urban Design/Planning Intern, North Park Main Street

Editors Note: WalkSanDiego will host a historic walking tour of North Park's University Avenue on Saturday, July 24, 2004. (See page 1.)

During the last few years, the North Park neighborhood has seen a revival in commercial activity and pedestrian orientation along University Avenue. A local non-profit organization, North Park Main Street, hopes to increase pedestrian activity in the area through the identification and recognition of its historic buildings.

To date, numerous building surveys have been conducted, including those by the late, beloved architectural historian Donald Covington, designer John Stewart McGaughy, and Gensler Consultants.

North Park Main Street chose to skip state and federal

historic designation, which can be lengthy and cumbersome. Instead, the organization has compiled a GIS database of what local residents consider to be historic structures. Developers and building owners will be

encouraged to retain or restore these historic buildings and features. Maps, posters, and building plaques are being created, and an interpretive walking tour program will be developed by Fall 2004.

Study shows people will walk farther than planners thought

Recent research shows people will walk much farther than transportation planners had previously assumed. That people will walk long distances is extremely significant because it indicates we must plan for a far wider "walking radius" in and around neighborhoods, commercial areas, and transit stations. In other words, virtually everywhere.

Asha Weinstein, a graduate student at San Jose State University, examined data from various travel surveys and concluded that, depending on the purpose of the trip, people will routinely walk up to a mile to reach work, the dentist, or a park. Other purposes average half a mile or more. Transit planners typically assume no more than a quarter-mile is tolerable to reach a transit stop.

Weinstein also found that walkers don't always minimize distance, sometimes going out of their way for

visual interest or pleasant conditions. In addition, she discovered age, gender, and environmental factors have inconclusive effects on distance walked. The only consistent factor is whether the person has access to a car. (A surprisingly high number of San Diegans tell us they choose not to own one.)

Weinstein recommends that planners analyze existing travel data carefully to tease out walking distance information, that better data be collected, and that environmental factors influencing walking distance receive research attention.

<u>Trip Purpose</u>	<u>Avg Distance</u> (Miles)
Medical/dental	1.19
To/from work	0.95
Other recreational	0.95
School/church	0.63
Other personal business	0.57
Shopping	0.54
Visit friends/relatives	0.50



Mayor Dick Murphy accepts one of Prevention Magazine's 12 Best Walking City Awards for 2004 on behalf of the City of San Diego.

Lessons abound at national event

This month, two WalkSanDiego board members Tina Zenzola and Andy Hamilton gave presentations at America Walks' 4th National Congress of Pedestrian Advocates in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Barbara Moore who, along with former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, founded Shape Up America! to warn Americans of the financial and health consequences of the growing prevalence of obesity. Another speaker, Maryland State Highway Administrator Neil Pedersen, outlined dozens of inspiring initiatives his agency (the Caltrans counterpart) is taking to improve pedestrian safety. He noted that in most communities, pedestrian fatalities far exceed homicides, but draw much less attention.

The send-off address was delivered by former Olympic race walker Mark Fenton, creator of the PBS TV series "America's Walking." Fenton explained that one job of advocates is to make walking advocacy the



job of many more professions — health, transportation, injury prevention, law enforcement, etc. He also noted that in most states, publicly-borne medical costs associated with inactivity are roughly equivalent to the state transportation budget, a fact he has used to great effect.

The Congress was held in downtown Silver Spring, a historic suburban center that has undergone transformative redevelopment in the last four years. Formerly a boarded up crime zone, the area is now a dense, mixed-use area centered on a bustling Metro rail station.

Many historic buildings have been restored, which adds to the charm of the area.

Presentations will be available within a few weeks for viewing or downloading from www.americawalks.org/congress. These will include the following topics:

- ✦ Economic benefits of traffic calming on small businesses,
- ✦ Changes in conventional views on street design,
- ✦ Success stories of walkable community workshops,
- ✦ Changing school siting standards to re-introduce the walk to school,
- ✦ Update on disability access,
- ✦ Reaching out to non-English-speaking residents,
- ✦ Encouraging seniors to walk for health,
- ✦ Car-sharing clubs reduce traffic and increase walking,
- ✦ Organizing advocates at the local and state levels, and
- ✦ Multi-modalism emphasis in environmental review documents.

America Walks is a national coalition of local advocacy groups dedicated to promoting walkable communities.



Participants listen to instructions on the use of a pedometer as they ready for a "Pace Yourself" walk co-sponsored with Scripps Mercy Hospital and the Uptown Partnership.

Drivers unaware of pedestrian laws

In a survey of nearly 1600 adult and teen traffic violators, WalkSanDiego Advisory Council member Sheila Sarkar has found that many were oblivious to laws intended to protect pedestrians.

Dr. Sarkar, who heads San Diego State University's California Institute of Transportation Safety, reported that, when shown a photograph of a driver blocking the crosswalk for a woman pushing a stroller, only about six out of 10 violators rated the behavior as moderately or very aggressive.

"A large number of people just don't get it," she says. "Blocking a crosswalk can be a problem, and it violates state law."

Notwithstanding the law, Sarkar says, few drivers seem willing to wait for pedestrians to get across a street. Teen violators were particularly unconcerned about maneuvers that endanger pedestrians, she noted.

Sarkar says she believes that while law enforcement officials may be trying to stop tailgating and unsafe lane-changing, they're



A recent survey showed that most traffic violators do not rate blocking the crosswalk as being aggressive behavior.

not paying enough attention to pedestrian issues arising from aggressive driving. She also says driver behavior won't change until police ticket these aggressive maneuvers more frequently.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Federal transportation bill in limbo

At this writing, the 6-year transportation bill, TEA-3, has cleared both houses of Congress. Unfortunately, the two versions are miles apart in important aspects. Conference committee members have been named to create a final bill, but both exceed the White House's veto ceiling of \$250 billion.

Importantly, both bills preserve most of the reforms begun in 1990, and both contain new Safe Routes to School funding. Earlier attempts by the leadership to eliminate the popular Enhancements program, including pedestrian and biking projects, were beaten back by an outpouring of protest from advocates, including WalkSanDiego. Stay tuned for updates on this critical legislation.

Become a Member of WalkSanDiego

Name _____

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- Individual - \$25 Family - \$40
- Benefactor - \$50+ Sponsor - \$100
- Student, senior or treading lightly - \$10
- Groups 25+ employees or members of a business or organization - \$250
- Corporate member - \$500-\$2,000+

Send to: WalkSanDiego
P.O. Box 122491
San Diego, CA 92112-2491

Obesity: The Limits of Personal Responsibility

by James Sallis, Active Living Research & San Diego State University

Obesity is becoming a defining issue in the U. S. So many children are now overweight that “adult” diabetes is an epidemic that foretells long-term suffering of individuals and enormous medical costs for the nation. Two-thirds of adults are now overweight, and the rate continues to increase.

It has taken the federal government a couple of decades to decide obesity is a problem, but the government’s strategy is now becoming apparent in recent actions:

- The House of Representatives just passed the “Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act”. The law would prohibit lawsuits holding restaurants liable for their customers’ obesity.

- A few weeks ago a Department of Health and Human Services spokesperson objected to the World Health Organization global strategy to combat obesity by stating that the administration insisted on emphasizing personal responsibility instead of policy changes.

- On the day of the announcement that obesity and inactivity are now rivaling tobacco as the number one cause of death (March 10), the Department of Health and Human Services began a public service ad campaign to encourage people to move more and eat less. One clever TV spot encouraged people to take the stairs to help them lose their “love handles.”

These three apparently-separate government actions define an approach to what is quickly becoming the most deadly and most costly health problem in the country. It is clear that the main strategy, perhaps the only one, is to promote personal responsibility for eating and exercise choices. Much can be said in favor of this approach. Encouraging more healthful choices does not restrict any freedoms.

As a health psychologist, I have studied programs to teach people behavior change techniques that help them make more healthful

choices. There are many programs that significantly help people improve their lifestyles. Over the years people have reduced their fat intake, and there have been small increases in exercise levels and fruit and vegetable intake, proving the population can change.

So it sounds like everyone agrees that helping people make more healthful choices is the way to go, so the government’s strategy should be endorsed. But there is another side of the argument. Although teaching behavior change skills can be effective, many of us who develop and study these programs have realized a number of limitations.

First, although many well-designed programs have significant effects, even the most motivated participants do not change, and changes generally are modest.

Second, most people do not want to participate in programs offered by worksites, health care organizations, schools, and the internet. Behavior change takes effort, and people prefer to use machines that promise “exercise without effort”, pills that make unsubstantiated claims, and fad diets.

Third, the biggest problem is that most changes don’t last. About 50% of exercisers drop out after a year. Diets go back to normal after programs end. Success rates five years after behavioral obesity treatments are usually in the single digits. Even though we have been promoting physical activity since the 1970’s, only about 12% of adults claim to do regular vigorous exercise, and about 30% admit they do no structured activity.

A consensus is developing among health scientists that the obesity problem is so widespread that programs promoting only personal responsibility will never be sufficient to control the epidemic.

Why does the personal responsibility approach not work better? From birth, humans have biologically-based preferences for sweet and fat foods, and these both drive

consumer demand and constrain choice. The food industry is built around these preferences. Not only are sweet and fatty foods vastly cheaper than nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables, but they are almost the only foods that are advertised.

Take a look at the food ads on children's TV and try to find an ad for something that is not sweet or fatty. In an area of soaring childhood obesity, this is no longer acceptable.

Although individuals do need to take responsibility for what they put in their mouths, what about the responsibility of food companies? Is it responsible to heavily promote foods of low nutritional value? Doesn't this make it more difficult for people to make healthful choices?

But people have free choice when it comes to physical activity, right? No one is chaining us to easy chairs, but the billions of dollars spent on ads for TV shows, movies, DVDs, computer games, professional sports, cars, and computers make it easy for us to be sedentary. How many ads encourage us to take responsibility to be active? Very few.

Tree-lined sidewalks, well-lit trails, and attractive parks encourage people to walk, however, in many communities, there are no sidewalks or trails, the streets are filled with fast traffic, there are few safe street crossings, and the parks are run-down.

Numerous studies show people walk less in suburbs that were built based on the assumption that people would drive everywhere. We have invested trillions of dollars to maximize the convenience of auto travel with very little consideration given to making our streets safe and attractive for pedestrians. When we design for pedestrians, we find people walk more.

I think it's great to have ads on TV that encourage people to take the stairs. A little more energy expenditure each day can help get the obesity epidemic under control. But we need to recognize the ad's limitations.

Let's say they motivate people to take the stairs. In some buildings it is impossible because you can't find the stairs or, once you get in the stairwell, you can only get out on the ground floor. In many other cases, the stairs have closed doors and are unpleasant



Taking the stairs is one way to increase physical activity but stairs are often hidden away.

inside. Why don't we require buildings to be designed so stairs are more convenient and attractive than the elevators?

The point is that we know eating and physical activity are not driven only by personal responsibility. We have created environments that make it difficult to make healthful choices. A national strategy that addresses only part of the problem is likely to fail, and the stakes for failing to control obesity are too high.

We need to motivate and help people make healthful choices, but we also need to create environments that make the healthful choice the easy choice. We have a long way to go on both of these goals. The nation cannot afford to politicize the debate over personal versus societal responsibility for eating and physical activity. Individuals, families, community and faith-based organizations, corporations, AND governments all must take responsibility for contributing to the solution of this national problem.

James Sallis, Ph.D. is professor of psychology at San Diego State University and a member of WalkSanDiego's Advisory Council. He's also a long-time supporter of WalkSanDiego.

Aging Americans stranded without options

According to a new study by the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP), “the demographics of the United States will change dramatically during the next 25 years as more baby boomers reach their 60s, 70s and beyond. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that the number of Americans age 65 or older will swell from 35 million today to more than 62 million by 2025 – nearly an 80% increase.

As people grow older, they often become less willing or able to drive, making it necessary to depend on alternative methods of transportation. Unfortunately, the United States is currently ill prepared to provide adequate transportation choices for our rapidly aging population.

Alternatives to driving are sparse, particularly in some regions and in rural and small

town communities. As the number of older people increases, so too will their mobility needs. How the nation addresses this issue will have significant social and economic ramifications.”

The report’s findings include the following:

- ➔ More than one in five (21%) Americans age 65 and older do not drive.
- ➔ More than 50% of non-drivers age 65 and older stay home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options.
- ➔ Older non-drivers have a decreased ability to participate in the community and the economy.

For more information and downloadable resources, visit STPP’s website at <http://www.transact.org/report.asp>.



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