

When discussing why transportation decisions are integral to community health, here are some talking points which will help support your argument when writing letters to newspaper editors and op-ed columns, or pitching a story to a journalist:

### **A good solution solves multiple problems**

Effective transportation planning and policies can help build healthy, prosperous, inclusive communities. Strategies ranging from public transportation, building sidewalks and bicycle lanes, to traffic calming, have the potential to *simultaneously* address many of the leading health, environmental, and economic issues of today (including injury and death rates, physical inactivity related chronic illnesses, climate change and poor air quality).

### **Transportation powers economic opportunity**

Transportation construction, operations, and maintenance translate into millions of jobs and thousands of business opportunities annually. Equity must be well-integrated into the fabric of the transportation industry by providing ongoing job training and employment opportunities to low-income communities and communities of color.

### **All communities deserve a fair chance to be healthy**

Approximately one-third of the US population is “transportation disadvantaged,” most of which are low-income, older adults, people with disabilities, and some communities of color. These communities enjoy fewer advantages from efficient public transportation systems and walkable, bikeable neighborhoods. Many are forced to stay home and forego visits to the doctor and the grocery store while bearing a disproportionate burden of the negative impacts of transportation policy.

### **Your zip code shouldn't determine your health**

Negative health impacts from highways and major roads, such as traffic injuries and deaths, air pollution, and noise adversely affects surrounding neighborhoods. Additionally, lack of public transportation can make access to grocery stores, farmers' markets, and health facilities difficult for those without a car.

### **Complete the streets for *all* travelers**

Roads and streets are among the largest public assets yet continue to be designed exclusively for the safety and ease of motorized travelers. When sidewalks and streets are designed to make walking and bicycling safe and more feasible, residents are more likely to be physically active, leading to better health.

### **Maximize current federal policy opportunities**

The current multi-year, multi-billion dollar federal surface transportation bill will expire in 2009. This is the largest lump sum of money transferred directly to locales to influence how communities are designed. The new bill must prioritize health and equity with investments for safety, walking, bicycling, public transportation, and environmental stewardship.