

Use of HIA Transportation Planning: Importance of Involving Transportation Agencies in Process

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How Does Transportation Affect Health?

- Physical activity and obesity
- Air pollution and asthma
- Motor vehicle crashes and pedestrian injuries
- Other impacts
 - Noise
 - Water quality
 - Climate change
 - Mental health
 - Social capital
 - Environmental justice



A Vision of Health Impact Assessment

- Transportation planners and elected officials will request information on potential health consequences of projects and policies as part of their decision-making process
- Local health officials will have a tool to facilitate their involvement in transportation planning decisions that impact health
- Public health will be at the table

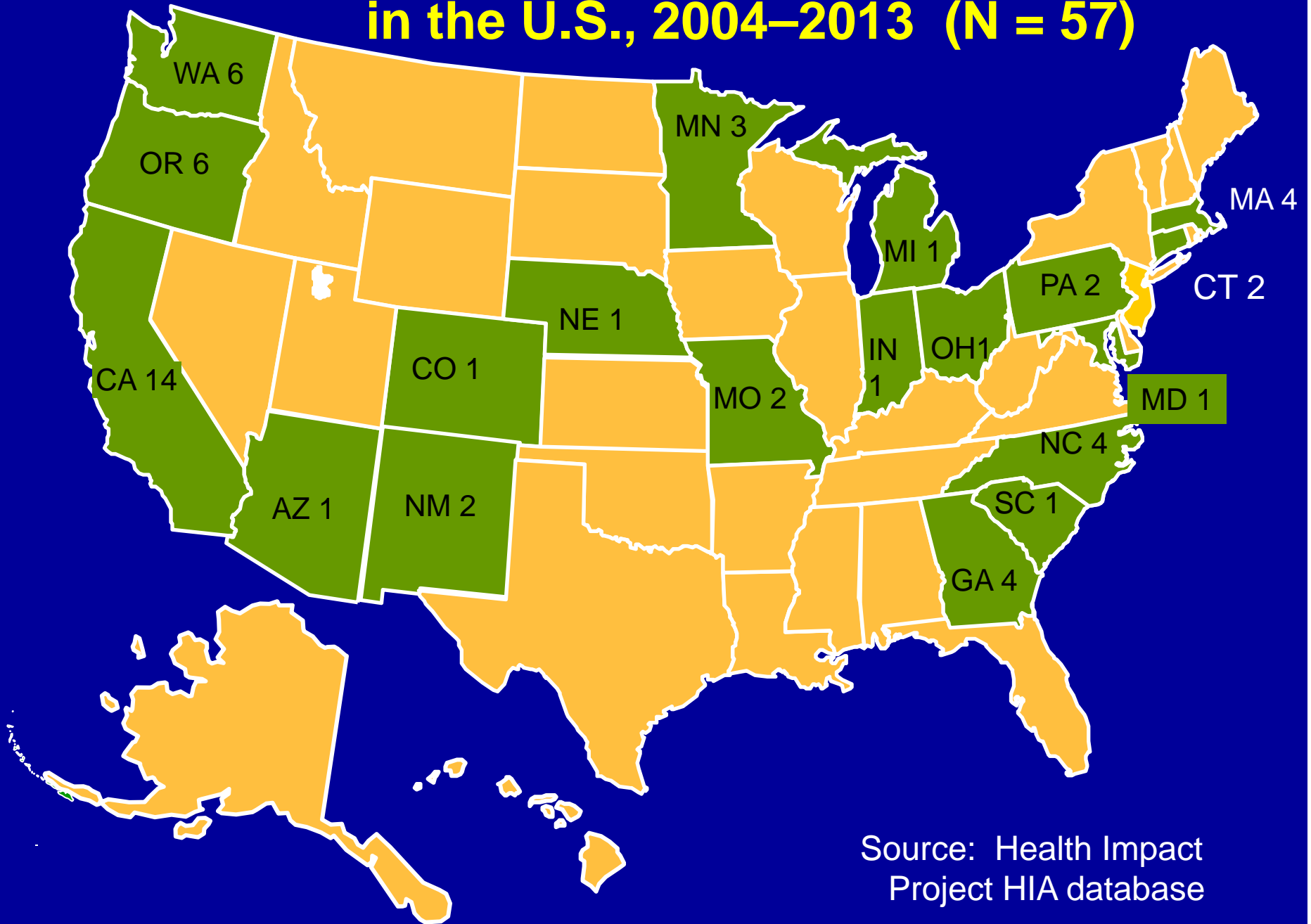
Definition of Transportation-Related HIA

- Included: Project or policy HIAs in which a local, state, or federal transportation agency was or could have been involved
 - Example: HIA of walking and bicycling trails designed by a parks department, because a transportation agency could have been involved
- Excluded: HIAs of development along a road corridor and transit-oriented development projects unless transportation was a major component of project

Methods to Identify Transportation-Related HIAs

- List of completed HIAs on Health Impact Project database in categories of “Transportation” or “Built environment” (<http://www.healthimpactproject.org/hia/us>)
- Networking among investigators who have been involved in HIAs done in United States
- List of HIAs identified may be incomplete

Completed Transportation-Related HIAs in the U.S., 2004–2013 (N = 57)



Types of Transportation-Related HIAs

- 13 Transit-related projects
- 11 Transportation-related policies
- 11 Community transportation plans
- 10 Road and bridge redevelopments
- 6 Corridor redevelopments
- 4 Trails and greenway projects
- 1 Seaport redevelopment
- 1 Airport operations assessment

Examples of Transportation Policy HIAs

- Road congestion pricing
- Vehicles miles traveled
- Climate change
- Transit fares and service levels
- Speed limits
- Complete streets
- Safe routes to schools
- Airport procedures

Levels of Collaboration with Department of Transportation (DOT)

- **High collaboration** such as: HIA invited by DOT; HIA funded by DOT; frequent meetings; shared data; DOT listed as co-author of HIA report; transportation planner involved in HIA
- **Low collaboration** such as: little or no mention of DOT in HIA report; DOT representative on advisory committee but not otherwise mentioned; no invitation or funding from DOT
- **Five case studies** selected from among HIAs with high collaboration between HIA investigator and local/state transportation agency

Case study #1: San Francisco Road Pricing HIA

- San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) is studying a road-pricing program that would charge motorists \$3 during rush hours to travel into and out of city's congested northeast quadrant
- Revenues would fund public transit, road maintenance, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- HIA conducted by San Francisco Dept. of Public Health and funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Case study #1: San Francisco Road Pricing HIA

- Health department and transportation authority met frequently during HIA and coordinated use of forecasting data
- HIA found road pricing could reduce some of increased 2015 “business as usual” health burdens
- Recommendations included investing revenues in safety improvements, hybrid buses, and pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure
- SFCTA now refining roadway pricing policy design
- Decision to be made in 2-3 years

Case Study #2

Baltimore Red Line Transit Project HIA

- 14-mile, east-west light rail transit project that will run through downtown with stops at major employment centers, hospitals, tourist attractions, and blighted areas
- Baltimore City DOT hired a public health fellow to complete the HIA, with staff support from the state and city health departments



Case Study #2

Baltimore Red Line Transit Project HIA

- Findings showed the transit line would positively impact health overall by increasing access to jobs, services, and physical activity; by improving air quality through decreased traffic congestion; and by helping reconnect neighborhoods
- HIA was submitted as comment to draft EIS
- As a result of the HIA's recommendations, the Baltimore City DOT
 - created fulltime position for a Health and Environment Specialist
 - developed a noise and air quality monitoring system for the construction period
 - developed a set of Green Design Guidelines for project
- HIA helped institutionalize health within the DOT

Case study #3: Atlanta BeltLine HIA

- Multibillion-dollar transit, trail, parks, and redevelopment project that is transforming a 22-mile loop of mostly abandoned railroad right-of-way
- HIA initiated by a Georgia Tech planning professor who had served as an Atlanta regional transportation official and had frequent contact with local transportation officials before, during, and after the HIA
- HIA conducted with technical assistance from CDC and funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



Case study #3: Atlanta BeltLine HIA

- HIA accomplishments include
 - Getting health issues incorporated into the Decision Support Tool for advisory committee that helps guide BeltLine decisions
 - Instigating early construction of parks and trails
 - Including public health professionals on project advisory committees and decision-making boards
 - Generating more resources for the project
 - Raising awareness about health related issues among decision-makers and stakeholders
- Current status of 25 year project
 - Initial trails and parks have been constructed
 - Planning for the transit component is underway

Case study #4

Seattle SR 520 Bridge Replacement HIA

- As part of funding SR 520 bridge replacement, state legislature mandated an HIA of the project's effects on "air quality, carbon emissions, and other public health issues"
- HIA conducted by Seattle King County health dept. and local clean air agency
- Washington State Dept. of Transportation funded and collaborated on HIA activities



Case study #4

Seattle SR 520 Bridge Replacement HIA

- Recommendations related to construction-associated pollution, walking and biking connectivity, landscaped lids to cover parts of highway, and design features to reduce noise
- Also recommended not losing planned health-promoting features if funding were limited
- City council and project mediation team supported recommendations
- HIA raised awareness of health issues in WSDOT
- Eastern end of bridge now under construction

Case study #5

Lake Oswego to Portland Transit HIA

- Proposed streetcar, enhanced bus service, and no-build scenarios for 6 mile highway section from Lake Oswego to downtown Portland
- Oregon Public Health Institute (OPHI) initiated HIA with Portland's metropolitan planning organization Metro
- OPHI took the lead in conducting the HIA
- Metro staff provided coordination and support for data gathering, analysis, and dissemination



Case study #5

Lake Oswego to Portland Transit HIA

- HIA found the streetcar would have greatest positive health impacts and suggested mitigations for construction exposures
- HIA was submitted as a comment letter to draft EIS for Transit Study
- HIA was posted on Metro's Transit Study project webpage and communicated to stakeholders via open houses, public meetings, memos, and presentations to the project's advisory committees
- Process for selecting a locally preferred alternative was suspended when the city of Lake Oswego withdrew its support for the streetcar option

Required Transportation HIAs: Massachusetts

- Massachusetts legislature adopted Healthy Transportation Compact in 2009
- Requires state agencies to “implement HIAs for use by planners, transportation administrators, public health administrators and developers”
- Details being worked out through collaboration between Dept. of Transportation and Dept. of Health
- HIA pilot study of redeveloping the McGrath Highway in Somerville MA is nearing completion
- Lessons learned from pilot study are being used to help draft decision criteria to guide HIAs in future Massachusetts state transportation projects

National Policy Statements that Encourage Use of HIA

CDC Recommendations for Improving Health through Transportation Policy, 2011

“Encourage states and communities to consider health impacts as part of transportation planning. Health impact assessments and safety audits may be a useful tool to identify the impact of a new policy, program or major transportation project on community and individual health.”

www.cdc.gov/transportation

Challenges in Conducting Transportation-related HIAs

- Modeling – difficult to quantitate health impacts
- Resistance – experience of regulatory burden from EIAs
- Capacity - few staff trained to conduct HIAs
- Resources - who pays to conduct HIAs
- Evaluation – need to document value of HIA

Final Comments

- Use of HIA for transportation projects and policies growing in US, but not widespread
- Some HIAs conducted within context of EIA process
- Ongoing demand for HIA training
- More work needed on modeling of health impacts
- Consider institutionalizing meetings between transportation and health departments
- Consider adding a public health professional to transportation agency staff
- TRB Health and Transportation Subcommittee

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www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces
www.healthimpactproject.org