



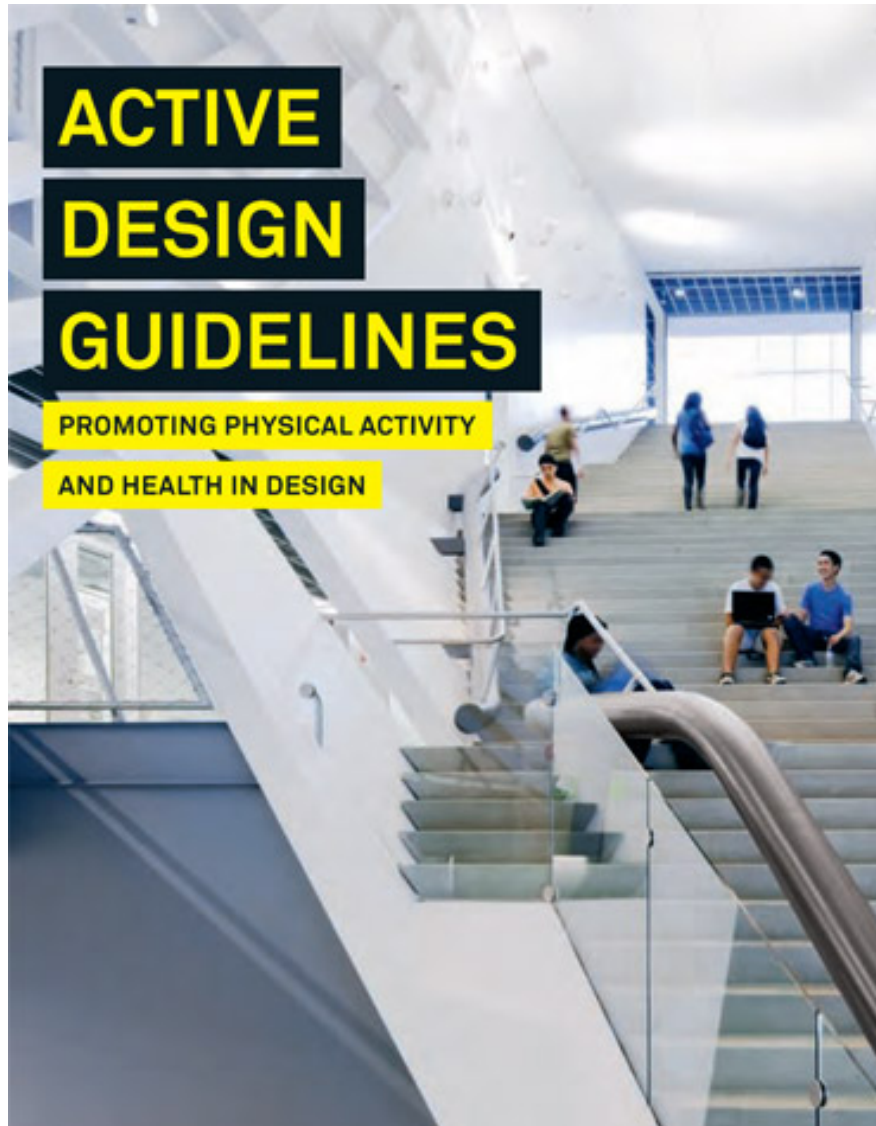
Photo courtesy of BtG and Iwan Baan



Active Design in Practice

NYS Health Foundation, June 2015

Center for Active Design



About Us

The Center for Active Design is an independent, not-for-profit organization committed to transforming design practice to make health a central priority

Our Approach

- **Translating health evidence into practical, implementable design strategies**
- **Innovative partnerships – such as ULI**
- **Embrace diverse perspectives – work across public/ private, sectors, disciplines**
- **Measureable results - Recognize power of evidence, data mapping + visualization**
- **Identify key synergies (sustainability, resiliency, universal design)**
- **Connect with business priorities (economic development, social equity, public safety, health)**
- **Celebrate success and learn from each other**

History of Health and the Built Environment

+ overcrowded cities

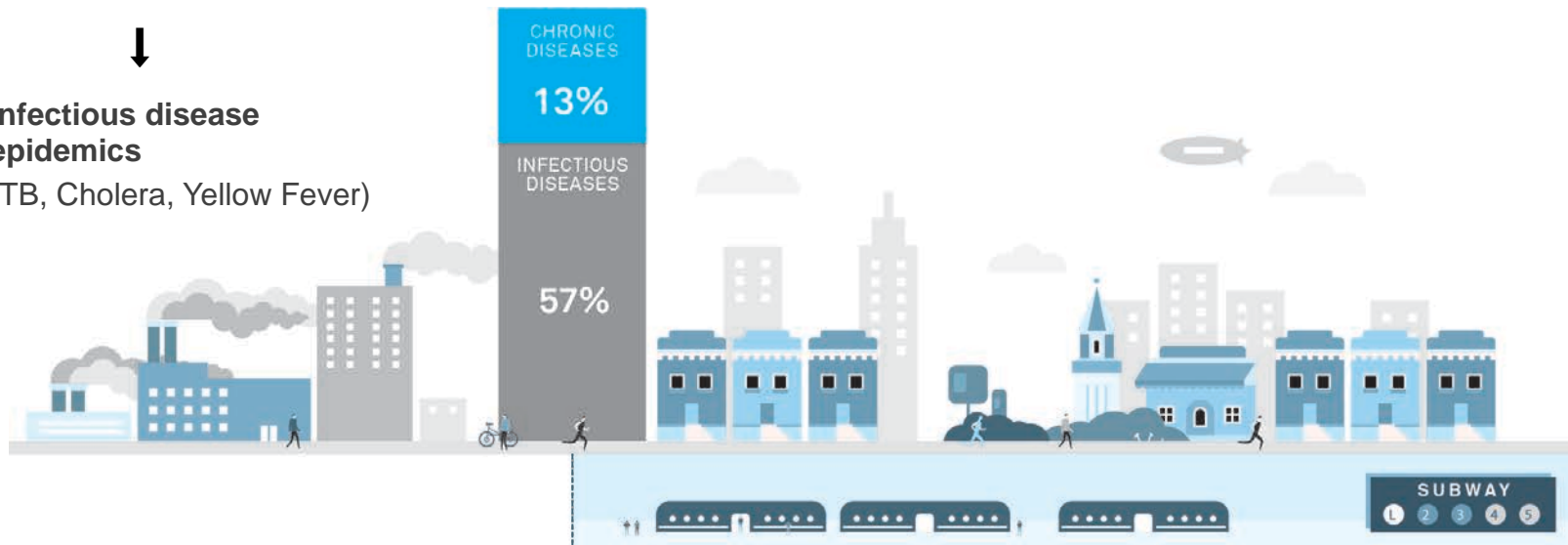
+ inadequate public health systems



infectious disease epidemics

(TB, Cholera, Yellow Fever)

1800

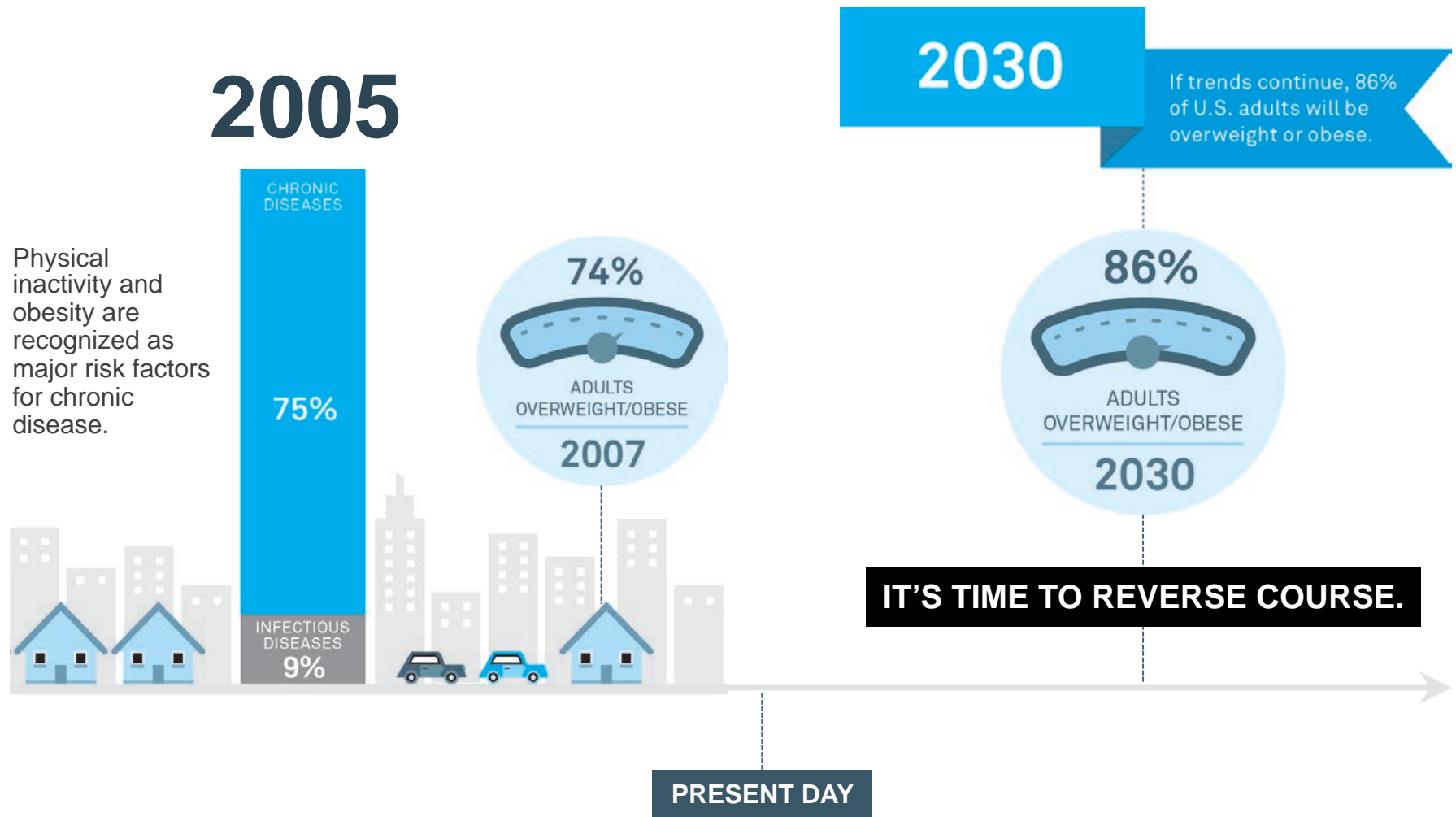


1881-1940

Cities used design + infrastructure to improve environmental problems, which led to a reduction in deaths from infectious diseases.
New York City examples:

- Infrastructure: Croton Aqueduct; subway system
- Planning & Design: Central Park
- Policy: Tenement House Act; Zoning Ordinance

History of Health and the Built Environment





Active Design: Key Concepts

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION



ACTIVE RECREATION



FOOD ACCESS



ACTIVE BUILDINGS



Active Transportation

Dynamic pedestrian environment, mix of land uses

Streetscape elements:

- Trees
- Benches
- Lighting
- Building facades



Active Transportation



Photo: NYC Department of Transportation

Traffic calming elements

Complete streets

Wayfinding signage

Cycling infrastructure:

- Continuous, protected bike lanes
- Ample bike parking and storage
- Bike share programs



Photo: NYC Department of Transportation

Active Recreation

Convenient, accessible spaces that incorporate:

- Trees
- Lighting
- Water fountains
- Seating

Programming for local cultures, and a range of ages and abilities



Washington Square Park
Photo: Emily Young

Active Recreation

Multi-purpose spaces foster creativity

Opportunities for active and passive recreation

Cleanliness and safety



Food Access



Proximity to:

- Supermarkets
- Farmers markets
- Healthy food retail

Community Supported Agriculture Gardening opportunities



Food Access

Cafeteria design

Cooking Classes with healthy food

Water fountains with bottle refill



Active Buildings

Incorporate:

- Open floor plan
- Views between floors
- Enticing circulation pathways

Design for a range of working styles



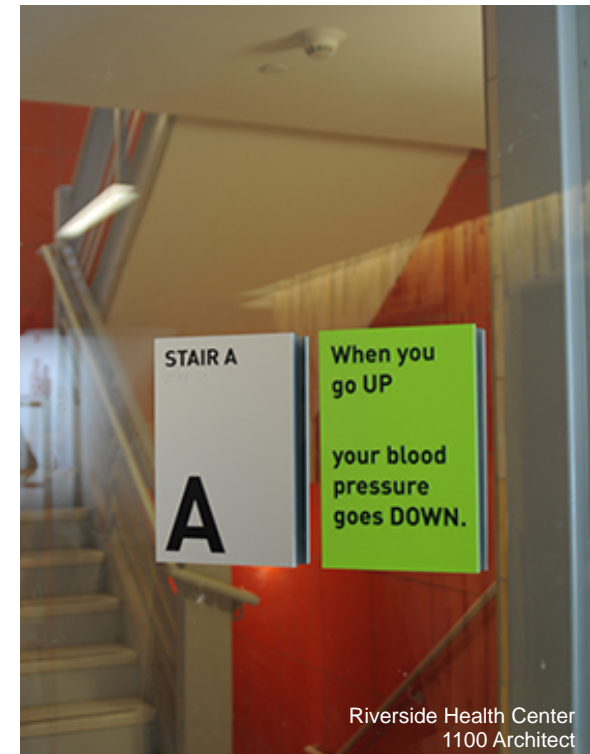
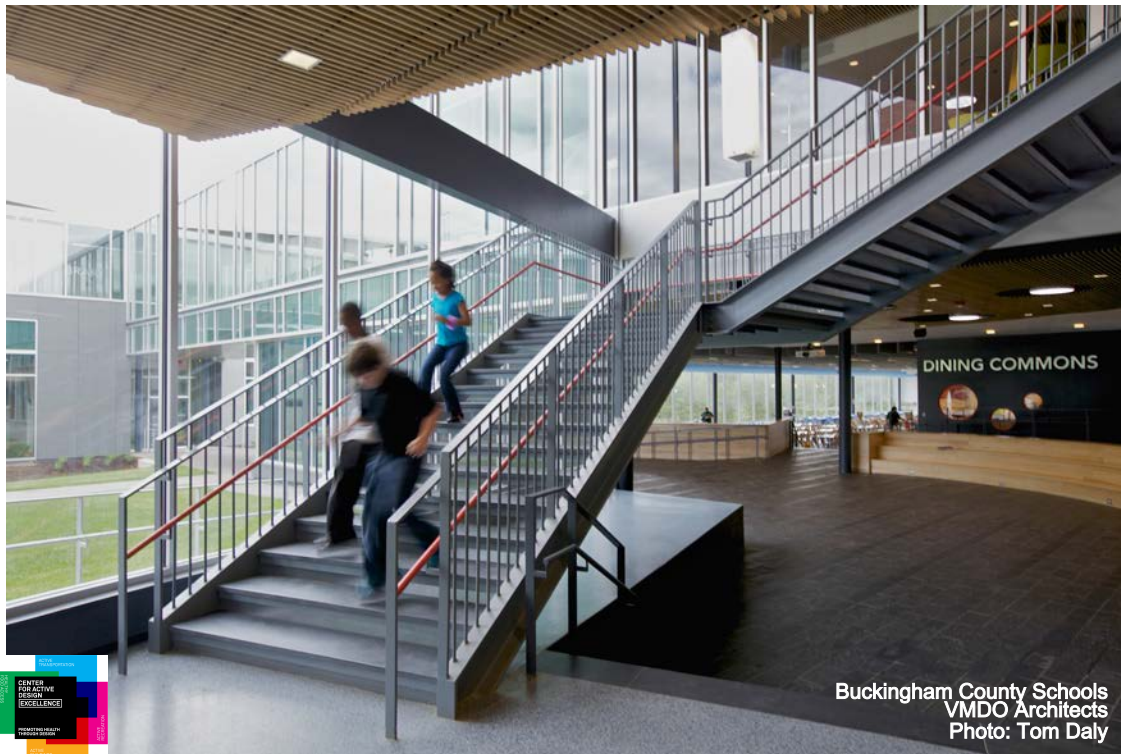
Gensler Newport Beach
Gensler
Photo: Nick Merrick

Active Buildings

Stairs designed to invite users

- Daylighting
- Artwork
- Finishing

Motivational signage placed at points of decision



Supporting Active Design and Safety



Natural Surveillance (CPTED)

Lighting – maintained and at a pedestrian scale

Landscaping – uniform plots, human scale plantings

Fences – Not too tall and allow people to see in

Windows – overlook open spaces



Supporting Active Design and Safety



Territorial Reinforcement – CPTED

Limit Points of entry into courtyard / playgrounds

Provide clear transitions between public and private space

When designing playgrounds that are separated from the public right of way, include ground markings that indicates dedicated areas for recreation.



Maintenance and Management – CPTED

Allows for the continued safe use of the space for people of all ages.

Active Design and Safety



Guthrie Green Photo: Jonnu Singleton



Guthrie Green Photo: Jonnu Singleton

Activity Support– CPTED

Passive and active efforts to promote the presence of responsible pedestrians and users in the open space.

Programming

Clear Signage for use

Art that reflects the local community

Larger areas for multiple forms of recreation

Access to tap water

Spaces that respond to climate – shade, shelter, lighting

Use of natural terrain to encourage children's play

Case study - Active Design and Safety



Use of greenery to create separate “rooms” out of a single large space.

Seating opportunities coupled with active track space allows for multi-generational use.

Open space in the middle allows for both creative group play and community event space.

Art work surrounding space engages community.

A mix of equipment and open un-programmed space allows for different types of use.



Supporting Active Transportation and Safety



Safety is Fundamental

A systematic review of 80 studies on child pedestrian injury:

- **Speed is the principle risk factor** for collisions and fatalities
- **Traffic calming** is consistently associated with more walking and fewer pedestrian injuries.¹

NYC Neighborhood Slow Zones:

- 10-15% decrease in speeds
- 31% reduction in vehicle injuries

¹ Rothman, Linda, et al. "Walking and Child Pedestrian Injury: A Systematic Review of Built Environment Correlates of Safe Walking." *Injury Prevention* 10.1136 (2014): BMJ. Web 4 Feb. 2015.

Active Recreation Research

Public Space

- Creates opportunities for social interaction and physical activity¹
- Positive influence on retail sales²

¹ J. Aaron Hipp, Amy A. Eyler, Susan G. Zieff, and Michael A. Samuelson (2014) *Taking Physical Activity to the Streets: The Popularity of Ciclovía and Open Streets Initiatives in the United States*. *American Journal of Health Promotion*: January/February 2014, Vol. 28, No. sp3, pp. S114-S115.

² New York City Department of Transportation. "Measuring the Street: New Metrics for 21st Century Streets." October 2012.



Research Findings



Brooklyn Bridge Park, NYC



Governor's Island Park, NYC

Thinking Long Term

Change can take time

- UK study found new walking & cycling routes showed minimal increase in use after 1 year, but significant increases at 2 years.¹
- A crash is (hopefully) a relatively rare event. Evaluations should capture accident trends 5 years before, and 2 years after an intervention.²

¹ Anna Goodman, Shannon Sahlqvist, David Ogilvie, and on behalf of the iConnect Consortium. *New Walking and Cycling Routes and Increased Physical Activity: One- and 2-Year Findings From the UK iConnect Study*. *American Journal of Public Health*: September 2014, Vol. 104, No. 9, pp. e38-e46.

² Li Chen, Cynthia Chen, and Reid Ewing. *The Relative Effectiveness of Pedestrian Safety Countermeasures at Urban Intersections – Lessons from a New York City Experience*. *Transport Policy*: 2014, Vol. 32 pp. 69-78.



Celebrating Success: Case studies

Excellence Awards highlight projects that incorporate Active Design Strategies, and are particularly innovative and replicable.

Featured case study:

Queens Plaza

The Center for Active Design works with the **Partnership for Healthier America** to promote active design strategies in affordable housing.

Featured case study:

Arbor House, Bronx, New York



Case Study: Queens Plaza



Queens Plaza has shifted NYC's perception of public spaces, now recognizing them as sustainable urban infrastructure that are capable of creating vibrant neighborhoods

Challenges:

Rezoning

Harsh impermeable landscape

Lack of lighting

Lack of crosswalks

Visual chaos – elevated train plus 16 lanes of traffic

Extensive underground utility lines creating conflicts for storm water management and landscaping

Case Study: Queens Plaza



Intervention

Human Experience – trees for shade, improved air quality, noise mitigation

Corridor for social exchange and economic development



Case Study: Queens Plaza



Intervention

Pedestrian safety - lighting, crosswalks, sidewalks, separation of space with bikes

Community building - public art in precast elements



Case Study: Arbor House



Blue Sea Development Company
Photo courtesy of Bernstein Associates

Implementing active design strategies into affordable housing

Blue Sea Development Company is committed to incorporating Active Design strategies, using the **Partnership for Healthier America** guideline checklist

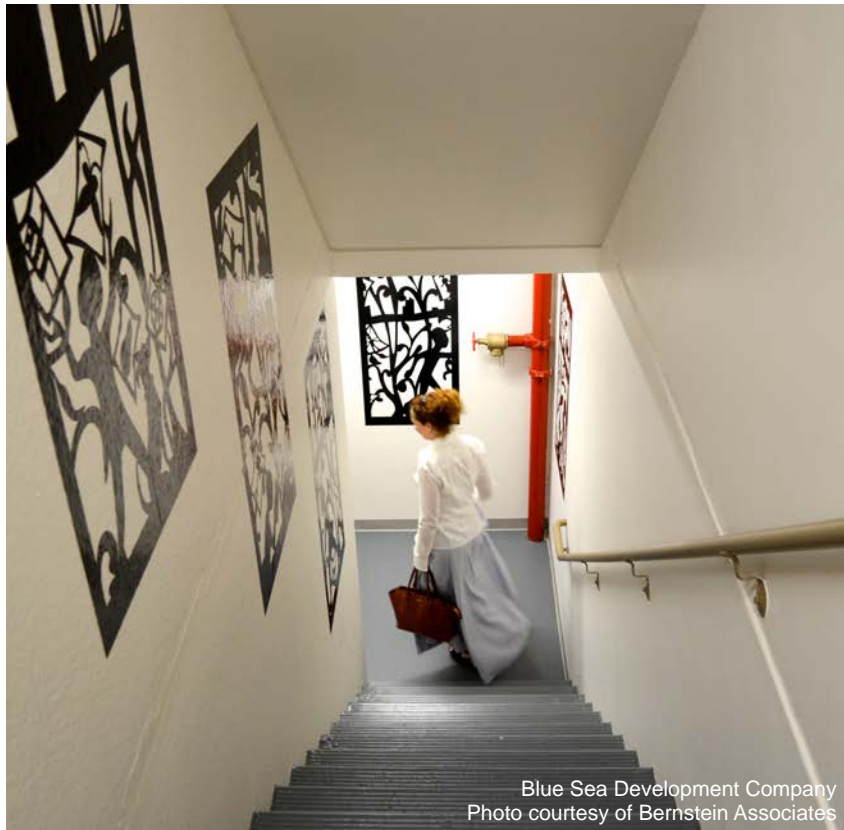


Case Study: Arbor House



Active Transportation

- Inviting stairwell
- Pedestrian focused sidewalk



Blue Sea Development Company
Photo courtesy of Bernstein Associates



Blue Sea Development Company
Photo courtesy of Bernstein Associates

Case Study: Arbor House



Active Recreation

- Indoor and outdoor facilities for a range of ages and accessibility
- Protected courtyard



Blue Sea Development Company
Photo courtesy of Bernstein Associates



Blue Sea Development Company
Photo courtesy of Bernstein Associates

Case Study: Arbor House



Healthy Food Access

- Rooftop hydroponic farm
- CSA for local community
- Food related programming



Blue Sea Development Company
Photo courtesy of Bernstein Associates



Arbor House resident Dorothy Smith
Photo by Marcus Santos, New York Daily News

Important Takeaways



- Embrace diverse perspectives – work across agencies, sectors, disciplines
- Recognize power of data mapping + visualization
- Identify key synergies (sustainability, resiliency, universal design)
- Adapt to shifting priorities (social equity, public safety)
- Measure results and celebrate successes
- Sustain the conversation through regular conferences, workshops

