What is Active Design?

Active Design is an evidenced-based approach to the development of buildings, streets, and neighborhoods that uses architecture and urban design to make physical activity and healthy foods more accessible and inviting. The Center for Active Design is a non-profit organization that promotes and expands on the Active Design Guidelines created by New York City. The Center maintain a multi-disciplinary perspective in the translation of health research into design solutions that amplify the role of the built environment in the well-being of our communities.

Why does Active Design matter?

Chronic diseases—such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers—are the greatest health epidemics of our time.

- They account for 7 of every 10 deaths in the U.S. and nearly 60% of all deaths worldwide.
- Physical inactivity is one of the key risk factors for chronic disease.

The effects on all of us are consequential:

- Physical inactivity has replaced smoking as the leading cause of preventable death in the world.
- In less than 2 generations, physical activity has dropped by 32%, where less than half of adults and children meet the recommended amount of physical activity per week.
- Chronic diseases account for more than 83% of the $1.4 trillion the U.S. spends on health care annually. Global health care costs totaled $6.2 trillion in one year.
- This is the first generation in which ten year olds are projected to have a shorter lifespan than their parents if behaviors do not change.

FRI - A07 - Get Active:
Implement Active Design in Your Neighborhoods and Open Spaces

Speakers

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Summary

Active Design, an evidence-based approach to design, aims to transform the fabric of our communities by promoting healthy living. This session will address specific implementation approaches for creating more sustainable neighborhoods using Active Design. Panelists will highlight award winning case studies and resources for participants to utilize in their practice.

Learning Objectives

1. Become familiar with Active Design Guidelines and how they promote health & physical activity.
2. Describe Active Design's synergistic relationship with universal and sustainable design.
3. Recognize successfully implemented strategies in a range of planning and open space projects.
4. Apply lessons learned from open space post occupancy evaluation findings.
### Key Concepts

The following Active Design concepts support the development of sustainable, healthy communities via a multi-disciplinary approach:

- **Active Transportation**: Supports a safe and vibrant environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders.
- **Active Buildings**: Encourages greater physical movement within a building site for users and visitors.
- **Active Recreation**: Shapes play and activity spaces for people of different ages, interests, and abilities.
- **Food Access**: Improves access to nutritious foods in communities that need it the most.

### Case Study: Blue Hole Regional Park

**WIMBERLEY, TEXAS**

Blue Hole achieves the difficult and delicate balance of ecological restoration combined with active use.

While managing to preserve 70% of the area’s tree coverage, the park supports active and educational uses with soccer fields, basketball courts, playgrounds, camping sites, and swimming areas. In addition, nearly five miles of recreational trails were added, including a connection to the regional hiking/biking trail.

### Case Study: Guthrie Green

**TULSA, OKLAHOMA**

The 2.7-acre Guthrie Green Park now serves as a central hub for social and cultural events for the community.

Using Active Design strategies, the park is well-connected to downtown Tulsa via bus, trolley, walking paths, and a bike share system. The former truck yard is now a flexible venue for community gatherings set among gardens, a central lawn, park pavilion, outdoor stage, and interactive fountains. Guthrie Green’s robust program of activities including fitness classes, bicycle races, farmers markets and musical events are held all year round.
**Case Study: 10th Avenue Hill Climb**

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
Yesler Terrace’s 10th Avenue Hill Climb goals are to increase community connectivity and community engagement. The Hill Climb is the first step to link three disconnected Seattle neighborhoods: Little Saigon/International District, First Hill and Yesler Terrace. Executed through a robust community engagement process, the Hill Climb design includes stairs, walks, a bike runnel, accessible ramps, art and a gathering space at the top to relax and enjoy views.

1. Background on Yesler Terrace
2. Reconnecting the neighborhood with the Hill Climb
3. Public process, Art
4. Prioritizing Active Design Features

**Case Study: Greenbridge**

WHITE CENTER, WASHINGTON
Greenbridge, one of the winners of the 2014 Center for Active Design: Excellence awards. In White Center, WA, the 100-acre Greenbridge Master Plan for King County Housing Authority represents a truly walkable community that encourages healthy activities and eschews car dependency with services at its heart and an innovative network of open spaces, parks, pocket parks and trails that encourage exploration.

1. Background on Greenbridge
2. Parks and Trail Master Plan, goals
3. Active Design Features

**Lessons learned: Post Occupancy Evals**

Share lessons learned from a Post Occupancy Evaluation, where designers compared the performance of open spaces with the project’s initial objectives, to close the gap between prediction and observed performance, and make informed design decisions on future projects.

1. Methodology for evaluation, observation and comparison to design objectives
2. Fine tuning POE methodology in the field
3. Trends: Design tools and strategies, POE
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