



December 4, 2009

Health, Physical Activity and TRANSPORTATION

Gotta love it when research is able to support what we feel in neighborhoods or on our daily trips to work. If we could walk, bike and transit safely and easily we would be healthier.

It is even more exciting when a national, well-respected non-profit such as the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) advocates for transportation money to make our built environment healthy through safe walking, biking and transit. The [research](#) shows higher levels of physical activity when we have nearby public transit stops, sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use trails and traffic calming.

Another interesting finding is the cost of obesity. Extra walking to transit was found to have estimated lifesavings of \$5,500 per person (in 2007 dollars) in obesity related medical costs. Note that this number does not account for a decrease in quality of life such as obesity related disabilities. In Lincoln, Nebraska, they found that for every \$1 invested in trails an estimated \$2.94 was saved in direct medical costs from a societal perspective.

An exciting addition to the Columbus active living environment was completed just a little over a week ago. The [Share the Road signs](#) are up on High Street! These signs proclaim that bicyclists and motorists have a right to the road and they should share. It is a lesson we all learned in kindergarten but sometimes, it is hard for us to accept.

As Columbus sees more and more people choosing active transportation and especially cycling, research says there will be less accidents as motorists and cyclist learn to share. This is great news for our city especially since a [recent obesity report](#) predicts that over 50 percent of Ohioans could be obese by 2018.

Check out the [previous Facebook post](#) (11/17/09) for more information on Columbus initiatives addressing walking and biking. To walk in your neighborhood now using safe routes identified by neighborhood residents, check out the [Columbus Neighborhood Walking maps](#).

