



**January 24, 2009**

Dear Healthy Communities Ambassadors,

Here at ICMA we are getting ready for a busy 2009. We will be visiting two more communities to host regional dialogue sessions on childhood obesity, in which we partner with AASA and NACo to facilitate a discussion of opportunities for local leaders to collaborate in addressing this issue. In addition, we will visit one of the communities in which we've hosted a dialogue session in the past to provide follow-up technical assistance. And planning is underway for ICMA's 2009 Annual Conference in Montreal, with a session or workshop being devoted to Healthy Communities.

We would like to thank you all for completing the survey last month. Your feedback will help us improve our services and plan for the coming year. We are going to host another meeting of the Ambassadors at the annual conference, and we will be able to provide travel stipends to help offset your costs for attending that meeting. Please feel free to send us any suggestions or requests you have for a speaker and/or a specific topic for this gathering.

We hope your holidays were healthy and happy, and wish you all the best in the New Year!

Best regards,

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### ***HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AMBASSADOR UPDATES***

Two of ICMA's Healthy Communities Ambassadors are being featured on the Leadership for Healthy Communities' Web site, based on profiles that have been published in *PM* magazine. Learn more about Wes Hare's work in Albany, Oregon and Dave Ramsey's efforts in Kirkland, Washington, [here](#):

## ***KUDOS TO ICMA MEMBER COMMUNITIES***

### [EPA Designates Lynchburg Project as Brownfields Sustainability Pilot](#)

The city of Lynchburg, Virginia, has launched the clean up and redevelopment of a former industrial property it plans to turn into a public park with technical assistance and funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. EPA named the project a Brownfields Sustainability Pilot project in 2008, and the agency has been helping the city develop plans for community involvement and the deconstruction and reuse of building materials on the site. The property has been home to a variety of businesses over the years, including a plant that manufactured metal signs. Lynchburg plans to showcase sustainability and active living in the park, which is adjacent to a city baseball stadium and Lynchburg Grows, a nonprofit urban farm. The Lynchburg Parks & Recreation Department partners with Lynchburg Grows to promote local agriculture and offer educational programs through the farm's monthly "First Saturdays" events.

## ***NEWS***

### [Incoming Obama Administration to Create Office of Urban Policy](#)

President Barack Obama has pledged to create the nation's first Office of Urban Policy and invited citizens to get online to list their priorities for this office. Among the top choices discussed on the Web site so far are investing in a "world-class" rail system, zoning to promote walkable communities, urban farming, and other health-related issues.

### [The Mayor's Action Challenge for Children and Families](#)

In mid-November, a group of mayors launched the Mayors Action Challenge for Children and Families which is sponsored by the National League of Cities' Council on Youth, Education, and Families. Over 90 mayors have signed on to the challenge so far. One goal of the four target areas is a healthy lifestyle and environment. Recommendations include increasing access to bike and walking trails, locating supermarkets in low income neighborhoods, and collaboration with schools to teach children healthy habits.

### [New York Offers Healthier Food in Women, Child Program](#)

Newsday.com, January 9, 2009.

New York has become one of the first states to offer healthier food choices to low-income families in an effort to meet new requirements under the federal Women, Infants, and Children food program. The program recently updated its nutrition recommendations for the first time since it began in 1974. All states are required to comply with the new recommendations by 2010, but several have already started offering healthier options. The new recommendations aim to address obesity with a focus on consuming less fat and fewer sweetened beverages in favor of more fiber, fruits, and vegetables. New options include whole grain bread, brown rice, and skim or one-percent milk for all children over the age of 2.

### [Massachusetts Readies Campaign to Curb Obesity Epidemic](#)

*Boston Globe*, January 8, 2009.

Massachusetts is set to become the second state to require calorie information on the menus of chain restaurants. The new requirement is part of a far reaching effort to curb obesity in the state. State agencies will review the food served at state-run hospitals and facilities and offer more healthy choices. Additionally, the BMI of public school students in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10 will be calculated and information on healthy eating and physical activity will be sent home to parents. The measures could go into effect this fall if they are approved by the Public Health Council.

#### [Childhood obesity can hit the pocketbook hard](#)

*Albany TimesUnion*, January 11, 2009.

The New York State Comptroller's office is getting involved in the fight against childhood obesity. New York spends more on obesity-related medical services than all but one other state, with spending of \$6.1 billion based on 2003 data. The state comptroller has ordered audits of lunch food and physical education programs.

### **RESEARCH**

#### [Nutrition Standards and Meal Requirements for National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs: Phase I. Proposed Approach for Recommending Revisions](#)

School nutrition standards and meal requirements have not been updated for the last decade, making them out of sync with the needs of today's children. USDA has requested that the Institute of Medicine (IOM) review the current standards and make recommendations for new requirements. This report is the first in a series of two and details the approach IOM will use to assess the current nutrition standards. The second report, with their recommendations, will be available in the fall.

#### [Limiting School Snacks Boosts Fruit, Veggie Consumption](#)

A new study of more than 10,000 fifth graders, published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, found that limiting the availability of unhealthy snacks at school led children to consume more fruits and vegetables overall. Students recorded the fruits and vegetables they ate all day, including outside of school, and school administrators provided information on what snacks were available through the school cafeteria and vending machines. The findings showed that students' consumption of fruits and vegetable went up three percent when unhealthy snacks weren't as readily available.

### **FUNDING**

#### [Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities](#)

**Deadline: February 3, 2009**

This is the second round of grants for Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) with the primary goal of implementing healthy eating and active living policy- and environmental-change initiatives that can support healthier communities for children and families across the United States. Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities places special emphasis on reaching children who are

at highest risk for obesity on the basis of race/ethnicity, income and/or geographic location. The Foundation will give special consideration to proposals from the following 15 states where childhood obesity rates are especially high: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia. Approximately half of the 60 grants to be awarded will go to communities within these states, although partnerships from all states are encouraged to apply. Each site selected will receive up to \$360,000 for four years. All grantees must secure a cash and/or in-kind match equal to at least 50 percent of the RWJF award over the entire grant period

#### [Salud America! The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children](#)

**Deadline: February 6, 2009**

Salud America! is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) that supports research on environmental and policy solutions to the epidemic of obesity among Latino children. The program also aims to develop a network of researchers whose findings will help identify the most promising obesity-prevention strategies specifically tailored for Latino communities. Proposals must be submitted by an educational institution or non-profit organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. A maximum of 20 grants of up to \$75,000 (to be used over a 24-month period) will be awarded.

#### [Healthy Eating Research: Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity](#)

**Deadline: February 24, 2009**

Healthy Eating Research is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) that supports research on environmental and policy strategies with strong potential to promote healthy eating among children to prevent childhood obesity, especially among low-income and racial/ethnic populations at highest risk for obesity. This round, the fourth, focuses on studies of policy and environmental strategies in four areas: food pricing and economic approaches; food and beverage marketing; improving access to healthy foods in low-income communities; and evaluations of promising food-related policy and environmental strategies in settings where children and their families make food choices.

#### [Funding Sources for Healthy Food Retail](#)

A new online guide serves as a clearinghouse for funding opportunities related to developing food retail outlets. The funding sources, which are categorized by eligibility, source, and type of assistance for easy searching, include several available to local governments.

### ***UPCOMING EVENTS and TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES***

#### [America 2050 to Address Challenges of Growth](#)

A national initiative has been launched to meet the infrastructure, economic development, and environmental challenges the United States faces as the country prepares to add 130 million residents by the year 2050. The America 2050 initiative will be guided by the National Committee for America 2050, a coalition of regional planners, scholars, and

policy-makers who are focusing on the emergence of mega-regions as the locus for most of this upcoming growth. They plan to develop a framework to organize infrastructure investments, environmental protection, and economic opportunities within these large networks of metropolitan areas and address such challenges as climate change, sprawl, and inequitable growth within and between regions. The Regional Plan Association and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy will host a [research seminar](#) March 30-31, 2009 as part of these efforts to create a national growth strategy.

#### [PPS Offers Training on Streets as Places](#)

**April 2-3, 2009, New York, NY.** The Project for Public Spaces is offering a two-day seminar on transportation and place-making in New York that will introduce participants to new ways of thinking about streets and how to achieve social and economic benefits by changing the way roads are designed. Participants will hear about context-sensitive design, walkability, land use and other topics, and they'll receive practical tools for assessing street typologies and case studies of communities that have successfully moved beyond mobility to community-building.

#### [SmartCode Workshop in Decatur, Georgia](#)

**April 16-18, 2009, Decatur, GA.** Andres Duany will lead three days of interactive sessions on smart codes in Decatur, Georgia, this spring with a focus on sustainability and "high performance urbanism." The workshop will explore the theory and mechanics behind this new way of thinking about land planning, and deliver the tools necessary to implement SmartCode at the local level.

#### [Leadership for Healthy Communities' Childhood Obesity Prevention Summit](#)

**May 7-8, 2009, Washington, DC.** Leadership for Healthy Communities, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is hosting a childhood obesity prevention policy summit on May 7 – 8, 2009 in Washington, DC. Plenary sessions will focus on the implications of federal policy on states, municipalities and schools; community collaborations for healthier environments; the economics of obesity; and youth perspectives on healthy environments. Workshops will delve into healthy eating and active living initiatives within the built environment (land use planning, zoning, etc.), rural and ethnic/minority communities, and the neighborhood and media environment. Keynote speakers will include RWJF President and Chief Executive Officer Risa Lavizzo-Mourey. Policy-makers from the federal, state and local level of government are expected to attend, and more information about the summit will be available soon.

#### [2009 Childhood Obesity Conference](#)

**June 9-12, 2009, Los Angeles, CA** The Childhood Obesity conference is devoted to addressing the most pressing and innovative issues related to childhood obesity, including structural issues that impact food access, nutrition, physical activity and the physical environment. Presentations will focus on research and evaluation; community perspectives (programs, coalitions, food systems, and the built environment); before-school, during school and after-school programs; policy (media advocacy, legislation, marketing, health equities, funding, and food insecurity); parents as role models, educators, and advocates; and clinical management and resources.

### [Weight of the Nation](#)

**July 27-29, 2009, Washington, DC** (Call for Abstracts ends February 14, 2009)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity, will host its inaugural conference on obesity prevention and control. Weight of the Nation is designed to provide a forum to highlight progress in the prevention and control of obesity through policy and environmental strategies and is framed around four intervention settings: community, medical care, school, and workplace. The call for abstracts is open.

### [Call for Papers for Safe Routes to School Conference](#)

**August 19-21, 2008, Portland, OR** (Call for Proposals ends February 2, 2009)

A call for proposals is currently open with a Feb. 2, 2009, deadline. Presentations and posters should exemplify Safe Routes to School programs' ability to address a range of issues that affect our society, and give schoolchildren the tools to change habits and stay two steps ahead of health issues, environmental problems, and traffic congestion. Presenters should focus their messages on a single age group (K-5, middle school) or geographic location (urban, suburban, rural). Any individual, organization, business, non-profit, or public agency that is actively engaged in Safe Routes to School and can demonstrate experiential success is invited to submit a proposal for presentation and/or posters.

### [Call for Papers for Walk 21 Conference](#)

**October 7-9, 2009, New York, NY** (Call for Abstracts ends February 27<sup>th</sup>)

Walk 21 is the 10<sup>th</sup> annual international conference on walking and livable communities. This year's conference has four themes: "Walkable communities are sustainable communities"; "Paved with Gold: Investing in the public realm for a successful city"; "There is more to walking than walking: Design strategies for urban quality"; and "Fit cities: community design for active living." A call for abstracts is open until February 27<sup>th</sup>.

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