Fuel for Active Bodies: Increasing Access to Healthy Foods
I am Marisa Jones.

I am the Healthy Communities Manager at the Safe Routes to School National Partnership.

I live in Philadelphia, where I ride my bike, walk, take public transit, use car share, bike share, and occasionally drive my own car.

You can find me on Twitter at @marisacjones
Hello!

I am Caroline Harries

I am an Associate Director with The Food Trust.

I also live in Philadelphia, where I love to run and bike along the Schuylkill river trail and shop at The Food Trust’s Farmers Markets!
The Food Trust helps make healthy food affordable and easy to find in supermarkets, corner stores and farmers’ markets.

The Food Trust makes food education a priority for children and adults, encouraging health in the classroom, at home and in the community.

The Food Trust promotes wellness through community health and youth leadership, and celebrates the joy of food with Night Market Philadelphia.

The Food Trust connects local farmers to the people they serve through farm to school initiatives and healthy food incentive programs.

To learn more about the Food Trust, visit thefoodtrust.org
The USDA estimates that more than 40 million Americans live in low-income areas without easy access to fresh, affordable, and nutritious food options.

Source: Bridging the Gap, Income Disparities in Street Features that Encourage Walking, 2012
Accessing healthy food is a challenge for many Americans, particularly in low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, and rural areas.
Low-income zip codes have 25 percent fewer supermarkets and 1.3 times as many convenience stores as middle-income zip codes.
THE FOOD ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS WHAT YOU EAT
The alternative in many places
The Food Trust –
Background on Healthy
Food Financing

HFFI IMPACTS
NATIONWIDE SUCCESS of HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING INITIATIVES
Philadelphia: Areas of Greatest Need
Stimulating Supermarket Development:
A New Day for Philadelphia

The appropriate city, regional, and state transportation agencies should develop safe, cheap, and convenient transportation services for shoppers who do not have access to a full service supermarket.
Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative

Pennsylvania Success Story

- 88 projects statewide
- 5,000 Jobs
- 400,000 people with improved food access
- $190 million in total project investment

Fresh Grocer opens at Progress Plaza in North Philadelphia, December 2009
Philadelphia: FFFI Funded Projects
Key Features of a Healthy Food Financing Program

- Business financing programs
- Grants and loans for new and expanded grocery and other healthy food retailers
- Targets LMI and underserved communities
- Administered as a Public Private Partnership, including a CDFI and an FAO. CDFI leverages public investment.
- Funded with federal, state, local, and philanthropic dollars
- Flexible program design
HFFI Grantees and State & City Financing Initiatives

Map showing distribution of federal HFFI grants awarded as of November 2018, plus the location of regional, state and city initiatives.
Lack of supportive street features to support walking

- Only 49 percent of low-income communities have sidewalks, whereas 90 percent of high-income communities have sidewalks

Lack of adequate infrastructure has deadly consequences

**People Killed While Walking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Likelihood</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2x as likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2x as likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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*Governing, August 2014*

**People Killed While Bicycling**

<table>
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<th>Ethnicity</th>
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<tr>
<td>African American</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>23% more likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2001*
Hunger in Metro Tulsa: People living in food desert

Refugees in Des Moines walk miles along busy highway to buy groceries

MacKenzie Elmer, melmer@dmreg.com  Published 10:55 p.m. CT Dec. 19, 2017 | Updated 11:36 p.m. CT Dec. 19, 2017

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Transportation Access to Healthy Food is a Challenge All Across the United States

- Low Income
- Low Vehicle Access
- Closest Grocery Store is $> \frac{1}{2}$ mile (urban) or 20 miles (rural) away

The Challenge

Too Few Places Selling Nutritious Foods Nearby

Not Enough Safe, Convenient Ways to Get Around

Food and Transportation Deserts
The Opportunity: Safe Routes to Healthy Food

Healthy Food Access

Active Transportation

Safe Routes to Healthy Food
Safe Routes to Healthy Food

The work of overcoming transportation challenges to healthy food access
Benefits of Safe Routes to Healthy Food

◉ Improve health
◉ Promote economic equity and vitality
◉ Increase efficiency
◉ Build social capital
Action Steps to Improve Safe Routes to Healthy Food

1. Collaborate and Make the Case
2. Make the Connection Possible
3. Make Routes Accessible and Accommodating
4. Educate, Activate, Incentivize
1. Collaborate and Make the Case

- Build partnerships across sectors
- Communicate the interconnectedness of these challenges
- Engage affected community members
- Use data to make the case
Collaborate and Make the Case

Build partnerships across sectors
Collaborate and Make the Case

- Communicate the interconnectedness of these challenges

Core Messages
- Economic
- Health
- Sustainability
- Equity/Lived Experience
Collaborate and Make the Case

- Engage affected community members

Work with community members to understand the barriers and challenges to walking, biking, and taking transit to access healthy foods.

Food is Good Medicine

WOYUTE KI LE PEJUTA WAŠTE
HEĆA KŠTO\YELO
Collaborate and Make the Case

- Use data to make the case

Use data and maps to display existing bicycle, sidewalk, and transit facilities compared with venues where healthy food can be obtained, and use this to guide policy, investments, and programmatic decision-making.
2. Make the Connection Possible

- Articulate a vision
- Use land use and transportation plans to improve healthy food access
- Consider transportation access as part of HFFI and other food access initiatives
Make the Connection Possible

Articulate a vision

Envision and plan for places that let everyone access safe, convenient opportunities for physical activity and healthy food access.

Make the Connection Possible

- Use land use and transportation plans to improve healthy food access

Make clear connections about the relationship between transportation and healthy food access in land use planning

Make the Connection Possible

- Use land use and transportation plans to improve healthy food access

Include Safe Routes to Healthy Food strategies and actions in transportation planning

Make the Connection Possible

- Consider transportation access as part of HFFI and other food access initiatives

Massachusetts Food Trust Program Eligibility Criteria

Among other criteria, businesses are encouraged to consider and demonstrate the following criteria in their applications:

- **Accessibility to the business by customers through means of public transportation**

Source: https://massfoodtrustprogram.org/
Make Routes Accessible and Accommodating

- Develop Active Design Guidelines
- Improve Facilities for People Walking and Biking
- Improve Transit Connectivity
Make Routes Accessible and Accommodating

- Develop Active Design Guidelines

Through designing for physical activity, support residents to achieve daily physical activity as part of a normal day-to-day routing

Source: https://massfoodtrustprogram.org/
Make Routes Accessible and Accommodating

- Improve Bike/Pedestrian Facilities

Make it easier and safer for people to walk and bike

To learn more: [https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/blog/safe-routes-groceries-clevelands-asiatown](https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/blog/safe-routes-groceries-clevelands-asiatown)
Make Routes Accessible and Accommodating

- Improve Transit Connectivity

Consider healthy food venues as part of transit planning

Photo Source: Detroit Free Press
4. Educate, Activate, Incentivize

- Educate people about the connections
- Activate new and existing routes
- Incentivize walking, biking, and public transit
Educate, Activate, Incentivize

- Educate people about the connections

Make people aware of active travel modes and routes to healthy food venues
Educate, Activate, Incentivize

- Activate new and existing routes

Encourage people to walk, bike, and take transit to healthy food venues

Photo Source: Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Educate, Activate, Incentivize

- Incentivize walking, biking, and public transit

Offer incentives to people who walk, bike, or take public transit to healthy food venues
Key Takeaways

◉ Recognize interconnectedness of goals of safe human mobility and food access and work with partners to achieve those goals

◉ Listen to community residents’ needs in order to build relevant and impactful connections

◉ The co-benefits of Safe Routes to Healthy Food extend beyond mobility to health, economic development, equity, and quality of life

◉ This field is evolving, and you are invited to be a part of it. We have numerous resources (with examples!) to help you work toward Safe Routes to Healthy Food
Resources for Improving Safe Routes to Healthy Food and Info Briefs for Transit Agencies
Resources for Improving Safe Routes to Healthy Food through Local Governments and MPOs

SAFE ROUTES TO HEALTHY FOOD: STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

In too many neighborhoods, local stores carry no fresh produce or other healthy options, but getting to healthy foods is dangerous and inconvenient due to unsafe walking conditions and lack of access to public transit or private vehicles. The challenge is two-fold: too few stores sell healthy foods, while transportation to places selling nutritious foods is unsafe, inadequate, or both. This is not an isolated problem. Almost 20 percent of people in the United States experience significant transportation barriers to accessing healthy foods.

Local governments play an important role in making sure people can safely get to healthy food. This fact sheet outlines the role of local governments in improving walkable, bikeable, transit-accessible healthy food access, a concept known as Safe Routes to Healthy Food. The fact sheet offers examples from many, towns, and communities across the country, and shows policy solutions that will support communities as they create or strengthen the transportation connections between neighborhoods and grocery stores.

Why Local Government?

In some communities, local government leaders recognize that where we live and spend time influences our ability to lead a healthy life. Local governments can play a significant role in creating healthy conditions, taking steps to increase access to nutritious foods and safe opportunities for physical activity, with the long-term effects on decreasing weight-related chronic disease.

- People living in walkable neighborhoods (where destinations are located within walking distance from residential areas and where streets facilitate safe and appealing walking) are more likely to be physically active and less likely to be overweight or obese than those in low walkable neighborhoods.

- Local government approaches to improve Safe Routes to Healthy Food fall into specific categories: (1) planning for healthy communities; (2) supporting multimodal mobility and (3) supporting economic development.

Create Safe Routes to Healthy Food When Planning for Healthy Communities

A key role of local government is to plan how development, transportation, and investments can help a community achieve its vision for the future. In developing long-range planning documents for communities, local government leaders can (1) recognize, (2) acknowledge, and (3) plan for places that let everyone access physical activity and healthy food. An additional benefit of improving opportunities for residents to walk and bike to access nutritious foods is that it also creates more and safer places for people to engage in recreation and to be physically active for fun.

No one should have to risk their life walking alongside fast moving traffic or spend two hours on the bus just to get to the grocery store. Yet this is the reality for too many people in the United States, and particularly affects people burdened by other challenges, like low income, lack of vehicle access, and unsafe streets. By working toward Safe Routes to Healthy Food, regions can improve safety and convenience for people walking, biking, and taking public transit to get nutritious foods. This fact sheet is intended to help active transportation and healthy food advocates understand why and how to engage regional planning agencies to improve Safe Routes to Healthy Food.

Want to learn more about Safe Routes to Healthy Food?

Safe Routes to Healthy Food focuses on overcoming the transportation challenges to getting healthy food. Not everyone has a car, and many people rely on walking, bicycling, or public transportation to access food. Everyone deserves a transportation system that can reasonably, safely, and affordably link them to the places they need to go, especially to healthy food. For more information, please visit https://saferoutestopartnership.org/ or www.saferoutestopartnership.org/healthyfood.
The Go-To Resource for Increasing Access to Healthy Food

The Healthy Food Access Portal harnesses a vast array of data and information to support the successful planning and implementation of policies, programs, and projects aimed at improving access to healthy food.
Thanks!

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