



## PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Patricia Conway  
Project Manager  
615. 248. 4280  
[patricia@civicedesigncenter.org](mailto:patricia@civicedesigncenter.org)

OCTOBER 12, 2011

### **NASHVILLE CIVIC DESIGN CENTER ANNOUNCES NEW PROJECT AT THE 2011 LIVING THE PLAN OF NASHVILLE EVENT**

The Nashville Civic Design Center (NCDC), in partnership with the Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Office of the Mayor, and Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Public Health Department (MPHD), announced the *Shaping Healthy Cities: Nashville* project on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 at their annual 'Living The Plan of Nashville' event.

*Shaping Healthy Cities: Nashville* is a two-year project culminating in a book—based on extensive research yet readable for the general public—that enhances awareness of the impacts of the built environment on health, and facilitates the inclusion of health impacts on future design decisions in Nashville Davidson County, Tennessee.

In the past decade, public health officials have established links between qualities of the built environment and the startling rise of preventable diseases, such as obesity, type II diabetes, heart disease and asthma. Today, Tennessee has the unfortunate distinction of ranking the least active state, with the fourth highest adult obesity prevalence in the nation. The *Shaping Healthy Cities: Nashville* project is a catalyst to transform Nashville into one of the healthiest cities in the south.

*Shaping Healthy Cities: Nashville* is developing partnerships and products to take on the public health and planning challenge of designing our cities to foster good health. The project is guided by a 16-member Steering Committee representing 15 public and private organizations engaged in the design, development, education and health of Nashville as well as Tennessee.

*Shaping Healthy Cities: Nashville* outcomes will include:

- A narrative book scheduled for publication in January 2013 by Vanderbilt University Press.
- An action plan to guide policy makers, planners and communities in adapting Nashville's built environments to benefit our county's health.
- Targeted materials for specific user groups such as a built environment design checklist for developers, designers, planners, engineers, city officials, and community members.
- Novel, engaging multi-media products to engage the wider community, including short videos, posters, social media content, web-based information and tools, information graphics, and maps.
- A venue and structure to facilitate public participation, education and discussion on built environment design for health.

The initial phase of the project involved identifying and compiling all of Nashville's current built environment plans, health reports, relevant community initiatives, and developments. Such existing

efforts will be reviewed and incorporated into the forthcoming action plan. The project has so far identified six groups of built environment factors that have been found to impact people's health. Currently the project is identifying examples of these health-defeating and health-promoting factors throughout Davidson County. We are also seeking personal narratives from Nashvillians to illustrate how people negotiate the built environment in their daily lives.

NCDC is leading the project in partnership with MPHD, which is partly funding the project through Nashville's Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) Federal grant, awarded to Nashville by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

NCDC is a non-profit organization dedicated to "elevating the quality of Nashville's built environment and to promoting public participation in the creation of a more beautiful and functional city for all." NCDC's 2005 publication *The Plan of Nashville: Avenues to a Great City* offers a 50-year vision for the future design and development of Nashville. Over 800 Nashvillians participated in the development of 'The Plan' and its 'Ten Principles' to guide public policy, development practice, urban planning, and design. The *Shaping Healthy Cities: Nashville* project will bring the lens of health to these 'Ten Principles', to determine ways to move 'The Plan's' vision forward with designs that foster better health among all our citizens.

For more information on this groundbreaking project, please contact Patricia Conway, or visit the project webpage <http://www.civicdesigncenter.org/projects/shapinghealthycities>