

- What makes a city healthy?
- Why are people the most fundamental aspect of a healthy city?
- How can people contribute to their cities health?

# Impact of the People

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## What Would a City Be Without the People?

What is a healthy city? A healthy community is one filled with diverse people who are willing to take the extra step and help make the necessary changes to improve the community in which they reside. In “Healthy Cities – Healthy Communities”, Joe Flower defines a healthy community to be “a community that nurtures its members, that makes us all more than we were” (Flower 1). Healthy City Fall River is committee that deeply involved with various organizations that have a common cause, which is to improve the city’s health and to keep the public informed of its advancement (Healthy City Fall River: Functions 1). It states, “People are the key to a healthy city” (Healthy City Fall River: What is a Healthy City? 1). What would a city be without the people? The people are the ones who become the leaders, the political voices, the advocates, the ones who teach the community, the ones who take immediate care of the sick, the ones who make sure streets are clean and safe, and so on.

Diverse groups of people have so much to offer to the community. They include people of all ages, religions, cultural backgrounds, and incomes. If these groups of people fuse to help make a



**Two college students walking in the city streets during my Philadelphia Jane’s Walk.**

healthy city, then all sorts of improvements can be made such as the following: developing an eco-friendly environment, building a stronger educational system, and developing a safer environment. “People come together to make their community better for themselves, their family, their friends, their neighbors, and others in the community” (Healthy City Fall River: What is a Healthy City? 1). Therefore, their community becomes a sense of place, which they would feel part of and have a strong connection with. This “sense of place” would lead to change and more community involvement (Place & Health: Making the Connection 1).

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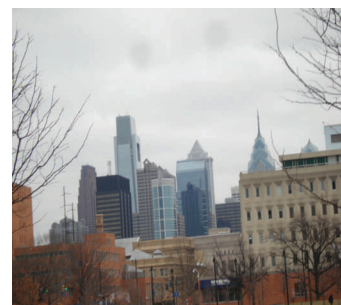
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**A beautiful view of downtown Philadelphia on a foggy Sunday morning**

## Eco-friendly Environment Depends on the People



A street in Philadelphia which is structured as a great way to keep the environment clean.

*A library is a  
“free institution*

*where the  
individual has open  
access to great  
quantities of  
information and for  
older adults, they  
are in a familiar  
place”*

Public Safety phones makes the college community feel safer.



Groups of people can help facilitate a more eco-friendly environment, which would greatly benefit the community. They could advocate Farmers Markets, recycling, water and energy conservation, planting of trees, green spaces, and green cars. Farmers Markets provide fresh fruits, vegetables, and handmade items for the community. The owner of Sette Luna, a restaurant in downtown Easton, emphasizes that the food he serves is fresh and obtained from local businesses (Sette Luna Salon). Megan, the manager of the Farmer’s Market in Easton added that the fresh food

contributes to the health of the local community (Sette Luna Salon). By word of mouth, people can develop the habit of recycling and conserving energy and water. People who own properties can help the community by planting a tree or gardening in front of their home. However, green spaces can be located anywhere in the community. Not only would it beautify the city, but also provide residents with a relaxing environment to do leisurely activities. In Hot, Flat, and Crowded, Thomas L. Friedman stated that the Toyota Prius hybrid car developed into a better system that

creates some of its own energy (Friedman 185). This eco-friendly car is so much better for the environment and has begun a revolution. Currently, various vehicle companies have produced environment-friendly cars and people have become fonder of them. The Toyota Prius hybrid car started a revolution that has made more people aware of how these types of cars contribute to a more eco-friendly environment. Overall, people can greatly influence the community by becoming more involved.

## Being Involved With the Schools

The people involved with the educational system have a great responsibility. First of all, they must have the appropriate resources available for schools. Secondly, they must ensure that teachers and professors are certified for their positions. These educators must have certain credentials and qualities, which would enhance their students’ learning. With the support of strong political leaders, policies could be implemented to improve the current faults of the educational system. The involvement of parents and guardians is a main factor in the en-

hancement of a child’s education. They play a major role in encouraging children to further their education by providing them support, homework help, and motivation.

The “Connections” newsletter issued in spring 2008, stresses the importance of life-long learning. It states, “Lifelong learning is a crucial component for cities planning for aging populations” (Lifelong Learning 4). Therefore, libraries in a community encourage various people’s participation, since it is welcoming to all age groups. It is mentioned that there are “innovative programs encouraging community involvement and continuous learning,” such as

Spanish-speaking clubs (Lifelong Learning 4). However, the article discussed how their library offers to mail books for elder or disabled adults who are unable to get there. Connie Van Fleet, PhD made a good point in stating that the library is a ‘free institution where the individual has open access to great quantities of information and for older adults, they are in a familiar place’ (Lifelong Learning 4). It is described as a place where learning never ends. Libraries provide people with knowledge, but who are the people that guarantee the safety of it?

# Ensure the Safety of the Community

The people responsible for ensuring the safety of the community are firefighters, neighborhood watch, security, and police officers. These people must be available at all times just in case any emergencies occur. There must also be a strict policy on drug use in order to decrease crimes and vandalism. Community involvement would keep people off the streets and develop a safer environment. Believe it or not, pedestrian-friendly streets play a major role on how safe other people feel, as they walk by it. On my "Jane's Walk" in the city of Easton, I passed by many alleys that made me feel unsafe, since the streets were narrow

and dark (Jane's Walk in the City of Easton). On the other hand, while walking in the streets of Philadelphia, I felt more comfortable and more welcomed (Jane's Walk in the City of Philadelphia). Furthermore, I perhaps feel this way since I reside in New York City and am used to the big city streets. However, these streets might be overwhelming for others who have not been exposed to them and are used to suburban streets.



Public Safety phones in the campus of the University of Pennsylvania

*Community involvement would keep people off the streets and develop a safer environment.*

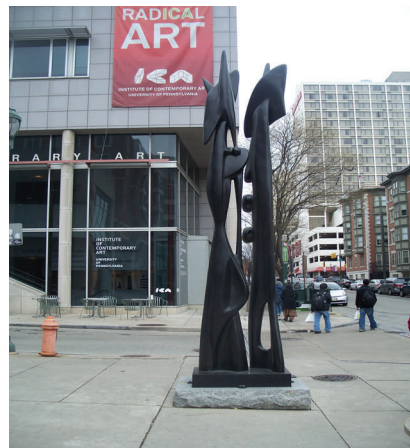
## The Importance of Urban Art

An important aspect of the city's safety is the portrayal of urban art. When people experience or take part in an art pro-



An example of urban art in the streets of Philadelphia.

ject, they appreciate what it has to offer to the community. It is a way of beautifying the neighborhood. On my "Jane's Walk" in Easton, I experienced the impact urban art can have on the community (Jane's Walk in the City of Easton). Not only were there gorgeous murals on buildings, but there were also many art galleries that welcomed and invited Eastonians and guests to their place to see what they had to offer. Art is a way to engage not only the artists, but also the diverse people who are exposed to it.



In a central area of the University of Pennsylvania campus, there was an art gallery with a statue in front of it which beautified the community.

## Diversified Communities Make Healthy Cities!



Green spaces in Philly which makes the environment more relaxing.

*“To catch the reader’s attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here.”*

St. Agatha  
St. James  
Phoman  
Catholic  
Church on  
38th St. in  
Philadelphia



A diverse group of people living in and supporting their community is essential to establish a healthy city. Various cultural backgrounds bring diversity to a community. Immigrants, regardless of their educational level, are extremely important to society. Some become part of notorious companies and some take low-income jobs that others do not want to take part in. They are both just as important, since they bring variety and have much to offer to a community. Education is important, but due a lack of resources in their country or personal problems they had to face, some were not able to obtain a higher education. These people provide the community with various ethnic foods and expose others to their traditions.

Nevertheless, different faith groups also diversify the community. Religion greatly affects people’s day to day actions. Depending on their religion, if any, people have different perspectives of what a healthy city consists of. These people can bring a more spiritual aspect of viewing ideas and improving their community. They strongly believe in something greater than humankind and would definitely be advocates for the betterment of the community in which they live.

Another important aspect to a healthy city is a

broad age range of people. Children are important to keep the youth and the livelihood of a community. It is essential that they obtain higher education at neighboring schools. However, they are the ones that put a smile on people’s faces, once in a while, and are a vital part of a healthy city. Adults are necessary to support their families, obtain careers, and work to sustain themselves. They are needed to provide the community with welcoming homes and to look out for the children and elders who live in the area. Moreover, an age group that is usually overlooked are the elderly. They play an important role in looking out for youngsters, sharing stories with others about past memories, and in a way they help maintain a calmer environment for the community.

People who take care of the elderly are crucial people to have in a healthy city, since many family members usually have an overload of responsibilities and some do not have the time to take care of them. The “Connections” newsletter, explained why elderly transportation is important to maintain a healthy city (Transportation 3). It stated that the development of transportation systems, such as ez-tran and e-van, promotes healthy aging in a community (Transportation 3). The people who run these transportation systems make it affordable and convenient for seniors to travel. However, some elders are

put in nursing homes if they are not able to provide for themselves. In *Working*, Terkel interviewed a practical nurse, Carmelita Lester, who works at a nursing home caring for an old woman who is ninety-three years old and who has cerebral thrombosis. She stated, “The work don’t leave my mind. I have been so long with her that it became part of me (Terkel 502).” Lester had a sense of fulfillment in the work she did and it became evident that what she was getting out of work was more than just a salary. Employees like Lester and those facilitating transportation for the elders are the ones who make the community a better one, since they enjoy what they do for a living.

How does income play a role in diversifying the community? Does it divide communities? Economic levels in communities are at times clearly visible, but do not completely indicate a family’s wealth. Nevertheless, low, middle, and high income residents must work together in order to benefit from the improvements of their society. Wealthier communities have the ap-



Philadelphia Bus System

Continued from page 4



**Cab services in the streets of Philly**

communities to work with one another and reciprocate what they have to offer? A healthy city must be able to balance out the resources

would greatly benefit all communities and make a healthier city. There would be less homelessness and more unity amongst the usually divided communities.

appropriate resources and extra money to improve their community. Low-income communities could work together with them to get the money necessary to build parks, community center, street trees, and so on. The question is how likely are these

needed to ensure healthy communities. How about homeless people? Are they included in healthy cities? There can definitely be a decrease in homelessness with the support of organizations and everyday people willing to donate belongings. Community involvement

*Without the*

*people,*

*there*

*would be*

*no city!*

# Community Involvement Create Healthier Cities

Diversity of people makes a healthy city. Without the people, there would be no city. Therefore, people of various cultural backgrounds, ages, faiths, and incomes are necessary to develop a healthy urban community. What would a community be with just black, middle-aged, Pentecostal, low-income people? Of course it

would still be a community of its own because no one is the same. However, "ideas, actions, and solutions derive from coalitions of diverse groups," which are extremely necessary for a healthy city (Healthy City: Fall River: What is a Healthy City? 1). Diverse groups of people are necessary to help make nec-

essary changes, in order progress into a healthier city.

## Mapping Urban Ecology

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**I Hope you enjoyed the newsletter! Please continue to stay informed of ways that you can improve the health and the quality of life in your city. If you have any additional questions or comments do not hesitate to contact me.**

**Visit our website for more information at [www.lafayette.edu/moodle](http://www.lafayette.edu/moodle).**



## Organization

### Mapping Urban Ecology

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This would be a good place to insert a short paragraph about your organization. It might include the purpose of the organization, its mission, founding date, and a brief history. You could also include a brief list of the types of products, services, or programs your organization offers, the geographic area covered (for example, western U.S. or European markets), and a profile of the types of customers or members served.



## Back Page Story Headline

This story can fit 175-225 words.

If your newsletter is folded and mailed, this story will appear on the back. So, it's a good idea to make it easy to read at a glance.

A question and answer session is a good way to quickly capture the attention of readers. You can either compile questions that you've received since the last edition or you can summarize some generic questions that are frequently asked about your organization.

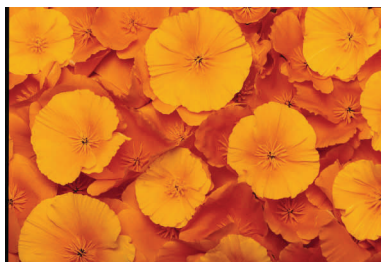
A listing of names and titles of managers in your organization is a good way to give your newsletter a personal touch. If your organization is small, you may want to list the names of all employees.

If you have any prices of standard products or services, you can include a listing of those here. You may want to refer your readers to any other forms of communication that you've created for your organization.

You can also use this space to remind readers to mark their calendars for a regular event, such as a breakfast meeting for vendors every third Tuesday of the month, or a biannual

charity auction.

If space is available, this is a good place to insert a clip art image or some other graphic.



**Diverse religion, ages, cultures**