**BEHIND THE SCENES**

**Chris Kochtitzky, s**enior advisor, **Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity**

As a trained community planner, I serve as a content expert in community design and transportation infrastructure that can improve or hinder physically active lifestyles. I also serve as a bridge to leaders in those sectors—such as other planners, transportation engineers, architects, and neighborhood developers. These almost 500,000 professionals are primarily responsible for related local and state activities. They are crucial to the success of things like [Active People, Healthy Nation](https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/activepeoplehealthynation/) and the [*Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd Edition*](https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/), as demonstrated by their [Joint Call to Promote Healthy Communities](https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/calltoaction/) and the [Institute of Transportation Engineers’ Transportation and Health Initiative](https://www.ite.org/pub/?id=aa339996%2D0ccb%2D488e%2Df32f%2D835e50bef343). I consider these colleagues a new “public health” workforce.

**What is your greatest professional satisfaction?**

I am proud to see concrete and practical outcomes that we’ve supported come to fruition, particularly related to potentially vulnerable populations. These include resources such as the [Active Communities Tool](https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/community-strategies/active-communities-tool/index.html), the [Built Environment Assessment Tool](https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/state-local-programs/built-environment-assessment/index.htm), the [*Parks, Trails, and Health Workbook*](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/healthandsafety/upload/Parks_Trails_and_Health_Workbook_508_Accessible_PDF.pdf), and the [Transportation and Health Tool](https://www.transportation.gov/transportation-health-tool). They also include grassroots efforts that we’ve supported through trainings such as [Walkability Action Institute](https://www.chronicdisease.org/page/wai) (WAI) and technical assistance on projects. For example, elements of the [Regional Active Transportation Plan](https://www.campotexas.org/regional-transportation-plans/2045-plan/regional-active-transportation-plan/) in central Texas, including the City of Austin, occurred as a direct result of a team participating in the WAI. In addition, products like the Urban Land Institutes (ULI) [Building Healthy Places](https://americas.uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/building-healthy-places-initiative/) report [*Active Transportation and Real Estate: The Next Frontier*](https://americas.uli.org/report/active-transportation-real-estate-next-frontier/) occurred in part because of technical assistance provided by CDC staff to the ULI project.

**How do partners help you do your work?**

First and foremost, partners keep me grounded in practical reality. Almost as important, they provide the crucial conduit to reach and positively affect people in their day-to-day lives. Before coming to CDC, I spent more time at the grassroots level. Because all public health is local, as the saying goes, I never want to be too removed from where the rubber hits the road, and in this line of work, I mean that literally.

**What would you like partners to know?**

I would like partners to know that to design community plans and change other key policies and systems that encourage more physically active lifestyles, help is just down the hall or maybe down the street. If you are in public health, reach out to your colleagues in planning, transportation, or public works. If you are in these other sectors, call your colleagues in public health, your local medical society, or hospital administrator.

**Favorite quote:**

“You see things; and you say “Why?” But I dream things that never were; and I say “Why not?”— George Bernard Shaw as quoted by [President John F. Kennedy](https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/address-before-the-irish-parliament)