

Proposal for the Standing Committee on Health

Overview

In January 2020 TRB approved a new committee structure that created a new standing committee on health. This was welcome news for the joint Subcommittee on Health and Transportation. A standing committee on health will further support and promote research and practice at the intersection of transportation and health goals, including efforts to better understand health consequences of transportation systems, best practices in integrating health and transportation goals and measurement needs related to transportation and health outcomes. With the TRB reorganization and the establishment of the new committee, the Subcommittee collectively sees itself including its active members and over 400 friends, its leadership, and its current and ongoing activities, as being subsumed and integrated into the new committee.

The proposed Committee is expected to build on and extend activities of the TRB Health and Transportation Subcommittee. The Subcommittee has always seen itself as morphing into a standing committee so it could bring health to the table with all the other committees. As this proposal will show, the Subcommittee brings a solid backbone to the new health committee.

The TRB Health and Transportation Subcommittee came into formal existence in March 2012. It is housed under ADD50, the number associated with the Committee on Environmental Justice in Transportation, and it has three other parent committees-- Urban Data and Information Systems (ABJ30), Travel Behavior and Values (ADB10), and Transportation and Sustainability (ADD40).

Through its parents, the Subcommittee has been linked to three sections (Social, Economic and Cultural Issues; Data and Information Technology; Travel Analysis Methods) and two groups (Planning and Environment; Policy and Organization). Until recently, the Subcommittee was also an active participant in transit at the group level. At the time of its formation, several other groups, sections, and committees also wanted to co-sponsor it. But TRB staff advised the Subcommittee leadership to limit the number of parents, and instead build a network across the organization. The Subcommittee heeded this advice, as demonstrated below..

The Subcommittee has been very active since its inception. It and its volunteers have conducted sessions, workshops and paper calls; participated in submitting research statements; served on panels for several of the TRB research programs and conducted the research; published a special issue of TR News; sponsored a group cross-cutting session; and sponsored and organized a conference titled the Conference on Health and Active Transportation (CHAT).

The remainder of this proposal provides a recommended scope, justification for the new committee and selected briefing materials.

Committee Scope

The mission of the Standing Committee on Health is to identify, advance and publish research and information to expand and improve current understanding and evaluation of the health impacts of national, federal, state, regional and local transportation policies, procedures and actions as well as the impacts of international policies and initiatives.

The scope of this Committee includes a wide array of topics designed to cover diverse impacts and issues related to health, including attention to vulnerable populations. Topics include, but are not limited to: sustainable and active transportation modes (e.g., walking, biking, transit); mobility; accessibility; safety; freight and aviation impacts to health; transportation-related air pollution and noise impacts; social cohesion; other social, physical and mental health impacts; the distribution of those health impacts in the population (based on factors such as income, race and ethnicity, sex, age and English proficiency); the use of health impact assessments (HIAs) and other health metrics and indicators to advance the consideration of health impacts in transportation decision-making; and, access to essential services. The Committee will consider approaches to maximizing health benefits and addressing potential adverse impacts of transportation planning and policy decisions.

The Committee will fulfill its mission by serving as a focal point for transportation issues and their health impacts, both positive and negative. It will do so by reviewing and publishing research, translating and communicating the research to inform action, sponsoring paper calls, developing research proposals and contributing to the knowledge base through the use of a variety of communication methods. This Committee will bring together a variety of disciplines, e.g., engineers, public health professionals, planners, epidemiologists, economists, advocates, elected officials, and academics, to advance the Committee's mission and scope.

Evidence of Uniqueness

To understand the uniqueness of a health committee in TRB, consider the environment when the Subcommittee was formed. Starting around 2005, TRB staff began to see annual meeting paper submissions with health-related topics and themes but no committee capable of doing the reviews. Behind the scenes, TRB staff established a group of three committee chairs to lead a team of reviewers that served as a virtual review team. This was the beginning of the recognition by the transportation community that health was emerging as topic that should be considered at the intersection of transportation.

While staff and others were realizing the uniqueness of health as a singular topic, those working in the health space had different ideas. They believed there should be a standing committee capable of interjecting health topics and interests throughout the TRB committee structure. Health was unique but must be dealt with broadly in the TRB organizational setting. To get a handle on where health was positioned among the TRB committees in preparation for one of its first organized Annual Meeting sessions, the Subcommittee interviewed 179 of the 247 committee chairs to ask them if their

committee had an interest in public health. Public health was very broadly defined in keeping with the Subcommittee's focus. A total of 61 chairs expressed some interest or connection to health¹, opening many avenues for the Subcommittee to begin spreading its focus throughout TRB.

Attention to health and transportation topics has been endorsed in several different ways. The first was when the Executive Committee (EC) recommended to the Technical Activities Council (TAC) that the Subcommittee be elevated to a full committee. Some say this endorsement kicked-off what began as the whole TRB strategic realignment process. Another form of endorsements came in 2016 when the Subcommittee formally sought to be elevated to a full committee and petitioned the TAC². At that time endorsements were sought from the Subcommittee's four parent committees. All four committees endorsed and welcomed the Subcommittee's proposed efforts. In addition to these direct Subcommittee endorsements the petition to establish the now completed Arterial Health Task Force also contained a page of endorsements³. At that time formal commitments of support for the Arterial Health Task Force were sought from Section, Group and Committee Chairs.

Attesting to the new committee's uniqueness, given its wide ranging subject matter puts the committee in good position to work on coordinating and working to harmonize the Committee scopes in the new Section and Group. The new committee could play a significant role in this process as the committees in the Section and Group begin to take shape.

Evidence of Demand and Potential Accomplishments

Interest in health and transportation remains very high within TRB. Subcommittee meetings are well attended. The Arterials Health Task Force (ADD55T) generated substantial interest and a high level of volunteer effort. Most recently the CHAT conference attracted 145 attendees from a wide variety of audiences and was notable for the level of engagement and enthusiasm in all the sessions.

Supporting this demand are some recent activities in the "health space" that have finished and need a home with a committee to promote and advance them. While the Subcommittee was planning to pick up many of these activities, committee status would enhance these efforts in the TRB organization. They include:

¹ Navigating the Intersection of Transportation and Public Health, Health and Transportation Subcommittee report. (https://www.dropbox.com/s/oyxwa33y7r3sqo8/health_and_transp_session_report.pdf?dl=0) accessed 2/17/2020.

² Document wrote to justify elevating the TRB Health and Transportation Subcommittee (ADD50-1) to Standing Committee status, 2016 (https://www.dropbox.com/s/olqd08m2eurv1j8/elevate_ht_subcommittee.pdf?dl=0) accessed 2/11/2020.

³ "Call for a TRB Task Force on Arterials and Public Health", Arterial Task Force website (https://www.dropbox.com/s/pgplimvfsfvpbyd/Arterials-Public%20Health_Task_Force_12-12-2014.pdf?dl=0) accessed 2/17/2020.

- [ECircular 239](#) - Arterial Roadways Research Needs and Concerns: Informing the Planning, Design, and Operation of Arterial Roadways Considering Public Health. This report was completed by the now completed Arterial Health Task Force which identified over 350 researchable ideas and topics that need to be advanced and championed in the field. The Subcommittee was attempting to advance this work but now the Committee can take the lead.
- NCHRP Project 20-112/Research Report 932 [Research Roadmap for Transportation and Public Health](#). The problem statements and synthesis proposals generated by this project need a committee to champion them among the various research programs. Initially the Subcommittee was filling this role but now the Committee is envisioned for this very most important task.
- TRB 2019 [Conference on Active Transportation and Health \(CHAT\)](#). Currently in production, the E-Circular resulting from this conference will articulate a course for moving forward in three health initiative theme areas including: building strategic institutional relationships, research needs, and innovative practices. Navigating and providing leadership to those working on the E-Circular theme areas is anticipated to come from the Committee.
- Healthy Transportation Clearing House. This is an ongoing project that was started as a Subcommittee activity and is now expected to be launched and marketed as an early development of the committee. It is being developed in conjunction with the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the International Professional Association for Transport & Health.

These are just a few of the activities in the pipeline. Refer to the rest of this document and the links provided throughout it for a more comprehensive view and perspective.

Previous Activities

Since its inception in 2012, the Health and Transportation Subcommittee has been highly productive. It functioned as a standing committee sponsoring paper calls, submitting research proposals, reviewing papers, organizing and conducting sessions and workshops, and taking on special initiatives.

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2014 TRB Conference

From the beginning, the Subcommittee has operated with two co-chairs, one with a strong background in transportation planning and the other with a strong background in public health. Shortly after the Subcommittee was founded, it put into place a leadership team that continues to the present with 16 members. The two co-chairs are assisted by a secretary; a research needs team, a communications team, and a paper review team. The leadership team guides the direction and efforts of the Subcommittee and works actively throughout the year. Periodically task groups have also been formed.

At the Annual Meeting, the Subcommittee routinely draws 100 to 135 (room capacity) interested persons, with good representation from both the transportation and public health fields. The Subcommittee receives between 25 and 35 papers to review from its paper calls. It has organized its own poster sessions, organized podium sessions in support of a variety of committees, developed workshops and hosted a cross-cutting Group session as well as one called for by the Executive Committee. Although the Subcommittee likes to lead when coordinating sessions, friends of the Subcommittee also help other committees throughout the TRB organization giving the Subcommittee some broad organizational appendages.

To engage its friends, the Subcommittee has a directed focus on marketing and communication. Since its inception the Subcommittee has hosted a listserv and website (<http://www.trbhealth.org>, accessed 2/21/2020). The listserv currently has 431 subscribers or friends of the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee uses social media tools, has active accounts on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook, and has a logo. From 2012 through 2014 the Subcommittee published a newsletter (7 issues), but after the retirement of the person responsible for it, the co-chairs determined that the listserv and social media were meeting the Subcommittee's communication needs.

In addition, the Subcommittee prepares a detailed report for the Annual Meeting providing information on the prior year's accomplishments, Subcommittee events at the Annual Meeting, and future initiatives. These reports are also used to inform partners of the Subcommittee's activities and ensure they align with the Subcommittee's strategic plan. Copies of the annual reports are provided on the Subcommittee's website.

The tables below highlight some of the data that the Subcommittee tracks.

Paper Review Summary

Year	Number	Presented	Published
2012	24	4	0
2013	27	9	1
2014	32	10	5
2015	23	8	3
2016	25	7	3
2017	28	15	0
2018	22	9	9
2019	28	11	1
2020	32	13	0

Workshops with Subcommittee Involvement

Year	No.	Lead	Title	Committees
2012	142	ADD00	Intersection of Health and Transportation: What We Know, What We Don't Know, How We Can Better Integrate Health Considerations into Transportation Decisions	ADD00, ADB10
2015	120	ADD50-1	Tools to Support Health and Transportation Planning and Analysis	ADD50, ADD40, ADD20, ABJ30, ADB10
2016	118	ADD50-1	Institutionalizing Health in Transportation Agency Practice	ABJ30, ADA30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50
2017	101		Nexus of Transportation and Environmental Health Governance	
2019	1015		New Paradigm for Managing Emissions from Transportation Sources	
2019	1064		Emerging Technologies in Transportation: Social and Economic Benefits, Challenges, and Risks	
2020	1782	ABJ30	Making Sense of Emerging Data Sources for Nonmotorized Transportation: Tools, Tips, and Knowledge Gaps for Effective Analysis	ABJ30, ADB40, ANF10, ANF20

Sessions Organized by the Health and Transportation Subcommittee

Year	No.	Type	Title	Main Committee (Chit Supplier)
2012	298	Poster	Health, Transportation and data	ABJ30
2012	694	Podium	Can Transportation and Public Health Be Compatible? Considering Health in Transportation Decisions	ADC10
2012	794	Podium	Health and Transportation Data Linkages: Eighth Annual Travel Data Users Forum (e-Session)	ABJ30, ABJ20, ABJ10
2013	351	Poster	Health Analysis Applied to Transportation Systems	ADD50, ABJ30, ADD40, ADB10
2013	392	Podium	Navigating the Intersection of Transportation and Public Health	A0000
2013	593	Podium	Use, Reuse, and Recycle: Getting the Most from National Household Travel Survey Data	ABJ45T, ADA20, ANB20
2014	359	Podium	Raising Public Health Issues to a Higher Level in the Transportation Sector	ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50
2014	570	Poster	Creative Use of Data in Transportation and Public Health Planning	ADD50, ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40
2014	572	Poster	Emerging Research in Health and Transportation	ADD50
2015	710	Poster	Where Transportation Meets Public Health	ADD50, ADD40, ABJ30, ADB10
2016	309	Poster	Innovations in Health and Transportation Research	ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50, ADD55T
2017	296	Podium	Translating Transportation Measures and Metrics into Health Outcomes	ADD55T
2017	347	Podium	Building Strategic Institutional Relationships at the Intersection of Health and Transportation	AB000
2017	371	Poster	Arterials, Population Health and Community	ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50, ADD55T
2017	515	Podium	Putting the Transportation and Health Tool to Work	ADD55T
2017	705	Poster	Innovations at the Intersection of Population Health and Transportation	ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50
2018	667	Podium	Why Consider Transportation and Health in a Rural Context?	ADA30
2018	713	Poster	Health, Transportation, and Moving Forward	ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50, ADD55T
2019	1108	Podium	Advancing Public Health in Transportation Is Critical for a Smart, Sustainable, and Equitable Future (Part 1)	ADD55T
2019	1151	Poster	Emerging Research in Health and Transportation	ABJ30, ADB10, ADD40, ADD50, ADD55T
2019	1180	Podium	Advancing Public Health in Transportation Is Critical for a Smart, Sustainable, and Equitable Future (Part 2)	ADD55T
2020	1690	Poster	Health, Transportation, and Emerging Research	ADD50, ADB10, ADD40

Subcommittee Paper Call History

Year	Title
2012	Any and all aspects of the connections between health and transportation
2013	Aspects of the connections between health and transportation
2014	Using transportation and travel analysis/models in coordination with public health analysis/models
2014	Creative use of data in transportation and public health planning (Poster Call)
2016	Enhancing the use of transportation and land use modelling tools in examining health outcomes
2017	Impact of freight on public health
2017	Equity in transportation: theory, methods, practices
2017	Transportation and environmental health governance
2017	Critical issues associated with arterials (major roads) and public health
2017	Data, methods, and models to integrate transportation and public health
2018	Influence of rural geography and transportation on health
2018	Expanding and improving our understanding and evaluation of the relationship between public health and transportation
2019	Expanding and improving our knowledge of methods, data, tools, and models that help enhance integration of public health and transportation

Over the years the Subcommittee has had many accomplishments (see below): A more complete list of contributions is posted on its website at (<http://www.trbhealth.org> accessed 1/21/2020).

- Publication of a Special Issue of TR News on Public Health and Transportation (TR News 299) in September-October 2015. Although unplanned, the release of this special issue coincided with the TRB Executive Committee's (EC) focus on health at the annual meeting which led to a recommendation by the EC to elevate the Health Subcommittee. (<http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/173512.aspx>, accessed 2-23-2020)
- Establishment of Arterial Health Task Force (<http://www.trbarterialhealth.org>, accessed 2/18/2020): In 2015, the TRB Technical Activities Council approved the Subcommittee's proposal to establish a Task Force with a purpose to inform the planning, design and operation of arterials while considering public health. The concept for the Task Force was born in the Subcommittee and it was the Subcommittee that took on the central role of proposing and championing the Task Force. The results of the work of the Task Force were published in a TRB e-circular (<http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/circulars/ec239.pdf>), in the *American Journal of Public Health* (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28640685>), and in the *ITE Journal* (http://www.nxtbook.com/ygsreprints/ITE/G93877 ITE_May2018/index.php#/12).
- Published Centennial paper ([http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/centennial/papers/ADD55TandADD50\(1\).pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/centennial/papers/ADD55TandADD50(1).pdf), accessed 2/18/2020): With the help of several task force members, the Subcommittee produced a centennial paper discussing a vision on how health can be organizationally approached between the TRB and Health and Medicine division of the Academies. The Centennial paper describes a variety of challenges and opportunities that should be addressed by the Committee.
- Health and Transportation Data Inventory (<https://tfresource.org>, accessed 2/16/2020). In collaboration with the Data and Travel Behavior committees, the Subcommittee developed a wiki-type document highlighting the data resources available for health and transportation planning. This is ongoing and part of a much larger effort within the planning and forecasting community.

Planned Activities

There are at least three separate paths envisioned for the new committee forward. One path deals with the administrative functioning/infrastructure of the Committee such as membership, working subgroups, and communications. Another more focused area deals with the products of the Committee that directly relate to its overall mission. There are currently many initiatives underway that need to be coordinated and advanced. Finally, work needs to be done cultivating the new initiatives that will likely be generated from the excitement around the formation of a "new" committee.

A significant early task for the Committee will involve coordinating and advancing recent initiatives concerning health and transportation. The immediate products needing additional work include NCHRP Research Report 932, E-Circular 239, and the product

of the CHAT conference. Each will take different levels of effort but all call for increased coordination throughout TRB and the Committee is the logical place for these efforts to occur.

The last major area for the Committee is to cultivate new initiatives. These initiatives will not only relate to those tied directly to the Committee's mission but also to the greater TRB organization. For example, the Committee could collaborate with other committees in the Section to develop a process to help harmonize their scopes while at the same time helping to articulate the scope of the Committee's Section. Such work could potentially extend to other Sections and even other Groups.

A new committee brings a great deal of excitement with it along with an increased potential to work more effectively within and across the TRB committees. Committees have the ability to direct sessions and develop their own lines of inquiries in cooperation with other committees. As a Subcommittee the initiatives pursued at the Annual Meeting tended to be constrained by the entity sponsoring the session, limiting the Subcommittee effectiveness. Breaking out of this submissive role, discussions have already started with the Strategic Management committee over partnering on an event at the 2021 annual meeting. Now the health committee can talk and know it can have some influence in the discussion with its "session chits".

Another emerging activity underway that was spurred on by the excitement of the new committee and discussions at the CHAT was to begin meeting with TRB upper management to discuss greater integration of health and transportation themes across the National Academies. A meeting on this front has already taken place and it was clear that the Committee could play a vital role given how the Subcommittee already includes diverse disciplines from across health, transportation, research, and practice.

Much work needs to be done to stand up a fully functional Committee. However, TRB has an excellent start in the Health and Transportation Subcommittee. As described above, the Subcommittee, its leadership, members, volunteers, and infrastructure are ready to step up and begin a new life as a TRB committee.

Thank you for your consideration.