

Building **Healthy** Corridors



Across the United States, communities aspire to become more economically vibrant, equitable, sustainable, and healthy.

Corridors can impede this aspiration by separating neighborhoods and prioritizing vehicles.

Together, ULI members, partners, and local stakeholders are reimagining the future of underperforming urban and suburban arterials, and reinventing them in healthier ways.

What Is a Healthy Corridor?

A healthy corridor has land uses and services that allow residents and visitors to easily make healthy lifestyle choices.

A healthy corridor is a place that reflects the culture of a community, inspires and facilitates healthy eating and active living, provides and connects to a variety of economic opportunities as well as housing and transportation choices, and adapts to residents' needs.



A Healthy Corridor Has:

Design and land use patterns that support community needs.

- Buildings pulled up to sidewalks
- Improved parking strategies
- Housing options
- Vibrant retail environment
- High-quality parks and public spaces
- Healthy food options

Engaged and supported people who live, work, and travel along the corridor.

- Regular programs in community gathering spaces
- Accommodations for pets
- A defined identity
- Measures to address safety and perceptions of safety
- Engaged residents and local business owners
- Organizations that facilitate long-term improvements and resident engagement

Linkages to other parts of the city.

- Well-connected, multimodal street networks
- Safe and easily identifiable connections, including sidewalks and trails
- Transit, including enhanced bus service or rail
- Bike infrastructure

Improved infrastructure.

- Safe and well-marked pedestrian crossings
- Traffic speeds that are conducive to pedestrians and other users
- Utility lines and traffic signs and signals that are underground or that blend in
- Sidewalks wide enough for a variety of users, buffered from the street, and unobstructed
- Streetscapes that add visual interest and safety, with trees and green buffers

From Here to There: A Process for Change

Relying on strong partnerships as well as stakeholder and community engagement, this recommended process draws from the experiences of champions—which include developers, community advocates, residents, and the public sector—pushing for change in corridors across the country.

You can be a champion for changing commercial corridors. Help improve the conditions along a corridor in your community.

Phase 1: Startup and Partnership Development (6–9 months)

- Identify a diverse leadership and stakeholder group
- Pursue strategies for community empowerment, engagement, and coalition building, framed around health and community needs
- Conduct initial-conditions audit

Phase 2: Convenings and Issue Identification (3–4 months)

- Hold a local public workshop to identify key corridor issues and opportunities
- Begin action planning
- Hold study visits to obtain expert recommendations

Phase 3: Priority Setting and Quick Wins (3–4 months)

- With stakeholders, set priorities with quick wins and short-, medium-, and long-term actions
- Create a strategy for business retention and affordable housing preservation
- Outline policy changes needed
- Determine potential funding sources
- Implement low-cost quick wins

Phase 4: Implementation and Working for Change (9–12 months)

- Assemble a corridor oversight group
- Identify champions to drive development strategies and policy changes
- Implement longer-term development, policy, planning, and programming interventions

Phase 5: Sustain Progress and Avoid Problems (ongoing)

- Sustain progress through the creation of a formal leadership group or improvement district
- Plan for ongoing maintenance and redevelopment
- Measure and track changes, and conduct conditions audits periodically
- Continue to address affordability and displacement issues



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Ten Principles for Healthy Corridors

- 1 Use the lens of health to convene stakeholders.
- 2 Understand the context of the corridor and determine how jurisdictional boundaries affect the corridor.
- 3 Analyze and understand the corridor's development potential; rethink land uses and zoning that are incompatible with community needs.
- 4 Proactively address transportation and infrastructure challenges.
- 5 Leverage anchor institutions as key partners (including hospitals, major employers, and universities).
- 6 Identify champions; redeveloping the corridor in a holistically healthy way will require many partners.
- 7 Engage proactively with communities along the corridor, and put in place strategies to prevent residential displacement.
- 8 Engage with business owners and landowners; local businesses that serve the corridor should remain and thrive.
- 9 Facilitate healthy food access through retail and policy solutions.
- 10 There is no one source of funding; seek out multiple opportunities from public and private sources.

ULI Healthy Corridors Project

The ULI Healthy Corridors Project is pioneering effective approaches to overhauling underperforming commercial corridors across the United States in ways that improve the health of everyone who lives, works, and travels along them.

With support from the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** and the **Colorado Health Foundation**, and working with demonstration corridors in four cities—Vista Avenue in Boise, Idaho; Van Nuys Boulevard in Los Angeles; Charlotte Avenue in Nashville,

Tennessee; and Federal Boulevard in Denver—ULI is developing strategies and recommendations for healthier corridors everywhere. Look for a full report in fall 2016.

To learn more, visit uli.org/healthycorridors.