HOW CAN WE STAY HEALTHY WHEN OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT IS WORKING AGAINST US?

ENVIRONMENT
Toxic air, water, soil, & materials
Light & noise pollution
Climate change & resource depletion

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY
Loneliness & social isolation
Economic insecurity & inequality
Polarization & lack of trust

PERSONAL/BEHAVIORAL
Sedentary & unhealthy lifestyle
Digital overload & stress
Disconnection from nature & heritage

URBAN UNWELLNESS
Intensive air, water, noise, & light pollution
Overcrowding & lack of tranquil space
Luxury versus slums
Limited amenities for the non-rich

SUBURBAN UNWELLNESS
Separation of home from daily activities
Car dependency & sprawl
Limited walkability
Social isolation & segregation

CHILDREN & TEENAGERS
Childhood obesity
Teen anxiety & depression
Lack of independence

WORKING ADULTS
Long commutes
Always on, 24/7 work culture
Rising stress & unhappiness

SENIORS
Decreased mobility
Increased medical needs
Isolation from friends & family

THE COSTS OF OUR UNHEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENT ARE STAGGERING AND UNSUSTAINABLE

PERSONAL/BEHAVIORAL
- Lack of physical activity (25% of adults and 80% of adolescents) costs over $67.5 billion each year in health expenditures and lost productivity.
- 38% of Americans say they lack outdoor spaces in their community to walk or exercise.

SOCIAL/COMMUNITY
- 25-40% of households are single in the United States, Western Europe, Japan, and South Korea.
- 25% of Americans have no close friend to confide in.
- Depression, a leading cause of illness and disability, increased 18% from 2000-2015 worldwide.

ENVIRONMENT
- A hazardous environment causes 24% of global disease and 13 million deaths every year.
- Air pollution kills 2.2 million in China and India every year.

URBAN UNWELLNESS
- 88% of urban dwellers are exposed to unhealthy levels of pollution.
- City life increases the risk of mental illness in children and adults.

SUBURBAN UNWELLNESS
- Each hour spent in a car per day increases obesity risk by 6%.
- Suburban dwellers walk less, drive more, weigh more, and are more likely to be hit by a car.
- Sprawl costs the American economy more than $1 trillion annually.

CHILDREN
- Only 13% of American children walk or bike to school, as compared to 48% in 1969.
- Australian children spend less than 2 hours a day outside but 4.5 hours in front of a screen.
- 2/3 of Chinese children do not meet recommended guidelines for daily physical activity.

WORKING ADULTS
- Every 10 minutes spent commuting results in 10% fewer social connections.
- Prolonged sitting raises the risk of cardiovascular disease by 14%, cancer by 13%, and diabetes by 91%.
- 33% of full-time workers find it difficult to maintain work-life balance (across the United States, United Kingdom, India, Japan, China, Germany, Mexico, and Brazil).

SENIORS
- 63% of older people find it hard to access healthcare (across 32 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean).
- 17% of seniors in England have contact with another person less than once a week.
- Only 1% of U.S. housing stock is adequately equipped to meet the needs of seniors.

Data aggregated by GWI from the sources listed in Endnote ix and the Bibliography.