

# INVEST HEALTH

## Strategies for Healthier Cities

A Project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
and Reinvestment Fund

Pod Meetup Course Catalog

September 2016

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### Invest Health

#### **Pod meetup #1: Improving public safety through community development**

Dates: January 31 – February 1, 2017

Location: Savannah, GA

Nearest airports: Savannah/Hilton Head Airport; Charleston International Airport (2 hours)

This pod meetup will explore how public safety—a key social determinant of health—can be improved by leveraging a range of community development strategies and partnerships. During the meetup, participants will engage with law enforcement, social services, urban planners, healthcare, nonprofit and community leaders who are working together to reduce crime and improve outcomes for youth, and share ideas about effective initiatives and approaches to improving health through public safety. We will visit the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard corridor, to understand the city's plans for a new police precinct first hand. Quiet walks along historic downtown Savannah's tree-lined cobblestone streets, the renowned local cuisine, and quick beach access will be an added treat for those who make the trip.

#### **Pod meetup #2: Expanding community development opportunities through public-private partnerships**

Dates: March 28-29, 2017

Location: Roanoke, VA

Nearest airports: Roanoke Blacksburg Regional Airport; Piedmont Triad International Airport, Greensboro, NC (2 hours)

This pod meetup will focus on opportunities to advance community development and improve health outcomes through direct partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including financial institutions, healthcare providers, developers, and city government. Drawing on lessons learned from Roanoke's ongoing downtown revitalization, participants will discuss strategies and incentives for engaging influential stakeholders in community development efforts and the important role that data plays in decision making. As part of the program, we will understand how the Roanoke team has worked to integrate health impacts into the city's broader plans to revitalize two low-income neighborhoods-- including using libraries as spaces for social service delivery and engaging the healthcare system in community development. Nestled between the Blue Ridge Parkway and Appalachian Trail, our extensive greenway system, emerging craft breweries and local cuisine will make this meetup as physically refreshing as it is intellectually stimulating.

#### **Pod meetup #3: Bettering housing to improve health**

Dates: May 2-3, 2017

Location: Akron, OH

Nearest airports: Akron-Canton Airport; Cleveland Hopkins International Airport (45 minutes)

This pod meetup will focus on how housing can be developed to meet the needs of low-income communities and improve health outcomes by incorporating health and social services. We will visit new housing developments in Akron and spend time discussing the practical and financial realities of developing health-focused housing. While in Akron we will connect with Summa Health, a leading

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healthcare provider, developers, and financiers that were part of these housing developments to better understand how to bring these projects to life. Spring hikes in the nearby Cuyahoga Valley National Park will be at your doorstep and—you never know—we might catch a glimpse of LeBron James in his hometown.

### **Pod meetup #4: Promoting health through food access and walkability**

Dates: September 19-20, 2017

Location: Syracuse, NY

Nearest airport: Syracuse Hancock International Airport

This pod meetup will focus on strategies for increasing access to healthy food in low-income neighborhoods, and promoting healthy activity by improving the streetscapes in the inner city. First hand examples of interconnected food markets, residential buildings, and green pathways funded by CDFIs and other diverse stakeholders will help spark a conversation about what it takes to bring investment in healthy food and walkable corridors to your city. During our time in Syracuse, we will visit urban food stores and a farmer's market and tour the city's various walkable corridors. This meetup will bring us to town in time to see the beautiful fall foliage of Upstate New York, and within striking distance of the Finger Lakes region's famous wineries.

### **Pod meetup #5: Engaging the community to drive revitalization**

Dates: October 18-19, 2017

Location: Henderson, NV

Nearest airport: Las Vegas McCarran International Airport

This pod meetup will focus on how to plan with implementation in mind. We will learn from Henderson's nationally recognized community engagement work (the city won the American Planning Association's 2016 National Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach) and discuss how to make sincere community engagement a continuous focus and systemic practice in any context. We will also learn about how community engagement can drive revitalization plan priorities, which may include leveraging private and public investments to improve health outcomes, neighborhood connectivity, and livability. We will tour one of Henderson's redevelopment focus areas—the Pittman Neighborhood—and consider the unique opportunities community and private development projects may bring to the area. Just a stone's throw from Las Vegas, Lake Mead, and the Grand Canyon, there are plenty of reasons to tack on a long weekend to this trip.