

Session 2: Integrating Health Equity in the Design Process: Let's PRECEDE

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

8:30 a.m – 9:30 a.m.

The Designer Selection Board will host a continued session with the Perkins&Will team **Erika Eitland**, MPH, ScD, Director, Human Experience Research, Senior Associate and **David Cordell**, FASID, LEED AP, WELL AP Associate Principal. The presentation will be **the second in a series of three sessions**. This session will take place outside of the Designer Selection Board meeting. The session is offered as an **AIA CES credit of 1 LU/HSW**.

The PRECEDE framework equips architects and design professionals with a proactive methodology to integrate public health, safety, and welfare (HSW) principles into every phase of the design process. By positioning the designer as a strategic partner in community resilience, PRECEDE strengthens the connection between a building's design and the physical, emotional, and social well-being of its users. This approach expands the traditional scope of programming and analysis to identify upstream health determinants—such as air quality, physical activity, and access to nature—and connects these to project-specific goals, client missions, and site conditions. For instance, designing the same building typology in a Southwestern suburb versus a Northeastern urban neighborhood demands different public health responses due to variations in climate, mobility patterns, and community health data.

By embedding health-focused strategies like enhanced air filtration, thermal comfort, active design, and material health early in project planning and design, architects can mitigate risks, address population-specific health needs, and avoid late-stage compromises during value engineering. PRECEDE thus supports project development and documentation processes that explicitly prioritize health-promoting, risk-reducing, and equitable design decisions—clearly communicating these choices to clients and ensuring they are integrated into specifications, QA/QC, and final construction. This ensures that buildings serve not only their occupants, but also the broader communities they impact—advancing health, protecting safety, and enhancing welfare at every scale.

In addition to community health strategies, the selection of healthy materials and the consideration of both operational and embodied carbon are critical components that support the HSW designation. Material choices directly impact indoor air quality, occupant health, and long-term exposure to toxins, while also influencing building performance and environmental impact. By prioritizing low-emitting, non-toxic materials and leveraging tools such as material passports and certifications, architects can protect occupant well-being and reduce life-cycle health risks. Furthermore, addressing embodied and operational carbon during project planning and development ensures that design solutions contribute to environmental sustainability—an essential aspect of welfare—while supporting long-term safety and resilience for current and future occupants.

Learning Objectives:

1. **Integrate** publicly available resources for health, well-being, and equity in early design phases.
2. **Prioritize** public health metrics that most directly impact occupant health outcomes for a specific community.
3. **Perform** community health centered visioning and programming with clients.
4. **Evaluate** design strategies and performance themes through a health equity lens.