

# The New York Times

April 5, 2009

Letter

Rebuilding America: Urban Policy and Health

To the Editor:

Re “Reinventing America’s Cities: The Time Is Now” by Nicolai Ouroussoff [March 29]:

Today’s cities not only reinforce and encourage racial, income and ethnic disparities, but they also contribute to population health outcome disparities as well.

Unsafe neighborhoods, diminished or improperly maintained park space, poor street lighting and pollution impact residents’ ability for physical activity, socialization, green gardening and even effective physical education, recess and after-school programs for children.

Reinventing America’s cities is also a necessary part of reforming America’s health care system.

Dr. Deborah Viola

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The writer is the director of the master’s of public health program at New York Medical College.