



WHAT COMPRISES A HEALTHY COMMUNITY?

“A healthy community is one where people have the opportunity to make healthy choices, in environments that are safe, free from violence, and designed to promote health. Factors that influence health range from early childhood education to quality housing and jobs, and include many other areas of community development such as financial inclusion, access to health clinics and healthy food, sustainable energy, and transportation.”*

ELEMENTS OF A HEALTHY COMMUNITY



ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND COVERAGE

- Affordable, accessible and high quality health care
- Community Paramedicine/care coordination
- Health literacy
- Access to behavioral health services

HEALTH IMPACTS: Disease prevention, mental health



AFFORDABLE QUALITY HOUSING

- Affordable, high quality, socially integrated housing
- Housing near public transportation if needed
- Ways to avoid displacement as older neighborhoods are revitalized
- Promoting housing development and design that encourages social interaction

HEALTH IMPACTS: Economic stability, disease prevention, air quality, mental health, exposure to extreme climate, exposure to lead, early brain development, injury prevention



COMMUNITY SAFETY

- Safe communities, free of crime and violence
- Diversion programs available instead of incarceration
- Promoting built environments that “feel” safe

HEALTH IMPACTS: Mental health, injury prevention, physical activity



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- Access to capital for entrepreneurship
- Job training and mentorship/accelerator space
- Access to affordable and diverse commercial spaces
- Clustering of commerce and integration with residential uses for enhanced vibrancy
- A culture of local talent development
- Living wages in the community

HEALTH IMPACTS: Economic stability/access, air quality, walkability/physical activity, mental health (stimulating, healthy work)



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

- Opportunities for high quality and accessible education
- Opportunities for developmentally-appropriate and affordable childcare
- Access to a variety of post-secondary opportunities

HEALTH IMPACTS: Healthier students tend to have greater educational achievement



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Clean air and waterways
- Healthy and clean soils
- Water supply protection and water security
- Tobacco- and smoke-free spaces
- Minimized toxics, greenhouse gas emissions and waste
- Affordable and sustainable energy use

HEALTH IMPACTS: Asthma and other respiratory diseases, disease prevention, exposure to environmental contaminants including lead, early brain development



FOOD ACCESS

- Affordable, accessible and nutritious foods
- Promoting a variety of healthy food access opportunities

HEALTH IMPACTS: Nutrition, obesity, disease prevention, mental health, early brain development



HEALTHY COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Walkability and places for multi-modal transport
- Mixed use developments
- Transit-oriented developments
- Adaptive re-use
- Access to cool and shaded spaces
- Environments free of excessive noise
- Vacant land reuse opportunities
- Access to green and open spaces, including healthy tree canopy and agricultural lands

HEALTH IMPACTS: Economic stability, mental health, physical activity, air quality, injury prevention, obesity, heat-related illness



PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Access to affordable and safe opportunities for physical activity
- Joint use opportunities with schools, libraries and community centers

HEALTH IMPACTS: Physical activity, disease prevention, mental health, early brain development, air quality



SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COHESION

- Opportunities for engagement with arts, music and culture
- Robust social and civic engagement
- Supportive relationships, families, homes and neighborhoods
- Support services for behavioral health needs
- Community empowerment that can lead to systems change

HEALTH IMPACTS: Economic stability, mental health, public safety



SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Addresses historical trauma and structural racism
- Resolves the social and physical differences adversely affecting socially disadvantaged groups
- Pursues fair distribution of resources

HEALTH IMPACTS: Live longer, physical and mental health, economic stability, intact families, resiliency, public safety



TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

- Safe, sustainable, accessible and affordable transportation options
- Promoting built environments that encourage walking, biking and taking transit

HEALTH IMPACTS: Obesity, disease prevention, physical activity, mental health, economic stability, air quality, injury prevention

CROSS CUTTING LENS

Equity and Social Justice: “Health equity is achieved when everyone, regardless of race, neighborhood, sexual orientation or financial status, has the opportunity for health – physical, mental, economic, and social well-being.”**

Resiliency: Ability to bounce back from adverse events (i.e. fire, drought, excess heat, economic disruptions, etc). We seek social-ecological resilience to crisis or extreme events caused by climate change, such as drought, heat, and flood.” We define indicators of social-ecological resilience in a variety of ways, including:

- Social coherence and other coping, anticipation, preparation, adaptation and response mechanisms
- Water and food security

* http://www.buildhealthyplaces.org/network_resources, ** http://www.policylink.org/focus-areas/health-equity-and-place/about-the-center#What_is_Health_Equity