



Gavin Newsom
Mayor

Mitchell H. Katz, MD
Director of Health

June 5, 2006

Dear ENCHIA Participant:

I would like to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to you for participating in the Eastern Neighborhoods Community Health Impact Assessment. This effort and its products represent an ambitious and much needed effort to make certain that San Francisco residents, both now and in the future, have the living and working conditions required for optimal health. Your participation ensured that the process incorporated a wide range of human health needs.

The 18-month long process has already resulted in a number of important outcomes:

- Producing a vision of a Healthy San Francisco;
- Developing community health planning objectives to reflect that *Health City Vision*;
- Identifying indicators to measure those objectives and vision;
- Generating and presenting data on those objectives and indicators to assess how the City was doing with respect to that *Vision*;
- Developing research and forecasting tools to relate planning to health outcomes;
- Developing a menu of urban policy strategies to advance those objectives; and,
- Integrating all of the above products into the *Healthy Development Measurement Tool (HDMT)*, an evidence-based support tool for healthy planning and policy-making.

Despite the complementary goals of city planning and public health, regular communication between City agencies has not been a routine part of policy analysis. We acknowledge that we need to work more closely together. Your work has helped to build our understanding of the relationships between health, your priorities, and diverse land use, economic, environment, and infrastructure objectives. I share your vision and feel that the ENCHIA research and products, such the *Healthy Development Measurement Tool*, can be constructively used to identify and promote health interests in City policy, plan, and project development.

I appreciate that ENCHIA has also resulted in a number of other outcomes. These include achieving an increased understanding of the human health impacts of development; the use of public health rhetoric and evidence in public policy dialogues and debates; new working relationships among Council members with complementary interests; and, a broadening of the horizons of a government agency.

At your most recent meeting, SFDPH staff made a number of commitments to conclude the ENCHIA process. Among these are to:

- 1) Complete the ENCHIA Final Report;
- 2) Produce a working final version of the *Healthy Development Measurement Tool*;
- 3) Develop a User Guide based on pilot testing of the HDMT;
- 4) Inform the Board of Supervisors, City agencies and non-ENCHIA organizations about the HDMT and its potential uses;
- 5) Develop the HDMT into as website for user-friendly, universal access and dissemination;
- 6) Develop and conduct training on the HDMT for potential users; and,
- 7) Apply the HDMT to appropriate and constructive opportunities, in partnership with other city agencies.

The *Healthy Development Measurement Tool* represents the beginning of a new role for DPH. This HIA reflects the first attempt at a comprehensive health impact assessment of land use planning in the United States. We have created a framework and method for evaluation and we feel successful in completing the process, maintaining stakeholder participation, and adapting and responding to challenges raised along the way. Today, as we prepare to apply the *Healthy Development Measurement Tool* to other planning contexts, we see this work as a reflection of the state of the field – a clear need for tools and methods to assess health in land use planning.

We also believe this experience reflects the call for comprehensive health and social assessment, which has long been unheeded by many government agencies.

Again, thank you for the hard work, commitment and cooperation in this innovative process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitchell Katz". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MITCHELL H. KATZ, MD
Director of Health

cc: Rajiv Bhatia