

Eastern Neighborhoods Community Health Impact Assessment (ENCHIA) Building a Vision for Healthy San Francisco Neighborhoods

A Project of the SF Department of Public Health

April 3, 2006

San Francisco Planning Department
Dean Macris, Director
Amit Ghosh, Chief of Comprehensive Planning
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94103

Dear Dean and Amit,

On behalf of the Community Council of the Eastern Neighborhoods Community Health Impact Assessment (ENCHIA), we are requesting your review of the attached working draft of our "*Healthy Development Measurement Tool*".

Briefly, to provide some background, Health Impact Assessment (HIA) encompasses a set of processes and methods to inform policy-makers about how policies, plans, programs, or projects can affect health. HIA reflects growing scientific understanding that optimal health cannot be achieved by health services and individual behaviors alone but also through healthful neighborhood conditions including adequate housing; access to public transit, schools, parks and public spaces; safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists; meaningful and productive employment; unpolluted air, soil, and water; and, cooperation, trust, and civic participation.

The ENCHIA, facilitated and staffed by the SF Department of Public Health, is a multi-stakeholder HIA process formed to analyze how development in several San Francisco neighborhoods could be planned to improve health. ENCHIA is guided by a Community Council of over 20 organizations who represent a range of public interests. The ENCHIA process has resulted in:

- A set of measurable community health planning objectives;
 - Data and maps to assess how San Francisco is meeting these objectives;
 - Research and forecasting tools that help relate planning outcomes to health outcomes; and,
 - A menu of urban policy strategies supporting health.
- The *Healthy Development Measurement Tool*

The *Healthy Development Measurement Tool* is an evidence-based tool for healthy planning and policy-making in San Francisco. The *Tool* not only reflects health goals but also a number of priority policies set forth in San Francisco's General Plan, including those for neighborhood-serving retail, parks and open space, neighborhood character, affordable housing, a broad economic base, public transit services, and cultural and economic diversity.

Community Council Members

American Lung Association
Asian Neighborhood Design
Center for Human Development
Charlie's Place
Citizen's Housing
Jardinere / Nextcourse
Low Income Investment Fund
Mission Community Council
Mission Economic Development Association
Mission SRO Collaborative
Neighborhood Parks Council
Okamoto-Saijo Architecture
People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights
People Organized to Win Employment Rights
SEIU Local 790
SF Bike Coalition
SF Community Land Trust
SF Food Systems/Food Alliance
SOMA Family Resource Center
South of Market Community Action Network
South of Market Employment Center
Tenants and Owners Development Corporation
Transportation for a Livable City
Urban Habitat
Walk SF

Government Agencies Providing Technical Support

SF Department of City Planning
SF Department of Parking and Traffic
SF Department of Public Health
SF Municipal Transportation Agency
SF Police Department
SF Recreation and Park Department
Board of Supervisors, Maxwell
Board of Supervisors, Ammiano
Board of Supervisors, Daly

Technical Advisors

Columbia University
Center for Collaborative Policy

Sponsor and Coordinator

Program on Health, Equity and Sustainability, SF Department of Public Health

We understand that community health provides only one perspective for making policy decisions. However, we believe this *Tool* might ultimately be helpful to the City and its agencies in planning, evaluating projects and policies, and prioritizing budgets.

As currently drafted, the components of the *Healthy Development Measurement Tool* include:

- **Healthy City Vision Objectives:** The ENCHIA Healthy City Vision objectives are actions that would result in greater and more equitable health assets and resources for San Francisco residents. The Healthy City Vision includes 22 objectives organized into four elements: healthy economy, public infrastructure/access to goods and services, adequate housing, and environmental stewardship. These objectives reflect broad goals for what ENCHIA envisions as necessary for a healthy city.
- **Indicators:** One or more indicators are identified for each of the 22 objectives in the Healthy Development Measurement Tool. The indicators are measures of social progress which are understandable, actionable, measurable, meaningful, and motivating. These indicators would be assessed in comparison to projects, policies and plans to understand whether objectives are being met.
- **Development Targets:** Targets reflects growth and development goals that would, if met, achieve the Healthy City Vision objectives. The targets in this Tool reflect land use planning and development outcomes which meets the objectives of the ENCHIA Healthy City Vision for San Francisco.
- **Baseline Data:** Where available, either baseline data or the source for baseline data for each indicator is provided. Baseline data tells us how we are doing and helps to assess the feasibility of progress towards the standards.
- **Health Justification:** For each target, the *Tool* provides an evidence-based rationale illustrating the specific way human health would be affected by improving the indicator.

We want to acknowledge that the indicators and targets reflect objectives and needs identified by the ENCHIA Community Council and supporting City agencies.

The *Tool* is meant to be used in a comprehensive way. This means that achievement of one or more development targets alone does not signify healthy development. Similarly, we do not expect that every plan or project will realistically be able to achieve all objectives and indicators.

The *Tool* will ultimately be placed into a more usable web-based form with indicators linked to baseline data and development targets linked to supportive actions. Currently, the *Tool* is in a working draft form. Not all indicators have associated development targets and some are missing baseline data and health justifications. Over the next few months, this version of the *Tool* will be 'peer-reviewed' by a national group of colleagues and technical experts to get feedback and make improvements.. At this point, we are requesting City agencies who might ultimately use this tool to provide us specific feedback on its content. Only certain aspects of this tool may be relevant to the mission of your agency. More specifically, we would like to better understand:

- Whether there are alternative measures to serve as indicators for the *Healthy City Vision* objectives?
- Whether your agency is already routinely collecting data on any of these indicators. If so, could you let us know to whom in your agency we should direct a request for this data?

- Whether your agency has a specific planning standard or target related to these indicators?
- Whether development targets appear consistent with your mission?
- Whether development targets appear feasible? If so, under what conditions? If not, why?
- Whether you see any trade-offs or conflicts between objectives, indicators, or standards?
- What are ways that your agency might use such a tool in planning, project or policy review or budgeting?

As the Planning Department, we are requesting that you specifically review the indicators and targets in all sections of the Tool. We understand this is a large task, but given your agency's purview, we feel the Tool would benefit from your expertise.

The overarching aim of the ENCHIA process has been to support public understanding of the importance of urban planning and policy-making to human health. We hope this tool might become one of several practical ways to promote health and prevent illness and injury. When the tool is in a final working form, we will be in contact with you to explore how the Council and SFDPH staff might support its pilot applications by City agencies.

More information about ENCHIA is available at www.sfdph.org/phes/enchia.htm. As we are hoping to receive your comments within the next month, our staff will be in contact with you to follow up on this request. In the meantime, please feel free to contact Rajiv Bhatia, Director of Environmental Health (415.252.3982) or Lili Farhang, ENCHIA Project Coordinator (415.252.3988) with any questions.

CC: Julian Potter, Mayor's Director of Public Policy