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**OCCUPATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

Thank you for your participation in the second meeting of the Eastern Neighborhoods Community Health Impact Assessment. Thirty-three community organizations and City Departments attended the meeting and shared their organization's interests in health and land use planning. This was an important first step in understanding each others needs in the process.

The group spent some time contributing additional physical, social, and qualitative dimensions to the composite picture of a healthy city developed from the small group sessions from the first meeting.

Key social attributes suggested by participants included secure livelihood (a healthy paycheck), social interaction in public places, diverse political representation, and living near extended families. Particularly notable were qualities of a city such as being legible, welcoming, safe, accessible, and open. The connection between the health of the city was made to individual health. For example, *legibility* or being able to locate things you need appeared to support mental health, perceived safety and the sense of belonging. Also discussed was how a city communicates to its residents; Ideas included community bulletin boards, non-commercial radio, and wireless access.

We brainstormed the diverse kinds of forces and policies that influence the healthy city vision. Not surprisingly, this list was broad and long. Forces included values, stereotypes, the economy, media, and political participation. Policies include both those directly related to land use decisions such zoning, the general plan, impact fees, transport plans, and environmental review to those involving financing such as ballot initiatives, department budgets, taxes, and subsidies. While many of these policies may appear distant from the process objectives, they represent a basket of tools that might be used to shape the outcomes of zoning and land use.

We briefly reviewed the health impact assessment (HIA) process map at the last meeting, and will return to this topic at the beginning of the third meeting to ensure that people feel that the process will get us to the core objectives— understanding the impacts of zoning on the eastern neighborhoods and how to effect the implementation of zoning to positively support community health.

**The next meeting will be on January 19th, 2005 at 9am at the Goodwill conference Room on Mission Street. Agenda attached. Please RSVP by January 12th, 2005.**

At the next meeting, the Department of City Planning will talk about land uses and development in the Eastern Neighborhoods. Based on the elements of a healthy city developed over the past two meetings, the first draft of an assessment tool has been created. This tool will be used to evaluate the current health of the Eastern Neighborhoods we will also apply it to the zoning proposals to anticipate if the development that occurs as a result of the rezoning will achieve our objectives of a healthy community. (Links to examples of tools used in other settings are attached below.) The questions and issues identified in this tool will serve as the scope of the HIA. A primary goal of the meeting is to refine the assessment tool, develop additional questions, and identify indicators that will help us measure perceptions of health.

Once again, thank you for your participation and we hope to see you at the next meeting. Please contact either myself or any of the project staff if you have any questions or wish to discuss the process.

Sincerely,

Rajiv Bhatia, MD, MPH, Director, Occupational and Environmental Health

Link to Complete Document: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mhip/CHImpactAssessTool%20.doc>

Another HIA Tool Resource, [The Mersyide Guidelines for Health Impact Assessment](#)