Health Impact Assessment

An emerging tool for integrating public health considerations into land use planning decisions

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Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

- World Health Organization
Health Impact Assessment
A combination of procedures, methods and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, program or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA identifies appropriate actions to manage those effects.

International Association for Impact Assessment, 2006
HIA Addresses Determinants of Health

How does the proposed project, plan, policy affect

- Housing
- Air quality
- Noise
- Safety
- Social networks
- Nutrition
- Parks and natural space
- Private goods and services
- Public services
- Transportation
- Livelihood
- Water quality
- Education
- Inequities

and lead to health outcomes
HIA Purpose

Through HIA report and communications
Judge health effects of a proposed project, plan or policy
Highlight health disparities
Provide recommendations
Shape public decisions & discourse
Make health impacts more explicit

Through the HIA process
Engage & empower community
Recognize lived experience
Build relationships & collaborations
Build consensus
## Steps of a HIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Screening</strong></td>
<td>Determines the need and value of a HIA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scoping</strong></td>
<td>Determines which health impacts to evaluate, methods for analysis, and a workplan</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Provides: 1) a profile of existing health conditions, 2) evaluation of potential health impacts</td>
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<td><strong>Recommendations</strong></td>
<td>Provide strategies to manage identified adverse health impacts</td>
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<td><strong>Reporting</strong></td>
<td>Includes: 1) development of the HIA report, 2) communication of findings &amp; recommendations</td>
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<td><strong>Monitoring</strong></td>
<td>Tracks: 1) impacts on decision-making processes and the decision, 2) impacts of the decision on health determinants</td>
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Examples of HIA Projects

Comprehensive / Specific / Transit-Oriented Development Plans
Lake Oswego to Portland Transit Project
Pittsburg Avenue Railroad Specific Plan
An Existing Conditions Report of the East Palo Alto Ravenswood Business District Planning
Humboldt County General Plan Update

Housing Projects
Jack London Gateway development
South Los Angeles housing redevelopment
San Francisco public housing redevelopment

State / Local Policies
I-710 expansion in California
Vehicle miles traveled legislation in Oregon
Paid sick days legislation in California, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire
Benton County Accessory Dwelling Unit Policy
Proposal
Update Humboldt County’s General Plan, including development scenarios to accommodate future growth in the county

Collaborators
Board of Supervisors
Public Health Branch
County Planning Department
The California Endowment
Human Impact Partners
HumPAL (community organization)
Proposed Alternatives

Alternative A
“Focused growth”
All new units built in areas with existing infrastructure
6,000 units over 25 years

Alternative B
Build primarily in areas with existing infrastructure
Some expansion to areas outside city centers
12,000 units (6,000 urban/6,000 non-urban)

Alternative C
Requires expansion of infrastructure
Allows new housing in outlying areas
18,000 units (6,000 urban/12,000 non-urban)
Clearly defined decision to be made
Decision will impact health
Public health involvement invited
Resources available
Variety of stakeholders interested
Humboldt Scoping

Process
Led by Public Health, HumPAL, and HIP
Conducted three focus groups with ~50 participants

35 community health indicators used to assess 3 alternatives
Healthy housing
Safe and sustainable transportation
Environmental stewardship
Public infrastructure
Public safety/Social cohesion
Healthy economy
Existing Conditions
In Humboldt County, VMT = 27 miles/person/day (2006)
California VMT = 24 miles/person/day

VMT affects health
Collisions, walking/biking, proximity to goods and services, social cohesion, global warming

Disparities
Seniors may be unable/unwilling to drive
Low-income people may not have access to cars or may need to spend large percent of income on driving

VMT: Average vehicle miles traveled per person per day
Assessment - VMT Findings

Alternative A (baseline)
Reduced individual travel expenses and time
Increased transit, walking, and biking

Alternative B
200 million more miles driven in the county annually

Alternative C
400 million miles more
Humboldt Findings

Alternative A
Most positive health impacts overall and requires fewest health-related mitigations

Alternative B
Changes current health outcomes least

Alternative C
Most negative health impacts overall and requires greatest number of health-related mitigations
Humboldt Recommendations

Examples of Transportation-related Recommendations

- Encourage employer-based incentives for transit
- Increase public education about public transit
- Raise priority of non-motorized modes of transport
- Collect data about pedestrian and bicycle use
- Establish pedestrian and bicycle routes to schools
Humboldt Outcomes

No decision yet on General Plan Update
Recommendations included in Circulation and Housing Elements
HIA included as appendix to EIS
Built collaboration between planning & public health agencies
Built awareness about health and land use among elected officials, general public, planners, community groups
Other counties interested in using the approach
Proposed Humboldt Port expansion project will include an HIA
Accessory Dwelling Unit
on property detached living quarters “granny flat” or “studio unit”

Benton County code does not currently allow ADU’s

County Comprehensive Plan includes goal to develop standards for ADU’s.

Have the potential to promote health, especially for persons with medical hardships
Policy Proposals

HIA completed collaboratively by County Planning and Health Departments to identify possible health impacts of ADUs and to assess potential policy options

potential policy options
1) no policy change
2) restriction of current rules;
3) allow dependent accessory dwelling units
4) allow independent accessory dwelling units
5) allow independent accessory dwelling units in urban growth boundary areas only
Assessment of Impacts

18 indicators of health assessed for each policy proposal

Positive impacts:
- living spaces for ill, disabled, or aging persons near family members or caregivers
- affordable housing for low and moderate income persons and small households
- living situations for “family-based” or multi-generational housing
- additional income for homeowners

Negative impacts:
- development of units in locations far from basic amenities and services
- development of units in places without appropriate public transportation
- development in rural areas where auto-dependence is necessary and pedestrian and bicycle activity in limited
### Summary of Policy Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 1 (no policy change)</td>
<td>No effect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Option 2 (restriction of current rules)</td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 3 (dependent ADUs)</strong></td>
<td>Positive impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 4 (independent ADUs)</td>
<td>Negative impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 5 (independent ADUs in UGB zones)</td>
<td>Negative impact</td>
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**Mitigations:**

1) Residents of ADUs must be the homeowner, relative or caretaker of the homeowner
2) Units cannot be offered as a rental
3) The policy will be reviewed for unexpected impacts several years after adoption
4) A “cap” of units permitted annually will be established and can be modified after the initial policy review.
¼ of the land acreage in EPA
Traditionally industrial area
Some environmental quality concerns
Last undeveloped land in EPA

East Palo Alto is a “community of concern”
30% or more of households earn below 200% of poverty level
70% or more of persons in households are people of color
Partners and Collaborators

Funded by

YUCA (Youth United for Community Action)

San Mateo County Health System

Funded by

The California Endowment
Development decisions will impact health and health disparities
Mayor of EPA committed to including health in decision-making
Public health invited to participate
Resources available
Variety of stakeholders interested
Area Plan in development;
   City seeking input
EPA RBD Scoping

Process

Series of meetings with coalition of community participants

6 chapters to address impact of RBD plans on:

Jobs and livelihood
Safe and sustainable transportation
Neighborhood completeness
Environmental quality
Healthy housing
Social cohesion
Pedestrian Quality

Existing Conditions
89.9% of intersections = poor or unsuitable
11.2% of street segments = poor or unsuitable

Pedestrian quality affects health
Collisions, walking/biking, proximity to goods and services, social cohesion

Disparities
Low-income people may not have access to cars; need to walk more
Upkeep is not as good in lower-income neighborhoods of EPA
Existing Conditions

Of 149 land parcels in redevelopment area, approximately 50 are zoned for industrial use, and 60% of industrial parcels have some level of hazardous waste contamination.

Current water and sewer infrastructure is inadequate and in need of improvement.

There is little air quality monitoring data at the local level in EPA.

Environmental quality and health

Living near contaminated land can pose serious threats to health, especially for vulnerable populations.

Exposure to environmental hazards is a major concern for residents in EPA.
Implement pedestrian improvements equally in all neighborhoods

Traffic calming in most dangerous intersections

Clean-up and remediation of contaminants necessary for RBD to be available for uses that meet interests and needs of the community

Consider the development of a “downtown”, pedestrian friendly area with retail in the RBD

New transportation developments associated with the RBD should help residents get to needed retail and services
EPA RBD Reporting

150 page report
Introduction
6 detailed analysis reports

Reviewed by community partners, San Mateo County Health Systems before release

Shared with other local organizations and Redevelopment Agency