

Community Health Indicators for Health Impact Assessment on Land Uses Policy and Planning

Section V: Community Health Indicators

An **INDICATOR** is essentially a measure of something. Indicators are often used in public policy to evaluate social, economic, or environmental conditions, to establish social goals, and to track progress towards those goals. For example, the US Clean Air Act identified criteria air pollutants and national ambient air quality standards to help achieve the country's clean air goals. The US Department of Health and Human Services established population health status indicators and objectives to achieve the goals of Healthy People 2010. Good indicators accurately reflect conditions of interest, are understandable, convey meaning, and motivate change.

Community Health Indicators reflect underlying conditions that have influence on human health. Community health indicators along with indicators of population health status are important to the practice of HIA. HIA uses community health indicator to describe existing health-related conditions in an area or place. HIA also makes predictions of how policies, plans, or projects can affect community health indicators. Data on community health indicators can be used in the *scoping* phase of an HIA to prioritize issues for analysis.

There are many community health indicators relevant to land use planning and policy, and the following table outlines several of these. Some of these indicators are also commonly included in the description of existing conditions in an Environmental Impact Report (see pages 1.11 and 3.45 for more information on EIRs with regard to land use planning projects). The table of Community Health Indicators below is not meant to be exhaustive, and particular projects or contexts may call for the creation or measurement of additional community health indicators.

COMMUNITY HEALTH DETERMINANTS AND THEIR INDICATORS

Health Determinants	Connections between Determinants and health outcomes	Measurable Community Health Indicators
<p>Livelihoods</p> <p>Security of Employment</p> <p>Adequacy of wages, income, benefits, and leave</p> <p>Job Hazards</p> <p>Job Autonomy</p> <p>Economic diversity</p>	<p><i>Unemployment is a source of chronic stress and low self esteem and is associated with health adverse behaviors and premature death.</i></p> <p><i>Income is strongly associated with life expectancy</i></p> <p><i>Sick leave supports timely use of health care.</i></p> <p><i>Rates of unemployment and poverty are proportional to crime rates</i></p> <p><i>Job autonomy predicts reduced mortality from cardiovascular disease</i></p>	<p>Proportion of residents within the labor market that are employed</p> <p>Proportion of jobs in the City that provide self-sufficiency income</p> <p>Proportion of jobs that have guaranteed paid sick leave.</p> <p>Proportion of jobs that have health insurance coverage.</p>
<p>Housing</p> <p>Space</p> <p>Light and Air</p> <p>Crowding</p> <p>Affordability</p> <p>Design safety</p> <p>Location safety</p> <p>Stable tenure</p>	<p><i>Crowded conditions increase risks for infections, respiratory disease, mental health, and fire risk.</i></p> <p><i>Unaffordable rents or mortgages result in trade-offs between housing, food, and medical care.</i></p>	<p>Proportion of housing units affordable to household with median income</p> <p>Proportion of population homeless in the past year</p> <p>Proportion of households evicted in past year</p>
<p>Transportation</p> <p>Access to jobs, goods, services, and educational resources</p> <p>Active travel</p> <p>Public transit options</p> <p>Transport Safety</p>	<p><i>Public transit provides access to employment, education, parks, and health care services.</i></p> <p><i>Sidewalks, bicycle lanes, parks and open space facilitate physical activity, reducing heart disease, diabetes, obesity, blood pressure, and osteoporosis, symptoms of depression, anxiety, and falls in the elderly.</i></p> <p><i>Vehicle speeds are directly proportional to injury severity</i></p>	<p>Rate of pedestrian and bicycle injuries per capita per year</p> <p>Proportion of street miles with dedicated bike paths or lanes, by class</p> <p>Proportion of population within ½ mile of regional transit and ¼ mile of local public transit stop, by neighborhood</p>
<p>Access to Quality Retail</p>	<p><i>Adequate nutrition prevents</i></p>	<p>Proportion of population by</p>

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<p>Goods and Public Services</p> <p>Quality and proximity of financial institutions</p> <p>Quality and proximity of food resources</p> <p>Quality and proximity of health services</p>	<p><i>infectious diseases</i></p> <p><i>Low birth-weight predicts chronic disease in later life</i></p> <p><i>Consumption of fruits and vegetables linked to reduced cancer risk</i></p> <p><i>Local financial institutions help families create and maintain wealth</i></p> <p><i>Timely access to primary health services prevents serious hospitalizations</i></p>	<p>neighborhood within ½ mile of a full-service grocery store or fresh produce market</p> <p>Proportion of population within a 30 minute transit or walking commute of a primary care public health facilities</p> <p>Proportion of population living ½ mile from a commercial district with 75% of common public services; (<i>Public services include: post office, public school, public childcare, community park or playground, community garden, library, recreation center, civic spaces, churches, public art and transit stops</i>)</p> <p>Proportion of population living ½ mile from a commercial district with 75% of common private services; (<i>Retail services include: bank, produce market, convenience store, supermarket, hardware store, cleaner, auto repair, restaurant, farmer’s market, café, and private childcare</i>)</p>
<p>Access to Educational Resources</p> <p>Quality, Proximity, and Capacity of Schools</p> <p>Quality, Proximity, and Capacity of Family and Center-based childcare</p> <p>Adult education and training opportunities</p>	<p><i>Children commuting to school have less sleep, less exercise, and greater exposure to vehicle pollution.</i></p> <p><i>Local community schools can promote parent participation and good educational outcomes</i></p> <p><i>Quality childcare increases childhood educational and job outcomes</i></p>	<p>Proportion of residential units within ¼ and ½ mile of public elementary and middle school</p>
<p>Access to Parks and Natural Space</p> <p>Quality, proximity, and</p>	<p><i>Regular physical activity reduces the risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and obesity,</i></p>	<p>Proportion of population by neighborhood within ¼ mile of neighborhood or regional park, open space or publicly</p>

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<p>capacity of parks</p>	<p><i>reduces blood pressure, relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety, and prevents falls in the elderly. Access to places for physical activity increases the frequency of physical activity in children and adults.</i></p> <p><i>People who live in greener environments have better physical and mental health</i></p> <p><i>Trees and greens space remove air pollution from the air and mitigate the heat island effects.</i></p>	<p>accessible shoreline</p> <p>Proportion of creeks and shoreline with public access</p> <p>Proportion of population by neighborhood within ¼ mile of community recreational facility (overlaid with population distribution by census blocks, and private recreational facilities)</p> <p>Acres per (1,000) capita of neighborhood parks</p> <p>Proportion of schools meeting state standards for adequate play areas</p> <p>Proportion of land area under tree canopy</p>
<p>Environmental Quality</p> <p>Pollutants in outdoor and indoor air</p> <p>Contaminants in drinking water and recreational water</p> <p>Environmental or occupational noise</p>	<p><i>Vehicle emissions exacerbate respiratory disease and increase cardio-pulmonary mortality.</i></p> <p><i>Indoor aero-allergens cause or exacerbate asthma</i></p> <p><i>Contaminated water can spread serious infectious disease</i></p> <p><i>Chronic noise exposure harms sleep, temperament, hearing, and blood pressure</i></p>	<p>Proportion of population living outside a 500 feet buffer from roadways with cumulative traffic of >100,000 vehicles /day</p> <p>Proportion of population living a safe distance from industries emitting hazardous pollutants</p> <p>Proportion of creeks, watersheds and shoreline restored and/or cleaned</p> <p>Proportion of population by neighborhood living with outdoors noise level of more than 65 decibels</p> <p>Proportion of land area with unutilized industrial or contaminated land</p>
<p>Community Violence</p> <p>Violent Crime</p> <p>Property Crime</p>	<p><i>Direct Effects</i></p> <p><i>Indirect effects of crime include fear, stress, and poor mental health.</i></p> <p><i>Fear of violence inhibits walking behaviors</i></p>	<p>Assault rate per capita</p> <p>Rates of strong arm robbery, perceived crime, social disorder, burglaries</p>

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<p>Social Cohesion</p> <p>Supportive relationships with friends, families, and neighbors</p> <p>Participation in social organizations</p> <p>The degree and quality of participation in public decision-making</p> <p>The responsiveness of public agencies to peoples needs</p>	<p><i>Physical and emotional support buffers stressful situations, supports illness recovery, prevents isolation, contributes to self-esteem, and reduces the risk of early death.</i></p> <p><i>Social contact across ethnic and class groups ensures equitable access to public health and educational services</i></p> <p><i>Supporting the effective participation of marginalized group in governance helps ensure achievement of basic human needs (e.g. food, shelter, health services)</i></p> <p><i>Locus of control is a major factor in quality of health</i></p>	<p>Proportion of voting age population participating in general elections</p> <p>Proportion of community involved in community organizations</p> <p>Proportion of community professing “trust” of neighbors</p> <p>Level of involvement in planning for development project</p>
<p>Social Exclusion</p> <p>The proportion of the population living in relative poverty</p> <p>Attitudes towards or stereotypes of minority racial, social, and ethnic groups</p> <p>The segregation of residences by race, ethnicity, religion, or class</p> <p>The degree of inequalities in income or wealth</p>	<p><i>Economic exclusion in segregated neighborhoods limits wealth which is a buffer against illness and stress.</i></p> <p><i>Residents of low-income and ethnically segregated neighborhoods experience, high rates of teenage childbearing, tuberculosis, cardiovascular disease, and homicide.</i></p>	<p>Residential segregation by ethnicity</p> <p>Residential segregation by household income</p> <p>Equality of income distribution</p> <p>Diversity of residential uses</p>
<p>Environmental Stewardship</p>	<p>Reducing electricity and natural gas usage results in reduction in climate change and air pollution emissions</p> <p>Green business practices may reduce occupational and environmental exposures</p> <p>Exposure and access to natural areas meets an essential human need improving health and well being and community image</p>	<p>Per capita energy use</p> <p>Per capita water use</p> <p>Per capita waste generation</p> <p>Proportion waste diverted from landfill</p> <p>Proportion of land preserved as natural area</p> <p>Proportion of facilities that meet green building standards (public</p>

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	and identity.	and private) Proportion of businesses meeting or exceeding the County's green business standards

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