

# Health in All Policies (HiAP)

## *A briefing for local government policymakers*



### ***What is Health in All Policies (HiAP)?***

*HiAP is a collaborative approach to improve health by incorporating health considerations into decision-making in all sectors and policy areas.*

*A HiAP approach convenes diverse partners to consider how their work influences health and how collaborative efforts can improve health while advancing other goals.*

### **How Communities Benefit from HiAP**

**E**nvironments in which people live, work, study and play affect health by influencing available opportunities. For example, residents of neighborhoods with few grocery stores and many fast-food outlets have limited healthy food choices.

Policy decisions made by “non-health” city or county departments can unknowingly impact the health of a community. For example, decisions made by land use departments influence whether or not residents can stay healthy by incorporating walking into their daily life or whether much of their time will be spent sitting in a car.

Residents receive a variety of quality-of-life benefits simultaneously when cities look at integrating the delivery of seemingly disparate public services. This collaborative approach provides an opportunity to increase efficiency and reduce city costs. For instance, cities are sometimes criticized for continually digging up the same street. A HiAP approach can lead to multiple street improvements being made at once.

For example, the Kansas City public works department needed to reconstruct a street and sewer system in a declining neighborhood to reduce basement flooding. Before moving ahead with their plans, the project directors convened several city departments – including public health, public works and planning staff – along with the neighborhood’s residents.

Together, they came up with a plan that provided a solution to more than just the flooding problem, one that saved time and money. The result is a street that now absorbs excess water in rain gardens, has sidewalks for pedestrians, is safer for bicyclists, is more attractive, and is shaded by trees during the hot summers. Long-term benefits, in addition to reducing flooding and polluting urban runoff, are cleaner air, reduced carbon emissions and healthier residents.

### **State of California Sets HiAP Policy**

**I**n 2010, California Governor Schwarzenegger issued an executive order establishing a “Health in All Policies” Task Force. It brought together leaders from 18 different state agencies and departments to identify measures that each could undertake to improve the health of Californians.

In the end, they came up with multiple recommendations that accomplish “healthy and safe communities with opportunities for active transportation; safe, healthy, affordable housing; places to be active, including parks, green space and healthy tree canopy; the ability to be active without fear of violence of crime; and access to healthy, affordable foods.”

In 2012, the State Senate adopted a concurrent resolution (Number 47) that requests certain state entities provide leadership in implementing the task force’s recommendations.

# Local Government Implementation

**S**ome city councils and county boards of supervisors in California are recognizing the importance of considering health in all policies and are employing a variety of practical strategies to address the challenge.

## Adopt a HiAP Ordinance

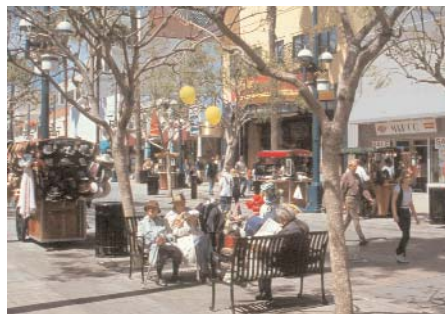
The City of Richmond is in the process of producing a comprehensive “health in all policies” ordinance that mandates the establishment of an interdepartmental team to carry out the work of HiAP, incorporates health equity and social justice into City operations, policies and programs, creates an annual reporting mechanism to measure progress, and requires an ongoing community engagement process.

## Encourage Health, Planning and Other Departments to Work Together on Policies of Mutual Interest

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution that directed public health, public works and planning agencies to work together. The result has been multiple HiAP-related projects and programs in both the county and its cities.

The Yuba County Board of Supervisors established a committee to advise them about improving the health of their residents.

Participants included the directors of the public health and planning departments, parks and recreation staff, a local physician and health-related nonprofit organizations. The result was new language added to the general plan.



## Incorporate Health in RFPs

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors developed an RFP for a community plan for the low-income, North Fair Oaks neighborhood that specified health as one of the issues to be addressed.

## Use a Health Impact Report

Contra Costa County is preparing a Health Impact Report for a proposed food truck ordinance.

## Add Health Considerations to a General Plan or Community Plan

The City of South Gate coordinated with the LA County Department of Public Health and the Kaiser Foundation to create a Healthy Communities Element of the South Gate General Plan, which addresses major intersections of public health and planning, including transportation and active living, and access to nutritious food and health care.

The North Fair Oaks Community Plan now includes health and wellness goals and policies, including walkability, transit accessibility and the preservation of income mixes and affordable cost of living.