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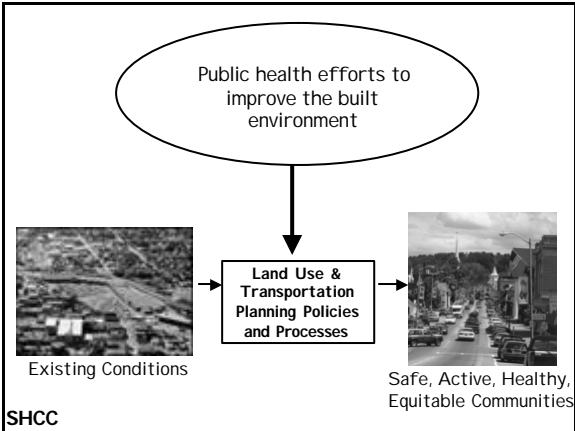
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What are the strategic points for public health to intervene and begin improving the walkability and livability of a community?

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## Key Community Design Policies and Processes

- General Plan
- Area Specific and Redevelopment Plans
- Zoning Code/Ordinances
- Regional Transportation/Comprehensive Plans
- Street Design Manual

- Retrofit: fixing yesterday's mistakes
- Public Participation

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## General Plan: What is it?

- Cities & counties required by state law
- Comprehensive & long-term
- The "blueprint" and vision for future development (& redevelopment), but not very specific
- Serves as basis for land use decisions by local legislative body
- Includes seven elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open-Space, Noise, Safety
- Developed by Planning Departments every 10-15 years; minor changes more often
- Approved by City Council or County Board of Supervisors

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## General Plan: Why intervene here?

- Public health goals are usually implied but not explicitly stated
- "Health" defined very narrowly
- Opportunity to shift overarching land use policy and vision of a city/county
- Lays foundation for changing other policies, practices to support healthy community design

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### What can I do?



- Seek official role on the advisory committee
- Provide comments on drafts
- Call for goals and objectives explicitly about health and walkable communities
- Educate the planners and stakeholders on the public health impacts
- Bring under-represented groups to the table

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### Example: King County, WA



Seattle, Washington

- Public Health & Transportation dept.s collaborated
- Public Health released report on obesity
- County Executive buy -in
- Commissioned study on health/transportation links
- *Result: the first comprehensive plan with physical activity as a goal and a rationale*

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**“King County supports land use and zoning actions that promote public health by increasing opportunities for every resident to be more physically active. Land use and zoning actions include: concentrating growth into the Urban Area, promoting urban centers, allowing mixed-use developments, and adding pedestrian linkages.” U-107**

**“King County should seek to improve pedestrian safety both within residential areas and at arterials near pedestrian activity centers such as schools, retail centers, concentrations of housing, transit facilities and trails.” T-322**

*King County Comprehensive Plan*

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## Area Specific and Redevelopment Plans: What are they?



- Area Specific Plans
  - Smaller areas within a city or county (existing urban core or new master planned community)
  - Specific development standards (building & street design)
- Redevelopment Plans
  - Plan for a blighted area that has been designated as a redevelopment zone
  - Also dictates very specific development standards

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## Area Specific and Redevelopment Plans: Why intervene here?

- Smaller scale, less time to develop so good points to "jump in"
- Opportunity to demonstrate new designs, walkability
- Smaller area = easier to engage local neighborhood



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## What can I do?



- Seek official role on the advisory committee
- Recommend walkable communities design; provide examples
- Educate the planners and stakeholders
- Provide comments on drafts
- Get under-represented residents involved
- Hold Walkability Workshops

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### Zoning Code: What is it?



- Tool for putting General Plan goals, objectives into action
- General Plan is broad; Zoning Code is specific
- The regulatory tool with “teeth”
- Divides land into “zones” and specifies:
  - uses
  - densities
  - some design elements



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### Zoning Code: Why intervene here?

- Most codes are antiquated and support auto-dominated development
- Bad codes can make good General Plans fail
- Developers cite them as the key barrier to building walkable/livable projects
- There’s an alternative: “Smart Codes”, “Form Based Codes”

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### What can I do?



- When General Plan is being updated – call for zoning revisions
- Bring in LGC’s “Smart Codes” workshop

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### Street Design Manual: What is it?

- Local guidelines for street and roadway design (and re-design)
- Addresses lane widths, number of lanes, crossing treatments, traffic calming, lighting, etc.
- Changes usually prompted by new city/county policies or new engineering practices

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### Street Design Manual: Why intervene here?



- Most are very auto-oriented
- Engineers usually won't venture outside their guidelines
- An upstream barrier to improving pedestrian safety & access

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### What can I do?

- Work with traffic engineering or public works to revise
- Or, get elected officials support
- Advocate for "skinny streets", wide sidewalks, traffic calming and safe, frequent crossings
- Show examples from other cities

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### Retrofit: Fix Yesterday's Mistakes



- Safe Routes to School/ Shopping/Transit projects
- Walkability Workshops and Walk Audits
- Result = Get pedestrian improvements: sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming
- Result = Identify upstream policy barriers

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### Public Participation: Improving social equity

- Most planning processes require public outreach and input
- "All the usual characters" participate
- Those most affected are often the least involved
- All the typical barriers: race, poverty, language, knowledge, power

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### Migrant Farm Worker's Influence General Plan



- Local CBO reached out to inform community
- Provided trainings on land use policy, GP process
- Lidere's formalized, developed report with policy recommendations
- City of Salinas adopted the group's recommendations on housing and neighborhood design

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## Neighborhood Takes Charge of a Capital Improvement Project

- Proposed parking garage for BART station
- Community rejects BART's plan; mobilizes to create something better
- Result = TOD with mixed-use housing, shops, offices, library, clinic, pedestrian plaza
- Result = less traffic & air pollution; more walking & transit; and access to services



Fruitvale Transit Village, Oakland

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## Move upstream for the greatest impact

*Influence the overarching vision, policies & standards (City, county, region)*

*Interject health into current development projects (Strip mall, town center, transit center)*

*Retrofit yesterdays mistakes (Intersection, school route)*



### Upstream

- General Plan
- Zoning
- Street Design Standards
- RTP & RCP
- Pedestrian Master Plans



### Midstream

- Area Specific Plans
- Redevelopment Plans/projects
- Capital Improvement Projects



### Downstream

- Safe Routes to School/Shopping/Transit
- Traffic calming projects

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