

# Case study: built environment policy change

[Business](#)



Physical Environments Title: Improving Physical Environments to Increase Health for High-Risk Residents Alignment with ACT: Reducing obesity and diabetes in adults “ Housing Is Important to healthy and sustainable communities because a community Is strongest and most successful when workers and families, especially children, have safe and affordable homes. Housing and neighborhood conditions can promote or adversely impact health outcomes.

Health is especially influenced by housing location, home maintenance and design, and housing costs. California Department of Housing and Community Development Issues In \*\*\* County more than 16% of the population has been diagnosed with diabetes or are borderline diabetic, 56% of adults and 44% of children age 5 - 19 are overweight or obese and therefore at high risk of developing diabetes and other chronic illnesses such as high blood pressure and heart disease.

Epidemiological research has made the connection between poor health, including heart disease, obesity, and depression, with living in disadvantaged neighborhoods - unsafe neighborhoods with housing that is crowded, unsafe, and too costly. For households where earnings are at or below the median income in \*\*\* County (\$76, 728), finding affordable places to live In safe, clean neighborhoods is a major problem.

This Is especially true for the 55% of families who are renters and earning less than \$50, 000 per year, and who are most often Hispanic working families, single-female head of household, elderly, or special needs residents. The majority of these families (88%) pay more than 30% of their

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income for housing, limiting their ability to purchase healthy, fresh foods. Lack of affordable housing results in families living “ wherever they can afford”, which can e housing that has poor ventilation and heating and unhygienic living conditions such as old carpeting, peeling paint, and Infestations.

It has been demonstrated that these conditions lead to a variety of health conditions and disease Including mental stress, high blood pressure, heart attacks, asthma and death. These low-income residents live in neighborhoods where there are less public and private resources such as parks, walk/bike paths, grocery stores, and community gardens. Insufficient lighting, lack of cross walks, crime, and traffic contribute to low levels of physical activity for families who can little afford physical activity outlets such as gyms and organized sports.

In Dalton, children and youth living In low-income, crowded conditions are less likely to complete a high school education or college degree, which develops into a self-perpetuating problem since education determines earning potential, and level of income is directly linked to health outcomes. Subsidized housing, both public and private, has had a positive impact in the United States by increasing the quality of living conditions for low-income residents and by reducing sousing costs, thus Increasing budget for food and other needs.

However, the excellent under AT unlit AT “ treadle” noosing does not meet ten current need the County, which grows exponentially each year. In addition, many of these subsidized housing developments are located in

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neighborhoods that are not conducive to healthy/active living due to lack of infrastructure; and, land that has been identified through City/County General Plan Housing Elements for future housing affordable housing development has similar environmental challenges.

Challenge The studies examined for the purpose of this proposal conclude that in order to reduce population-level change, efforts related to changing built environments must utilize a comprehensive approach that includes strategies in three areas: Policy change that leads to the development of safe, healthy housing and health- supportive environments that will help to improve health for all residents in a community, especially those who are most impacted by health disparity.

Programs that promote behavior change (for example, nutrition education) and ensure that environmental resources are leveraged to the fullest (for example, walking clubs and no/low cost sports activities where residents use walking paths ND green space).

\* Partnerships, between organizations, and between organizations and residents so that public policy change can actually occur and for sustainability of programs. Opportunity \*\*\* County is a “ midsized” county in comparison to other counties in California, both in population and square miles.

There are half a dozen nonprofit affordable housing development corporations that serve the County and several more public housing authorities. \*\*\* is the leading nonprofit developer of affordable housing in the County, has been in business for more than 30 years, and has strong <https://assignbuster.com/case-study-built-environment-policy-change/>

relationships with other public and private non-profit providers of affordable housing, decision makers at cities and County, government and nonprofit organizations that support the community, as well as regionally and nationally through organizations that support our work. \*\*g's experience and relationships position the organization for success in championing policy change. Pilot Objectives \*\*\* is proposing to lead development of a set of "Healthy Affordable Housing Guidelines" with benchmarks for creating affordable housing and health supportive environments based on best practices identified through the capacity building phase of the ACT.

The goal will be to have affordable housing developers commit to the guidelines by September 2013. May/June \*\*\* will internally develop a draft set of healthy affordable housing guidelines and design standards to present to the broader field for consideration.

These could include: \* Tobacco free policies \* Increasing access to health foods through community gardens and edible landscaping \* Increasing physical activity through planning of sidewalks and common areas \* Facilities that are conducive to community connection \* Partnerships that provide health services onsite (post construction) July/August \*\* will convene a small task force of affordable housing developers, financing institutions, schools, architects, and other housing-related professions.

The group will define what constitutes "healthy housing" in \*\*\* County and build upon \*\*\*'s Internal work to Rene Ana Telltale ten "Healthy Treadle Housing Gleefulness". Staff and task force members will conduct key

informant interviews (public officials) that will inform the final draft of the “Healthy Affordable Housing Guidelines”.

September \*\*\* will hold a workshop at the Housing Conference to inform others in the housing placement field, including public and private sectors including planning departments, housing developers, and financing institutions regarding the work of the task force.

Evaluate the pilot based on two criteria: \* Demonstrate that we have \*\*\* Board support for adopting Healthy Affordable Housing Guidelines internally; \* Measure the number and diversity of leaders in the affordable housing and related fields who commit to the guidelines. Outcomes At the conclusion of the project nonprofit housing developers and others will have formalized their commitment to adopting Healthy Affordable Housing Guidelines (as evidenced by a Letter of Commitment).