



# HEALTHY HOUSING ELEMENTS

## Planning for a Healthier Community

Increasing research has shown that the way cities and towns are developed has a great impact on the epidemic rates of chronic diseases in the United States. Housing, in the context of community design, has a significant impact on the well-being of San Mateo County residents by either facilitating or hindering physical activity, access to fresh fruits and vegetables, easy walkability, public transportation and neighborhood cohesion. We envision an active, inclusive, and responsive city/county, where healthy habits are encouraged rather than discouraged by the environments we build. Our goal is to encourage the health and safety of our residents through the development of neighborhoods that sustain mental health, promote social cohesion, and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Too often affordable housing is located either far from a person's work and/or concentrated in areas of poverty. Long commutes are associated with personal stress and neighborhoods with little cohesion, while concentrations of poverty expose residents to environmental health risks and exacerbate health disparities. Working towards the goal of improved well-being for our residents, we prioritize the availability of affordable housing options for a variety of income levels and prioritize the ability to live near work. In addition, we encourage the development of supportive and transitional housing for the most vulnerable to assist them in obtaining self-sufficiency. In order to increase social cohesion in our neighborhoods, we aim to create environments suitable for multi-generational and cohesive communities and lifecycle housing. To achieve these results, we support housing practices that support healthy aging in place and childhood development by promoting safe, multimodal streets and a range of housing types and affordability within neighborhoods.



The San Mateo County Health Department is available to assist your group in developing language that promotes healthy growth specific to your community as well as reviewing your jurisdiction's housing element.

For more information, technical assistance, or to partner with your local Health Department, please contact Angela Sajuthi, Health Policy and Planning, at (650) 573-2737 or [asajuthi@co.sanmateo.ca.us](mailto:asajuthi@co.sanmateo.ca.us).

Website: [www.smhealth.org/hpp](http://www.smhealth.org/hpp).

*Updated 10/2008*



# HEALTHY HOUSING CHECKLIST

## ACCESS TO FOOD

YES NO NA Comment

For residential uses, is the project within <b>½ mile</b> of a supermarket (1)?				
For residential uses, is the project within <b>½ mile</b> of a retail food store (not including supermarket) AND from a produce store (1)?				

## ENVIRONMENT

YES NO NA Comment

Are all residential areas, schools, day care facilities, playgrounds and sports fields required to be more than at least <b>200 m (656 ft)</b> from a major road (Annual Average Daily Traffic > <b>40,000</b> ) (2)?				
Are planned residential uses located in areas with existing water and sewer infrastructure or where it is planned to occur with development (2)?				

## HOUSING DENSITY

YES NO NA Comment

Does the plan vary housing densities and housing cost? (2)				
Are all residential areas planned for an average of <b>4 (preferably 7)</b> units per gross acre? (2)				

## PLACEMENT OF HOUSING

YES NO NA Comment

Are projects required to be within <b>1/2 mile</b> of an area that has <b>8</b> out of the 11 following common public services: childcare/daycare, community garden, hospital and public health clinic, library, open spaces, neighborhood or regional parks of 1/2 acre or more, performance/cultural space, post office, public art, recreational facility, and public school. (1)(2)				
Does the housing element require projects be within a <b>5 minute</b> response time of a nearby fire station? (1).				



# HEALTHY HOUSING CHECKLIST

## PUBLIC SAFETY

	YES	NO	NA	Comment
The housing element includes effective health-oriented building design measures that purposefully seek to prevent illness and injuries (1). <i>An example would be: to improve indoor air quality and reduce moisture</i>				
Does the housing element select for environmental design elements that protect and enhance public safety (1)? <i>Examples include: analyzing and improving environmental quality for bicyclists and pedestrians; using traffic calming devices on interior streets; meeting or surpassing city standards for adequacy of sidewalk and street lighting; limiting the number of alcohol, tobacco and firearm outlets</i>				

## TRANSPORTATION/TRANSIT

	YES	NO	NA	Comment
Are projects required to be within <b>1/2 mile</b> of an area that has <b>8</b> out of the 11 following common public services: childcare/daycare, community garden, hospital and public health clinic, library, open spaces, neighborhood or regional parks of 1/2 acre or more, performance/cultural space, post office, public art, recreational facility, and public school. (1)(2)				
Does the housing element require projects be within a <b>5 minute</b> response time of a nearby fire station? (1).				

1. San Francisco Department of Public Health HDMT Development Checklist--Version 2.01 [www.thehdm.org/etc/HDMT\\_Development\\_Checklist\\_April\\_2008\\_Version\\_2.01.pdf](http://www.thehdm.org/etc/HDMT_Development_Checklist_April_2008_Version_2.01.pdf)
2. Design for Health Checklists for Comprehensive Plan Elements <http://www.designforhealth.net/techassistance/checklists.html>
3. Walkability Checklist [www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf](http://www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf)



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