Housing Equity and Healthy Housing Choices
“Home” and Health

Two individuals of the roughly 30 million Americans living in homes with health or safety hazards.
Meet Erma & Garlenda
Before

After
Housing and Health: New Opportunities for Dialogue and Action

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Renowned community developer and philanthropist Jim Rouse once said, “For many years, I have lived uncomfortably with the belief that most planning and architectural design suffers for lack of real and basic purpose. The ultimate purpose, it seems to me, must be the improvement of mankind.”

The adoption of a new “health in all policies” approach by the federal government provides an historic opportunity to extend Jim Rouse’s advice to the nexus of health and housing and foster a dialogue that can lead to new partnerships and stronger policies that advance health and housing objectives in equal measure. By developing a framework for improving those aspects of housing that impact health, this dialogue could help ensure that housing policy and neighborhood design make the maximum possible contribution to the health of children, older adults, and other community members.

I. Summary and Recommendations

Housing affects health in multiple ways:

- Housing quality can impact physiological health (e.g., lead, radon, mold, extreme temperatures), psychological health (e.g., noise, inadequate light), and safety (e.g., falls, fires).
- Unaffordable housing costs affect health by reducing the income that a household has available for nutritious

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HOW DOES HOUSING AFFECT HEALTH?

- Housing Quality
- Affordability
- Social and Community Attributes
- Physical Neighborhood Characteristics