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What's Health Got to Do With It? *Max Richardson; Galatea King; Kara Vuicich, AICP; and Jeremy Nelson*

Some of the largest public health challenges of the 21st century are correlated with how we plan and build our communities. This includes recently increasing rates of obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and asthma, as well as future health impacts of climate change. While these issues affect us all, they disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities.

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Integrating health into planning includes creating safe and convenient paths for bicycling and other active forms of transportation.



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For these reasons, planning officials in many communities are redoubling their efforts to prioritize land-use patterns that locate affordable housing close to jobs and services and create transportation systems where walking, biking, and transit are safe and viable options.

This article supports that work by providing a brief primer on the interrelated history of planning and public health, showing how new data and tools are facilitating the reemergence of “healthy planning,” and describing several communities where planners are putting public health at the forefront of their work.

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(Re)convergence of Planning and Public Health

The American planning profession is rooted in public health concerns. As early planners dealt with the effects of industrialization and rapid urbanization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including issues such as overcrowded housing and lack of public parks, they were motivated by a desire to promote better health.

However, the planning and public health professions diverged during the postwar period. Urban planning began to focus on economic growth and large-scale transportation and infrastructure projects while public health became increasingly concerned with controlling and eradicating infectious diseases.

As new public health issues have recently emerged that are correlated with how we build our communities, many public health practitioners and planners initially found themselves unequipped to address these interrelated challenges. Fortunately,

public health and planning professionals have begun working together to better understand the impacts that our built environment has on our health.

Long-range Planning for Healthy Communities

General (or comprehensive) plans are the “blueprint” for community development and are therefore an important opportunity to incorporate “healthy planning” goals and principles. Earlier this year, Richmond, California, adopted a health element as part of its general plan. California law does not require that general plans address community health. However, Richmond residents and the city council saw the added value of creating a blueprint for the community’s health and well-being. The health element—developed over an 18-month planning process—addresses issues such as access to recreational spaces, healthy foods, and medical services, safe neighborhoods, and environmental quality. It provides Richmond residents with a plan for engagement to create a healthy community as the city grows over the next 20 years. (More information is at www.ci.richmond.ca.us/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=862.)

Evaluating Health Impacts of New Development

San Francisco has used health impact assessments (HIAs) to evaluate the potential health impacts of proposed development. For example, a new development project with 1,400 new condominiums was proposed in 2003 for a site with 360 existing rent-controlled apartments. The new development proposed including only 170 low-income units. At the request of community residents affected by the project, the Department of Public Health conducted an HIA to review the project’s potential health impacts. The HIA found that the project could have serious adverse effects on displacement and homelessness, thereby affecting residents’ mental health, social networks, and overall well-being. Ultimately, a plan was developed with the developer to replace the 360 rent-controlled units and provide a community meeting space and children’s play area. (More information is at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1805033/pdf/0970406.pdf.)

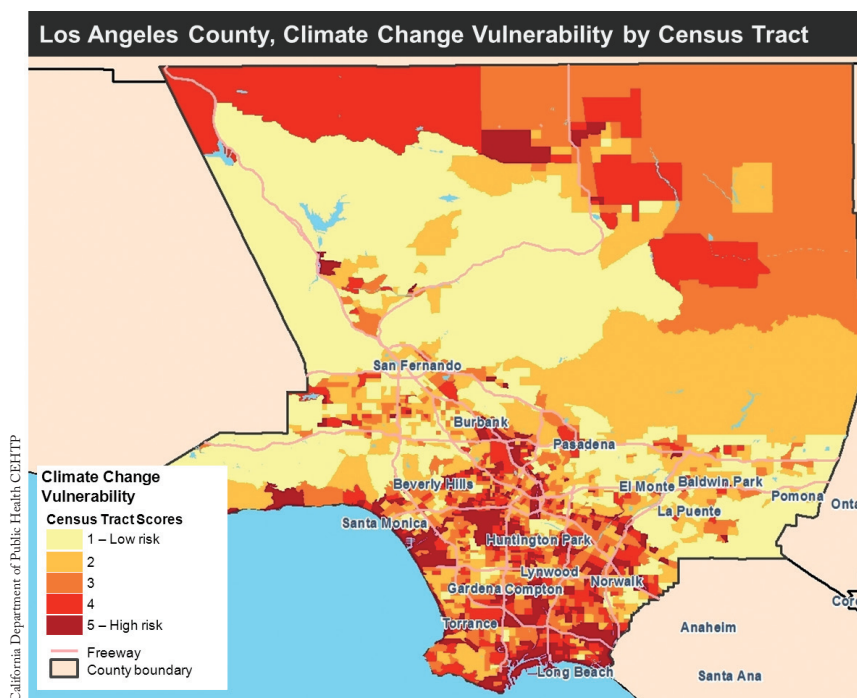
Measuring Healthy Planning Outcomes

Even though Colorado has the lowest obesity rate in the United States, the state has recently seen dramatic increases in obesity rates. The non-profit LiveWell Colorado aims to reduce obesity in the state by promoting healthy eating and active living. LiveWell has developed an extensive set of tools and resources to help state, regional, and local planners create a built environment that supports and encourages active living and healthy eating in rural, suburban, and urban areas. Recently, LiveWell released a set of performance metrics for measuring a community’s progress on healthy planning. (More information is at <https://about.livewellcolorado.org/resource-toolbox/built-environment/built-environment>.)

Healthy Design and Active Transportation

Davidson, North Carolina, is a small college town of almost 11,000 people. Davidson was one of six nationwide recipients of the Centers for Disease Control’s Healthy Community Design

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The California Environmental Health Tracking Program's tool screens for human vulnerabilities to climate change at the

neighborhood level. The tool can guide planning efforts related to climate change adaptation. See www.ehbt.org/page.jsp?page_key=703.

Staying Current on Planning Law

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hether the topic is the farm bill, small-scale energy development, compatible land use near military bases, state legislation post-*Kelo*, or conservation land trusts, *Planning & Environmental Law* is the authoritative source for planning law.



Is your community affected by hydraulic fracking? Do you understand how your state has shaped your power to regulate it? Shaun Goho in the July issue of *Planning & Environmental Law* provides an overview of the trends, with examples of how courts have addressed the issue in six states. Goho, a lecturer and clinic instructor at Harvard University's Emmett Environmental Law and Policy Clinic, examines how local government deals legally with public health and nuisance issues. As local government seeks to plan and regulate this new form of resource extraction, they can choose tools from outright bans to less drastic regulation of where and how this activity takes place.

Perhaps your current concern is ethics and local practices in decision making. If so, Joshua C. Wells's February 2012 commentary will be of special interest as he reports on *Nevada Commission on Ethics v. Carrigan* and explains how the U.S. Supreme Court views state ethics standards.

Whether the topic is the farm bill, small-scale energy development, compatible land use near military bases, state legislation post-*Kelo*, or conservation land trusts, *Planning & Environmental Law* is the authoritative source for planning law. Written for an audience of planners, attorneys, and veteran officials, the publication comes out 11 months a year.

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Planning commission members from left to right: Paul Summers, Doris Murphy, Greg Perosino; Richard Calkins, chair; Martin J. Connor, AICP, city planner; Greg Mele, vice chair; Christine Mele; Donna Greco; Absent: Jim Bobinski.

Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission

Karen Finucan Clarkson

Ethical, efficient, and expeditious, Torrington, Connecticut's planning and zoning commission "works hard—looking out for individual property owners while focusing on the betterment of the community as a whole," says Martin J. Connor, AICP, Torrington's city planner. "We have excellent commissioners who get along with each other and do their homework. They're not there to hear themselves talk but to work with the public."

Unlike in some Connecticut municipalities, the mayor appoints the five commissioners and three alternates, with concurrence by the city council. They have five-year staggered terms, a process supported by the commission's chair and vice chair. "By electing planning and zoning officials, you place them in a political atmosphere and planning and zoning should have nothing to do with politics," says 17-year commission veteran Richard Calkins, who chairs the panel.

Alternates attend commission meetings and are free to ask questions. "They participate the same as regular members, but once a public hearing is closed then only the regular members can discuss and vote on the application," explains Connor. An alternate may be tapped by the chair to vote when a regular member is absent. Both Calkins and the vice chair, Greg Mele, began their commission service as alternates.

The commission is the decision-making body for all planning and zoning matters in Torrington. "They don't make recommendations to council, they make the decisions," says Connor. "An appeal goes to the local superior court, so our commissioners understand the importance of making good decisions that can be backed up by the record."

The commission meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays, except during the summer, when meetings occur monthly. "As residents, most of us are familiar with locations for proposed projects," says Mele. "But there have been times when I've gone to city hall and researched adjacent land uses."

Connor estimates that commissioners spend about three hours prepping for every two-hour meeting. As chair, Calkins figures he invests a couple of additional hours each month. "You won't see anyone opening up an envelope while sitting at the dais," says Connor.

Calkins tries to streamline meetings, which start at 7 p.m., to the extent possible. "I like to be out by 9 o'clock," he says. "After that amount of time, you wear people out and it's not fair to applicants coming up at the end of the night."

Service on the planning and zoning commission is voluntary, and the only requirement is city residency. Each commissioner brings a unique perspective and skill set to the table, agree Calkins and Mele. The panel includes an electrical contractor, engineer, attorney, retired school teacher, and a developer with a national housing firm.

Two commissioners serve as liaisons to other boards—the Inland Wetlands Commission and the Economic Development Commission. "It really helps us out," says Connor. "Greg Mele, for example, can bring back comments from meetings of the Economic Development Commission and provide insight and explanations."

Ethical considerations are always in the minds of commissioners. In fact it wasn't until 1993, when Calkins left his job with a contractor that often had business before the commission, that he considered serving on the panel. Mele, who before his appointment occasionally appeared before the commission, now hires an attorney to handle land-use matters and recuses himself, leaving the auditorium until the issue is decided.

Mele encourages those considering serving as a commissioner to "keep an open mind. You can't take things personally or have a personal interest in any application. Stay objective and professional, and act with the community's best interest in mind."

A Focus on Downtown and Sustainability

“WE’RE AN OLD MILL TOWN WITH SOME BROWNFIELD SITES, four of which were recently rezoned under a new incentive housing overlay zone established by the commission,” says Martin Connor, Torrington’s city planner. The idea is to encourage affordable housing in Torrington’s downtown,

“where there are transportation connections, nearby access to amenities and services, and infrastructure necessary to support concentrations of development.”

A range of housing is being promoted for the downtown. Torrington, like the rest of the state, has an aging population. “Connecticut is losing that 25 to 34 cohort,” says Connor. “We’ve got to figure out how to keep college kids in-state . . . we also need to capture that cool factor—with lofts and such—to keep younger people here.”

Housing is not the sole focus of Torrington’s downtown redevelopment effort. “Long term, we would love to see an expansion of the commercial and industrial tax base,” says commission chair Richard Calkins. Following adoption of the city’s 2009 Municipal Development Plan, the commission enacted changes to the downtown’s zoning regulations to encourage redevelopment that is more business- and pedestrian-friendly. Certain parking requirements were eliminated, sign regulations were updated, and seasonal outdoor sidewalk dining was permitted.

The downtown in this city of 36,000 includes a historic district and a thriving cultural center. “The Warner Theatre, a majestic movie theater built in 1931 by Warner Brothers to premiere movies, has been refurbished to the tune of \$12 million and brings in \$800,000 a year through plays, concerts, and other cultural activities,” says Connor. “We also have a ballet company that attracts students from across the United States.”

Having updated its Plan of Conservation and Development in 2010, the commission can now tweak individual chapters as necessary. “We spent a good bit of time on the plan and deliberately so,” says Calkins.

Torrington’s Planning & Zoning Commission also participated in the Low Impact Design Municipal Land Use Ordinance Evaluation Project administered by the state. “By incorporating low-impact development techniques into our subdivision regulations we’re able to move beyond ice-cube-tray subdivisions,” says Calkins. Low-impact development (LID) is gaining traction in the city. A new 149-unit independent and assisted living project for seniors will feature a green roof and several state-of-the-art LID stormwater treatment practices.

The Connecticut Chapter of APA invited the Torrington commission to speak last month at its Hot Topics Seminar about zoning for medical marijuana dispensaries. As the state legislature considered approving the use of medical marijuana, planning and zoning commissioners “decided it was important to get ahead of this legislation,” says Connor. As a result, those wanting to open a dispensary in Torrington “are going to have to apply for an overlay or floating zone for the property. This will give the public more of an opportunity to speak to it and our commission greater discretion as to where it may be located.” The new zoning regulations were in place shortly before Connecticut’s governor signed the medical marijuana bill on June 1.



Photos by Maratin J. Connor

The city has focused on ways to make the community more attractive to young people, including creating lively events in the downtown. The downtown offers a variety of shops and

services in a pedestrian-friendly environment, and the Warner Theatre was recently refurbished to present plays, concerts, and other events.

Equity in Comprehensive Plans

David Godschalk, FAICP

Equity is an essential aim of comprehensive plans. Through their policies and actions, plans distribute both costs and benefits to individuals and groups. The fair distribution of opportunities and choices, costs and benefits is an important planning goal. To reach that goal, equity considerations must be interwoven throughout the fabric of the plans.

Comprehensive plans are statements of a community's desired future. They set forth a vision to be reached through following agreed-upon goals and policies. Plans are familiar tools for guiding community development, bringing together community aspirations and technical analyses. They provide the policy basis for decisions on objective setting, development regulation, and capital investment. Through state enabling acts, plans have the legal authority to guide zoning and capital budgeting.

Comprehensive plans are excellent vehicles for communities that seek sustainable development. They coordinate the critical balance between social equity, economic opportunity, and environmental quality—the so-called three Es of sustainability. They record the communities' consensus on the actions they will take to achieve a sustainable future.

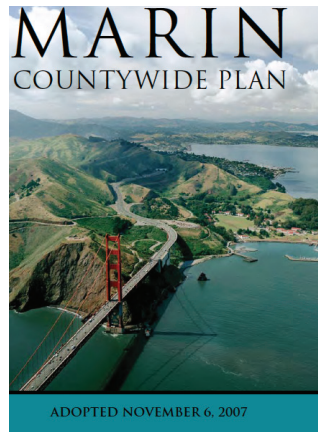
The 2012 report of the Sustaining Places task force of the American Planning Association identified key principles found in leading plans for sustaining places (Godschalk and Anderson 2012). Interwoven equity is a key principle. For example, the 2007 Marin Countywide Plan, one of the sustaining places plans examined, includes equity as its number one goal and weaves it through all of its proposed policies (See sidebar: Marin Countywide Plan.)

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Images courtesy Marin County

Marin County

MARIN COUNTY IS A CALIFORNIA COASTAL COUNTY connected by the Golden Gate Bridge to San Francisco on the south. Bordering on both the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay, the county's main cities are Petaluma, Novato, and San Rafael, the county seat. Landmarks include the Muir Woods redwood forest, Point Reyes National Seashore, and Mount Tamalpais. Most of its 2010 population of 252,409 lives on the eastern side of the county. The interior contains large areas of agriculture and open space and is defined by four environmental corridors: Coastal Recreation, Inland Rural, City-Centered, and Baylands.



The Marin Countywide Plan (www.marin-county.org/Government) defines sustainability as aligning the built environment and socioeconomic activities with the natural

systems that support life; adapting human activities to the constraints and opportunities of nature, while meeting the needs of both the present and the future. As the figure from the plan shows, the sustainable community lies at the intersection of the environment, the economy, and social equity.

The conceptual framework of the Marin plan is based on a pyramid that integrates natural systems, social systems, and human aspirations. The foundation consists of natural systems, such as water, air, soil, and natural habitats that support life and sustain agriculture. The built environment layer of housing, transportation, and infrastructure rests on this base. Socioeconomic capital builds on these foundations in order to provide jobs, health, safety, education, and cultural resources. At the top is community well-being, as the sum of all the systems.

THE GOALS OF THE MARIN COUNTY PLAN are directly related to both sustainability and equity:

1. Link equity, economy, and the environment locally, regionally, and globally.
2. Minimize the use of finite resources, and use all resources efficiently and effectively.
3. Reduce the use and minimize the release of hazardous materials.
4. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.
5. Preserve our natural assets.
6. Protect our agricultural assets.
7. Provide efficient and effective transportation.
8. Supply housing affordable to the full range of our members of the workforce and diverse community.

9. Foster businesses that create economic, environmental, and social benefits.
10. Educate and prepare our workforce and residents.
11. Cultivate ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity.
12. Support public health, safety, and social justice.

TO EVALUATE each goal for its environmental, economic, and social equity benefits, the plan asks and answers the following questions:

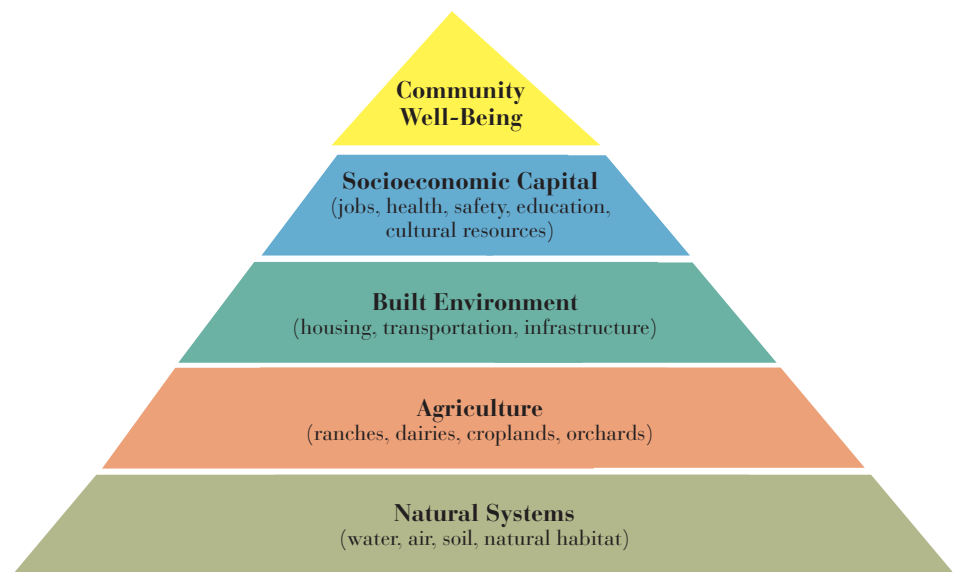
- What are the desired outcomes?
- Why is it important (with a focus on addressing the three Es)?
- How will the results be achieved?
- How will success be measured?

For example, the Socioeconomic Element emphasizes the need for universal health care, abundant child care, community policing, full civic participation, open access to information, education and the arts, proper nutrition, and physical fitness. The element seeks to enhance quality of life for everyone in Marin. Its policies and programs aim to improve conditions for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, bolster a strong and diverse economy, and engender fair and just social relationships within the Marin community.

One of the goals in this element is Social Equity in the Workplace. A desired outcome is to ensure that all persons have access to meaningful employment with fair compensation, adequate benefits, and a decent work environment.

Policies to implement this goal are:

- *Expand Job Opportunities.* Improve employment prospects for county residents.
- *Lead by Example.* Implement socially responsible business practices that increase the health of the community and the productivity of county operations.



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? The plan states that studies show that workers who are compensated fairly report a greatly enhanced sense of recognition for work. This is linked to increased job commitment, reduced turnover, and increased productivity. Productive members of the workforce are an essential component of a healthy economy and healthy community.

Relationships to the 3 Es are:

- *Economy:* Research shows that providing jobs with a living wage increases productivity and reduces job turnover significantly. High productivity and low job turnover contribute to a strong economy.
- *Equity:* The poverty rate for residents of Marin County went from 6.4 percent in 1993 to seven percent in 1997. The average Marin County wage in 2003 was \$47,013, while the median price of a home stood at \$657,500. Job training and work opportunities with benefits and good working conditions will improve the quality of life for many Marin residents.

How will results be achieved? Implementing programs include:

- Promote Job Training.
- Encourage Employment.
- Consider Employment Services for Day Laborers.

The conceptual framework of the Marin plan is based on a pyramid that integrates natural systems, social systems, and human aspirations.

- Provide Employee Support Services.
- Offer a Range of Jobs.
- Pay Living Wages.
- Offer Workplace Flexibility for Parents.

How will success be measured?

- Nonbinding indicators, benchmarks, and targets will help to measure and evaluate progress. This process will also provide a context in which to consider the need for new or revised implementation measures. Indicators include:
- Gross county production in major sectors: agriculture, retail, manufacturing, services, etc.
- Rate of unemployment.
- Number of individuals below the poverty level.
- Number of certified green businesses.
- Number of “Sustainable Partner” certified businesses.
- County bond rating.

Interwoven Equity

The interwoven equity principle states that the goals and policies of plans for sustaining places should ensure fairness and equity in providing for the health, safety, and welfare needs of all citizens and groups. In practice, this means that comprehensive plans should balance the needs of the three Es—economy, environment, and equity.

Equity and fairness concerns underlie all of the major topics of the comprehensive plan, including housing, jobs, health, education, public services and infrastructure, and public participation.

Housing

Equity in housing provision is a key topic for comprehensive plans. Equitable housing provision is linked to the affordability and location of housing types and to the relationship of jobs and housing, since transportation costs can be a problem for lower income households. Affordable and workforce housing, as well as homeless housing facilities, are needed to compensate for the private market's lack of attention to these housing types.



Local community plans can affect housing needs within their borders. An even more effective approach to equitable housing provision is a regional fair share housing program. Because much of a community's workforce may commute from throughout its region, housing plans that go beyond individual jurisdictional boundaries can deal more effectively with the equitable distribution of housing opportunities.

An example of a regional fair share housing approach is found in the 2004 San Diego County Regional Comprehensive Plan (www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/generalplan.html). Their Regional Housing Needs Assessment is designed to achieve three goals:

- Increase the housing supply and the mix of housing types, tenure, and affordability in all cities and counties within the region in an equitable manner, with each jurisdiction receiving an allocation of units for low- and very low-income households.
- Promote infill development and socioeconomic equity, protect environmental and agricultural resources, and encourage efficient development patterns.
- Promote an improved intraregional relationship between jobs and housing.

Based on this assessment, housing targets are allocated to the 18 cities and the unincorporated areas of San Diego County. Implementation is ensured through the involvement of the county's local governments in setting the housing targets.

Jobs

Fairness demands that local economies offer employment opportunities to their working populations. Plans should analyze the employment needs of the community, with careful attention to those groups who may be bypassed in the traditional job market. Their policies should encourage employment for youth, senior citizens, the disabled, the homeless, and other traditionally underemployed groups.

For example, the small town of Keene, New Hampshire, seeks to achieve opportunity, prosperity, livability, and meaningful work for its citizens as part of its strategy for long-term economic sustainability. Its 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan aims to provide for a balanced local economy and to create employment opportunities. (www.ci.keene.nh.us/departments/planning/keene-comprehensive-master-plan). It states that a primary objective for Keene and the region is to secure high-quality jobs that pay a living wage. To grow the job base, it proposes a multipronged approach including fostering local start-up companies, retaining and expanding existing firms, and recruiting new businesses.

Health and Safety

Equity in planning for public health and safety is important to provide lower income or disadvantaged populations with healthy food, health care, and recreation facilities. Lack of these opportunities is linked to public health problems such as obesity, diabetes, and other illnesses. Planning strategies include improving access to healthy, safe, and affordable foods through location of grocery stores, restaurants, and farmers markets, and encouraging physical activity through provision for walking, bicycling, recreation, and regular physical activity.

For example, the Safe and Healthy Community vision of the Fort Collins, Colorado, City Plan (www.fcgov.com/planfortcollins) emphasizes three areas: a safe and healthy community in which to live, work and play; opportunities to lead healthy and active lifestyles; and access to healthy, locally grown or produced food. The plan suggests indicators that could be used to monitor implementation of this vision, including public safety, air quality, walkability score, mobility/travel modes, neighborhood involvement, community physical activity, public health, and local food production.

Environmental hazards affect health and safety, leading to issues of environmental justice. Lower income neighborhoods often are located near environmentally hazardous areas and areas subject to natural hazards. Comprehensive plans should identify and map hazardous areas, including brownfields, floodplains, earthquake faults, and landslide areas, as well as landfills, excessive noise zones, and other environmental and natural hazards. Impacts on lower income neighborhoods should be avoided or mitigated through plan policies, programs, and regulations.

Education

Equity in planning for education is important both for workforce training and for K–12 school systems. Comprehensive plans can deal with both areas. For example, one of the key components of the Albany, New York, 2030 Comprehensive Plan (<http://albany2030.org>) is a model educational system. The plan states that Albany nurtures its most valuable resources, its children, by promoting excellence in education at all levels and expanding economic opportunities, enhancing work force skills, and promoting lifelong learning.

The plan's workforce training and continuing education strategy is to equip residents for jobs in the 21st century economy. Actions include convening business and education leaders to increase opportunities for recent high school and college graduates to work nearby; ensuring that workforce services and state and local partner training programs are customer-driven, competency-based, and focused on achieving results; and improving access to local com-



munity colleges to provide training for jobs in the new economy (i.e., nano-technology, green infrastructure, sustainable technologies.)

The plan's educational system strategy is to elevate the quality of K–12, pre-K, adult education, higher education, libraries, and cultural organizations to standards based on established targets. Actions include: championing urban education; increasing partnerships between institutions, the business community, higher education, and cultural organizations; and extending digital literacy programs.

Public Services and Infrastructure

Equitable provision of public services and infrastructure is an important planning concern. In many cases, poor and disadvantaged neighborhoods have been bypassed in allocations of both amenities and necessary public facilities. Comprehensive plans can remedy these inequitable situations.

For example, the Philadelphia's 2035 Plan recognizes the need to adapt, renew, and modernize its historic urban form and infrastructure to meet the conditions arising from its shrinking population (<http://phila2035.org>). The plan sets the goal of increasing equitable access to open space resources by enabling every resident to live within a 10-minute walk (a quarter mile) of a neighborhood park or green area. To implement this goal, it maps access to public open space, highlighting those areas with poor access, and calls for investments in new green infrastructure, including parks, green streets, and trees.

The plan proposes to create Neighborhood Centers with community-serving public facilities such as libraries and health centers, commercial corridors, and transit stations, and to strengthen neighborhoods by recommending capital improvements, zoning changes, and incentive programs. The plan seeks to modernize existing infrastructure, adapting utility services to changing technology and consumption patterns.

Public Participation

Citizen participation is necessary to ensure that the public's viewpoint and knowledge are recognized in plan making. Public engagement serves as a reality check and as a way of bringing the concerns of all segments of the population into goal setting and action assessment.

For example, the Burlington, Vermont, 2030 Legacy Plan sets the goal of being a national model for its responsive style of governance and informed, active citizenry, increasing voter turnout and giving residents an active voice in decisions affecting their neighborhoods (www.burlingtonvt.gov/Planning). To reach this

goal, Burlington intends to address the need for responsiveness and accountability on the part of government, the need for local control over decisions affecting neighborhoods, and the need for informed decision making.

The plan proposes to achieve the goal of responsive government by increasing diversity on decision-making boards; implementing a neighborhood design process; reorganizing city government; and developing more creative, centralized information access. It ensures that the public is engaged by evaluating the plan annually, using a "report card" score for measuring progress toward reaching the plan's goals. It also hosts an annual town meeting where projects throughout the year are celebrated and the goals and metrics in the plan are reviewed.

Summary and Recommendations

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to including equity in plans. The scope and nature of equity in comprehensive plans is a function of local characteristics. Variations in land-use and transportation patterns, employment opportunities, income distributions, and population diversity dictate each community's particular equity needs.

Every community can review its existing comprehensive plan to see how its equity content scores. Some universal questions that can be asked in a simple "equity audit" to check on whether a plan has done an adequate job of incorporating equity concerns are:

- Is equity mentioned in any of the plan's goals or objectives?
- Does the plan's population analysis highlight those likely to require special equity treatment, such as those with lower incomes, educational levels, or minority status?
- Do land-use and transportation plans consider the need for linking jobs and housing?
- Does the housing plan extend to the region, and include not only affordability but also workforce housing needs?
- Does the plan seek to make healthy food and recreation opportunities available to lower income neighborhoods?
- Does the plan set goals for an adequate supply of living wage jobs?
- Are the plan's education and training programs geared to the needs of the underemployed?
- Does the plan provide adequate public services and infrastructure to lower income neighborhoods?
- Have lower income and minority residents been involved in the planning process?
- Does the plan provide for regular progress reports?

Not all plans will have dealt with the full range of equity and fairness needs. However, asking these questions during the process of making or updating comprehensive plans can help to ensure that equity is interwoven into the community's future goals and policies.

Resources

- Godschalk, David R., and William Anderson. 2012. *Sustaining Places: The Role of the Comprehensive Plan*. Planning Advisory Service Report no. 567. Chicago: American Planning Association.
- Marin (California) Countywide Plan. 2007. www.co.marin.ca.us

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Initiative grant. In response to community concerns about new development fitting in with community character, the Davidson Design for Life (DD4L) initiative seeks to foster healthy community design through the use of HIAs, public participation, and intergovernmental collaboration. In its first year, the DD4L program has focused on healthy design and active transportation initiatives, including public health and neighborhood design standards, public health and street design standards, and conducting an HIA of the Red Line Commuter Rail project. (More information is at www.ci.davidson.nc.us/index.aspx?NID=732.)

Accessing Public Health Data

Two key challenges for planning are measuring health impacts and accessing health-related data. These are necessary for communities to better integrate public health considerations into land use, transportation, and other planning. Fortunately, there are national and statewide efforts under way to provide better data for planners who want to address public health concerns in their work, including the National Environmental Health Public Tracking Program (www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking) and the California Environmental Health Public Tracking Program (www.cehnp.org).

Conclusion

Planners in many communities are using new “healthy planning” tools to promote more walkable land-use patterns and active transportation options. An important part of this effort has been to develop better data and performance measures to assess community health. These initiatives are intended to address community health needs, but also to reduce long-term public health costs, highlight potential health concerns with development projects, and avoid costly mitigation (or litigation). Planning officials in these communities are recognizing that better public health doesn’t always happen on its own: sometimes you have to plan for it.

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RESOURCE FINDER

Social Equity

Planning focuses on the broad view, considering the needs of all members of the community. Some communities go even further with more focused efforts to ensure a viable community that provides opportunity for all.

APAPlanningBooks.com

A Decent Home: Planning, Building, and Preserving Affordable Housing

Alan Mallach, FAICP
APA Planners Press, 2009

Fair and Healthy Land Use, PAS Report no. 549/550

Craig Arnold
American Planning Association, 2008

Planning and Community Equity

APA Planners Press, 1994

Right to Transportation:

Moving to Equity
Thomas Sanchez et al
APA Planners Press, 2007

APA Books

Overlooked America
APA Planners Press, 2008

This book is no longer available through APAPlanningBooks.com, but may be in your library and is still available from other online bookstores.

APA Publications

A Sound Approach to Regulating Social Service Facilities

Margaret Weurstle, AICP
Zoning Practice, January 2010

Environmental Justice

Lora Lucero
The Commissioner, Summer 2007

Environmental Justice and Land-Use Planning

Patricia Salkin
PAS QuickNotes no. 26, June 2010

Fair Housing Act and Local Planning

Alan Weinstein
The Commissioner, Summer 2008

Human Investment Planning

PAS Memo, July 2011

Planning Communities to Support Successful Aging

Nancy LeaMond
The Commissioner, Winter 2010

Social Equity and the Cleveland 2020 Citywide Plan

Norman Krumholz, FAICP
The Commissioner, Spring 2009

Visualizing Fairness: Equity Maps for Planners

Emily Talen, FAICP
Journal of the American Planning Association
68(1): 22

APA Audio/Web Conference Series, 2012–2013

New! An all-day training program, The 21st Century Planning Commission, will be webcast from the 2013 National Planning Conference. Speakers from around the country will provide both the foundation for running a sound commission and explore planning and the planning commission in the context of new challenges and economic conditions.

For topical training on current planning issues, the series offers an array of options. A good choice for commissioners and other officials is the 2013 Planning Law Review.

Vehicle Miles Traveled Lecture

September 26, 2012

CM | 1.5

Planning Mistakes: Assessing, Learning, Adapting

October 10, 2012

CM | 1.5

Ethics and Food Systems Planning

November 7, 2012

CM | 1.5 | Ethics 1.5

Design Guidelines for Historic Neighborhoods Lecture

December 5, 2012

CM | 1.5

Zoning for Small-Scale Businesses

January 16, 2013

CM | 1.5

Fracking and Resource Extraction and Community Planning

February 13, 2013

CM | 1.5

Environmental Systems, Assessment, and Carrying Capacity Lecture

March 13, 2013

CM | 1.5

The 21st Century Planning Commission

Short Course Webinar

Cosponsor: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

April 13, 2013; June 15, 2013 rebroadcast

The rebroadcast gives your commission the flexibility to train all members on either April 13 or June 15 for one fee.

Rethinking the Role of the Urban Freeway

May 15, 2013

CM | 1.5

Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning

June 5, 2013

CM | 1.5

2013 Planning Law Review

June 26, 2013

CM | 1.5 | Law 1.5

Register and find out more: www.planning.org/audioconference



American Planning Association

Glencoe, Illinois: Small Town Sustainability

Marya Morris, AICP
Glencoe, Illinois,
Plan Commission

Like a lot of small towns and suburbs, Glencoe, Illinois (pop. 9,000), is eager to find ways to promote and support sustainability objectives, both within village government and among residents. But in an unstable economy the village is understandably averse to hiring staff or launching a major program. When the village board took up the issue in 2008, it knew success would depend on the commitment of a skilled staff and knowledgeable, enthusiastic volunteers. Here's how we did it.

In 2008 the board of trustees directed the village's Contextual Design Review Commission, chaired by Walter Eckenhoff, a local architect, and staff planner Nathan Parch, to study sustainability programs and policies with an eye toward those that Glencoe could learn from and possibly emulate. The Village of Glencoe Sustainability Study was completed in 2009. It recommended, and the trustees later approved, that the plan commission take the lead in crafting the village's sustainability initiative.

It was clear to my fellow commissioners and me during our first meeting on this topic that we needed to know more about who was doing what in Glencoe (e.g., recycling, preserving trees, conserving water, managing runoff, saving energy). We envisioned the village being part of a collaborative approach to conceptualizing and implementing sustainability tools.

In 2010 we hosted two forum nights in which about 15 entities, including village departments, our three elementary schools, the park district, the public library, the Boy Scouts, and the 280-acre Chicago Botanic Garden (which is located here) walked us through their current and future sustainability activities.

Following the forums, we narrowed our focus to four key areas. As of June 2012 the first three have been successfully implemented:

1. The village president formed a Sustainability Working Group in June 2011 comprised of seven members-at-large and a representative from the park district and the school board. The group reports to the plan commission.
2. Village staff and the working group launched an informational website for residents in early 2012. The village also held a public forum in November 2011 to engage the public in creating sustainability goals. (See www.villageofglencoe.org/about/sustainability/default.aspx.)
3. Staff audited the village regulations to identify barriers that may impede sustainable goals.
4. The Working Group is currently considering pilot projects (e.g., rain barrels and rain gardens), to demonstrate how home owners can implement their own sustainable goals.

The people involved in the sustainability initiative in Glencoe accomplished a tremendous amount of work with little more than human capital. It worked for us and I hope it inspires other small suburbs to follow our path.

C Shopping Centers as Town Squares and Neighborhood Centers

onsidered by many as the first automobile-oriented shopping center, County Club Plaza employed colorful architecture and art to create an appealing center for residential developments on Kansas City's southside. Located at the terminus of Ward Parkway, the center provided clothing stores, a grocery store, movie theatre and bowling alley, and an enjoyable place to stroll for residents.

Developer J. C. Nichols established the plaza in 1922 on 55 acres. The center grew into a 14-block shopping center with a regional clientele. Architect Edward Buehler Delk, influenced by the popular Spanish revival style, modeled the buildings on Seville, Spain. The hallmark of the plaza is the half scale copy of Seville's Giralda Tower.

Other developers in other cities had similar ideas. Roland Park (1907) was a more modest development, consisting of strip of stores, while Highland Park, Texas (1931), sought to create a town center and looked to Mexico and Spain for architectural ideas. Suburban Square (1928) in Philadelphia and Market Square (1916) in Lake Forest, Illinois, are two other examples that accommodated automobiles and shopping.



<http://msjdy3.hubpages.com/hub/VINTAGE-POSTCARDS-CITIES-IN-AMERICA>

Over time Country Club Plaza became a high-end retail center supported by hotels. Although still enjoyed by neighborhood residents, especially for its holiday light display, the Plaza is an important tourist attraction today.

The plaza was designated a National Planning Landmark in 1989.

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Max Richardson and Galatea King are public health researchers with the California Department of Public Health's Environmental Health Tracking Program (www.cehtp.org). **Kara Vuicich, AICP**, and **Jeremy Nelson** are transportation planners with **Nelson\Nygaard** (www.nelsonnygaard.com). They coauthored the article beginning on page 1.

Rana Salzmann is the APA manager of content strategy. She wrote the resource finder on page 10.

Carolyn Torma is the editor of *The Commissioner* and APA's director of education and citizen engagement. She wrote the history article on page 12.