



May 14, 2010

Andrew Crabtree
Principal Planner
Department of Planning, Building, & Code Enforcement
City of San Jose
200 East Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Quality Neighborhoods, Health Care, Parks and Rec and Urban Agriculture

Dear Mr. Crabtree and Members of the General Plan Task Force:

On behalf of The Health Trust, a Silicon Valley nonprofit foundation committed to advancing wellness, I am writing to share some suggestions about how to enhance your general plan draft language so it can best promote health.

The following provides specific suggestions for the Goals and Policies language for Health Care, Quality Neighborhoods, Parks and Recreation and Urban Agriculture.

Health Care

1. We suggest strengthening the goal so it reads, "Ensure that all segments of the community have access to adequate primary and emergency health care services and facilities."
2. On HC1.5 we suggest adding: "Work with VTA to ensure availability of affordable transit options to health facilities. Each resident should be able to access a hospital using public transit within X (45?) minutes." And "Ensure an operating emergency room is within X miles of every resident and a primary care facility is within X miles of every resident."
3. On 1.8 we suggest adding "Work with Santa Clara County Health Department to track and report rates of uninsured residents of San Jose."
4. We also suggest adding a new section with language that directs the city to regularly report on the percentage of City residents eating their recommended daily serving of fruits and vegetables, and the percent who are overweight and obese. It should be possible to get this data using County data.
5. We suggest adding action items that include something along the lines of "Review health needs analyses done by the county, state and others to determine deficiencies in health services including estimated demand for primary, specialty and emergency care."

Quality Neighborhoods

1. On QN 1.2-1.6 we suggest including some language "including people of all ages" to acknowledge the needs of our growing aging population.

2. On QN 3.3 we suggest adding language that directs the city to look at the percent of establishments that accept EBT.
3. On QN 3.7/3.8 we suggest using RFEI data which shows density of fast food outlets (“Retail Food Environment Index”).
4. On QN 3.9 we suggest looking at www.thefoodtrust.org to find some language about financing health food outlets.
5. On QN 3.9 and 3.10 we suggest referencing the business sector as a partner.

Parks and Recreation

1. On PR 1.9 we suggest including community gardens.
2. On PR 2.1 we suggest tracking at the portion of households within ½ mile of a community garden.
3. On PR 2.2 we suggest tracking the portion of households within ¼ mile of recreation facility.
4. On PR 2.3 we suggest tracking the portion of households within ¼ of a park. The quality of the park is important too so we recommend developing something like the “Park Score,” developed and used by San Francisco.

Urban Agriculture

1. We suggest adding some language about encouraging the city to use undeveloped or vacant parcels of land, including Muni land for community gardens, even if it is on a non-permanent basis.
2. On Action UA-1.9 we suggest including specific language “increase urban food production including strategies to promote home gardens...”

Thank you for your continued work on these important issues. If you would like further examples, assistance or specific suggested language, my staff is more than willing to provide resources to assist you in your efforts. Please don't hesitate to contact Nicole Kohleriter at (408) 879-4112.

Yours in health,



Frederick J. Ferrer
CEO

Cc: General Plan Task Force Members