

16. HEALTH

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INTRODUCTION

The Health Element is optional in the General Plan. It is allowed under Section 65303 of the State Government Code. Health Elements are a relatively new phenomenon in General Plans with only a select number of California cities having incorporated this element into their General Plan. The City of Clearlake’s General Plan will contain a Health Element for the first time in this 2040 General Plan Update.

Medical research shows that genes typically determine 10 to 15 percent of an individual’s health status, behavior accounts for 20 to 30 percent, and the environment – physical, social, and economic – accounts for 60 to 70 percent (Raimi & Associates, 2011). Thus, motivated by the dramatic increase in national obesity rates and obesity-related illnesses over the past two decades, public health professionals and urban planners have identified city planning as an avenue for fostering physical activity rate and increasing access to healthy foods. The City of Clearlake is establishing a desire to promote healthy lifestyles within its community with the addition of a Health Element into the Clearlake General Plan.

The Health Element is most closely related to the Land Use and Circulation elements. There is an increasing awareness of the link between the built environment and public health. Land use decisions help shape the pattern of community development and can either promote or discourage active modes of transportation. Recent trends in literature suggest land use as a major influence over adequate provision of community amenities; including access to healthy food, outdoor recreation opportunities, and civic services within walking distance of every household. A city with access to alternative modes of transportation can have significant impacts on increasing physical activity and decreasing obesity rates. Public transportation networks should be efficient and easy to access in order to increase ridership and subsequently reduce dependence on the automobile. The Open Space and Safety Elements are also closely related to the Health Element. Parks should provide recreational space in every neighborhood to encourage physical activity, contribute positively to mental health, and improve air quality. Additionally, an active community is also a safe community with plenty of ‘eyes on the street’.

Existing best practices and standards, fieldwork, community health assessments, stakeholder interviews and community input were considered in creating this element. The Health Element contains goals, objectives, policies, and programs aimed at creating a healthier community in Clearlake. Specifically, this element focuses on improving access to healthy food, opportunities for physical activity, air quality, and access to health care and social capital.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

GOAL HE 1

Accessible healthcare.

Objective HE 1.1

Increase access to healthcare facilities.

Policy HE 1.1.1

The City shall seek service connections to healthcare facilities by different forms of public transportation.

Program HE 1.1.1.1

Support existing shuttle services to St. Helena Hospital, Clearlake.

Program HE 1.1.1.2

Provide non-emergency medical transportation for the community through Lake Transit.

Program HE 1.1.1.3

Promote the awareness of Lake Transit's Clearlake/Lower Lake Dial-a-ride and "Flex Stop" services.

Policy HE 1.1.2

The City shall seek the establishment of health services to serve hard-to-reach populations or areas.

Program HE 1.1.2.1

Establish a Mobile Health Services Unit (MHSU) at St. Helena Hospital in Clearlake.

Objective HE 1.2

Increase the percentage of populated residential parcels within a half-mile radius of a healthcare facility to 50 percent by 2040.

Policy HE 1.2.1

The City shall encourage the development and establishment of healthcare facilities.

Program HE 1.2.1.1

Utilize vacant city-owned parcels as potential healthcare zones.

Program HE 1.2.1.2

Attract healthcare practices to underserved areas by providing proportionate relief from impact fees.

GOAL HE 2

High awareness of healthy eating and healthy food options.

Objective HE 2.1

Increase access to healthy food options.

Policy HE 2.1.1

Promote the prevalence of fresh fruit and produce and healthy dining options.

Program HE 2.1.1.1

Establish farmers markets.

Program HE 2.1.1.2

Provide transit connections to produce markets and grocery stores.

Program HE 2.1.1.3

Establish community gardens and food cooperatives.

Program HE 2.1.1.4

Encourage market organizers to provide fee-free incentives for local growers to participate at farmers markets.

Program HE 2.1.1.5

Permit convenience stores to carry fresh produce meeting health department regulations.

Program HE 2.1.1.6

Support school programs to offer healthy food in school.

Program HE 2.1.1.7

Encourage food assistance program benefits to the wider community including eligible educational programs.

Objective HE 2.2

Offer educational materials regarding the Food Stamp or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to families living in poverty.

Policy HE 2.2.1

Increase awareness of financial assistance programs for families living in poverty.

Program HE 2.2.1.1

Facilitate informational workshops with School Districts, community service agencies and healthcare providers on assistance programs.

Objective HE 2.3

Move from a food balance score (an indication of healthy food access versus non-healthy food access) below 0.75.

Policy HE 2.3.1

Aim to move the food balance score from average to good according to the Food Balance Score method developed.

Program HE 2.3.1.1

Identify areas lacking healthy food providers and establish more fresh food enterprises.

Program HE 2.3.1.2

Work with existing food cooperatives in the City.

Program HE 2.3.1.3

Convert pocket green spaces in new Planned Residential Developments into community gardens.

GOAL HE 3

Healthy lifestyle and educational programs for all.

Objective HE 3.1

Promote awareness and educational programs on the benefits of healthy and active lifestyles, with particular attention to information related to obesity, heart disease, substance abuse and emotional health.

Policy HE 3.1.1

Promote programs that address substance abuse and mental health.

Program HE 3.1.1.1

Work with County Health Officer and Department to organize health education and awareness campaigns.

Program HE 3.1.1.2

Expand family support and preventive services as lifestyle or behavioral coaching assistance.

Program HE 3.1.1.3

Create informational sessions on substance abuse and mental and emotional health available to the wider community.

Objective HE 3.2

Promote community and family based activities that lead to healthy and active lifestyles.

Policy HE 3.2.1

Promote suitable physical and social activities for families, seniors and youth.

Program HE 3.2.1.1

Establish partnerships with local business communities, school districts and community organizations to develop health and active lifestyle awareness in consumers.

Program HE 3.2.1.2

Expand public events that encourage active community participation and social integration.

Program HE 3.2.1.3

Create opportunities for volunteers, senior programs, youth and after school programs.

Objective HE 3.3

Control the location of land uses to reduce exposure to air pollution.

Policy HE 3.3.1

The City shall not allow new residential development within 300 feet of industrial uses or within 500 feet of the center of a major roadway.

Program HE 3.3.1.1

Review land use regulations and zoning to ensure compatible land uses, especially in targeted growth areas.

GOAL HE 4

A safe community.

Objective HE 4.1

Foster a sense of safety in the community.

Policy HE 4.1.1

Improve road conditions and public spaces to increase visibility and foster better social connections among residents.

Program HE 4.1.1.1

Improve lighting on streets, sidewalks, crossings and public amenities to improve safety in pedestrian and recreational areas.

Program HE 4.1.1.2

Expand neighborhood safety watch programs.

Program HE 4.1.1.3

Implement strict code enforcement and road patrols for driving-under-influence (DUI) offenses.

Policy HE 4.1.2

The City shall accommodate emergency shelters and special needs populations such as the homeless and domestic abuse victims.

Program HE 4.1.2.1

Work with appropriate agencies to establish a permanent emergency shelter for the homeless and abuse victims.