Health Impact Assessment: A Tool for Healthy Public Policy

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Public health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions for people to be healthy.” -- Institute of Medicine (1988)
Health Impact Assessment supports informed policy-making

...a combination of procedures, methods and tools

...that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, program or project on the health of a population

....and the distribution of those effects within the population

....[and] identifies appropriate actions to manage those effects.

--International Association of Impact Assessment

Adaptation of WHO definition
Good Policy & Law Requires An Understanding Of Health Impacts

- Planning, building, housing, transportation, consumer product, and environmental regulations are all justified by the protection of health and welfare.

- The National Environmental Health Policy Act (NEPA) requires analysis of health and safety problems caused by physical changes.

- Environmental justice mandates to identify and address adverse health effects on low income and minority populations.

- Cost-Benefit analysis of public policy places economic value on health effects.
Health Benefits Analysis of the 1999 San Francisco Living Wage Law

- Quantified the Health and Social Benefits of a Living Wage
  - Life-expectancy, education, depression, sick leave
- Contributed to local support for living wage law
- Demonstrated public health could contribute to social and economic policy
- Led to awareness of HIA
- Led to new partners for work on social determinants
HIAs Completed or In-Progress in San Francisco (1999 – 2011)

- Labor (4)
- Land Use (6)
- Housing (6)
- Transport (2)
- Energy (1)
- Environment (1)
- Local (17)
- State (2)
- National (1)
HIA of SF Road Pricing Feasibility Study (2011)

- Substantial, quantifiable health burdens from transportation system, including air pollution-related mortality, noise-related heart disease, and traffic injuries to pedestrians and cyclists
- Opportunities to increase walking and bicycling
- Disproportionately burdens within the pricing zone
- Anticipated increases in adverse transportation impacts in priority development areas
- Modest benefits from pricing effects on traffic volume under future conditions.

Health Impacts?
Healthy Development Measurement Tool (2007)

1) Community vision for a health city (27 objectives)
2) Community-level Health Indicators
3) Policy and Design Strategies
4) Criteria for healthy development
5) Public Health Evidence
**Spatial Models of Particulate Matter Concentration**

Identifies high pollution areas for emissions and exposure reductions
Statutory Protections for Housing in Traffic Pollution Hot Spots (2008)

- Identified Areas with Potential Conflicts through Roadway Exposure Zone Map
- Established an Action Level for Mitigating indoor air quality
- Established performance criteria for enhanced ventilation systems.
Participation in Local & Regional Planning Efforts

San Francisco
- SFMTA, SFCTA, SFDCP, MOH, DPW, MTC,
- Walk SF, CA Walks, PODER, Urban Habitat.
- Mayor’s Pedestrian Safety Task Force
- Inter-Agency Sustainable Communities Workgroup
- HOPE SF Health Task Force
- Developers

Regional
- HIA Collaborative
- MTC Equity Advisory Committee
Current Approach to HIA

Sustainable Community Policy Dialogues

• Air Quality Hotspots
• Pedestrian Injuries
• Transportation Efficiency
• Housing Affordability, Adequacy & Quality
• Economic Development
• Food Systems

Candidate Topics for HIA

• Ventilation Standards for Air Pollution Hotspots
• Energy Efficiency Subsidies for Housing
• SF Traffic Calming Tools

SFDPH Environmental HEALTH
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Context</th>
<th>Policy/Project/ Plan/ Program</th>
<th>Decision Target(s)</th>
<th>Potential health and equity impacts/ benefits</th>
<th>Value of information</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Air Pollution Risk and Disparities | Amendments to health code ventilation standards for residential buildings in high air pollution zones | • Community Risk Reduction Plan (CRRP)  
• Legislation | High, expands area subject to AQ protections, requirements applicable in areas of highest air pollutants | Could justify amendments to law; inter-agency support | Available lit; modeling tools; staffing | Committed |
| | Targeted building performance and ventilation subsidies | • CRRP  
• State/fed public programs to subsidize building energy efficiency | High, multiple health benefits, targeting to vulnerable populations | Could justify modification of program; inter-agency support | Available lit; UCB student support | Committed |
| | Limitations of Truck Routes in resid. districts | • Community Risk Reduction Plan | | | | Pending |
| Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety | Automatic Speed Enforcement on high injury arterial roadway | • City pilot program of automated speed enforcement | | | | Pending |
| | Lane narrowing vs. road diets vs. enforcement for arterial traffic calming | • City traffic calming toolkit | | | | Pending |
| | Restrict turns to ↓ injuries of right of way violations | • City traffic calming toolkit | | | | Pending |
| Transportation Efficiency | Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) | • Regional Transport. Plan  
• 1 Bay Area Grant Prgm | | No HIA; Provide focused TA via EIA comment letter | | |
| | Transit Effectiveness Project (TEP) | • SFMTA | | No HIA; Focused design recs for TEP implementn | | |
National Leadership and Recognition

- First U.S. City to develop a sustained HIA practice
- Internationally recognized as leader in the field
- Mentorship and training of new practitioners
- Contributed to standards and guidance for practice
- Current HIA funding under CDC collaborative agreement
Outcomes: Organizational learning & New Partnerships!

- Direct Outcomes
  - Changes to policy design

- Indirect Outcomes
  - Public understanding of health determinants
  - Agency capacity to measure environmental and social determinants and disparities
  - Agency understanding of other policy sectors
  - Constructive public and private sector partnerships
  - Integration of public health objectives in other public sector organizations
  - New public health policy and regulation
Resources: The SF Bay HIA Collaborative

SF HIA Collaborative
www.hiacollaborative.org

SF Department of Public Health
www.sfphes.org

UC Berkeley HIA Group
http://sites.google.com/site/ucbhia

Human Impact Partners
www.humanimpact.org