

# CHAPTER 11 HEALTH

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## 11.2 PURPOSE OF CHAPTER

A healthy and vital Mountain View is a key component of the vision for the City's future. This chapter documents baseline conditions in Mountain View that affect the overall health of the community. It identifies key issues and opportunities relevant to the General Plan Update. In addition, the chapter provides a brief overview of County and local health studies that have been completed or that may help inform development of city policies as part of the General Plan update. Highlighting the importance of Mountain View's setting within the regional context, it also identifies key health trends for Santa Clara County, as well as health-related issues among school-age and senior populations in Mountain View.

This chapter was prepared by MIG.

The following sections of the Health chapter:

- Describe County-wide health efforts;
- Document school and school district findings related to health;
- Describe the demographic profile and health statistics for the community; and
- Identify current built environment conditions that affect public health.

### ***Health Trust Grant***

In January 2009, the City of Mountain View received a grant from the Silicon Valley Health Trust (see website: <http://www.healthtrust.org/>) to conduct health-related assessment of existing built environment conditions that affect public health and develop goals, policies and implementing actions for the General Plan Update. As part of this effort, Human Impact Partners, a non-profit health organization, is providing technical expertise to the General Plan Update project team.

The existing conditions analysis focuses on health indicators most relevant to the City of Mountain View. The indicators are organized in seven categories or health outcomes, listed below. Indicators were selected from the Healthy Development Measurement Tool, a comprehensive list of indicators created to help cities and counties develop health-related policy.<sup>1</sup>

This report assesses community health in Mountain View based on the following overall health outcomes:

- Access to open space;
- Access to healthy foods;
- Access to medical services;
- Access to public transit and active transportation;
- Completeness of neighborhoods;
- Safe neighborhoods and public spaces; and
- Environmental quality.

This analysis will inform the General Plan Update policy framework and will support the development of goals, policies and implementing actions to help improve community health in Mountain View.

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<sup>1</sup> The Healthy Development Measurement Tool. Available online at: [www.thehdmtool.org](http://www.thehdmtool.org).

### 11.3 HIGHLIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

These represent key observations, issues and highlights noted by City staff and the consultant team related to health.

- Most Mountain View residents live within a half mile of parks and open space defined as a mini-, neighborhood and regional park; publicly accessible shoreline; or a trail consistent with the Parks and Open Space Plan (POSP). Proximity to parks allows increased physical activity, greater social cohesion, improved neighborhood safety and improved mental health.
- While parks and open space in Mountain View are generally well distributed, there may not be adequate acreage to meet the POSP standard of three acres per 1,000 residents in several neighborhoods.
- More than half of the residential parcels in the city enjoy good access to nutritious food options. But five of the city's 10 public elementary schools and about half of all residential parcels in Mountain View are located within one half mile of one or more fast food restaurants.
- About one third of Mountain View residents can access a major medical facility within 30 minutes using public transit. Residential communities with convenient transit access to medical facilities are concentrated south of the Central Expressway along major arterials such as El Camino Real and connectors like Castro Street and Grant Road.
- About 25 percent of Mountain View residents and about 27 percent of employees have good access to regional public transit. The North Bayshore Area, however, does not have good access to frequent public transit service.
- Over the last ten years, most of the vehicular collisions with pedestrians occurred along El Camino Real, Castro Street and Central Expressway. And most of the vehicular collisions with bicyclists occurred at the following locations: intersections of El Camino Real/Castro and Escuela/California; and along El Camino Real.
- Nearly half of Mountain View homes are located within walking distance of a public elementary school. Proximity of elementary and middle schools to residential areas promotes walking and bicycling to school which increases physical activity.
- Violent and property crimes are generally concentrated in two areas in Mountain View: along San Antonio Road north of El Camino and along Showers Drive north of El Camino. The vast majority of these crimes are non-violent property crimes.

- Few residents live in close proximity to roadways with significant average daily vehicle traffic. All eleven public schools in Mountain View are located more than 300 feet from major roadways. Proximity of schools to major roadways may improve vehicular access but also reduces pedestrian and bicycle safety and increases exposure to air pollutants.

## 11.4 REVIEW OF EXISTING COUNTY AND LOCAL HEALTH REPORTS

### ***Countywide Health Reports***

#### *Santa Clara County Community Health Assessment, 2007*

In 2007, the Santa Clara Community Benefits Coalition, a partnership of representatives from community health clinics, major hospitals, non-profit health organizations, the Santa Clara County Public Health Department, the Santa Clara County Office of Education and various charitable foundations that support health in the county, released the Santa Clara County Community Health Assessment report. The assessment, which will be updated every three years, identifies opportunities and challenges facing government agencies, community organizations and health care organizations as they work to improve community health and quality of life in the county.

The Community Health Assessment focuses on five areas of particular concern in the county including: access to health care; obesity; chronic disease; children's health; and senior health. The assessment uses measures based on quality of life indicators drawn from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) and the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS).

#### *Healthy Silicon Valley Community Action Plan*

In 2002, the Health Trust convened representatives of the California Endowment, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the Valley Foundation to explore how the foundations could contribute to a healthier Santa Clara County. The Healthy Silicon Valley Collaborative formalized its structure in early 2006. Its mission is to foster a culture of health by supporting prevention and wellness activities, increasing physical activity and promoting healthy nutrition.

The Healthy Silicon Valley Community Action Plan and related implementation efforts are the result of this collaboration. The plan focuses on improving health and wellness by strengthening organizational practices in six broad categories: education; childcare, family home, preschool and before- and after-school providers; government; food providers; media and marketing; and nutrition and physical activity service providers.

### ***School and School District Health Reports***

#### *Castro School Service Area (CSSA) Community Health Report 2002*

In 2003, the Santa Clara County Public Health Department and Healthy Ventures of Mountain View released the Castro School Service Area (CSSA) Community Health Report. The report focuses on areas of high concern in the CSSA community such as safety, education and health based on input provided by residents at a community forum. The goal of the report was to acknowledge the influence of economic, environmental and social conditions on health in communities.

The report is a synthesis of the results of a survey of residents within the CSSA, an area bounded by Ortega Avenue, Central Expressway, El Camino Real, Mountain View Avenue, Snow Street, Palo Alto Avenue, Villa Street and Chiquita Avenue. The survey was administered in Spanish and English through 192 face-to-face interviews. Of the respondents, 80.2 percent were of Hispanic origin and 63.2 percent indicated that Spanish was their primary spoken language. Hispanic representation in the survey sample significantly exceeded the Hispanic population of Mountain View (18.3 percent)

and Santa Clara County (24 percent).<sup>2</sup> In addition, 60 percent of 2002 survey respondents had an annual household income of \$35,000 or less compared with median household incomes for Mountain View (\$81,246) and Santa Clara County (\$85,454).<sup>3</sup>

Survey questions pertained to perceptions of community life, community resources, perceptions of living conditions, educational attainment, morbidity and mortality, prenatal care, health access and insurance coverage and perceptions of safety and crime.

Key findings from the report included:

- Survey participants reported a lack of awareness of the City's recreation programs.
- Participants identified poor street lighting and speeding vehicles as key safety concerns.
- Respondents reported that minimal or lack of health care coverage was a barrier to health care access.
- More than half of survey respondents reported that the quality of life in the CSSA was the same or better than it was five years earlier.
- More than half of respondents also rated Mountain View parks as good or excellent and indicated that their children participated in after-school activities.

#### *California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)*

The California Healthy Kids Survey is a tool provided to school districts by the California Department of Education to collect information on health risks to students. The survey is designed to provide a common set of health risk and resilience data across the state to inform local decision-making and analyze geographic and demographic variations. The report provides key findings related to substance use, violence and safety as well as indicators of the positive behaviors and attitudes of students.

The Mountain View Whisman School District and Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District administered the CHKS in the fall of 2007 and the spring of 2008, respectively. The goals for administering the survey were to reduce risk behaviors and promote well-being and positive development, promote learning, demonstrate accountability, meet funding requirements and promote health programs and community support. The districts surveyed a minimum of 60 percent of students in each grade and school.

#### Mountain View Whisman School District<sup>4</sup>

The Mountain View Whisman School District conducted the CHKS among seventh graders in the district.

Key findings from the survey included:

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<sup>2</sup> Castro School Service Area (CSSA) 2003. Healthy Ventures of Mountain View/Los Altos and Santa Clara County Public Health Department. Community Health Report 2002.

<sup>3</sup> A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. Glossary, US Census 2000.

<sup>4</sup> WestEd. (2007). California Healthy Kids Survey: Mountain View Whisman School District. Accessed from [http://www.wested.org/chks/pdf/rpts\\_dl/f07s\\_43\\_69591.pdf](http://www.wested.org/chks/pdf/rpts_dl/f07s_43_69591.pdf)

- A significant number of students reported that they had used inhalants (16 percent) or smoked marijuana (10 percent) at least once; statewide, only 8 percent of students had engaged in either behavior.
- Two in five surveyed students (41 percent) reported being harassed because of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability in the past 12 months at school, compared with only a quarter (28 percent) of state respondents.
- Approximately 16 percent of Mountain View Whisman respondents reported feeling very safe at school, a slightly lower percentage than at the statewide level, where 19 percent of students felt very safe at school.

#### Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District<sup>5</sup>

The Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District conducted the CHKS among ninth and eleventh grade students. Key findings from the survey included:

- The responses of Mountain View-Los Altos survey participants paralleled those of statewide participants closely, with 17 percent of ninth grade students reporting that they had smoked a cigarette at least once, 42 percent reporting that they had consumed alcohol, 11 percent reporting that they had used inhalants and 21 percent reporting that they had smoked marijuana.<sup>6</sup>
- Only 13 percent of Mountain View-Los Altos ninth grade respondents indicated that they had been in a physical fight within the last 12 months, compared to 25 percent of state respondents.
- Over a quarter (26 percent) of ninth grade respondents and 31 percent of eleventh grade respondents reported feeling very safe at school, in contrast to only 16 and 13 percent, respectively, of their counterparts at the state level.
- More than half of the students (57 percent of ninth grade respondents and 62 percent of eleventh grade respondents) reported that their schools had school connectedness, an indicator that rates caring relationships with teachers, high expectations from adults and opportunities for meaningful participation at school. Statewide, only 31 percent of ninth and eleventh grade respondents felt their schools had this quality.

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<sup>5</sup> WestEd. (2007). California Healthy Kids Survey: Mountain View-Los Altos School District. Accessed from [http://www.wested.org/chks/pdf/rpts\\_dl/s08s\\_43\\_69609.pdf](http://www.wested.org/chks/pdf/rpts_dl/s08s_43_69609.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Statewide, 16 percent of students reported that they had smoked a cigarette, 41 percent had consumed alcohol, 11 percent had used inhalants and 22 percent had smoked marijuana.

Los Altos Elementary Unified School District

The Los Altos Elementary School District conducted the CHKS among seventh grade students in Spring 2008 and fifth grade students in 2005. The responses of the Los Altos Elementary survey paralleled those from other districts in Mountain View and statewide. Key findings from the survey include:

- Fifteen percent of seventh grade students have consumed at least one whole drink of alcohol in their life, 7 percent had tried inhalants at least once and 4 percent reported using marijuana at least once.
- Forty-three percent of fifth grade student report that they use alcohol, 2 percent report that they smoke cigarettes and inhalants, one percent use smokeless tobacco and zero percent report using marijuana.
- Twenty-six percent of seventh grade students have been harassed and 19 percent have been in a fight.
- Thirty-nine percent of fifth grade students have been bullied (hit or pushed) and 10 percent report seeing someone with a gun or knife at school in the past year.
- Nearly half (47 percent) of seventh grade respondents and nearly three-fourths (70 percent) of fifth grade respondents feel safe at school.
- Over half of fifth grade student respondents (59 percent) exercise five days per week.