



## Introduction

A healthy city is one that is continually improving those physical facilities, social environments, and community reserves which enable people to perform all the functions of life and develop their maximum potential. There are many conditions that have a profound impact on a community's ability to lead a healthy life. Communities that have access to vital resources such as recreational facilities, healthy foods, medical services, transportation options, quality and affordable housing, living-wage jobs, safe neighborhoods, and quality educational services experience better health outcomes.



## Purpose

The purpose of the Healthy Community Element is to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the Perris's residents, workers, and visitors. The Healthy Community Element provides a framework to implement the General Plan's vision for a healthier sustainable Perris. This element will address areas where public health and planning intersect, including transportation, active living, access to nutritious food, access to health care, mental health, and environmental health.

## Public Outreach/Initial Efforts to Improve Health Outcomes

In preparation for this Healthy Community Element, the City of Perris has used various avenues to educate residents about the relationship between planning and health, to understand better the community's priorities for health, and to provide an opportunity for citizens to discuss their concerns about the overall health in the community, such as healthy eating and access to nutritious foods, and the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment.



**2014 Student Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA)**

In April 2013, the City of Perris adopted the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Campaign Resolution. Under this resolution the City was ordered to promote employee wellness, improve the built environment and increase healthy food access within the City of Perris.



## HEALTHY COMMUNITY ELEMENT

Since the adoption of the resolution, the City has kicked off the Live Well Campaign to provide opportunities for citizens to live a healthier active life. The City has offered various activities and resources to the citizens to understand and participate in healthy eating and active living. The City has offered free workout sessions, sports clinics for children, Health Fairs, Walk to School Day, and a Farmers Market, to name just a few of the activities. In addition, the City has adopted a Master Trail Plan to further implement active living and design.



**2014 Live Well Kick Off**



**2014 Lake Perris Community Hike**

One of the most attended events was the City of Perris' Annual Health Fair on April 26, 2014. At this Health Fair the City administered a survey to the residents about what they would like to see. Over 100 people responded to the survey. The data gathered at this event directly informed the content of the Healthy Community Element. The residents that participated in the survey identified their city-wide nutrition priorities as: creation of farmers markets; support for local markets and grocery stores to provide more healthy food options; and limits on drive-through restaurants and liquor stores, especially around schools. Overall, residents expressed a strong desire for clean and safe streets that encourage walking and public gathering.



**2014 City of Perris Health Fair Healthy Community Survey**



# Goals and Policies

The goals and policies in this Element are the result of a comprehensive analysis of existing health and environmental conditions along with community outreach. They reflect a progressive but realistic approach to Perris' current environment. It may not be realistic to expect everyone in the City to sell their cars and start biking everywhere, but there are opportunities to promote more physical activity through improved park access, a better walking environment, more access to public transit, and more jobs and services that are locally available.

## Citywide Health



The City of Perris has a total area of 31.5 square miles and the population is estimated at 72,326.<sup>1</sup> Leading causes of death in Perris are heart disease and cancer, followed by unintentional injury.<sup>2</sup> The City of Perris scores in the top percentages for children and adults with unhealthy dietary habits. With heart disease strongly related to lifestyle and individual behavior, it is a particular concern to the City of Perris to improve the environment so there can be an effect on health. Certain segments of the population such as young children, older adults, and those with lower incomes are often more susceptible to a variety of health risks.

The rate of overweight or obese adults in the City is higher than that of Riverside County or the State of California. 32.7 percent of Perris residents are overweight or obese, compared to 25.9 percent for Riverside County and 24.8 percent for the State of California.<sup>3</sup> Studies have found that being overweight or obese has strong links to other illnesses like diabetes, asthma and heart disease.

<sup>1</sup> State & County QuickFacts, "Perris (city), California" accessed April 28, 2015 at [quickfacts.census.gov](http://quickfacts.census.gov)

<sup>2</sup> Riverside County Community Health Agency, Department of Public Health, Epidemiology & Program Evaluation Branch, with data from State of California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Death Statistical Master File Riverside County, 2005-2007

<sup>3</sup> 2005 California Health Interview Survey, "Obese" question for Riverside County and the State of California, accessed February 11, 2015 at [www.chis.ucla.edu](http://www.chis.ucla.edu)





## Policy Area 1: Citywide Health

Goal HC-1: Citywide Health – Foster educational opportunities that show a connection between “place” and health.

### HCE Policies

- HC 1.1 Promote an understanding of the connections between the built environment and the on-going health challenges in the City of Perris
- HC 1.2 Coordinate the development of complete neighborhoods that provide for the basic needs of daily life and for the health, safety, and welfare of residents
- HC 1.3 Improve safety and the perception of safety by requiring adequate lighting, street visibility, and defensible space
- HC 1.4 Encourage health promotion groups to participate at community/city-sponsored events (e.g. waive booth fees at fairs, etc.)
- HC 1.5 On an ongoing basis, identify and address health inequities in Perris (i.e. unjust barriers that result in differences in environmental conditions and health outcomes) and strive to provide a high quality of life for all residents, regardless of income, age or ethnicity
- HC 1.6 Encourage the attraction and retention of high quality grocery stores and other healthy food purveyors as an economic development strategy for the City. Healthy food outlets include full-service grocery stores, regularly-held farmer’s markets, fruit and vegetable markets, and convenience stores or corner stores that sell a significant proportion of healthy food

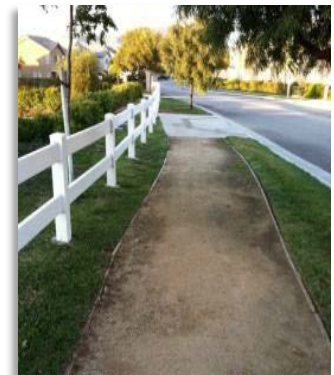
## Land Use and Community Design



Although conventional planning practices (such as separating residential and commercial uses, building low density areas, constructing streets primarily for automobiles, and not providing adequate transportation choices) are not the single cause of chronic health problems in the State, there is increasing documentation that they are often a contributing factor.

Research indicates that auto-oriented, low density; single use places – as well as places underserved by parks and active recreation facilities – discourage physical activity and therefore contribute to an increased risk of heart disease, cancer,

stroke, and diabetes. Poor nutrition, which can be exacerbated by land use decisions that limit people’s access to healthy food, also contributes to these chronic diseases. Physical inactivity and poor nutrition is also a primary risk factor for obesity





(the fastest-growing disease in California, along with diabetes). Conversely, research shows that higher density, walkable urban places, transportation choices, and access to recreation all increase physical activity, and thus promote positive health impacts.

### **Policy Area 2: Land Use and Community Design**

Goal HC-2: Community Design – Facilitate local efforts to improve the opportunities and choices for a healthy and active lifestyle.

#### **HCE Policies**

HC 2.1: Implement the Perris Trail Master Plan

HC 2.2: Partner with the Riverside County Department of Public Health in its efforts to fund, coordinate, and implement safe-routes-to-school projects

HC 2.3: Promote increased physical activity, reduced driving and increased walking, cycling and public transit by:

- Requiring where appropriate the development of compact development patterns that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly
- Increasing opportunities for active transportation (walking and biking) and transit use
- Encouraging the development of neighborhood grocery stores that provide fresh produce

HC 2.4 Promote development patterns and policies that:

- Reduce commute times
- Encourage the improvement of vacant properties and the reinvestment in neighborhoods
- Provide public space for people to congregate and interact socially
- Foster safe and attractive environments
- Encourage civic participation

HC 2.5 Support life-cycle housing opportunities through the creation of cohesive neighborhoods

HC 2.6 Encourage land use and urban design to promote physical activity, provide access to nutritious foods, and reduce air pollution

HC 2.7 Promote goals, objectives, and policies that achieve positive health outcomes. These include the following:

- Redeveloping the Corridors and Districts with a diverse mix of higher-intensity uses
- Building higher density development near existing and proposed future transit
- Enhancing existing neighborhoods with walkable streets, a diverse mix of housing types, and neighborhood services (such as stores, recreational facilities, and childcare) within walking distance. This could also include promoting building designs that enhance opportunities for defensible space



### Multimodal Transportation



**Kimball Transit Center**

Most people in Perris drive to work, to school, and for their daily needs such as shopping. This is similar to the transportation behavior of Riverside County, where in 2008 the average household drove 66.5 miles per day (21.26 miles per day per capita), according to the SCAG Regional Transportation Plan.<sup>4</sup>

Many parts of Riverside County, including the Perris area, experience high levels of traffic congestion. A large portion of residents experience long commute times, and the hours and miles spent driving continue to rise. Increased driving rates are a source of physical, economic, and environmental stress. Driving has been linked with negative health impacts, including higher rates of traffic crashes

and increased levels of stress and anxiety. In addition, more miles and hours spent traveling by motor vehicle translate into greater amounts of air pollution which in turn have health impacts.

The City would like to improve access and the effectiveness of alternative transportation modes ultimately supporting active living and healthy lifestyles. The transportation system should make it easy to walk, bike, and use public transit, while also minimizing the need to drive long distances to meet basic daily needs or get to work. The transportation systems should be designed in close coordination with land use patterns and the urban form, so that all transportation facilities encourage people to drive less, walk more, and have greater access to jobs, healthy food and community resources.

Public transit is an approach to combat traffic congestion and protect the environment. In 1993 The City Council approved the Downtown Specific Plan incorporating a multi-modal transportation center. Ward Kimball Transit Center is located in Downtown Perris and serves approximately 880,000 riders annually mainly via 216 weekday buses. The City is currently undergoing the development of the Perris Valley Line (PVL) Project. PVL will be a 24-mile extension of the Metrolink 91 Line. This line currently provides service from Riverside to Downtown Los Angeles.



**Perris Valley Line Metrolink**

<sup>4</sup> Regional Transportation Plan 2008, Amendment 2PL data provided by Youngping Zhang and Gouxiong Huang, Transportation Planning Department, Southern California Association of Governments in March 2010 for Raimi+Associates.



## Policy Area 3: Multimodal Transportation

Goal HC-3: Multimodal Transportation – Support efforts to create transportation options beyond an auto-centric focus.

### HCE Policies

- HC 3.1 Coordinate with transportation service providers and transportation planning entities to improve access to multi-modal transportation options throughout Perris including public transit
- HC 3.2 Coordinate with transportation service providers and transportation planning entities to address the location of civic uses such as schools and government buildings, commercial corridors, and medical facilities so that they are accessible by public transit
- HC 3.3 Coordinate with transportation service providers and transportation planning entities to ensure that public transportation facilities are located a convenient distance from residential areas
- HC 3.4 Ensure that regional trail plans are implemented at the development plan review level
- HC 3.5 Promote job growth within Perris to reduce the substantial out-of-Perris job commutes that exist today

## Public and Open Space



**Mercado Park**

Parks, plazas, natural areas, sports facilities, and other public spaces can have great benefits for physical and mental health. They encourage physical activity by creating a venue for organized or casual recreation. They can also provide opportunities for social interaction, relaxation, and a connection with nature, all of which have well-established links to good mental health.

The City of Perris has 175 acres of parkland within 17 total parks available for residents to use. The City also has 1,460 acres zoned Open

Space. 28.2 percent of Perris’ residents meet the minimum weekly exercise recommendation; State of California’s rate is 33.3 percent.<sup>5</sup> Research shows that residents that are farther than ½-mile from a park in these areas are less likely to meet minimum weekly exercise recommendations.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 2005 California Health Interview Survey, “Walked at least 150 minutes” question for Riverside County and the State of California, accessed February 11, 2015 at [www.chis.ucla.edu](http://www.chis.ucla.edu)





## Policy Area 4: Public and Open Space

Goal 4: Public and Open Space – Facilitate the creation and maintenance of spaces for public recreation.

### HCE Policies

- HC 4.1 Promote public spaces that foster positive human interaction and healthy lifestyles
- HC 4.2 Foster the creation of public plazas with seating, art, and play features near shopping and business districts
- HC 4.3 Encourage the development and display of public art to promote the history, heritage, and culture of Perris
- HC 4.4 Provide opportunities for community gardens and local food production:
  - o The City will support the use of public and private vacant lots, including school yards, for community gardens, as feasible or appropriate

## Healthy Economy

Income is one of the strongest determinants of health status. When people have access to high quality employment that pays a living wage, they are more likely to have access to health care, and more likely to afford basic necessities such as healthy food and housing. Additionally, people with higher incomes incur less psychosocial stress about how to make ends meet. 21.9 percent of adults (aged 18 or older) in the City are living in poverty. California’s average is 13.0 percent.<sup>7</sup>



Home Depot Fulfillment Center

The number of jobs in a community in proportion to the amount of housing available is an important indicator of both the availability of housing for the City’s workforce and the availability of jobs for City residents. The overall jobs/housing ratio in Riverside County is approximately 0.7, which includes all cities within its jurisdiction.<sup>8</sup> The need to travel long distances for work or for housing increases time

<sup>6</sup> L.Frank et al., 2000, *Linking Land Use with Household Vehicle Emissions in the Central Puget Sound: Methodological Framework and Findings*, Part D, Vol. 5, Transportation Research, *supra* note 11

<sup>7</sup> 2005 California Health Interview Survey, “Living in Poverty” question for Riverside County and the State of California, accessed February 11, 2015 at [www.chis.ucla.edu](http://www.chis.ucla.edu)

<sup>8</sup> Western Riverside Council of Governments “Western Riverside County: a collection of profiles, indicators, and maps” (2006)





spent driving, which negatively impacts physical health and decreases levels of social engagement. A lack of jobs can also diminish economic vitality, competitiveness, and sustainability.

### Policy Area 5: Healthy Economy

Goal HC-5: Healthy Economy – Encourage businesses to provide meaningful employment opportunities to residents.

#### HCE Policies

HC 5.1 Develop programs to attract and retain industries that can provide a living wage, provide health insurance benefits, and meet existing levels of workforce education

HC 5.2 Encourage local employers to adopt healthy living/healthy employee programs and practices such as health challenges (e.g., weight loss contests, stop smoking programs, lunchtime/worktime sponsored events, bike to work days), healthy food choices, and healthy work environments

### Healthy Environment



**Perris Civic Center  
Solar Carports**

A healthy community promotes environmental protection, better use of resources, sustainability and stewardship. Sustainable development practices increase the efficiency with which buildings use resources and reduces impacts on human health and the environment through better design, construction, operation and maintenance.

People today are exposed to an unprecedented amount of harmful substances, ranging from particulate matter and emissions from auto and industrial sources to toxic pesticides and ingredients found in every day household and pharmaceutical products. These harmful substances

enter into air and water supplies and accumulate in bodies causing a range of health effects such as increased respiratory illness, cancer and other chronic health problems. Consequently decisions about the location and mix of lands uses, transportation investments, design and building practices, and building materials can all have an impact on the environment and human health.

The City of Perris supports the broader needs of the community and surrounding region by being a leader in addressing community-wide objectives, to reduce impacts arising from the environmental impacts of greenhouse gas emissions.

For energy efficiency, solar panels on carports are constructed throughout the City. The roofs of these new carports are installed with photovoltaics panels to take advantage of clean and renewable solar



energy in City parks, the Senior Center, the Public Works Yard, City Hall, and the County Library. The energy produced by these solar energy systems currently accounts for approximately 30% of the City government's energy needs.

To minimize the use of fossil fuels that contribute to green house gases and global warming, 25% of the City's fleet of vehicles is currently powered by an alternative fuel source: compressed natural gas (CNG), the "Clean Air Choice."

### **Policy Area 6: Healthy Environment**

Goal HC-6: Healthy Environment – Support efforts of local businesses and regional agencies to improve the health of our region's environment.

#### **HCE Policies**

- HC 6.1 Support regional efforts to improve air quality through energy efficient technology, use of alternative fuels, and land use and transportation planning
- HC 6.2 Support regional water quality efforts that balance water conservation, use of recycled water, and best practices in watershed management
- HC 6.3 Promote measures that will be effective in reducing emissions during construction activities
  - o Perris will ensure that construction activities follow existing South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) rules and regulations
  - o All construction equipment for public and private projects will also comply with California Air Resources Board's vehicle standards. For projects that may exceed daily construction emissions established by the SCAQMD, Best Available Control Measures will be incorporated to reduce construction emissions to below daily emission standards established by the SCAQMD
  - o Project proponents will be required to prepare and implement a Construction Management Plan which will include Best Available Control Measures among others. Appropriate control measures will be determined on a project by project basis, and should be specific to the pollutant for which the daily threshold is exceeded