

ABOUT THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES (HDG)

The Healthy Development Guidelines (HDG) is a proposed tool with specific standards and guidelines across a broad range of health and equity-related issues including housing, employment, environmental health and food access. The Planning Department, architects, developers and residents can use the HDG to ensure that development decisions are made in ways that improve individual and community health for all residents in Oakland.

By adopting policies that intentionally promote community and equity in development decisions, the HDG project envisions a healthier, prosperous Oakland for everyone.

BACKGROUND

Much of what shapes the differences we see in health happens outside the doctor's office and includes having access to better schools, jobs, transportation, housing, safe places to work and play, and a fair criminal justice system. Residents have known this for decades, and strong public health research shows that health inequity is real and harmful to everyone because of added health costs and lost opportunities. Making strategic plans and decisions to improve access to the things needed to promote health for the residents of Oakland, including low-income communities of color, can help decrease health inequities and ensure a more just and healthy future for all.

Policies guiding previous development in Oakland have left existing low-income communities of color with fewer resources and less of a voice in decisions that affect them. In response to this reality and unprecedented challenges like the housing crisis facing Oakland today, East Oakland Building Healthy Communities and partners sought to find a way to ensure that the voices of residents are reflected in future development decisions, and that these decisions affirmatively promote health and justice. The Healthy Development Guidelines was created through a multi-stakeholder process in which Oakland resident leaders helped to set the vision and priorities for the project.

TOPICS ADDRESSED BY THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES FOR OAKLAND INCLUDE:

- Environmental Health
- Economic Opportunity
- Culture, Community and Safety
- Healthy Food
- Transportation
- Housing
- Recreation and Active Design

WHEN THE HDG IS IMPLEMENTED, OAKLAND WILL BE AMONG THE FIRST CITIES IN THE COUNTRY TO ADOPT EQUITY FOCUSED GUIDELINES FOR A PLANNING DEPARTMENT.

Some new and groundbreaking standards and guidelines in the HDG could be implemented with minimal changes to existing policy. Other guidelines are already on the books in the City's laws and Standard Conditions of Approval, and the HDG aims to improve implementation of these current policies that aim to promote health. All of the standards in the document have the same goal: to ensure that new development projects promote health for all of the Oakland community.

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES (HDG) FAQ'S

Who was involved in creating the Healthy Development Guidelines?

The East Oakland Building Healthy Communities (EOBHC) Land Use Work Group led the process of developing the HDG in collaboration with concerned Oakland residents, architects, developers, the City of Oakland Planning Department, Alameda County Public Health Department, Communities for a Better Environment, HOPE Collaborative and East Bay Housing Organizations. Technical assistance was provided by a team of professional planners and health experts.

Why does Oakland need Healthy Development Guidelines?

Where we live has a big impact on our health. City planning departments, architects, and developers make decisions directly affecting the places we live, work, and play. These decisions vary from requirements to keep areas clean and well-lit to addressing whether new developments will include affordable housing. By ensuring that decisions about new development in Oakland consider health and equity, the HDG will help to improve health for all of Oakland's residents.

How will HDG make effective changes?

Currently, when the City of Oakland planning staff reviews and approves applications to build new projects they consider some of the impacts to the health of new and long term community residents. The HDG provides specific standards and guidelines that aim to strengthen this review process and to ensure healthier and more equitable development for all communities in Oakland.

How can I get involved with HDG?

There will be many opportunities for residents of Oakland to get involved as the HDG process moves forward. For more information please contact Nehanda Imara at nehanda@eastoaklandbhc.org or Anna Lee at Anna.Lee@acgov.org.