Housing - Public Health Partnerships: Designing for Health

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Enterprise Green Communities
1. Do no harm
2. Evidence-based improvements, for all
3. Respond to specific needs
Creating the Health Action Plan

- Commit to embedding health into project design
- Partner with public health professional
- Collect and analyze community health data
- Engage Community Stakeholders to prioritize health needs and maximize outcomes
- Identify design and programmatic interventions strategies to address the prioritized health needs

Implementation and Monitoring

- Determine if a strategy will be implemented
- Identify how the strategy be implemented
- Select performance metrics (design, operations, health) for evaluation to measure impact of selected strategies
- Identify the method and responsible individual and/or organization for collecting performance metrics
Capacity Building Dimensions

- **Organizational Commitment** (embedding health into approach to site design and operations)
- **Partnerships** (partnerships with public health professionals to maximize health outcomes)
- **Data Collection & Analysis** (ability to collect, analyze, and interpret data)
- **Stakeholder Engagement** (engaging stakeholders to maximize health outcomes)
Pilot Project Findings: Organizational Commitment

Participating in the pilot broadened the developers’ understanding of the relationship between health and the built environment.

“As developers, we are not service providers so we don’t think about what kind of a room could be best for delivering services or how a space can welcome people. Before this pilot, we didn’t realize that place and design can intersect to increase the health and wellness of our residents.”

(Mercy Housing Southeast)
Pilot Project Findings: Partnerships

Partnering with a public health professional is important, but it takes time to find the right fit.

“Our organization realized that we needed somebody who knew more about health, so we reached out the NY Academy of Medicine who had just released a report about the health of the community in East Harlem. They were happy to work with us.”

(SKA Marin)
Pilot Project Findings: Proper Timing is Essential

Beginning the process early on in the design phase of development is essential to impact the final design.

Many of the groups spent more time finding and finalizing a scope of work with their public health partner than expected.
Pilot Project Findings: Data Collection and Analysis

Understanding local data and engaging the community were essential to the process of creating the Health Action Plan. The public health professionals most often led this effort. This process improved awareness and capacity of organizations to do this in the future.

“Our capacity is greater in knowing the process that we took. We can get a view of the community through public health data and then engage the community members.”

(Gulf Coast Housing Partnership)
Pilot Project Findings: Stakeholder Engagement

Community engagement is an essential part of the process and revealed unexpected insights.

“Community engagement was the most valuable part of the process. We learned the most by listening to the perspectives of people in the community. However, it is important to engage in these conversations in a sensitive way to give some thought to trust building in advance.”
(Gulf Coast Housing Partnership)

“The community members provided a lot of input on mental health issues, perspectives on safety issues and knowledge of who in the community was providing health assets. The residents are the experts on what they’re experiencing.”
(LUCHA)
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Next Phase

• Measurement Tool
• Raise Awareness
• Build the Field
• Tool Development
• Technical Assistance
• Create Incentives