Neighborhood Health Assessment

A neighborhood health assessment was conducted based on the evidence-based qualities that contribute to positive health outcomes as described in *Land Use: A Powerful Determinant of Sustainable and Healthy Communities*. The authors of the 2013 report represented nine different agencies including the Office of Research and Development, the US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Sustainable Communities, and the Association of Schools of Public Health. The report is a comprehensive review of best practices for informing land use decisions and included a review of over 1400 peer-reviewed publications. The land use qualities at the neighborhood scale that were determined in the report to have the most direct causal link for economic, health and environmental impacts are summarized in the table below. A qualitative analysis of the Transit District Plan (Plan) was completed to determine how the Plan impacts public health as compared to the existing land use and planning framework.

Outcome	Contributing Factors	Change NC=No Change ⇧ Increase ⇩ Decrease	Evaluation
Walking for transportation	Transit stops	NC	Overall, the Plan is expected to encourage walking for transportation by increasing the mix of uses by locating neighborhood commercial uses and higher density residential uses near the existing transit station. Anticipated new housing will lower the age of the housing stock.
	Intersection density	NC	
	Housing age	⇩	
	Mixed-use	⇧	
Walking for leisure	Perception of safety	⇧	The proposed street improvements will enhance the neighborhood conditions with new lighting, landscaping and street furniture. Safety will be improved with new pedestrian infrastructure and the reduction of the curb to curb width on many streets.
	Pleasant aesthetics	⇧	
Park use	Park quality	NC	No new parks are proposed or currently located within the Plan area. However, new streetscapes will improve connections to existing parks.
	Park amenities	NC	
Lower Obesity/Body Mass Index	Walkability	⇧	Walkability will be improved with new street landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and street furniture. TOD developments are encouraged within the higher density residential and mixed-use land uses.
	Transit-oriented development (TOD)	⇧	
Lower Driving/Vehicle Miles Traveled	Intersection density	NC	There are no proposed changes to the street network. However, there is an anticipated shift in mode split to non-auto trips as density increases near the transit center and improvements are made to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
	Job accessibility by auto	NC	
Transit use	Intersection density	NC	Increasing residential density around the transit station is expected to increase transit use. The Plan will increase the number of people living in close proximity to the transit station. No changes are proposed to the street network.
	Distance to transit stop	NC	
	TOD	⇧	
Traffic safety	Low sprawl index	⇧	

Outcome	Contributing Factors NC=No Change ⇧ Increase ⇩ Decrease	Change	Evaluation
			The Plan results in a more compact development pattern with more residential units located in close proximity to transit and commercial uses. A focus of the plan is to encourage alternative modes of travel with planned improvements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
	More walkers and bicyclists	⇧	
Lower crime	Greening/infill vacant parcels	⇧	It is anticipated that new planned land uses will encourage the re-use of vacant or underutilized properties. Enhanced walkways with accessible paths, light standards and improvements will encourage activity for a continuous street presence.
Social Capital	Mixed-use and walkable	⇧	Densities of 40-60 units per acre are clustered near the transit station and mixed-use both (horizontal and vertical) are encouraged. New land uses are anticipated to result in new development which will result in a more diverse mix of new and the existing older housing stock.
	Density ~40 units/acre	⇧	
	Housing age diversity	⇧	
Mental well-being	Exposure to greenspace	⇧	New streetscapes with landscape areas and street trees will add greenspaces throughout the Plan area. Opportunities for new open spaces and public plazas will also provide for new community gathering spaces.
Diversity	Mix of housing types	⇧	The Plan has varying residential densities to allow for a variety of housing types from single-family residences and duplexes to townhomes and stacked flats.
Lower health disparity	Green neighborhoods	⇧	The Plan promotes street trees and parkway landscaping to create additional green spaces.
Low capital or service cost	Compact development	⇧	The Plan results in a more compact development pattern with more residential units located in close proximity to transit and commercial uses. New parkway planters will serve as bio filtration for storm water runoff and create new green spaces. Private recreational open spaces are required with each new housing development.
	Green infrastructure/low impact development	⇧	
	Open space	⇧	
Fewer extreme heat events	Compact development pattern	⇧	The Plan adds new housing opportunities to the existing neighborhood served by transit and commercial services resulting in a more compact land use pattern.
Cooler air temperatures	Parks and tree cover	⇧	While the plan does not identify new public parks, it does require and promote private open space and recreational amenities. Street trees

Outcome	Contributing Factors	Change NC=No Change ⇧ Increase ⇩ Decrease	Evaluation
			are encouraged and part of the streetscape design.
Property values	Walkability	⇧	Walkability will be improved with new street landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and street furniture. The Plan results in a more compact development pattern with more residential units located in close proximity to transit and commercial uses. The Plan area is not adjacent to any large parks.
	TOD	⇧	
	Adjacent large parks	NC	
Retail revenue	Walkability	⇧	Walkability will be improved with new street landscaping, pedestrian amenities, and street furniture. Street trees are part of the streetscape design for major corridors.
	Trees	⇧	
Air pollution (immediate vicinity)	Density	⇧	The Plan has varying residential densities to allow for a variety of housing types from single-family residences and duplexes to townhomes and stacked flats. Approximately, 1,800 new housing units would be planned. This would result in a more urban environment in this district. Due to the proposed road diets, traffic speeds are anticipated to decrease due to additional delay. No new roads are proposed.
	Traffic congestion	⇧	
	Accessibility by auto	NC	
	Urban areas	⇧	

References:

Cox et al. (2013) *Land Use: A Powerful Determinant of Sustainable and Healthy Communities.* Retrieved from EPA Website: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-09/documents/fy13productnheerl4121land_use_synthesis.pdf