

# Cotati General Plan Update

## MEMORANDUM

**November 14, 2011**

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TO: Planning Commissioners

FROM: Vicki Parker, Community Development Director  
Beth Thompson and Ben Ritchie, De Novo Planning Group

SUBJECT: Community Health and Wellness

DATE: November 14, 2011

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### INTRODUCTION

This Planning Commission meeting will focus on the topic of Community Health. This meeting packet includes specific reading materials related to community health and wellness, and raises key issues to consider in preparation for the fifth General Plan Planning Commission meeting. The Community Health Element is an optional element of the General Plan.

“Community health” is a broad term and determinants or factors relating to community health are addressed by various elements of the General Plan. The Community Health Element will focus on the City’s policy decisions that can facilitate or encourage healthy lifestyles that are not addressed by other elements of the General Plan. The table below identifies the primary topics associated with community health and identifies which General Plan Element will address each specific topic.

<b>Community Health Topic</b>	<b>General Plan Element</b>
Community participation/civic pride	Community Health Element
Economic health and growth	Economic Vitality Element
Environmental quality, including clean air and clean water	Community Health and Conservation Elements
Healthy foods and local food production	Community Health Element
High-quality and affordable housing	Housing Element
Medical and health services	Community Health Element
Park facilities	Land Use Element
Public facilities and services (water, sewer, police, fire, etc.)	Public Facilities Element
Recreation opportunities	Community Health and Land Use Elements
Safe neighborhoods and public spaces	Community Health Element
Sustainable development	Land Use Element
Walkable neighborhoods with access to services	Circulation and Land Use Elements
Walking, bicycling and public transit	Circulation Element

As part of the Visioning Process, residents and stakeholders were asked to identify their vision and priorities for the City's future, as well as challenges and opportunities associated with the General Plan Update. Of the four Visioning Workshops, one focused on community health, housing, and human services issues. Participants at this workshop were asked several questions related to community health; the questions and responses are summarized below.

*What contributes to a healthy community?*

- Safe and expansive opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian transportation options
- Strong and transparent City services
- Public safety
- Affordable housing

*What should change or improve, or what should the General Plan focus on, to improve or increase community health and wellness in Cotati?*

- Environmental sustainability
- Public safety
- Graffiti
- Clean air
- Transportation based improvements

*What are the primary human services needs/issues?*

- Affordable health care
- Language barrier
- Improved transportation
- Cultural/diversity awareness, translation, education

A complete list of community health concerns raised at the second Visioning Workshop is included in Attachment 1. In addition, the following concerns related to community health and wellness were identified at the first Visioning Workshop:

- Incorporate more community art and cultural activities.
- Increase local food production, urban agriculture, and healthy food options.

The City's 1998 General Plan includes goals and policies specifically related to community health. It is anticipated that the Commission will review these policies for relevancy and scope, and if necessary, expand upon them as part of this General Plan Update.

## **REQUIRED READING**

Prior to the meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>, please read the following items:

1. Visioning Workshop #2: Community Health and Wellness Priorities and Issues (see Attachment 1)
2. Background Information – Community Health and Wellness: Chapter 4 of the Background Report (previously provided to the Planning Commission)
3. 1998 General Plan Goals and Policies related to Community Health and Wellness (see Attachment 2)

## **OPTIONAL READING**

If you are interested in additional research regarding community health, the Healthy by Design workbook published by Sonoma County provides an excellent discussion of local and regional approaches to addressing community health issues. The Healthy by Design workbook includes the following information:

- An inventory of general plan policies currently in place around Sonoma County that address key topics associated with community health.
- A series of success stories from around the County, including especially noteworthy general plan policies; short case studies of some successful policies, regulations, programs and projects; and several areas where there is identified interest in a topic and opportunities identified for future consideration.
- A number of inspirational stories from elsewhere, including stories that highlight local government approaches to addressing public health concerns through land use planning by jurisdictions outside of Sonoma County.
- A resource section as a guide to more information, organizations, websites, sample policies, and other research.

The Healthy by Design workbook may be downloaded from the General Plan Update website at: <http://cotati.generalplan.org/content/background-documents>.

## **WORK EXERCISE**

After reading the materials identified above, please consider the following questions and be prepared to discuss:

1. In developing a goal and policy framework to address community health and wellness, what top three issues or actions should the City prioritize?
2. In reviewing the 1998 General Plan policies related to community health and wellness:
  - a. Which 1998 General Plan goals and policies best address the concerns you identified?
  - b. Which priorities are not addressed in the 1998 General Plan?

## ATTACHMENT 1

### VISIONING WORKSHOP #2: COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES AND ISSUES

#### WHAT DOES COMMUNITY HEALTH MEAN?

Essential City services

Healthy General Fund reserves

Emergency preparedness and emergency drills

Televising City meetings

Transparency in City Hall

Drivable community

Community health is intrusive - people have rights and free will

Government should not make health decisions for a community or any individual

Developing a built environment that provides opportunities for active transportation - walking, bicycling

Provide children and parents the ability to walk and bike safely to school

Educate the public through schools and in the community about health and environmental benefits of safe walking and bicycling practices

Include a General Plan language for Safe Routes to Schools programs - both infrastructure and non-infrastructure

Direct public works to make improvements to the built environment and to educate public about taking advantage of such improvements

Improve community health with year-round farmers markets

Freedom to make my own decisions and not be told what to do by marxists

A place where people can walk and bike to the services they need

Making Cotati a safe place for our citizens

Events that focus on sense of community and health

Accessible place to be physically active, parks, sidewalks, bike lanes

Schools with walk/bike routes

Limit concentration of alcohol and tobacco outlets

Affordable housing

Good air and water quality

Community gardens

Healthy good outlets

Take into account input from tax-paying citizens

Better roads

Clear, clean water

Mosquito abatement

Better walkways

Mowed weeds

Holistic conception of healthy mind, body, and spirit

Triple bottom line - economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, social justice

Community resiliency - emergency and disaster preparedness

Access to housing so I can live and work in my city

Access to healthcare services in the community

Public safety

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**VISIONING WORKSHOP #2: COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES AND ISSUES**

**COMMUNITY HEALTH PRIORITIES (in order of importance)**

- Environmental Sustainability
- Public Safety
- Graffiti
- Clean Air
- Transportation Based Improvements

**HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS**

**Human Services Needs (City)**

	<b>Need</b>	<b># Votes</b>
Affordable health care		3
Accessibility		1
Language barrier (translation, etc.)		3
Public transportation		1
Jobs		1
Employment referral		1
Health care		1
Affordable exercise facilities		1
Affordable dental care		1
More/better bike paths		1
Bike/Ped safety for disabled (wheelchair-accessible paths/sidewalks)		1

**Human Services Needs (Regional)**

	<b>Need</b>	<b># Votes</b>
Improved transportation		6
Education		1
Language barrier (including diversity awareness/education for service providers)		2
County building permit process		1
Reduce permit fees for non-profit affordable housing developers		1
Affordable health and dental care		1
Affordable legal/mediation services		1

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**1998 GENERAL PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES: COMMUNITY HEALTH**

**GOAL 4            HELP CREATE A "SENSE OF COMMUNITY" BY PROVIDING PUBLIC FACILITIES THAT ENCOURAGE SOCIAL INTERACTION AND CIVIC PRIDE.**

4.1.1 Locate new park and recreation facilities in areas which are accessible and convenient to the community.

4.1.2 The City of Cotati shall pursue, where feasible, the shared use of school facilities.

4.1.3 The City shall expand recreational opportunities in the existing facilities to accommodate a wider range of activities for all age groups.

4.1.4 The City shall reserve parkland to meet the recreational needs of future residents established by the City's growth projections.

**GOAL 6            ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF COTATI RESIDENTS THROUGH THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF WELL-DESIGNED AND APPROPRIATELY SERVED NEIGHBORHOODS.**

6.1.1 Assure that all residential developments are located near land uses that would not be visually unaesthetic, noisy or unsafe.

**GOAL 8            MAINTAIN ADEQUATE PUBLIC AND PERSONAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT MEET THE MEDICAL, SCHOLASTIC, RECREATIONAL, WATER, AND SEWAGE NEEDS OF COTATI.**

8.5.1 Facilitate the location of private preschools and all-care centers, especially those that operate year-round.

8.6.1 Supplemental health programs and services shall be established and maintained.

8.6.2 The City shall provide training programs to the public in emergency health care such as first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

8.6.3 Establish a referral service system providing information on substance abuse and related programs.