

Healthy City Heights

A Resident's Guide

For a Healthier City Heights
For a Healthier Life



Health Equity by Design

2011

Healthy City Heights A Resident's Guide

Prepared with the Residents of City Heights
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- International Rescue Committee
- Proyecto de Casas Saludables
- San Diego County's Health and Human Services Agency
- Stepner Design Group
- WalkSanDiego



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Health Equity by Design

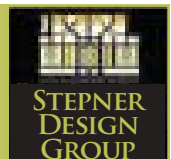


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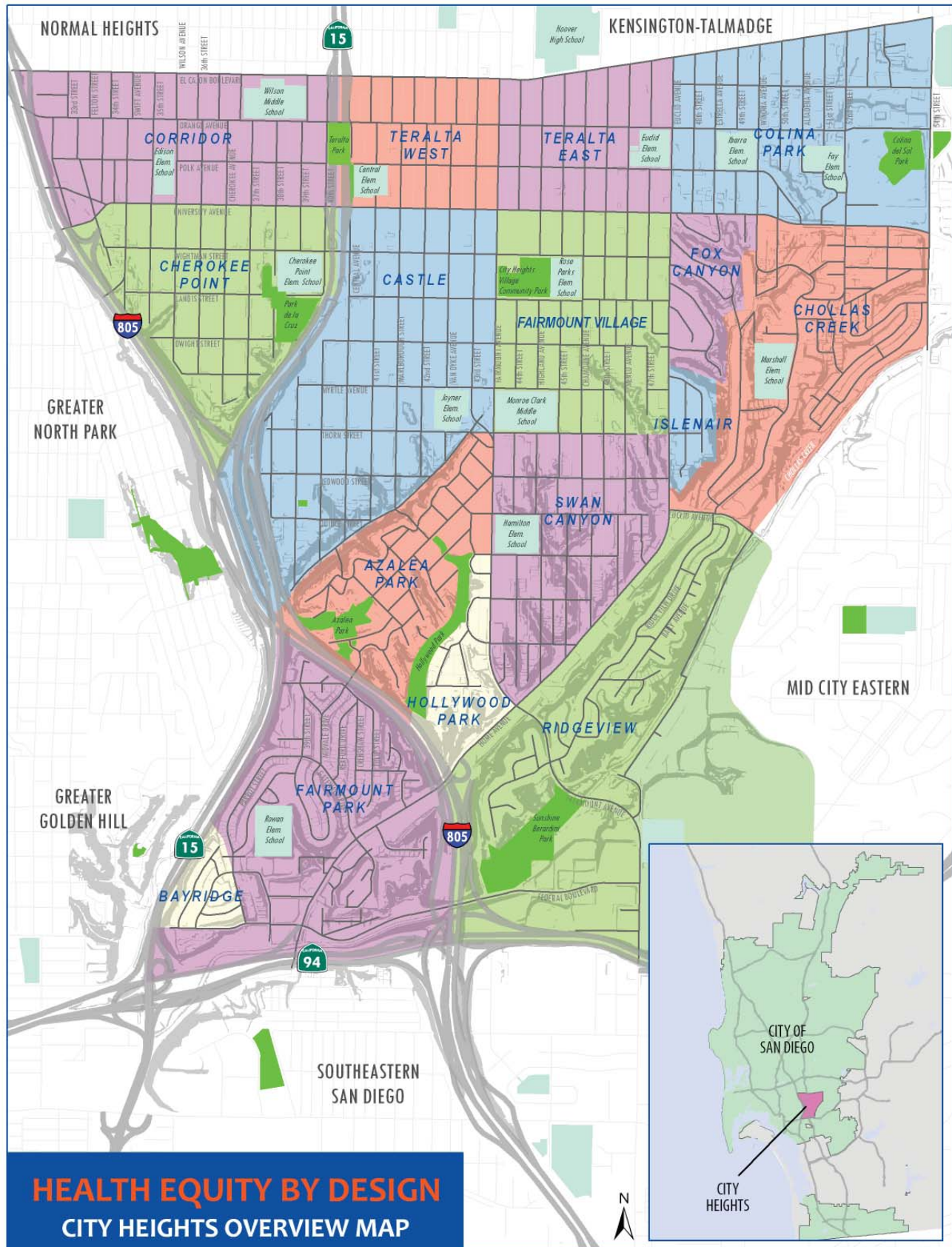
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CITY HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOODS



INTRODUCTION

HEALTH STARTS WHERE WE LIVE, LEARN, WORK AND PLAY

One number determines how long you live and how good you feel. It's not your weight or your age, it's your address. The way your community has developed over time and the places where you live, learn, work and play affects your health more than having health insurance or seeing a doctor regularly.

Decisions are made every day by city officials, businesses, and community groups that affect the health of people living in City Heights, or its residents. These decisions impact how your community is planned, and designed, and how it is developed. You can get involved in these decisions to create your own vision of a healthy community.

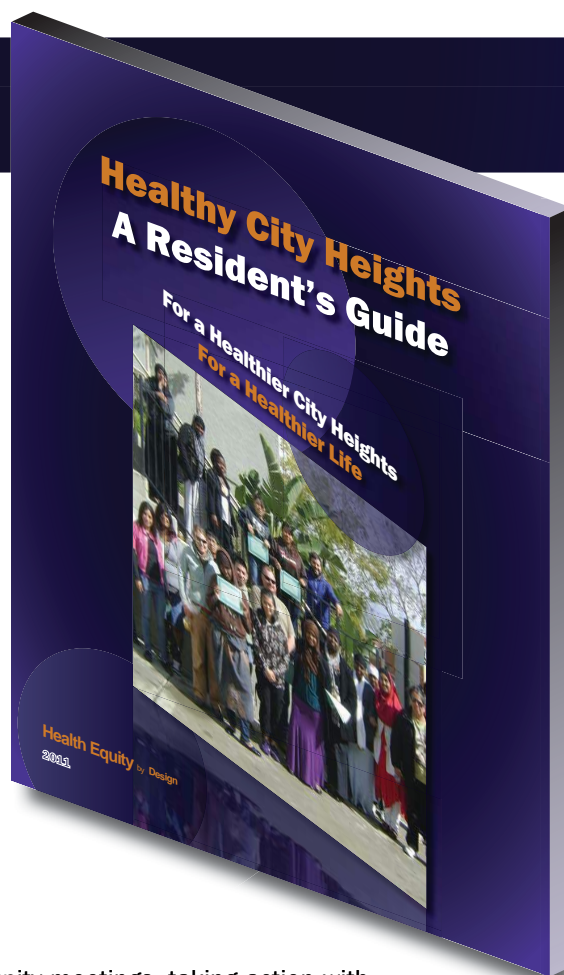
You're Invited

You can influence these decisions by taking part in community meetings, taking action with your neighbors, talking with decision makers, and working toward policy change. Many City Heights residents have been involved for a long time. This **Healthy City Heights Resident's Guide** will highlight these efforts, show others how to get involved, and explain why it's important that everyone takes action to create a healthier City Heights. By joining with others and taking action, **you can make a difference and** improve the health of your community, your family, your neighbors, and yourself.

Resident's Guide Organization

There are five chapters in this Guide described below. Each chapter is based on a priority that YOU and other residents of City Heights have said over the last ten years are important in the community. This guide does not address everything of concern in City Heights. Instead, the chapters address concerns in City Heights that have consistently been voiced related to how your community is designed - your 'built environment'. Read through one chapter or all chapters; share what you learn with your neighbors. Start a conversation and a movement toward a healthier community and a healthier way of life in City Heights.

- **Chapter One (page 9): Where You Eat** - You deserve food that is healthy *and* affordable. This chapter shows why eating healthy begins with food choices offered in City Heights. It also tells you which groups in City Heights are working to get healthy and affordable food choices, and what actions they are taking.



- **Chapter Two (page 15): How You Move** - You have the option to walk, bike, play and take the bus in City Heights. This chapter shows how the design of your community affects how convenient and attractive these things should be. It also tells you which groups in City Heights are working to improve how you move and what actions they are taking.
- **Chapter Three (page 25): Where You Live** - You have a right to affordable, healthy homes. This chapter shows how the home where you live affects your health. It also lists action steps to take, and some of the rights you have (especially if you're a renter) to have healthier homes.
- **Chapter Four (page 31): Do You Feel Safe** - You should feel safe. This chapter shows how not feeling safe affects your health by leading to less exercise and more stress. It also tells you which groups in City Heights are working to improve safety and what actions they are taking.
- **Chapter Five (page 41): The Toolbox** - This chapter gives detailed information on how to ask for change, who the decision makers are in your community, important policies to know, and other tools to help you get started on the road to a healthier City Heights ...and a healthier you!

CITY HEIGHTS HUMAN SETTLEMENT HISTORY:



City Heights has a rich and long history. Below is a summary of human settlement. A brief history of City Heights begins on the next page.

Prior to 1770s	Traditional Kumeyaay homeland
1770s	Kumeyaay people colonized and missionized
1947	I-15 corridor planned through City Heights
1950s	Suburbanization
1960s-70s	Urban decay and flight
1975	Arrival of refugees from Southeast Asia
1978	Arrival of Ethiopian and Somali refugees
1980s	Densification
1994	Price Urban Village
1995	Arrival of refugees from Somalia (civil war 1989-)
2000	Arrival of 'lost boys' from Sudan (from 2nd civil war)
2003	Arrival of Somali 'Bantu' refugees
2007	Arrival of refugees from Myanmar (Burma)



YOUR CITY HEIGHTS A BRIEF HISTORY

City Heights is a vibrant, culturally rich community. With a population of 80,000 people in approximately 4.5 square miles and 14 individual neighborhoods, it is also one of the most dense communities in San Diego. It was once part of the separate city of East San Diego with a predominantly white population, it has since evolved into a popular port of entry for diverse populations from Asia, Africa, Mexico, and Central America who have been welcomed into the community. Walk the streets and you are greeted by languages, customs, and food from all around the world. This diversity is both a benefit and a challenge to City Heights. It distinguishes the community from any other, but it can also make it challenging for residents to come together and collaborate for change. In many cases, residents have overcome this challenge with remarkable success.



City Height's Legacy of Activism ▼▼



City Heights is also burdened with high rates of asthma, diabetes, and pedestrian injury. As the population and demand for services have grown, infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, housing, water lines) have not been properly maintained and upgraded to keep up. During the 1950s, new, larger homes in the suburbs attracted families who could afford them, to move away from places like City Heights. At the same time, planning for the I-15 freeway through City Heights began to physically divide the neighborhood. While discussions of freeway alternatives took place, the government bought houses in anticipation of demolishing them for highway use. The vacant houses became havens for drug dealers, gangs, and others, bringing additional crime to City Heights. At the same time, City policies encouraged the demolition of single family homes to be replaced by apartment buildings. Many apartment buildings were built by, or purchased by, owners who didn't live in City Heights and did not experience, or need to care about, day-to-day life in the neighborhood. During the 1960s and '70s, more middle class families began to leave the community and crime rates continued to rise. In their place, lower income families and refugees began to arrive, attracted by lower housing prices made possible through apartment construction. As time progressed, absentee owners, those not living in City Heights, often failed to maintain healthy homes for their tenants. As a result, housing conditions continued to worsen. Today, the problem with housing quality persists, largely in part because of the high percentage of homes owned by landlords who live outside of City Heights who have very little incentive, or pressure, to maintain their properties.

These events are part of City Heights' long history and provide a backdrop for how the community exists today. Over time, these events have lead to inequities, such as health disparities. (See description of health disparity on page 5). This **Healthy City Heights Resident's Guide** highlights these disparities and shows you how to take action for change. You as a resident can be inspired by City Heights' history of activism and the changes that have been made as a result. Use this guide to join with others and create your own vision for a healthy community.

CITY HEIGHTS IN TRANSITION - CHANGES IN POPULATION AND COMPOSITION

YEAR	POPULATION	COMPOSITION		
		WHITE	HISPANIC	BLACK
1970	40,100	76%	15%	7%
1990	67,548	45%	45%	11%
2000	72,994	27%	53%	13%

CITY HEIGHTS IN TRANSITION - RATIO OF MULTIPLE FAMILY HOUSING UNITS

YEAR	NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS	PERCENT MULTIPLE FAMILY
1970	17,100	31%
1990	24,385	55%
2000	23,875	60%

A TERM TO LEARN: "THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT"

As you get involved in designing a healthier City Heights you will encounter a planning and design term – the “built environment”. The “built environment” refers to what humans have built upon the land. You as a resident interact with the built environment every day through:

- The roads and sidewalks you use to get around
- The open spaces where you and your family play
- The stores and restaurants where you eat
- The place where you live



A TERM TO LEARN: "HEALTH DISPARITY"

Parks and trails, streets and sidewalks, and healthy foods are not equally available in all communities. Read through this guide: City Heights has more fast food restaurants and less park space than other communities in San Diego. These conditions can lead to differences in how healthy you are, which are known as health disparities. Living with these differences makes it harder for you to make healthy choices.

HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN

Health Equity by Design (HED) is a collaborative project among the City Heights Community Development Corporation, International Rescue Committee, Proyecto de Casas Saludables, San Diego County’s Health and Human Services Agency, and WalkSanDiego. It was initiated to reduce health disparities in City Heights through the development of community-based healthy design policies and projects. During its 20 months, the project worked to:

- Help people understand the connection between the built environment and community health,
- Provide education on advocacy, or on asking for what you want to make improvements in the community,
- Develop tools to help with advocacy, and
- Raise awareness of City Heights’ desire for change to San Diego policy makers.

CITY HEIGHTS DIVERSITY

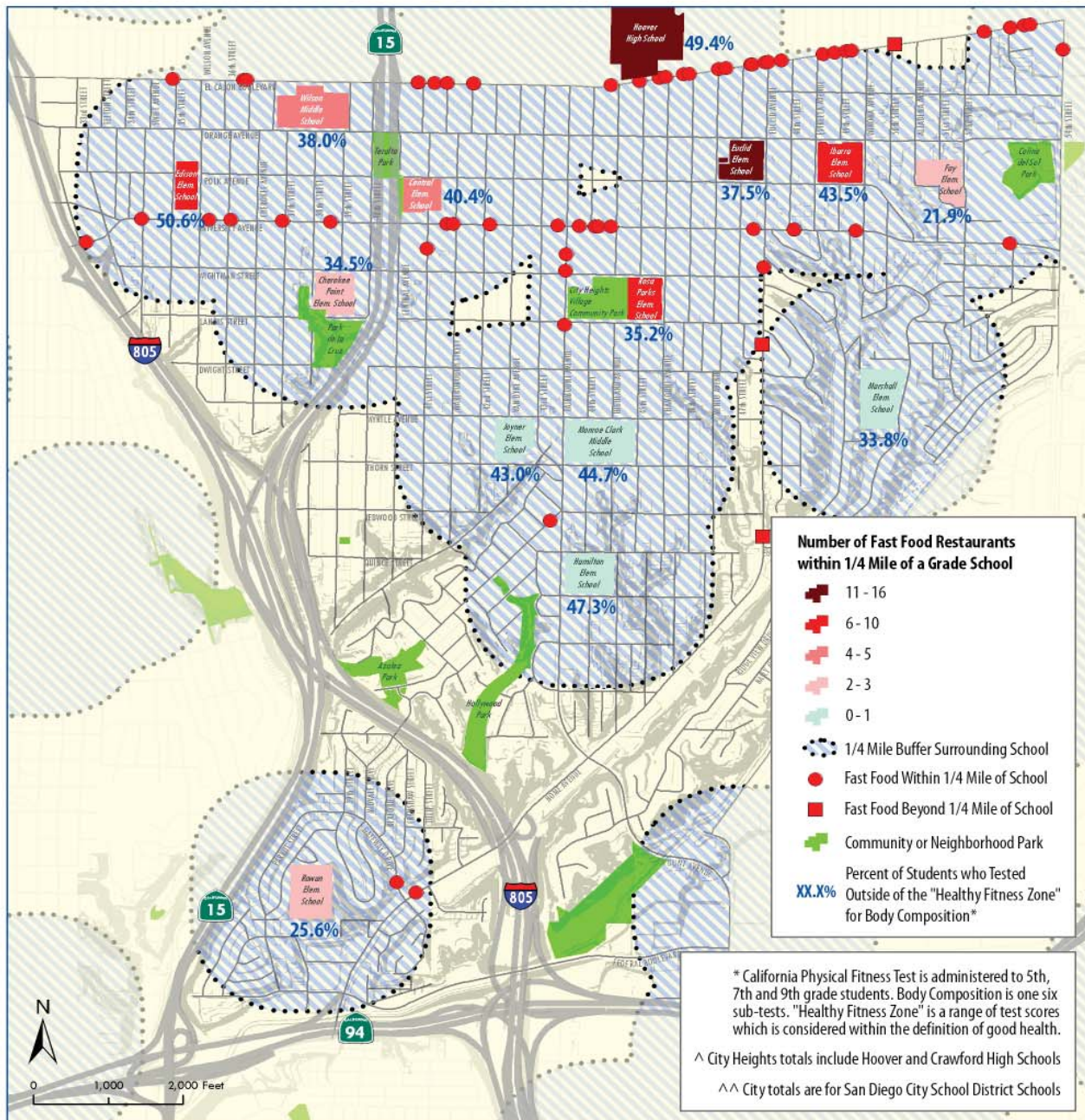
City Heights is among the City's most diverse communities.



EXAMPLES OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF CITY HEIGHTS



FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS NEAR SCHOOLS IN CITY HEIGHTS



HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN

FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS NEAR SCHOOLS IN CITY HEIGHTS

Average Number of Fast Food Restaurants within a 1/4 Mile of Grade Schools and Student Physical Fitness

PROXIMITY OF FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS TO GRADE SCHOOLS AND STUDENT PHYSICAL FITNESS	CITY HEIGHTS	CITY OF SAN DIEGO
TOTAL NUMBER OF FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF A GRADE SCHOOL	59	1,051
AVERAGE NUMBER OF FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS WITHIN 1/4 OF A GRADE SCHOOL	4.4	1.3
PERCENT OF STUDENTS WHO TESTED OUTSIDE OF "HEALTHY FITNESS ZONE" FOR BODY COMPOSITION*	43.1% [^]	32.8% ^{^^}

Date: June 1, 2010; Source: NIK (2009); CA Department of Education (2010); SANDAG (2008)

CHAPTER ONE WHERE YOU EAT

■ WHERE YOU EAT

Eating healthy begins with the choices offered in your community. The more stores you have selling healthy food, and the more community gardens you have, the more likely you are to choose healthy food. Look around you as you walk down the street: what kinds of restaurants or stores do you see the most? Do you see more fast food restaurants or stores selling fresh fruits and vegetables?



FAST FOOD

Did you know that kids in City Heights are surrounded by four times more fast food near their schools than other communities in San Diego? The 'Fast Food Restaurants' map (page 8) shows the location of fast food restaurants and schools in City Heights. The light blue areas show you which schools have fast food restaurants within walking distance from a school. The drawing (right) compares City Heights to the City of San Diego.

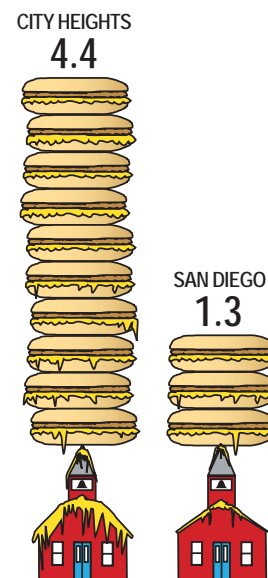
What you can learn from and do with the “Fast Food Restaurants” map:

- Show this map to decision makers if you would like more healthy food options. It shows the inequity that exists in City Heights and can motivate decision makers to provide more places to eat healthy.
- Look at the areas where there are more fast food restaurants. Focus on increasing healthy food options in these areas.

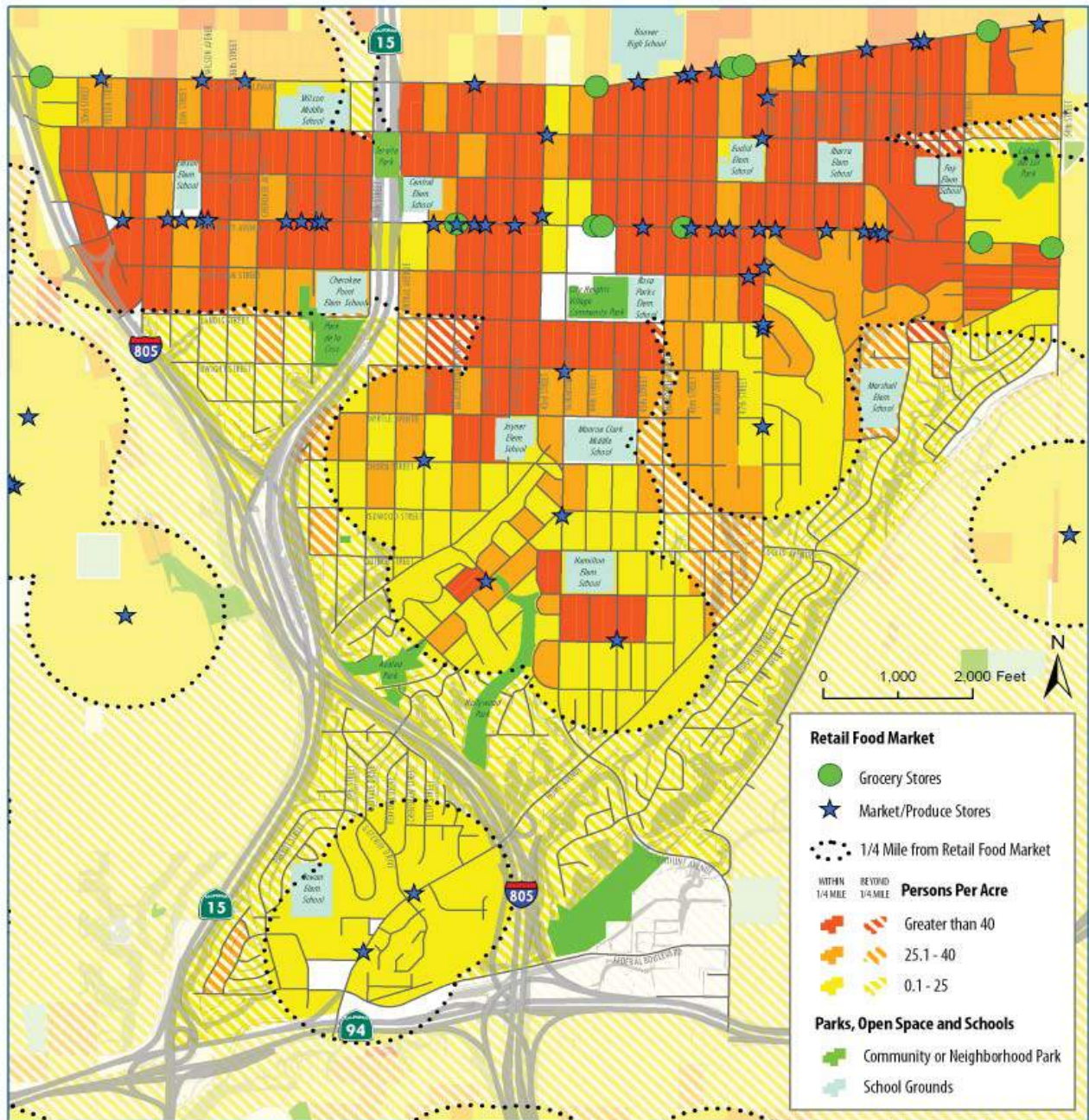
Take Action!

City Heights residents deserve more healthy food choices. You can help make City Heights as healthy as other communities by **influencing how the land around schools is used, which is known as zoning**. Start by asking your City Planning Department for information about the way the land is zoned around schools. Call 619-235-5200 and ask for the City Heights community planner.

NUMBER OF FAST FOOD FRANCHISES
WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF A GRADE SCHOOL



GROCERY STORES & PRODUCE MARKETS IN CITY HEIGHTS



HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN ACCESS TO RETAIL FOOD MARKETS IN CITY HEIGHTS Population Living Within 1/4 Mile of Retail Food Market

POPULATION LIVING WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF RETAIL FOOD MARKET	CITY HEIGHTS	CITY OF SAN DIEGO
TOTAL POPULATION	78,888	1,223,400
POPULATION WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF RETAIL FOOD MARKET	66,036	470,555
PERCENT OF POPULATION WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF RETAIL FOOD MARKET	83.7%	38.5%

Date: 8/9/10. Source: NIK (2008); US Census (2008); SANDAG (2008)

For example, are fast food restaurants or community gardens allowed near schools? Work with organizations in City Heights, like the Food Justice Momentum Team to **introduce a policy to limit fast food restaurants and make it easier to establish gardens, produce carts and produce markets around schools.** For information on the Food Justice Momentum Team, call 619-283-9624 or go to <http://www.midcitycan.org/momentum/food-justice>.

What food would you rather have near your child's school?...



FRESH PRODUCE

Did you know families in City Heights are twice as likely to have a neighborhood food market near their home than families in other San Diego communities? The problem is that many of the neighborhood stores don't sell much of the healthy food choices you need: fresh fruits and vegetables. Instead, they sell packaged food like cookies, crackers, and candy.

The 'Grocery Stores and Produce Markets' map (page 10) shows the location of stores that sell fresh produce in City Heights. If your house is in an area with a solid color, you have a neighborhood food market within a 15-minute walk of your home. If your house is in a striped area, it will likely take you longer than 15 minutes to reach a food market.

What you can do with the 'Grocery Stores and Produce Markets' map:

- Use this map to locate and work with neighborhood stores and encourage them to sell more fresh produce.
- Show this map to your City Council representative and members of the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) if you would like more healthy food options. The map shows that residents depend on neighborhood stores for healthy food because there are few full service grocery stores.

** The map does not show the price of food or what options inside the store are available. More studies would need to be completed to get this information.

Take Action!

You can take action to make it easier to have fresh fruits and vegetables in City Heights. For example:

- Take a look at what is being sold in the stores near where you live. Are there healthy choices available that you can afford? Ask your city council representative to **create incentives – such as lower taxes and easier permit processing - for neighborhood stores to sell healthy, local produce.** Depending on where you live, you might call Todd Gloria, Marti Emerald or Tony Young. (A map of council representatives and their contact information is included on pages 44-45 of this guide.)
- Contact the International Rescue Committee (IRC) at 619-641-7501, x.234 to **find out more about allowing WIC cash value produce vouchers to be used at neighborhood markets.**

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Did you know City Heights' New Roots Community Farm is one of the largest community gardens in San Diego? This is a great way to get the fresh produce you need. But it took 14 months and more than \$40,000 to establish New Roots. This process should be easier so there can be more community gardens in City Heights.

Community Gardens help Create Fresh Produce ►



CITY HEIGHTS IN ACTION!

In 2008 and 2009, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) worked to establish the 2.3-acre New Roots Community Farm. This beautiful 2.3-acre garden at the eastern edge of City Heights offers farming space to 85 refugees, new immigrants, and neighbors. The project's three primary goals are to: (1) provide land for low income community members to grow food, (2) increase the availability of fresh, culturally desirable food for refugees and new immigrants, and (3) create a path towards larger scale farming for City Heights' residents interested in returning to their farming roots. It has been an enormous success in reconnecting families to farming and contributing to their physical and mental health. These farmers, with help from the IRC, are now working to create more community gardens so others can have the same opportunity. Call 619-641-7510, x. 234 to get involved.

Take Action!

You can take action to make it easier to have gardens in City Heights. For example:

- Ask your City Council representative to **pass a resolution allowing community gardens in all zones or areas of the city.**
- Ask your school board member to **adopt a joint use garden policy that allows school properties to be used for community gardens during non-school hours.** Depending on where you live in City Heights, your school board member is either Richard Barrera or Sheila Jackson. You can reach both of them at 619-725-5550.

- Contact the City Heights community planner to **pass a policy allowing produce carts outside schools for gardeners to sell their vegetables.** Call the City Heights community planner at 619-235-5200 for information.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The following organizations in City Heights are already working toward these goals and the action items listed above. In fact, many of them are doing this because of your advocacy in the past. Join them today and add to their legacy of accomplishments:

Mid-City CAN Food Justice Momentum Team

People like you - residents of City Heights - are members of this group. They work with youth and adults to plan ways to have more fruits and vegetables in the community. They meet the 2nd Wednesday of every month between 12:00 and 2:00 p.m. at the City Heights Wellness Center, 4440 Wightman Street. The meetings are open to the public. New people are always welcome to join and participate. Call 619-283-9624 for more information.



International Rescue Committee (IRC)

This organization has a food security office that works with residents to grow, buy, and sell healthy food. They specialize in working with refugee populations. Call 619-641-7510, x.234 for information.



Policies to Know

The Toolbox (page 41) outlines policies that impact healthy food choices in City Heights. These are important to read because they are used by decision makers to make decisions about food, especially the items listed above under *Take Action!*.

CITY HEIGHTS



CHAPTER TWO HOW YOU MOVE

■ HOW YOU MOVE

Moving around: it's how you walk, bike, and play in City Heights. Doctors recommend at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day. Look around you - do you have sidewalks everywhere to walk on? Can you walk or bike to a nearby park? Your ability to move largely depends on conditions in your community.



It Only Takes 30 Minutes

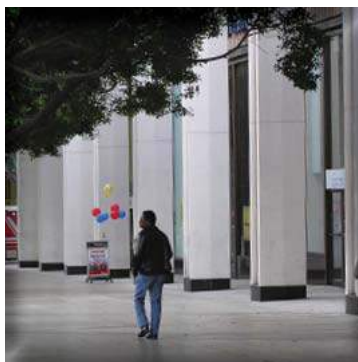
Walking to the grocery store, biking to the library, and playing in a nearby park are all examples of recommended exercise in your community.



Go to a park...



Take a walk...



Ride a bike...

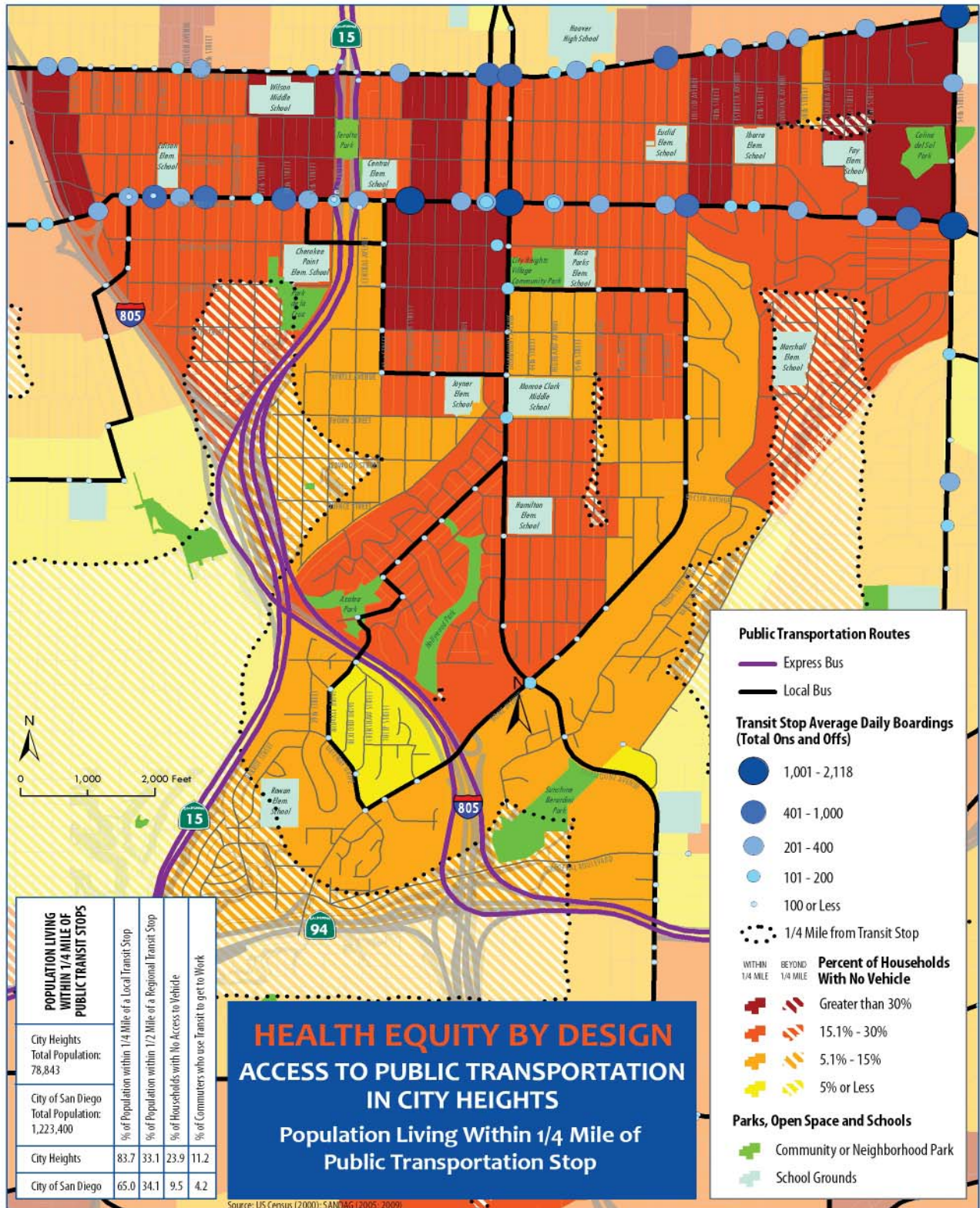


RIDING THE BUS IN CITY HEIGHTS

Did you know that City Heights has twice as many residents who depend on the bus to get around because they do not own a vehicle, when compared to other San Diego communities?

The 'Access to Public Transportation' map (page 16) shows public transportation use in City Heights. If you live in a solid color area, you live within a 15-minute walk to a bus stop. If you live in a striped area of the map, a bus stop is beyond a 15-minute walk. The circles show how many people are getting on and off a bus each day – in some cases as many as 2,000 people!

ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IN CITY HEIGHTS



What you can learn from and do with the ‘Access to Public Transportation’ map:

- Residents of City Heights have better access to local buses than people living in other San Diego communities.
- City Heights has three times as many people walking and using the bus every day than other San Diego communities.
- Show this map to your city council representative to demonstrate how many people use the bus in City Heights and to ask for timely, affordable bus service.

(What the map doesn’t show is whether families are able to easily afford bus fares, or whether buses run on time. If you as a resident feel like the buses are not running on time, or that prices are rising too high, talk to your city council representative and ask him to make it easier to ride the bus.)

Take Action!

You can take action to make it easier to ride the bus in City Heights. Work with the City Heights Community Development Corporation (CDC) (619-584-1535) to ask that buses run on time and to ensure that newly proposed bus routes are designed in the best way to meet your needs.

PERCENT OF PUBLIC TRANSIT COMMUTERS

CITY HEIGHTS
11.2%



SAN DIEGO
4.2%



MILES OF BIKE LANE PER 100,000 PERSONS

SAN DIEGO

25



CITY HEIGHTS

1



WALKING AND BICYCLING IN CITY HEIGHTS

City Heights has only a fraction of bike lanes compared with the rest of San Diego: just over 1 mile per 100,000 persons compared to more than 25 miles per 100,000 persons in the City of San Diego. Yet living in a community with good sidewalks and bike lanes helps you get exercise. In fact, if you live in one of these communities, you’ll probably get 70 minutes of exercise more each week.



A TERM TO LEARN: "WALKABILITY"

Good walkability is, among many things, the following:

- Sidewalks lining the street separating your path from the cars.
- Sidewalks at least 5-feet wide.
- Safe street crossings. At intersections sidewalks should extend into the intersection to allow you to stand without being hit by a car. On wide streets there should be a median in the middle to serve as a "refuge island"
- Nothing (like cabinets, poles, signs, trash cans) should be in the middle of the sidewalk making it difficult to walk or navigate with a wheel chair.

Take Action!

As a resident, you can take action to increase places to walk and bicycle in City Heights and make it safer to do so. For example:

- Start by asking your community planner for the current Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan, which determines where improvements for walking and bicycling in City Heights will be made. Look at the projects that are planned for the area, get together with fellow residents to decide where improvements can be made and **work with the city's Planning Department to implement and update the Bicycle Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan to make it safer and easier to bicycle in City Heights.** You can contact the city's Planning Department by calling 619-235-5200 and asking for the City Heights community planner.

Where would you rather bicycle?...



Where would you rather walk?...



Other policy steps you can take include:

- Determine where sidewalks can be fixed using tools like WalkSanDiego's walkability checklist. Call 619-544-9255 or go to www.walksandiego.org to find out more about the checklist. You can also share your ideas with **the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) for the next Redevelopment Five Year Implementation Plan**, which outlines goals for how special redevelopment funding should be spent in City Heights. See the PAC's meeting schedule on page 39 of this guide.
- Ask your school board member to **adopt a Safe Routes to School policy** to make it easier to walk and bicycle to schools in City Heights. Your school board member is either Richard Barrera or Sheila Jackson. You can reach both of them at 619-725-5550.

CITY HEIGHTS IN ACTION!

As part of the Health Equity by Design project, youth from three high schools – Hoover, Crawford, and Arroyo Paseo – gathered in Spring 2010 to identify where sidewalks were needed in City Heights. They presented a report to two of City Heights' volunteer planning groups: the City Heights Area Planning Committee (CHAPC) and the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC). The PAC is using the report to give money for future sidewalk improvements in City Heights.

Playing in a Park or Open Space

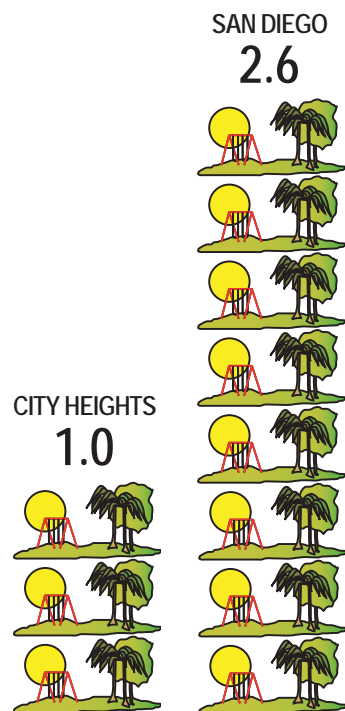
Your ability to play is affected by the choices available in your neighborhood. Safe, well-maintained parks, fields, and open space are important for your health, your children's health, and your community's health. A well maintained park also provides a beautiful space and reflects pride in your community. City Heights' play spaces include traditional parks, school fields that can be used by the community (known as joint use fields), canyons and other open space.

Canyons

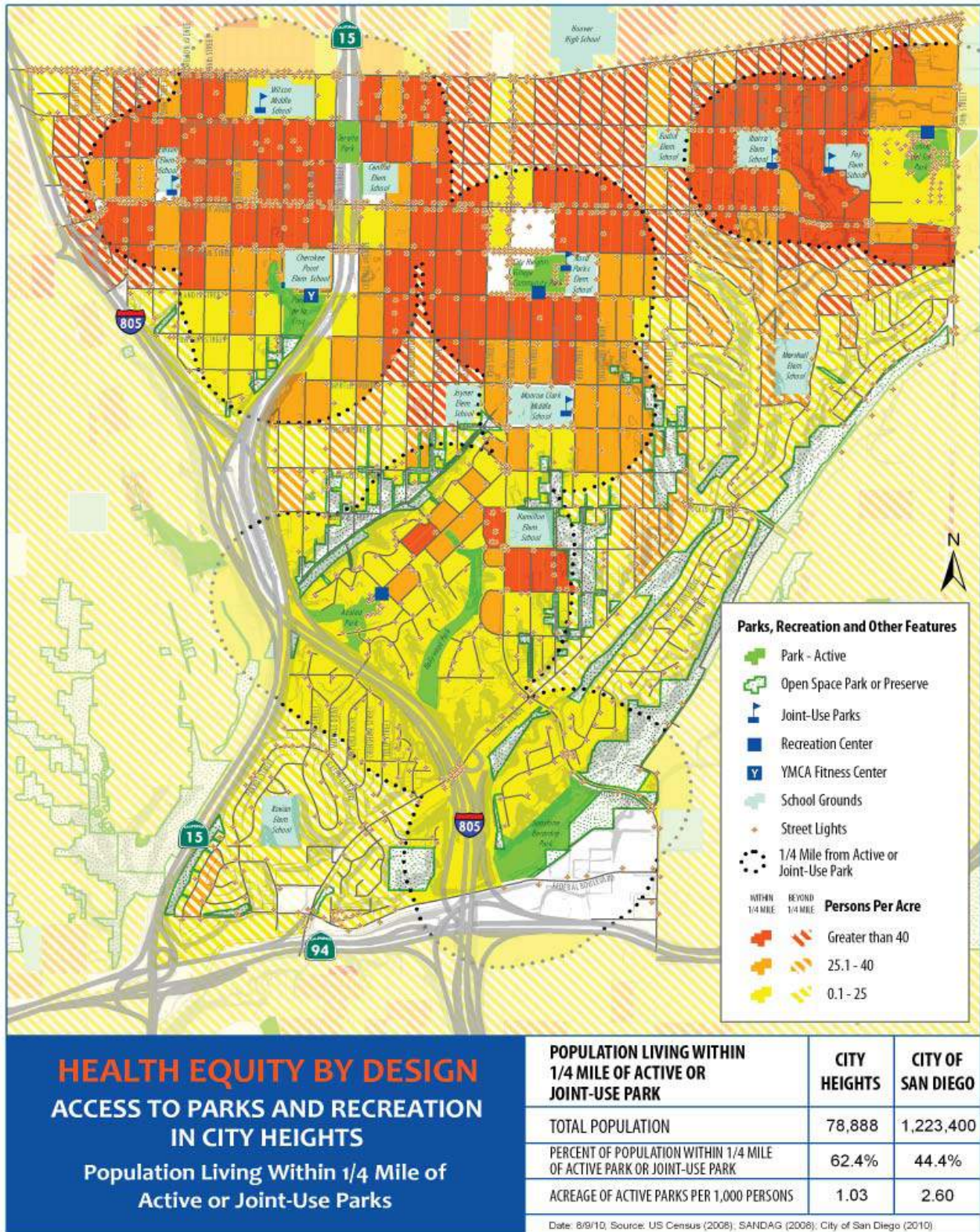
Have you ever visited one of the many canyons in City Heights? These are examples of open space that truly make City Heights unique. They provide natural places to play and experience nature.

Did you know that City Heights has less than half the park space for every person living there than do other San Diego communities? This is in large part because of City Heights' big population. But because of this, it is important to use existing parks in City Heights and to also work to create new parks or green spaces.

ACREAGE OF ACTIVE PARKS PER 1,000 PERSONS



ACCESS TO PARKS AND RECREATION IN CITY HEIGHTS



Take Action!

What you can learn from and do with the Access to Parks map

- The “Access to Parks and Recreation” map on page 20 shows parks and school fields that residents can use in City Heights.
- If you live in an area with a solid color, it means you’re within a 15-minute walk of a park or a joint use field. If you live in an area that’s striped on the map, you have to go farther than 15 minutes.
- Do you see more space with solid colors or stripes? If you see more solid areas, it means more City Heights residents have a park near their home. If you see more striped areas, there is a need for more parks in City Heights.

Other policy steps you can take

- Learn how to improve existing parks so more people will use them, using tools like WalkSanDiego’s park assessment. Call 619-544-9255 or go to www.walksandiego.org to find out more about these tools. Work with the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) to **include park improvements and green zones – which are streets with more trees and green plants, throughout City Heights in the next Redevelopment Five Year Implementation Plan.** See the PAC’s meeting schedule on page 39.
- If your school’s field is not a joint use field (is not open to the public after hours), show this map to the City Heights Recreation Council and your school board member to **adopt a policy to open the school for community use after school hours.** See the Park and Recreation Council’s meeting schedule on page 40.
- Work with the City Heights Canyons and Communities Alliance (CCAC) to identify areas for small parks, especially in areas near canyons, get involved in the restoration of canyons, and **update the Canyon Enhancement Plan.** To learn more, contact Eric Bowlby with the City Heights Canyons and Communities Alliance at 619-284-9399.

Where would you rather play?...



HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN IN ACTION!

In Colina Park, residents and participants of the Colina Park Neighborhoods First Initiative concerned about safety met with community organizations, members of the Colina Park Recreation Council, and a neighborhood police officer to talk about design principles that promote safety. Residents surveyed the park and talked about specific improvements that could make the park safer. A report was presented to city Park and Recreation staff who requested City funding for some of the issues identified. Residents continued to discuss how the improvements could bring more people to the park through a newly organized neighborhood group. Contact Sakara Tear at the City Heights Community Development Corporation for more information: 619-584-1535.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Organizations in City Heights are already working towards these goals and the action items listed above. In fact, many of them are doing this because of your advocacy in the past.

Recreation Councils

Get involved with this group to learn more about park programs and joint use fields. City Heights has two of these groups and both are made up of residents of City Heights. They meet once a month with the city's park area manager to advise the Parks and Recreation Department on park activities and decisions. The City Heights Recreation Council meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 in the City Heights Recreation Center. The Colina del Sol Recreation Council meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 in Colina del Sol's meeting room. Both groups' meetings are open to the public. Call the park area managers for each group for more information at 619-641-6104 (City Heights) and 619-235-1145 (Colina del Sol).

San Diego Canyonlands

Contact them to restore canyons or to identify areas for small parks. This organization is dedicated to promoting, protecting, and restoring the natural habitat of San Diego's canyons and creeks. They have special projects in Manzanita and Swan Canyons and are creating a Canyon Enhancement Guide. Contact their director Eric Bowlby to get involved at 619-284-9399.

A canyon in City Heights ►



City Heights Canyons and Communities Alliance

This group was formed by approximately 10 members from key organizations, neighborhood associations, government, and youth from schools to revitalize and protect canyons in City Heights. They have developed 13 distinct strategies to complete their goals and organize ongoing canyon cleanups and education programs as part of their work. The group meets the second Tuesday of each month at 3:30 at Hamilton Elementary School. Meetings are open to the public. Call the Ocean Discovery Institute at 858-488-3849 for more information.

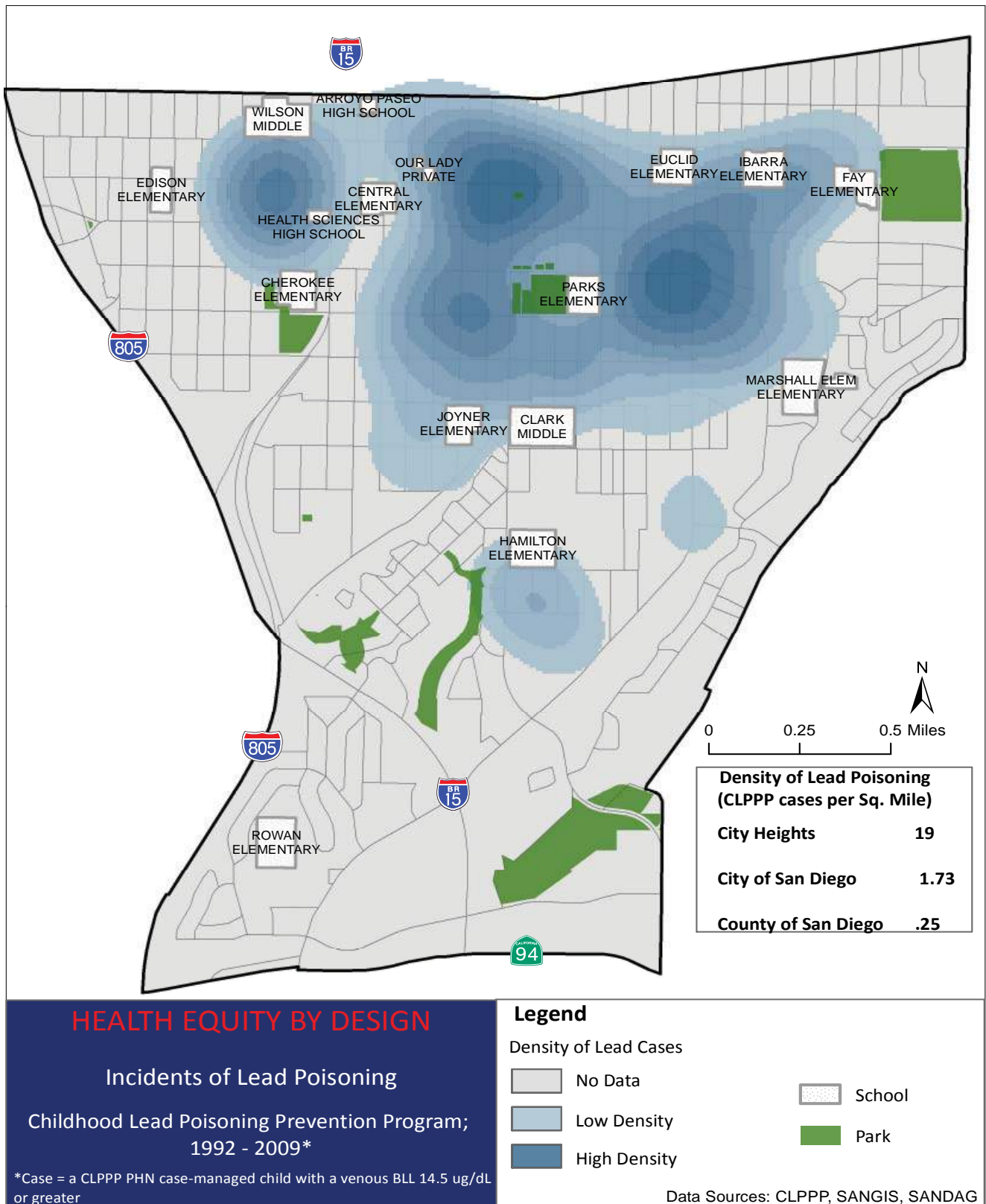
Other groups that influence park space are the **City Heights Area Planning Committee (CHAPC)** – because they ensure that the Mid-City Community Plan is implemented, the **City Heights Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC)** – because they provide money for new parks, and **City Heights Community Development Corporation (CDC)** for work in Colina del Sol Park – because they manage the Neighborhoods First project in the park and greater Colina Park community. Contact the CDC at 619-584-1535.

Policies to Know

The Toolbox (page 41) outlines policies that impact public transportation, walking, biking, and playing in City Heights. These are important to read because they are used by decision makers to make decisions about how you move, especially the items listed above under *Take Action!*.



INCIDENTS OF LEAD POISONING



CHAPTER THREE WHERE YOU LIVE

■ WHERE YOU LIVE

Every person deserves to live in a healthy, affordable home. The quality of your housing conditions and the amount of income you spend on your housing can have a significant impact on your health.

HOUSING QUALITY

Did you know that City Heights has almost twice as much rental housing when compared to other communities in San Diego?

Being a renter means that someone else other than you is responsible for maintaining your home. This can sometimes lead to unhealthy housing conditions.



Take Action!

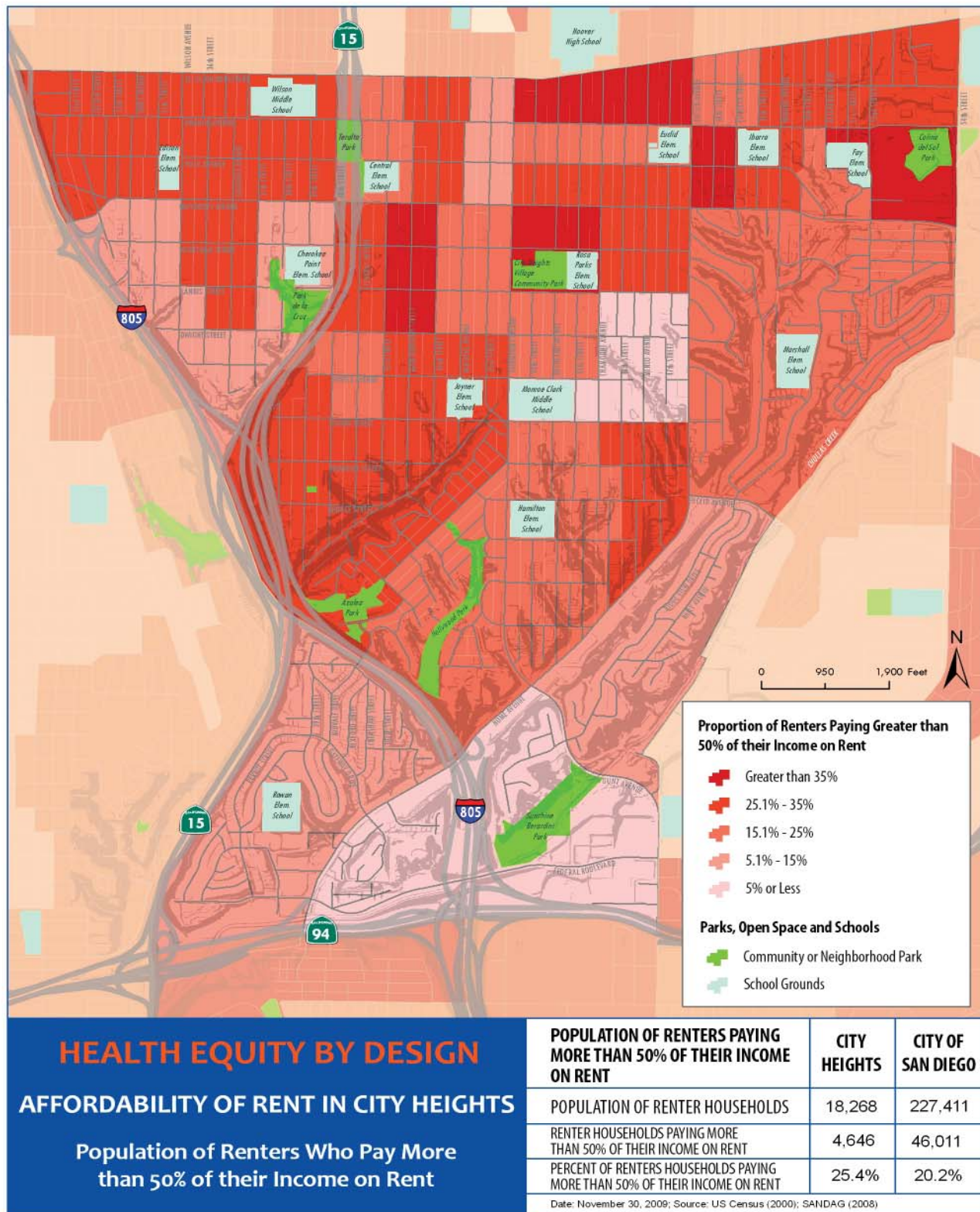
Take action now to make sure you have healthy housing:

- Work with Affordable Housing Advocates in City Heights to **adopt a comprehensive housing code enforcement policy to make sure that tenants, (people renting homes from others) have healthy homes.** They can also help you learn about your rights as a tenant. Call Catherine Rodman with Affordable Housing Advocates at 619-233-8441 for more information.
- Request that the city of San Diego implement a policy to **conduct a random review of landlords each year to ensure they maintain homes as required by law.** For homes with carpeting, ask the city to adopt a policy and require that **carpets be professionally cleaned very two years, and that it be replaced every five years.** Call 619-233-8441 for more information.
- Form a residents' association where homeowners and tenants can talk about solutions to poor housing conditions and **work together to activate policy changes outlined above for healthier homes.**

Unhealthy homes, or homes with poor physical conditions, can cause a wide array of health problems such as ongoing stress and mental illness, breathing problems and lead poisoning, especially in children.

City Heights has almost ten times as many lead poisoning cases compared to other communities in San Diego. (see map page 24). Before 1979, paints used for all homes contained lead in them. After 1978, the federal government required new paints to be used. Many homes in City Heights are older which helps to explain why there are higher rates of lead poisoning. Contact the County's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

RENTERS PAYING MORE THAN 50% OF THEIR INCOME ON RENT



at 619-515-6694 to understand, identify, and eliminate the risk of lead poisoning. You can also contact the Environmental Health Coalition to find how they work to remove lead in homes. Call 619-474-0220.

Take Action!

Use the Incidents of Lead Poisoning map on page 24 to take action. The map shows the number and location of lead cases reported in City Heights between 1992 and 2009.

What you can learn from and do with the “Incidents of Lead Poisoning” map:

- Lead cases are concentrated in the northern section of City Heights where housing is generally older.
- Show this map your city council representative and **tell them you are worried about the amount of lead in housing in City Heights.**

Housing Affordability

A TERM TO LEARN: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing is housing that receives support from the state or federal government to build. Families living in affordable housing must have incomes that are generally 30, 40, 50, 70, or 80 percent of San Diego's regional median income – which was \$75,500 for a four person family in 2010). Affordable housing is NOT cheap, poorly constructed housing. In fact, state and federal laws require that affordable housing units be well maintained and inspections be conducted regularly to make sure this happens. Because of San Diego's high cost of living, affordable housing is very much needed.

Hollywood Palms Affordable Housing in City Heights ►

Did you know City Heights residents generally contribute 5% more of their income on housing compared to residents in other San Diego communities? The “Renters Paying” map (page 26) shows how much of their income people are spending on housing.



What you can learn from and do with the “Renters Paying” map:

- People living in the northern portion of City Heights are generally paying more of their income on housing than those living in the southern section.
- More people in City Heights are paying more than 50% of their rent on housing than in other San Diego communities.
- Share this map with your city council representative and explain why it is important to increase funds for affordable housing in City Heights.

Take Action!

Ask the City to **designate more funding for affordable housing, such as redevelopment funds, linkage fees and inclusionary housing fees.** Contact Community Housing Works in City Heights at 619-282-6647. They provide support and advocate for additional funding.

CITY HEIGHTS IN ACTION!

In 2006, City Heights residents participating with Proyecto de Casas Saludables, in partnership with the American Lung Association, evaluated 150 homes in City Heights to note housing conditions and their potential relationship with asthma, especially in young children. They found that (a) more than 80% of the homes evaluated had problems with mold and roach infestations, and (b) of these, approximately 76% of the homes had at least one family member living with asthma problems. The evaluation results were published in a report, 'Un-Doing the Privilege of Healthy Homes'. It also helped launch a coalition of organizations to advocate for a Healthy Homes Ordinance which would require landlords to participate in programs to promote healthier homes. Call Proyecto de Casas Saludables for more information at 619-752-5317.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Organizations in City Heights are already working towards these goals and the action items listed above. In fact, many of them are doing this because of your advocacy in the past.

City Heights Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC). The PAC must dedicate a minimum of 20% of its funding towards affordable housing. People like you – residents of City Heights – are elected to be members of this group. They meet with city staff once a month to discuss and recommend priorities for City Heights' redevelopment project area. Call the City project manager at 619-236-6700 for more information.

Proyecto de Casas Saludables. This organization has four subcommittees that meet once a month to learn about issues impacting their community and advocacy. One of the sub-committees is a housing subcommittee. Call 619-752-5317 for more information.

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) – This is a program offered through the County of San Diego to help families understand, identify, and eliminate the risk of lead poisoning. Call the program office at 619-515-6694 for more information.

Policies to Know

The Toolbox (page 41) outlines policies that impact housing conditions in City Heights. These are important to read because they are used by decision makers to make decisions about housing, especially about the items listed above under “Take Action!”.





CHAPTER FOUR DO YOU FEEL SAFE

■ DO YOU FEEL SAFE

Whether you feel safe is critical to good health. In fact, safety is vital to everything else discussed in this guide: efforts to improve where you eat, how you move, and where you live can only be successful if you feel safe. If you don't feel safe, you're less likely to be physically active and more likely to suffer from stress.

Did you know that in City Heights you're twice as likely to experience a violent crime as other San Diego communities?

City Heights residents have a long, successful relationship with its community police officers. The two groups have consistently worked together to make people aware of crime and produced solutions.



A TERM TO LEARN: EYES ON THE STREET

Have you heard anyone talk about 'Eyes on the Street'? Having more people watching the street for unsafe activity lowers the chance that someone will commit a crime. There are ways to design City Heights to help people keep an eye on their street, such as homes with windows and front doors facing the street and benches to sit on at parks. Strategies such as these are known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design because the way a community is designed can affect the number of crimes in a community.

Take Action!

There are things you can do to feel safer in City Heights.

- You can work with your neighborhood police or City Heights on Patrol (CHOP) to **adopt and apply Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in updated community or redevelopment plans for the community**. See CHOP's meeting schedule on page 40.
- Work with the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) to **develop vacant lots within the community to beautify City Heights and deter crime on these lots**. Call 691-236-6700.
- Work with the Mid City CAN's Substance Abuse Momentum Team and ask your local city council representative to **limit approvals of liquor stores and tobacco outlets**. Call 619-582-9046 to get involved.

VIOLENT ASSAULTS
PER 1,000 PERSONS
CITY HEIGHTS

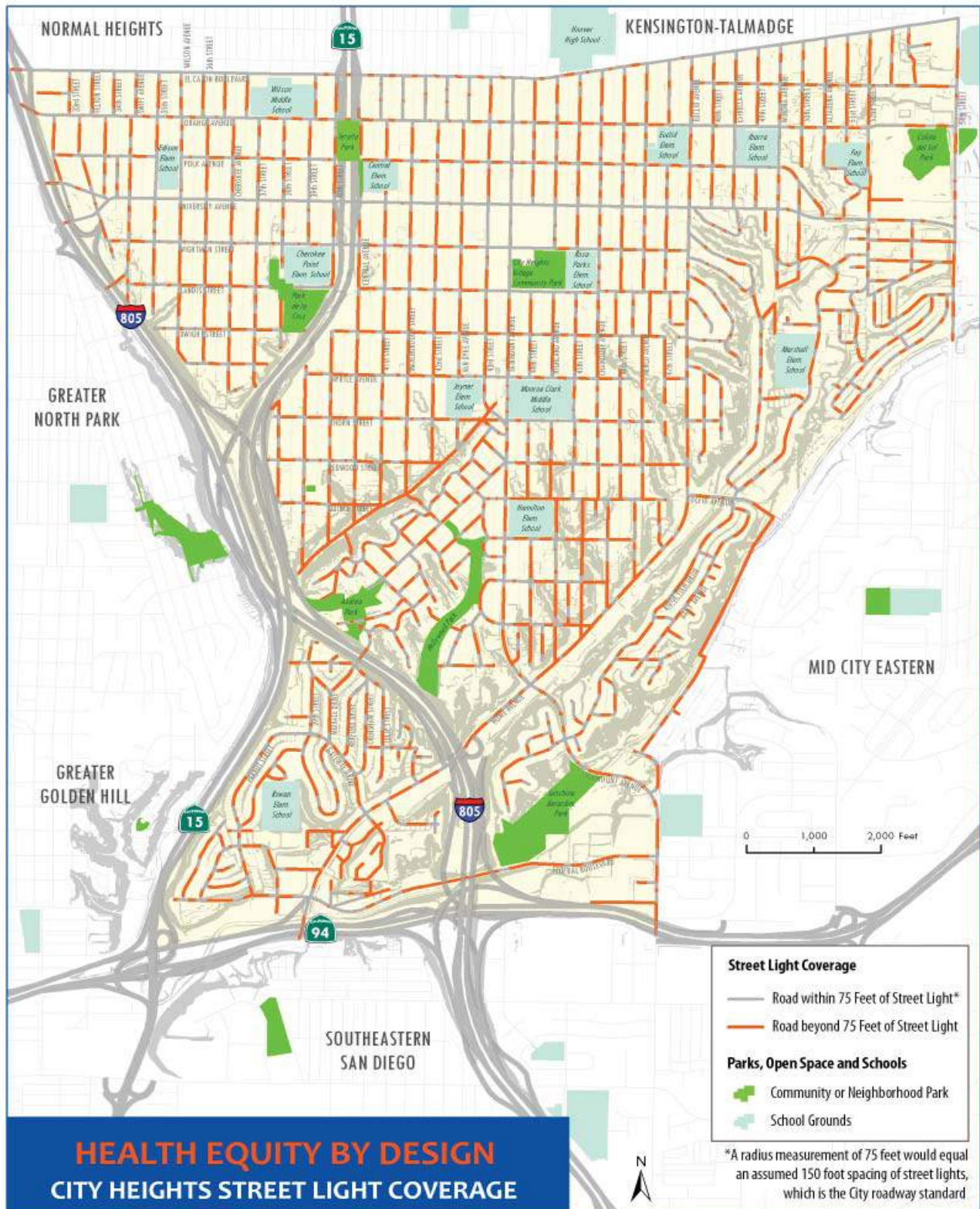
0.96



SAN DIEGO
0.52



STREET LIGHTS - EXISTING AND WHERE NEEDED



Where do you feel more safe?...



Street Lights

Street lights in the right places can increase safety. The ‘Street Lights’ map (page 32) shows where street lights are and where they should be according to the city of San Diego’s Street Design Manual.

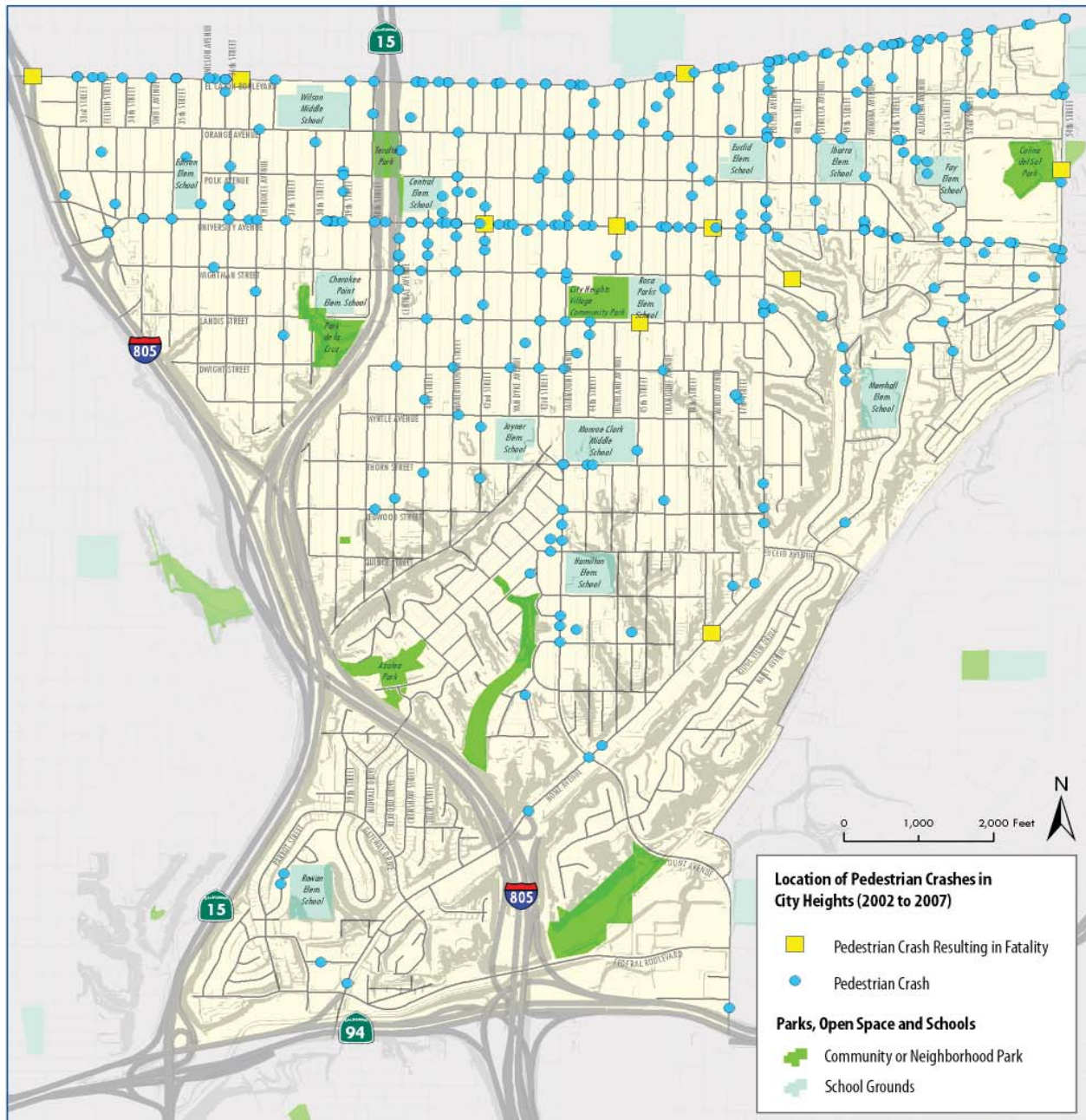
What you can learn from and do with the ‘Street Lights’ map:

- Show this map to your city council representative and the City Heights community planner and ask them to **replace any lights not working and to abide by its lighting policy of placing streetlights every 150 feet as outlined in the City of San Diego Street Design Manual.** Call the City of San Diego Planning Department 619-235-5200, and ask for the City Heights planner.
- Work with the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) to **ask for funding to install street lights in places where they are most needed throughout City Heights.** Call 619-236-6700.

HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN IN ACTION!

Residents in Colina Park joined together in 2010 to talk about neighborhood safety. They mapped where they wanted more street lights and began working with the PAC to make sure their priorities were first in line for funding. Without the involvement of the residents, the PAC would have funded street lights, but the residents were able to make a difference by communicating where the lights should be located to improve safety in City Heights. They will continue to work with the PAC until the street lights are put in place.

PEDESTRIAN COLLISIONS IN CITY HEIGHTS



HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY in CITY HEIGHTS

Number of Vehicle Crashes involving Pedestrians (2002-2007)

PEDESTRIAN CRASHES 2002 - 2007

	CITY HEIGHTS	CITY OF SAN DIEGO
PERCENT OF POPULATION COMMUTING BY TRANSIT OR WALKING	14.2%	8.2%
PEDESTRIAN CRASHES PER 1,000 PERSONS (OVER 5 YEAR PERIOD)	4.9	2.7
PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES PER 1,000 PERSONS (OVER 5 YEAR PERIOD)	0.13	0.10

Date: 8/9/10; Source: SVWTRS (2008); City of San Diego (2008); US Census (2000)

Walking Safety

The “Pedestrian Collision” map (page 34) shows where pedestrian collisions occurred in City Heights between 2002 and 2007.

What you can learn from and do with the “Pedestrian Collision” map:

- City Heights has more people walking in the community than other parts of San Diego.
- As a pedestrian in City Heights, you are twice as likely to be hit by a car as residents in other communities.
- The majority of collisions occur on University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard, two roads with very high traffic volumes.
- Show this map to the City Heights community planner to request that improvements listed in the city’s Pedestrian Master Plan are implemented. Call 619-235-5200.

PEDESTRIAN CRASHES
PER 1,000 RESIDENTS

CITY HEIGHTS

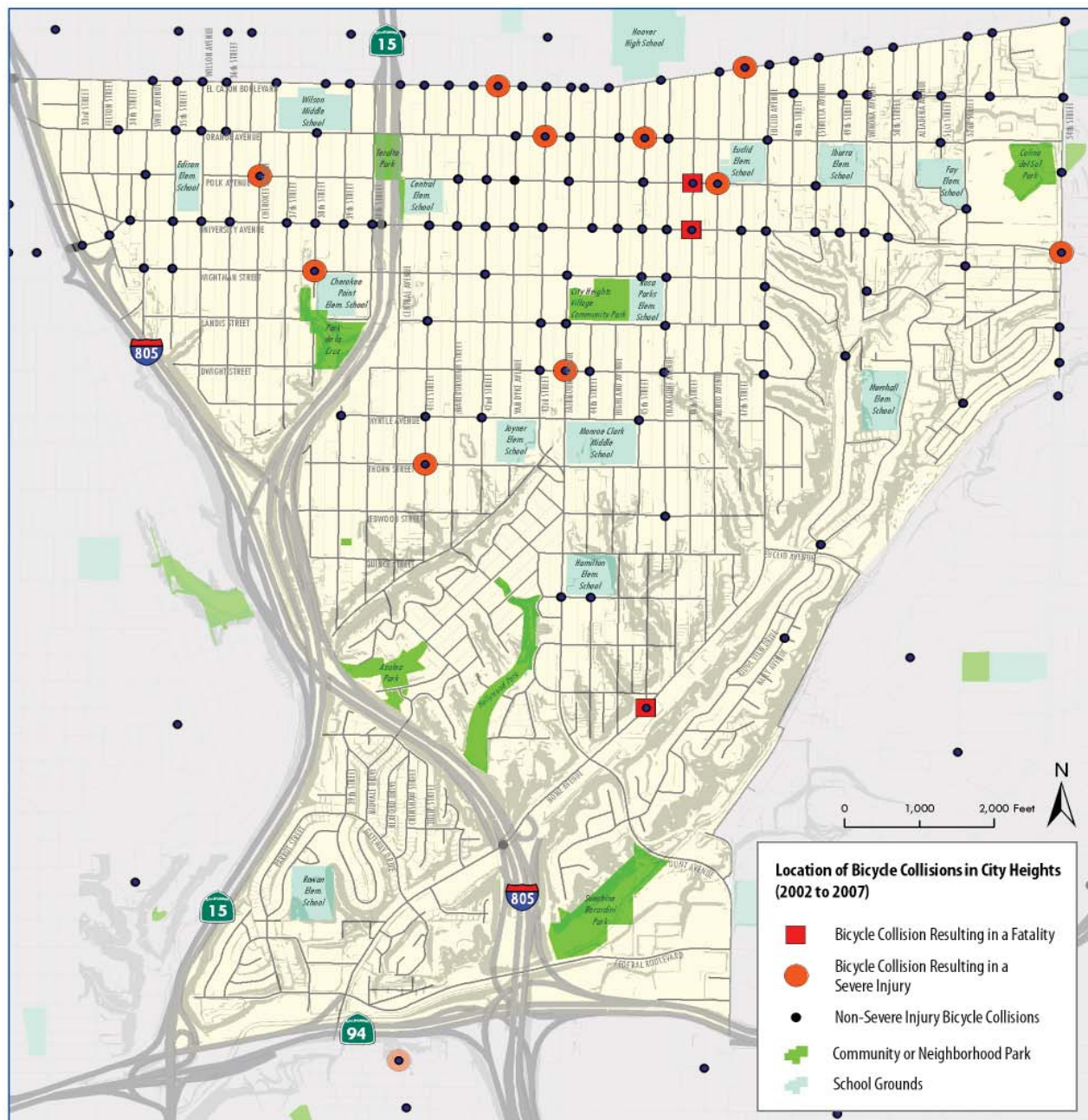
4.9%



SAN DIEGO
2.7%



BICYCLE COLLISIONS IN CITY HEIGHTS



HEALTH EQUITY BY DESIGN

BICYCLIST SAFETY in CITY HEIGHTS

Number of Severe and Fatal Collisions involving Bicyclists (2002-2007)

BICYCLE CRASHES 2002 - 2007

PERCENT OF POPULATION COMMUTING
BY BICYCLE

CITY
HEIGHTS

CITY OF
SAN DIEGO

BICYCLE CRASHES PER 1,000 PERSONS

2.45

1.99

CRASHES RESULTING IN A FATALITY OR SEVERE
INJURY PER 10,000 PERSONS

1.65

1.46

Date: 8/9/10; Source: SWITRS (2008); US Census (2000)

Biking Safety

The “Bike Collisions” map (page 36) shows where bicycle collisions occurred in CityHeights between 2002 and 2007.

What you can learn from and do with the “Bike Collisions” map:

- Similar to pedestrian collisions, the majority of bicycle collisions are occurring along University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard.
- Show this map to the City Heights community planner to request that bicycle safety projects listed in the City’s Bicycle Plan are implemented. Call 619-235-5200.

Take Action!

There are things you can do now and in the future to promote more safety:

- Start by asking your community planner for the current Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan, which determines where improvements for walking and bicycling in City Heights will be made. Look at the projects that are planned for the area, get together with fellow residents to decide where improvements can be made and **work with the City’s Planning Department to implement and update the Bicycle Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan to make it safer and easier to bicycle in City Heights.** You can contact the City’s Planning Department by calling 619-235-5200 and asking for the City Heights community planner.

Other policy steps you can take:

- Determine where sidewalks can be fixed using tools like WalkSanDiego’s walkability checklist. Call 619-544-9255 or go to www.walksandiego.org to find out more about the checklist. You can also share your ideas with **the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) for the next Redevelopment Five Year Implementation Plan**, which outlines goals for how special redevelopment funding should be spent in City Heights. See the PAC’s meeting schedule on page 39 of this guide. Advocate for the City to abide by its lighting policy of placing streetlights every 150 feet as outlined in the City of San Diego Street Design Manual.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Organizations in City Heights are already working towards these goals and the action items listed above. In fact, many of them are doing this because of your advocacy in the past.

City Heights on Patrol (CHOP)

People like you – residents of City Heights – volunteer with this group. Participants pair up every Friday and Saturday night to drive around and patrol the neighborhood and report unusual events to the police. By being visible and patrolling small areas, these volunteers act as crime deterrents and help identify problems. Their efforts also produce lists of street lights not functioning which can be fixed immediately. The group meets at 6:30 the third Wednesday of every month in the Mid-City police station. Meetings are open to the public.

City Heights Town Council

People like you – residents of City Heights – volunteer to be members of this group. Each neighborhood of City Heights is represented and issues, including community safety, are discussed every month. They also offer matching grants for community improvements. The group meets at 6:30 the second Monday of every month in the City Heights Recreation Center. Meetings are open to the public.

City Heights Business Association

The 'CHBA' was created in 2003 to help revitalize City Heights and promote the community as an international marketplace. Businesses within the district contribute fees for street improvements, including those that can improve safety. CHBA maintains a Clean and Safe Program as part of its ongoing activities. They also produced Crime Prevention Tips which is free to the public upon request. Contact 619-906-4443 for more information.



Other groups that work to improve safety in City Heights are the **El Cajon Business Improvement Association** (BIA) (619-283-3608) – they provide money for improvements along El Cajon Boulevard, the **City Heights Community Development Corporation (CDC)** – they provide solar powered spotlights for residents in Colina Park to promote safety. Contact the CDC at 619-584-1535

Policies to Know

The Toolbox (page 41) outlines policies that impact safety in City Heights. These are important to read because they are used by decision makers to make decisions about safety, especially items listed above under Take Action.

CONCLUSION

City Heights has many good things that make it a unique, vibrant community. Yet, there are inequalities that exist that should be improved: inequities with the number of fast food restaurants, the number of people who depend on transit service, the amount of park space, unhealthy housing, and unsafe walking conditions. These inequities are concentrated along major corridors such as University Avenue and El Cajon Boulevard where the largest percentage of City Heights residents live and the need for services is greater.

The power to make these improvements lies within you as residents. By getting involved, you can help decision makers ensure that the right decisions are made so that you can be a part of designing a healthy City Heights where you want to live, learn, work and play.

There are many opportunities to get involved. Groups like the City Heights Area Planning Committee (CHAPC), Project Area Committee (PAC), and Parks and Recreation Council exist in order to allow residents to partner with government to make decisions.

GET INVOLVED TODAY!

By joining together with other residents, you can make it City Heights a safer and healthier place to live. The city wants to hear from you! There are several public meetings held regularly each month that are open to the public. The purpose of these meetings is to allow residents to make recommendations to the City.

City Heights Area Planning Committee (CHAPC):

When: 1st Monday of each month

Where: Metro Center, 3910 University Avenue

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Translation can be requested for free

Call 619-235-5200

Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC):

When: 2nd Monday of each month

Where: Metro Center, 3910 University Avenue

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Translation can be requested for free

Call 619-236-6700

(more on next page)

City Heights Recreation Council:

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month
Where: City Heights Recreation Center
4380 Landis Dr.
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Call 619-641-6125

Colina Park Recreation Council:

When: 3rd Wednesday every other month
Where: Colina del Sol Park Recreation Center
5319 Orange Avenue
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Call 619-235-1145

Food Justice Momentum Team:

When: 2nd Wednesday of each month
Where: City Heights Wellness Center
Time: 12:00-2:00 p.m.
Call 619-283-9624

City Heights on Patrol (CHOP):

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month
Where: Mid-City Police Station, 2nd floor
Time: 6:30 p.m.

City Heights Town Council:

When: 2nd Monday of each month
Where: City Heights Recreation Center
4380 Landis Dr.
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Call: 619-563-0671

City Heights Canyons and Communities Alliance (CCAC):

When: 2nd Wednesday of each month
Where: Hamilton Elementary School auditorium
Time: 3:30

For more information on all of these subjects, to view more maps, or to learn more on how to take action in your community, please see the Resident's Guide to a Healthy City Heights. Call Kathleen Ferrier at 619-544-9255 to request a copy or go to www.walksandiego.org.



CHAPTER FIVE THE TOOLBOX

■ THE TOOLBOX

This chapter provides residents with tools to help you make the changes discussed earlier. In San Diego, planning and decision-making processes are “community-based” which means they desire input from residents on decisions. You should know your ideas, concerns, and solutions are welcome because you know your community best. The tools in this chapter will help make your involvement more productive.



Tool #1 (page 43) PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENT

This will help you approach government employees and decision makers so your thoughts are heard and they work with you on an issue.

Tool #2 (page 47) PUBLIC HEARINGS

Policies and plans are often adopted or discussed in public hearings. Tool #2 offers some practical advice regarding attending and participating in these meetings.

Tool #3 (page 49) KNOW YOUR POLICIES

The previous four chapters outlined policies and actions for four primary elements of life in City Heights:

- Where you Eat
- How you Move
- Where you Live
- Are you Safe

This tool details related policies and how they impact City Heights.

Tool #4 (page 59) CITY CONTACTS

This is a convenient chart to help you contact different departments within the City of San Diego for a variety of concerns.



CITY HEIGHTS

TOOL#1 - PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENT

■ PARTNERING WITH GOVERNMENT

This Guide recommends contacting decision makers. What you may not realize is how many decision makers or elected officials actually represent City Heights! An elected official is someone who is voted into office by residents of a community. The job of these elected officials is to represent you and what you want in your community. Each official has staff people who are available to meet with you to talk about City Heights.

City Heights Representatives



1. Federal representative - Susan Davis

Susan Davis is a U.S. Congresswoman and represents City Heights at the federal level. She has an office in San Diego:

2700 Adams Avenue, Suite 102

San Diego, CA 92116

Phone: (619) 280-5353



2. State representative - Christine Kehoe

Christine Kehoe is a state assembly person for the State of California and represents City Heights at the state level. She has an office in San Diego:

2445 Fifth Ave., Suite 200

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: (619) 645-3133



3. County representative - Ron Roberts

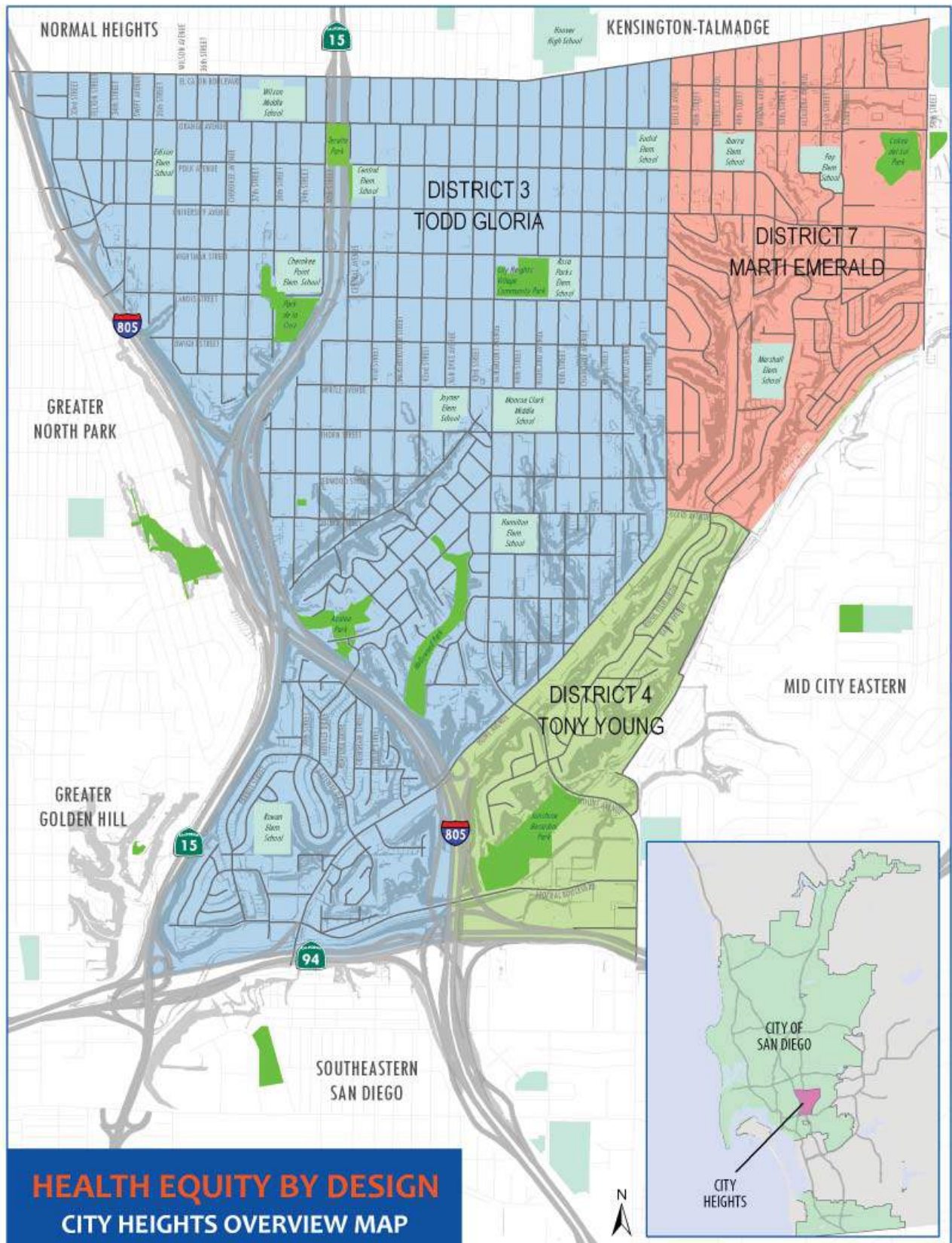
He is a County Supervisor for the San Diego County and represents City Heights at the county level. He has an office in San Diego and a staff person dedicated to City Heights:

1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: (619) 531-5544

CITY HEIGHTS COUNCIL DISTRICTS



4. City council representatives

There are 3 city council members that represent different parts of City Heights. The map on page 44 shows which council people cover different areas of City Heights.



Todd Gloria, District 3

Todd regularly holds Saturday afternoon meetings in City Heights in order to talk to City Heights residents.

202 “C” Street, MS #10A

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-236-6633



Marti Emerald, District 7

Marti has an office in City Heights and makes regular visits to the neighborhood.

City Administration Building

202 C Street, MS #10A

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-236-6677



Tony Young, District 4

Tony has staff people dedicated to City Heights. He represents the southeast portion of City Heights. Contact him if you live in this part of the community.

City Administration Building

202 C Street, MS#10A

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-236-6644

Tips for Contacting your Representative's Office

Many of the Take Action steps in this guide recommend talking with decision makers. Below are tips on how to contact these people's offices.

1. Find out as much as you can about the problem before you contact your representative.

- Talk to people in your community about the problem.
- Make a fact sheet with all the important information.

2. Pick the right people to help you contact the representative.

- Ask other people who live in City Heights like community leaders, business owners, or families with children in school to join you.
- Choose people who are most affected by the problem. For example, if the problem is an unsafe home, your best advocate is someone living in one of these homes.

3. Keep your message short and clear.

- Be honest, specific and polite about what you want.
- Give examples to show how the issue affects you, your family and your neighbors.

4. Offer a solution.

- If possible, suggest a solution to the issue that is supported by everyone you bring to the meeting.
- Point out why you think the solution is best. Remember, you are the expert on your community. Your representative values your opinion!

5. Be respectful.

- Don't harass or threaten the elected official in any way.
- Listen to the representative's ideas and opinions.
- Thank your representative and his/her office for their time.

6. Be committed.

- This isn't easy and one meeting will not get you what you want. Meet more than once with the representative to remind him/her what's happening and to develop a relationship.



TOOL#2 - PUBLIC HEARINGS

A public hearing is a public meeting where decision makers take an official vote on an issue or change in policy. Comments from the public are *always welcome* at these meetings. For the items discussed in this Guide, you might attend public hearings for the City Council, Planning Commission, or the Park and Recreation Board.

1. Get involved early.

- Find out what's happening in meetings with the City Heights Area Planning Committee (CHAPC), the Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC), and the Park and Recreation Council ('Rec Council'). These are groups of residents who meet regularly and make recommendations to decision makers.

If your issue goes to a public hearing, there are several things you can do to make sure your issue is completely understood.

1. Get a copy of the staff report.

- This explains the city's recommendation to the decision makers.
- You can get these before the meeting by calling the office or looking on the internet.

2. Read the staff report.

- Read the report to make sure the facts presented are correct.
- If you believe there is an error, write a letter to the office at once explaining why.

3. Attend the hearing.

- Present your ideas at the hearing at either (a) the beginning of the meeting when 'public comments' are requested, or (b) later when the actual project is discussed.

CITY HEIGHTS POLICIES TABLE

PLANNING DOCUMENTS ▼	HEALTH DETERMINANTS ▼						
	RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE	NUTRITION AND HEALTH	TRANSIT AND ACCESS	HOUSING	SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS & PUBLIC SPACES	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES
CITY HEIGHTS POLICIES							
MID CITY COMMUNITY PLAN (1998)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
REDEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (2009)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES SURVEY (2010)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
COLINA PARK QUALITY OF LIFE REPORT (2009)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
AZALEA PARK REVITALIZATION PLAN (2002)	✓		✓		✓	✓	
EUCLID AVENUE REVITALIZATION PLAN (2000)	✓		✓		✓	✓	
CITY OF SAN DIEGO POLICIES							
SAN DIEGO GENERAL PLAN (2008)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MID-CITY PUBLIC FACILITIES FINANCING PLAN (1998)	✓						
PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE MASTER PLANS (2010)			✓				
REGIONAL POLICIES							
SANDAG REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2011)			✓				
SANDAG DESIGNING FOR SMART GROWTH GUIDELINES (2009)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

TOOL#3 - KNOW YOUR POLICIES

What is “Policy”?

“Policy” is simply a plan of action or series of goals that a city adopts to guide future decisions made by city leaders. For example, a housing policy may suggest where and how many housing units should be built in a specific time frame.

City of San Diego General Plan

General Plans are required by law for all California cities. The City of San Diego's General Plan establishes an overall vision of how the city should grow in the next 20-30 years and lays the foundation for all other plans. It is written by city staff with a lot of community input. There are typically 7-8 chapters with each chapter focused on a different topic. Individual community plans, like the Mid-City Community Plan, show how to implement the General Plan for their own community. <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/genplan>

Important chapters of the General Plan relative to this guide include:

- Mobility – goals for transportation, walking and biking
- Recreation – goals for parks and open space, community gardens
- Housing – goals for all types of housing
- Public Facilities - goals for facilities like fire stations, libraries, and police stations

How it Impacts City Heights

- Community goals proposed for City Heights must generally agree with ideas in the General Plan.
- The General Plan promotes community gardens as a way to provide more green space in communities.
- The General Plan prioritizes balanced communities so that people of all types of income levels can have access to affordable housing in City Heights.

Mid-City Community Plan

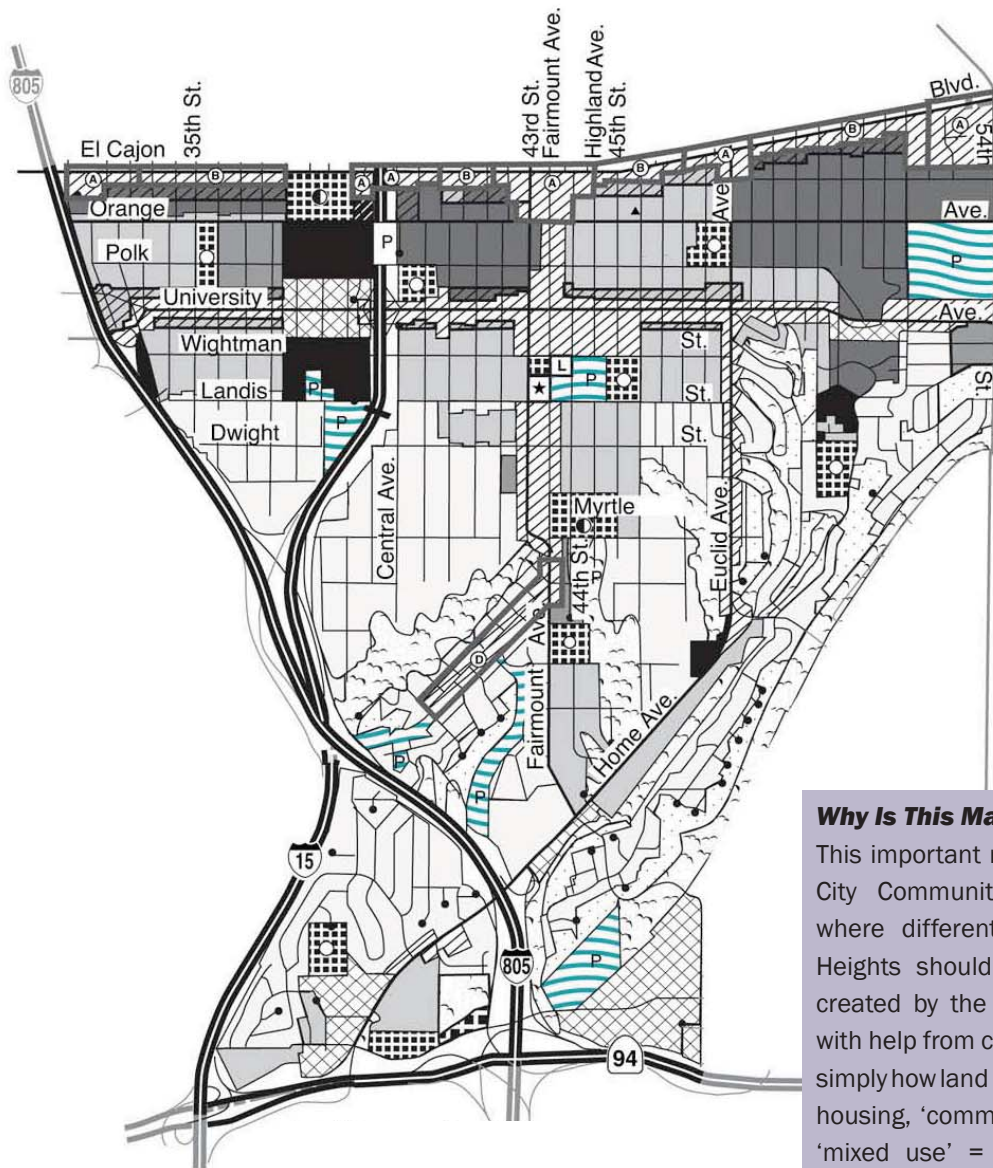
The Mid-City Community Plan - last updated in 1998 - outlines goals for City Heights' housing, parks, streets, and commercial development over the next 10-15 years. These goals are outlined in text and through maps. The plan was written by city staff with a lot of input from the community over several months. City Heights is one of 4 neighborhoods included in the plan along with Kensington -Talmadge, Normal Heights, and Eastern San Diego.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community/profiles/cityheights/plan.shtml>

How it Impacts City Heights

- The Community Plan is the primary planning document for City Heights; consult this plan when looking at a change that involves land use, zoning, and design.
- All decisions about land use in City Heights must reflect goals outlined in the Mid-City Community Plan.
- This Plan guides decisions by the City Heights Area Planning Committee (CHAPC - pronounced “chap-see”), especially as they review proposals for new development in City Heights.

MID-CITY COMMUNITY PLAN - CITY HEIGHTS



Land Use Legend

Residential	Industrial
1-5 du/ac	Institutional
6-10 du/ac	School
11-15 du/ac	○ Elementary
16-20 du/ac	● Junior High
21-25 du/ac	● High School
26-30 du/ac	Park
MH Mobile Home Park	Open Space
Commercial/Residential Transition Zone	▲ Fire Station
Commercial and Mixed-Use	★ Police Station
29 du/ac*	L Library
Ⓐ 73 du/ac	■ Post Office
Ⓑ 35 du/ac*	
Ⓒ 19 du/ac*	
Ⓓ 9 du/ac	

*in areas where residential use is permitted, a mixed-use bonus to 43 du/ac is available

Why Is This Map Important?

This important map is from the Mid-City Community Plan and shows where different land uses in City Heights should be located. It was created by the community in 1998 with help from city staff. 'Land use' is simply how land is used: 'residential' = housing, 'commercial' = businesses, 'mixed use' = buildings with both residential and commercial uses. All decisions regarding newly proposed projects defer to this map.

What is "du/ac"?

du = dwelling units (homes, apartments, condominiums)

ac = acre (43,560 square feet)

du/ac = The maximum number of dwelling units that are allowed on a parcel of land.

For instance, if a half-acre sized parcel (21,780 square feet) is limited to "30 du/ac" it can have only 1/2 of 30...

no more than 15 dwelling units built upon it.

- The Plan includes a map of land uses desired within the community, showing where to build housing, stores and parks in City Heights. All proposed development must be the same as what is on this map or the developer must request the ability to change the map.

Redevelopment Five-Year Implementation Plan

All redevelopment project areas within a city are required to have a five-year implementation plan that is updated every five years. This plan outlines the community's goals for the physical development of the project area during the next five years. The plan is written by city staff with a lot of community input. The City Heights redevelopment project area generates its own funding, which can be used for affordable housing and physical improvements such as streets, street lighting, parks and schools. Money cannot be used to operate and maintain facilities. The map on page 52 illustrates the City Heights redevelopment project area.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/redevelopment-agency/pdf/cityhtsimplementplanfinaldraft.pdf>

How it Impacts City Heights

- This Plan is the primary planning document for development in the redevelopment project area of City Heights.
- The City Heights' redevelopment project area funding is managed by the City. This funding must be spent within City Heights, on goals outlined in the Five-Year Implementation Plan.
- State redevelopment law requires that 20% of the funding generated in a redevelopment project area be spent on affordable housing, either for new construction or the rehabilitation of existing housing. The Five-Year Implementation Plan guides construction of affordable housing in City Heights using these dollars.

City of San Diego Street Design Manual

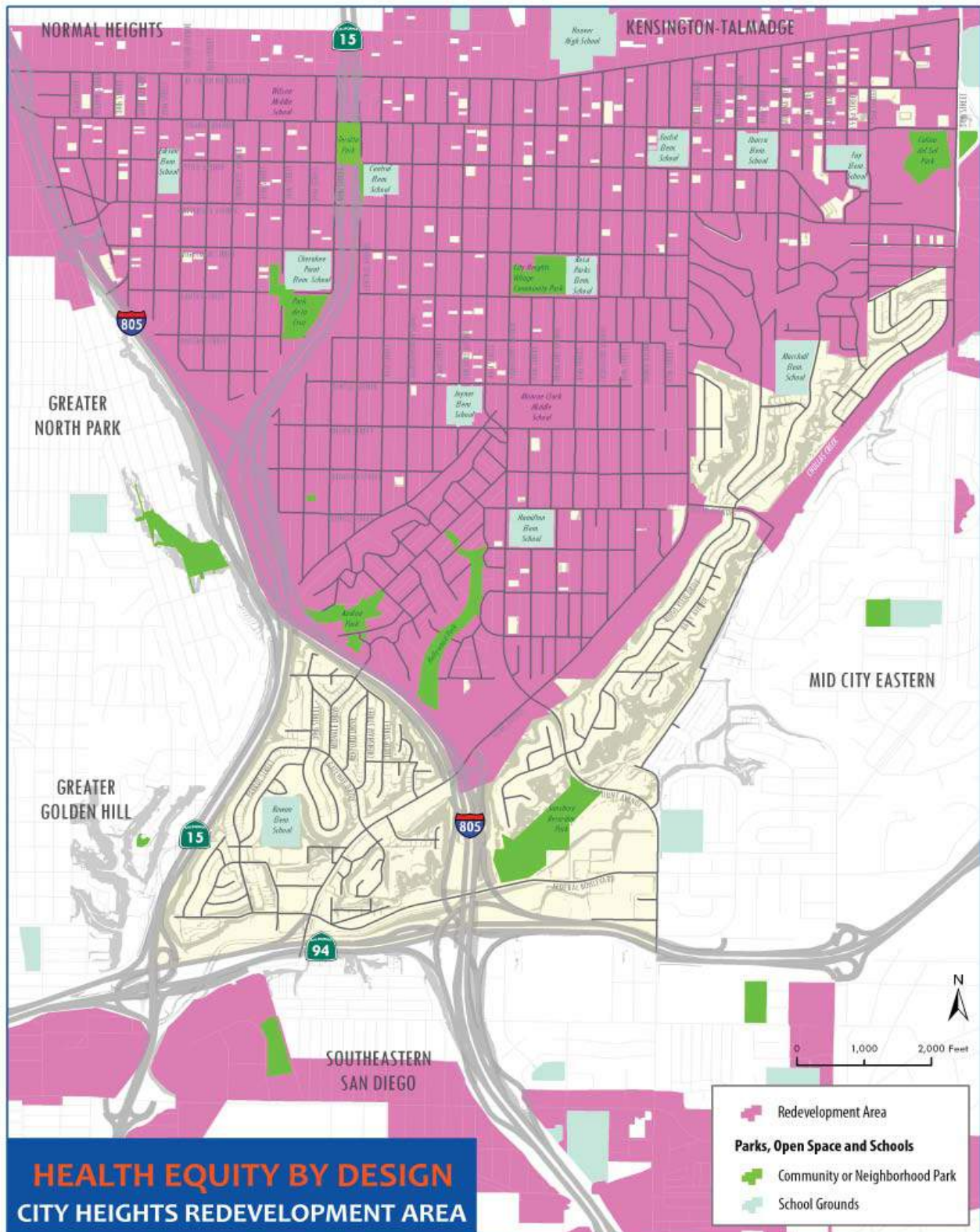
The purpose of this manual is to regulate how streets are designed in the City of San Diego. The manual includes detailed requirements for automobile lane width, on-street parking, sidewalks, street trees, bicycle lanes, and street lighting. It is used by the city and engineers to guide the construction of new streets and to improve existing streets.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/library/stdesign.shtml>

How it Impacts City Heights

- When street improvements are proposed in City Heights, they must abide by the guidelines in the Manual. If you participate in the CHAPC, you can use this manual to review new development proposals to make sure that street improvements match the guidelines.
- Some of the guidelines define how close together street lights should be, what part of the street they should be installed on, and how bright they should be. Consult this manual if you are interested in increasing the number of street lights in City Heights.
- This manual includes recommended tools to slow traffic down, which is known as traffic calming. You can use this information to choose the best tool for a dangerous intersection in City Heights when advocating for improvements.

CITY HEIGHTS REDEVELOPMENT AREA



City of San Diego Pedestrian Master Plan

The Pedestrian Master Plan (PMP) was created to guide and prioritize the City's funding for improving pedestrian infrastructure in order to increase safety throughout the City. Examples of projects include the installation of sidewalks and the design of traffic calming projects at busy intersections. The plan was written by city staff with a lot of input from the community.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/pedestrian.shtml>

How it Impacts City Heights

- The Plan specifically addresses the importance of pedestrian safety and identifies solutions for particularly dangerous intersections.
- The Plan recommends design elements to create a more attractive walking experience. Use this plan along with the Street Design Manual to look at tools for fixing dangerous intersections when advocating for improvements.
- The Plan provides an opportunity for residents to follow up with the City to ensure that proposed improvements are actually being completed. If they haven't, contact the City Planning Department for information: 619-235-5200.

City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan

This plan was created to guide the construction and maintenance of bicycle improvement projects in order to improve bicycle safety and increase bicycle use, including how to make the bicycle an attractive and practical option for day-to-day use. The map on page 54 illustrates bike improvements recommended for City Heights.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/mobility/bicycle.shtml>

How it Impacts City Heights

- The Plan specifically addresses the importance of bicycling safety and identifies improvements for bicycling on streets in City Heights.
- The Plan provides an opportunity for residents to follow up with the City to ensure that proposed improvements are actually being completed. If they haven't been completed, contact the City Planning Department for information: 619-235-5200.

Mid-City Public Facilities Financing Plan

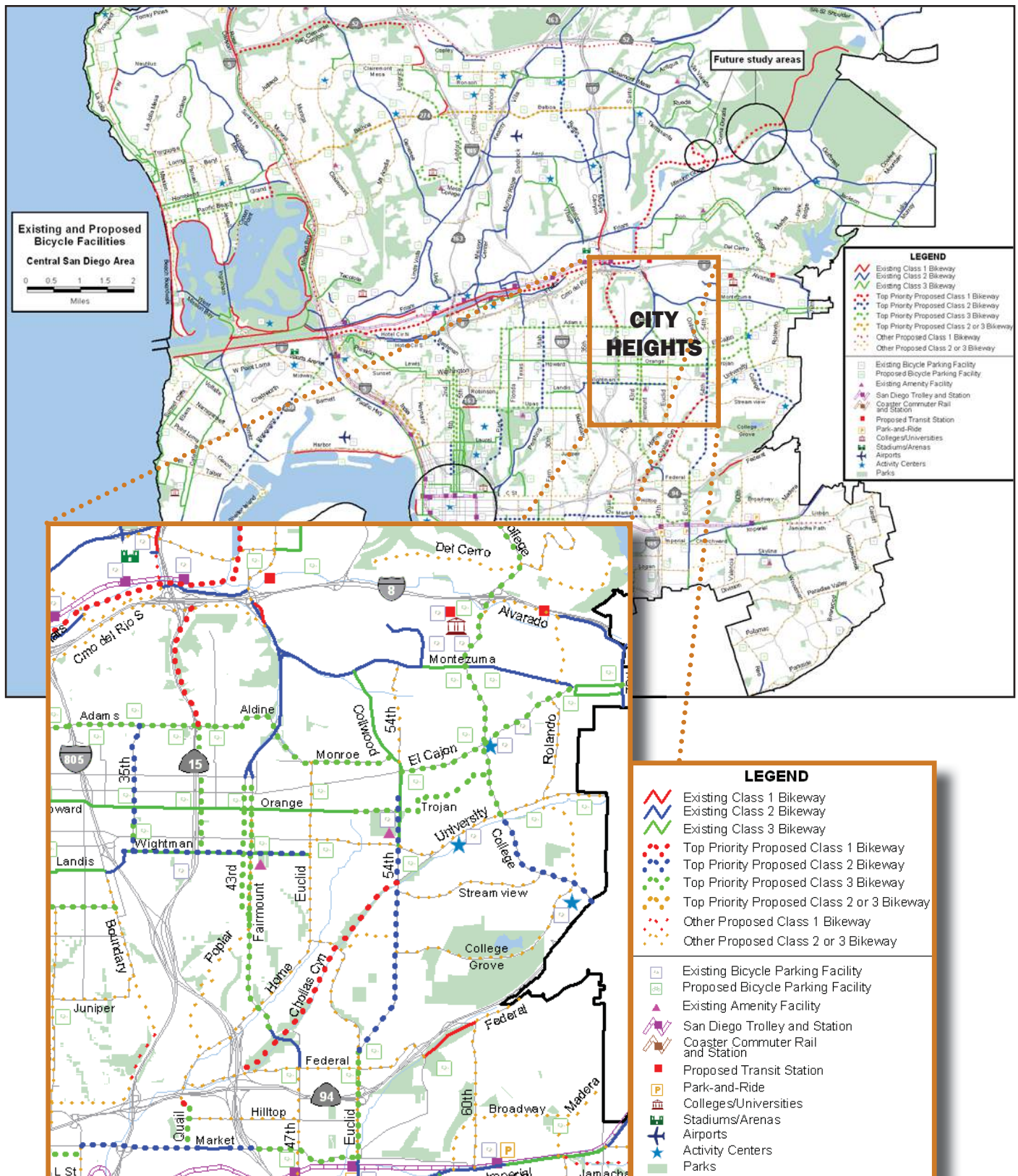
This plan guides investments for public facilities such as joint use fields, bike lanes, etc. A large portion of the funding for these projects comes from Development Impact Fees (DIFs) paid by developers in order to get a building permit. City Heights is one of four neighborhoods included in the plan along with Kensington, Talmadge, Normal Heights, and Eastern San Diego.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/facilitiesfinancing/plans/pdf/mcplanelements.pdf>

How it Impacts City Heights

- This plan helps to implement the Mid-City Community Plan and City of San Diego General Plan. It prioritizes improvements and budgets money for certain public facilities such as parks, bike lanes, and joint use fields in City Heights.

BICYCLE MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY HEIGHTS



Canyon Enhancement Planning Guide

This document provides guidelines for integrating canyons as open space into our communities throughout San Diego. Key goals include visual and physical canyon access, canyon restoration, environmental education, and ecologically sensitive recreation. The guide was created by San Diego Canyonlands organization with input from stakeholders such as city staff and community residents. (not available online)

How it Impacts City Heights

- This plan helps to implement the Mid-City Community Plan and City of San Diego General Plan. It provides guidelines for access, use and maintenance of canyons in City Heights.
- City Heights' Manzanita Canyon was selected as a pilot project to improve access to the canyon.
- The plan outlines enhancement opportunities such as community gardens, pocket parks, and resting areas at canyon edges.
- The plan outlines how canyons can be made more accessible and better integrated into the community.
- The plan describes how adjacent development projects can use the canyons as assets, with more orientation and focus on the canyon.

Inclusionary Housing Policy

All new housing with more than 10 units built in San Diego requires that developers either (a) make 10% of the units affordable, or (b) pay an 'in-lieu fee'. Money collected goes towards building affordable housing throughout the City of San Diego.

http://www.housingsandiego.org/library_policies.php

How it Impacts City Heights

- Inclusionary fees collected can be used by non-profit developers to build affordable housing in City Heights.
- The inclusionary housing fees are an important source of funding for affordable housing in City Heights, along with redevelopment funds and linkage fees.
- The fees can be used to build affordable housing outside of the City Heights redevelopment project area.

Linkage Fee Policy

This policy requires that fees be collected with commercial development, or office space, in order to produce and maintain affordable housing. It 'links' housing with job locations. The fee was reduced by fifty percent in 1996 and has not been increased since that time. However, efforts have been underway in 2010 to bring the fee back to its original level. More information can be found at:

<http://www.sdhc.net/Special-Housing-Programs/Linkage-Task-Force/>

How it Impacts City Heights

- All collected fees go into the city's Housing Trust Fund managed by the City's Housing Commission.
- Non-profit developers can use these fees to build affordable housing in City Heights.
- This fee is a source of funding for affordable housing in City Heights along with redevelopment funds and inclusionary fees.

Lead Hazard Prevention and Control Ordinance

This ordinance was approved by the City Council in 2008 to stop lead hazards and lead poisoning in the home. It requires property owners, childcare facilities, and contractors working in homes with lead to complete special inspections and make sure homes are lead free. More information can be found at:

<http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/ep/leadenforce.shtml>

How it Impacts City Heights

The ordinance can be used as a tool to require that homes are lead free. Homeowners who find lead should work with a nonprofit organization such as the City Heights CDC to report the lead. The City gives money to nonprofits specifically for the purpose of helping residents make their homes lead-free.

City of San Diego Municipal Code

The Municipal Code is the governing document for the city outlining the roles and responsibilities of city departments, specifically as they support the safety, health and welfare of San Diego residents. Fifteen chapters cover policies for subjects like government, health and sanitation, public utilities and transportation, and building and land development regulations.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk/officialdocs/legisdocs/muni.shtml>

Tenants Right to Know Regulations

A tenant is someone who pays rent to use an apartment or building. The Tenants Right to Know Regulations in Chapter 9 of the municipal code protect tenants by limiting the number of reasons landlords can evict them and requiring landlords to notify the tenant with reasons for the eviction. Because of this policy, landlords cannot force tenants out for any reason not listed and they cannot make tenants leave without telling them why first. The policy applies only to people who have rented the same apartment more than two years. However, with community support, this policy could be changed to protect a larger number of tenants.

<http://www.sandiego.gov/city-clerk/officialdocs/legisdocs/muni.shtml>

Health Overlay District

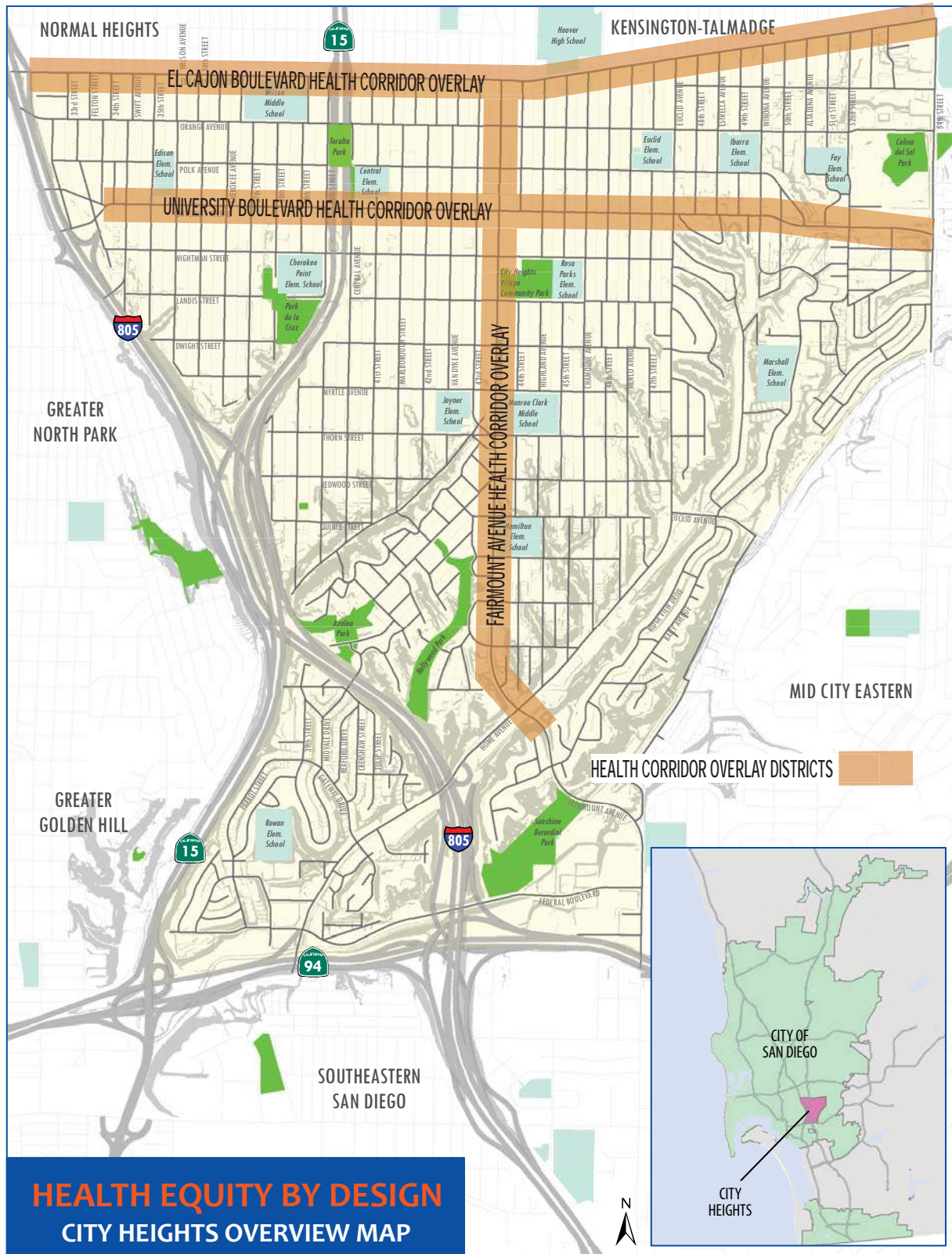
Ask your City planning agency to consider health disparities in their planning process by creating a Health Overlay District in City Heights – which is a type of policy, similar to zoning, that promotes healthy planning and is “overlaid” onto other plans. A Health Overlay District could be used to address health disparities, including the following examples outlined earlier in this guide:

- Limit fast food restaurants.
- Encourage produce carts and fresh vegetable displays among street vendors.
- Introduce traffic calming tools such as brightly painted crosswalks, median islands, angled parking, bike lanes, and street trees.
- Support safer and more pleasant walking conditions such as public seating areas, streetlights, and pedestrian scale lighting (like the lights around Teralta Park).
- Install bike racks, bike lockers, bike route signs, bike lanes (to encourage the healthy practice of biking)
- Design standards that encourage “Eyes on the Street” including a colorful sign system to help residents and visitors find healthy food stores, and other destinations.

The map on page 58 shows where some possible health corridor overlay districts could be - El Cajon Boulevard, University Boulevard, and Fairmount Avenue. THE OVERLAY ZONE IN THIS TOOL IS ONLY AN EXAMPLE. Any final Health Overlay District could be very different since it would be the result of much more study and a lot of resident participation.



CONCEPT CITY HEIGHTS HEALTH CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICTS



**CITY OF SAN DIEGO
DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

CITY DEPARTMENT	CONTACT INFORMATION	DESCRIPTION	REASON TO CONTACT
City Planning Department	Todd Gloria, District 3 Councilmember 619-236-6633 toddgloria@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts hearings on various city issues. Meets every Monday and Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. 202 C Street, 12th floor http://www.sandiego.gov/directories/government.shtml 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend City Council meeting to speak on an issue of concern Contact (e.g. phone, email, letter) Mayor/Council members regarding issue Invite Mayor/Council members to major events (e.g. walk audit, park clean-up)
	Marti Emerald, District 7 Councilmember 619-236-6677 martiemerald@sandiego.gov		
	Tony Young, District 4 Councilmember 619-236-6644 tyoung@sandiego.gov		
City Planning Department	Michael Prinz, Community Planner 619-533-5931 mprinz@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates and implements the City's General Plan, which outlines the City's plans for how it wants to grow and develop in the future. Implements all of the 26 individual community plans. http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/index.shtml 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about the Mid-City Community Plan or City Heights Area Planning Committee.
	Marlon Pangilinan, Senior Planner 619-235-5293 mpangilinan@sandiego.gov		
Redevelopment Agency	Melissa Garcia, City Heights Project Manager 619-236-6547 magarcia@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages revitalization and affordable housing in targeted areas of the City by providing incentives to businesses and developers. Manages Project Area Committee (PAC) in City Heights. http://www.sandiego.gov/redevelopment-agency/index.shtml 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions about redevelopment projects in City Heights View meeting notes from PAC meetings
	Karina Danek, City Heights Project Manager 619-236-6537 kdanek@sandiego.gov		
Planning Commission	Meets every Thursday at 9:00 a.m. 202 C Street, 12 th Floor http://www.sandiego.gov/planning-commission/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts hearings on all special use development permits, proposed re-zonings, community plans, the General Plan, considers land use ordinances and such other improvements as Council may determine. http://www.sandiego.gov/planning-commission/index.shtml#about 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend hearing to voice concern, disapproval or approval of a proposed development project in City Heights.



CITY DEPARTMENT	CONTACT INFORMATION	DESCRIPTION	REASON TO CONTACT
Economic Development Division	619-236-6700 sdbusiness@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages a business-friendly environment, helps attract, retain and expand businesses in San Diego. Provides assistance to small businesses, specifically through Storefront Improvement Program Collaborates with neighborhoods on streetscape projects that improve and enhance the street landscape and public spaces. http://www.sandiego.gov/economic-development/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request financial assistance to improve front of business building.
Park and Recreation Planning	<p>Keith Selby, Area Manager, Colina del Sol Park 619-235-1145, kselby@sandiego.gov</p> <p>Raul Contreras, Area Manager, City Heights Park and Recreation 619-641-6104 rcontreras@sandiego.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information on the planning and inventory of parkland and open space in each community planning area. Describes the park requirements within the Recreation Element of the General Plan and also within each Community Plan. http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/parkplanning/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about park inventory and requirements for City Heights. Ask which schools have joint use fields, and which are planning to in the future.
Transportation Planning	Maureen Gardiner, Project Manager 619-236-7065 mgardiner@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepares and develops travel forecasts, mobility studies, corridor and parking studies, and plans and programs to identify improvements in biking and walking. Integrates transportation planning with land use planning to develop an efficient transportation system for the City. Manages City's Street Design Manual outlining street design guidelines. Houses a document library with mobility planning documents. http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/transportation/index.shtml 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request information on street design, San Diego's pedestrian master plan & bike master plan Find out how many trips specific land uses generate
Facilities Financing Division	Vicki Burgess, Mid-City Project Manager 619-533-3684 vburgess@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information about public projects such as bikeways, street improvements, joint use agreements for school fields, storm drains, and parks scheduled for each community. Describes the impact fees and fee schedules required for development in San Diego. Manages facility financing plans for each community. http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/facilitiesfinancing/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request information on the Mid-City Public Facilities Financing Plan, development impact fees, and prioritization of upcoming projects.

CITY DEPARTMENT	CONTACT INFORMATION	DESCRIPTION	REASON TO CONTACT
Development Services	<p><i>Development Services main line</i> 619-446-5000</p> <p><i>Small business</i> dsdweb@sandiego.gov</p> <p><i>Code compliance</i> 619-236-5500</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the permit process for development projects. Provides zoning information and enforcement so that only certain types of building (e.g. residential housing, commercial, industrial) are allowed in certain areas. http://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/ Manages Small Business Permits http://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/smallbus/ Manages Neighborhood Code Compliance http://www.sandiego.gov/nccd/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request zoning information for properties Seek building permit or other permits (community garden) Seek help with a small business. File a complaint with neighborhood code compliance.
Historic Resources Division	<p><i>Kelley Saunders, Historical Resources Board staff</i> 619-236-6545 kmsaunders@sandiego.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the City's Historical Resources Board, guidelines to historical preservation, a list of San Diego historical sites, cultural landscapes and archaeological sites. The Historical Resources Board designates individual historical sites, establishes historical districts, and reviews development projects that may affect historical resources. http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/historical/index.shtml 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report a potential threat to a historical building by proposed development Find out how to change a building over 45 years old Request information on the Islenair Historic District in City Heights Request a list of Designated Historical Resources in San Diego.
Street Division	<p>619-527-7500 Street_Service@sandiego.gov</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the installation of traffic signals, traffic signs, and street lights, and the construction of roadways, storm drains, and street name signs. Also houses Urban Forestry division to plant street trees. http://www.sandiego.gov/street-div/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to install a stop sign or traffic signal, sidewalk repair, or replacement Request street repair Request City tree trimming, removal, or planting (e.g. overgrown plant/tree blocking stop sign or path)
Housing Commission	<p>619-231-9400 sdhcinfo@sdhc.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps house more than 75,000 low-income San Diegans each year through a variety of programs. These include owning and managing 1,800 housing units, providing rental assistance to families and individuals, offering financial assistance for qualifying first-time homebuyers, and giving financial and technical assistance to low-income households whose older homes need rehabilitation. http://www.sdhc.net/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find available low-rent apartments Learn more about the voucher program to help with apartment payments.

CITY DEPARTMENT	CONTACT INFORMATION	DESCRIPTION	REASON TO CONTACT
Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program	619-235-1000 swppp@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides education, inspection, and enforcement services to reduce pollutants in urban runoff. http://www.sandiego.gov/stormwater/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report foreign substance flowing into storm drain (e.g. paint dumping)
Environmental Services Department	<i>Report illegal dumping</i> 858-694-7000 <i>Call Miramar Landfill</i> 858-492-6100 <i>Report a lead hazard</i> 858-694-7000 lead-safe@sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides San Diego residents with properly disposed municipal solid waste, an environment free of litter and illegal dumping. Manages City's trash pickup, compost program, and Miramar Landfill. Oversees City's management of energy. http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn what is recyclable Dispose of hazardous household waste Report illegal dumping, littering, or other waste related violations Pick up free mulch or compost and wood chips Have a dead animal removed Report a lead hazard Recycle cooking grease
Police Department	<i>Mid-City Division</i> 619-516-3000 SDPDMidcity@pd.sandiego.gov <i>City Heights East, Multi-Cultural Storefront Office</i> 619-515-2733 & 619-531-1590 <i>Parking Enforcement</i> 858-495-4747 SDPDTraffic@pd.sandiego.gov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages multiple related programs: Auto Theft, Homicide, Domestic Violence, Elder and Dependent Abuse Unit, Financial Crimes, Forensic Science, Gangs, Juvenile Services, Parking Enforcement, Permits and Licensing, Sex Crimes, Traffic Investigates trespassing http://www.sandiego.gov/police/forms/index.shtml#trespass Home webpage http://www.sandiego.gov/police/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report suspicious or criminal activity Report pedestrian collision Request a security check at your home while you are on vacation Ask police to check in on elderly neighbors Request parking enforcement

