

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

HEALTHY RETAIL ACCESS POLICY REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

WALKSacramento conducted a policy scan of regional and local policies that currently exist relating to healthy retail access. This scan surveyed the existing policy landscape in the Sacramento Region and was used to identify current policy gaps relating to healthy retail access. While the recommendations are directed at current policy gaps in the Sacramento Region, the best practices and general recommendations are universally applicable. The recommendations include specific examples from other jurisdictions, references from comprehensive agency reports, and general best practices to improve park access for urban and neighborhood parks. Policy recommendations are guided by broad healthy retail access policy goals and are intended for decision-makers to guide policy development with the intention of improving access to healthy foods.

Physical activity and a healthy diet are among the contributing factors in chronic disease prevention and intervention. Healthy retail plays a critical role in improving chronic health outcomes in communities by providing healthy food options for households. Additionally, healthy retail stores that are within a 10-minute walk of communities encourages active travel and creates additional health benefits from physical activity. However, communities in Sacramento that are most vulnerable to poor health outcomes often do not have safe or convenient access to healthy retail destinations, contributing to health disparities. Policy drives built environment change, and as such it is critical that policies address healthy retail access through a health equity lens.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Jurisdictions within the Sacramento Region have an opportunity to proactively improve community health and wellbeing through comprehensive food access policies. This report provides policy best practices that can be used to guide effective and substantive healthy retail access.

This report is designed for decision makers at the local government and regional government levels to improve healthy food access and public health through public policy. This report analyzes existing policies in the Sacramento Region and recommends new or strengthened policies based on a literature review of best practices. Recommendations are targeted towards different jurisdictional levels and planning documents.

Regional Government

Regional agencies fund transportation improvements and establish regionally consistent transportation, land use, and open space policies. Recommendations geared toward regional government includes innovative funding policy and high-level, regional strategies for trail systems planning and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to healthy retail.

Local Government

Local jurisdictions such as cities and counties set policies through General and Master Plans and manage funding for infrastructure projects. This report identifies active transportation policies, development standards, guidelines for funding local projects, and other strategies for local governments to improve access to healthy retail.

HEALTHY RETAIL ACCESS POLICY IN THE SACRAMENTO REGION

In the Sacramento Region no dedicated healthy retail policy document is in place on a local or regional level. However, a food access plan is currently being developed by the County of Sacramento and there are community based organizations that focus and advocate for healthy food access. Healthy food access is a priority among communities in the region, indicating the importance for dedicated policies that address both built environment and financial opportunities to improve accessibility, availability, and affordability of healthy food options.

KEY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The most relevant healthy retail access policies are found within general plans and master plans.

General Plans

General Plans provide policy language intended to meet the broad goals of future development and act as guiding principles for more specific plans. A strong and comprehensive General Plan establishes the priorities and policy goals of the jurisdiction. Healthy retail access policies appear in key elements of the General Plan that pertain to circulation (transportation), public facilities, and land use.

Master Plans

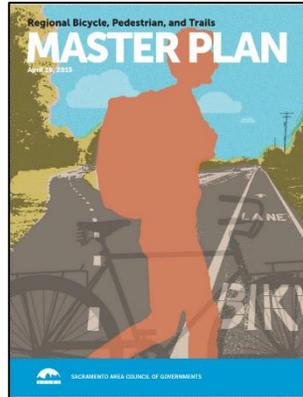
Master Plans are documents that address a specific discipline or area such as a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan or a Downtown Master Plan. These documents provide greater specificity and implementation for development. Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans are able to prioritize specific corridors and identify specific policies that aim to improve active transportation to healthy destinations.

The following policy documents were reviewed:

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS)

The MTP/SCS provides high level, regional guidance to improve quality of life based on projected land use patterns and population growth. The MTP/SCS analyzes current transportation and land use trends and identifies guiding principles and strategies, including smart land use, environmental sustainability, and access and mobility. Public health, air quality, and promotion of active transportation are highlighted as key policy goals.



Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan

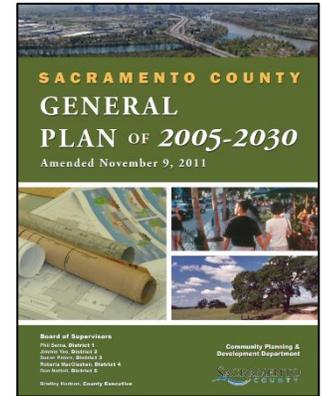
The Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan envisions a complete transportation system for the region that supports healthy living and active communities. The plan identifies a series of goals, strategies, and actions to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, increase travel by active modes, and implement regional priorities consistent with the MTP/SCS.



Sacramento County

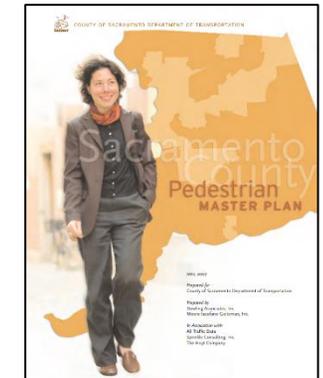
2030 General Plan

The Sacramento County 2030 General Plan identifies policies and programs for guiding development patterns in the unincorporated County. Elements pertaining to healthy retail access and active transportation include Land Use, Circulation, and Public Facilities. Some of the key goals of the General Plan are environmental sustainability, economic development, infill development, an integrated transportation system, and healthy communities.



Pedestrian Master Plan

The Sacramento County Pedestrian Master Plan aims to improve pedestrian safety and access throughout the unincorporated County. The Pedestrian Master Plan outlines policies to improve pedestrian safety, increase access, and improve comfort and convenience through streetscape design and land use.



Bicycle Master Plan

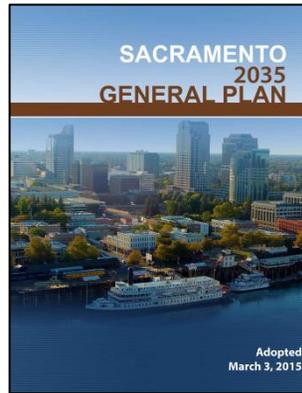
The Sacramento County Bicycle Master Plan guides bikeway policies, programs, and development standards and complements the Circulation Element of the General Plan. Policies and strategies aim to increase bike mode share and reduce bike collisions and injuries.



City of Sacramento

2035 General Plan

The City of Sacramento General Plan sets overarching goals and policies to develop a livable city. Key themes of the General Plan include smart growth, placemaking, economic vitality, healthy communities, and sustainability. Elements pertaining to healthy retail access and active transportation include Land Use and Urban Design and Mobility.



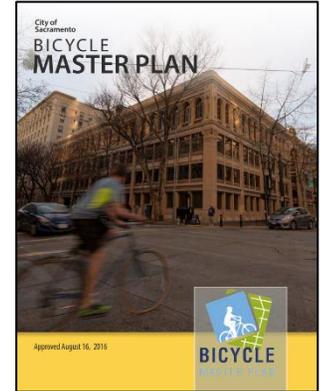
Pedestrian Master Plan

The City Pedestrian Master Plan provides a comprehensive vision for improving pedestrian conditions. The Master Plan highlights the importance of pedestrian-oriented development and recommends updating development review guidelines to better address pedestrian-friendliness in new development projects. Goals include improving pedestrian education, creating walkable environments, and increasing safety.



Bicycle Master Plan

The City Bicycle Master Plan supports the 2035 General Plan goals of reducing vehicle miles traveled, reducing climate emissions, and improving overall quality of life. The goals of the Master Plan are to increase bike modeshare, improve safety and connectivity, and equitably invest in bike facilities and programs throughout the city.



HEALTHY RETAIL ACCESS POLICY GOALS

Comprehensive healthy retail policy goals create clear priorities for local and regional governments to ensure equitable and sustained access to healthy retail destinations. The following categories outline comprehensive goals to guide meaningful policy recommendations to address inaccessible food systems, lack of healthy food options, healthy food affordability, and other inequities in food access. These goals are based on policy gaps that were identified through a policy scan of existing policies in the Sacramento Region as well as national and statewide policy best practices.



Connectivity

In order to make healthy retail accessible to all residents, it is important to recognize the built environment surrounding these locations. Healthy retail locations should be accessible by multimodal travel including active transportation and transit.



Land Use and Siting

The development and siting of new healthy retail locations should be informed by data-driven processes that prioritize healthy retail in communities with limited healthy options. Design guidelines should prioritize pedestrian-oriented development. Existing stores within neighborhoods should be assessed for opportunities for healthy retail conversions.



Safety

Safety policies address both traffic safety and personal safety. Traffic safety can be addressed through adopting Vision Zero policies and other safe infrastructure approaches. In addition to traffic safety along routes to healthy retail, it is important to foster personal safety through adopting comprehensive Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies.



Collaboration

Healthy food access relies on cross-sector partnerships in order to achieve policy goals. Policies should encourage and formalize collaboration between stakeholders for infrastructure improvements, programs, and other implementation measures to improve access.



Financial Access

An integral part of healthy retail access is financial affordability and ensuring that households of all income levels have the resources they need to afford healthy foods. This includes comprehensive funding initiatives for food access programs and creating economic incentives for businesses to implement these programs.



POLICY GOAL: CONNECTIVITY

Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to healthy retail locations is critical for encouraging active travel and improving health outcomes. In particular, communities with poor health outcomes are less likely to own a vehicle, more likely to rely on public transit and active transportation, and more likely to live in a neighborhood with car-oriented development patterns and inadequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Policies that aim to address connectivity along routes to healthy retail destinations should prioritize active transportation infrastructure that creates a safe and comfortable user experience, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

EXISTING POLICY LANDSCAPE

Overall, multimodal access between residential and commercial activity centers is listed as a policy goal. Existing policies recognize the importance of safe infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle travel and identify certain strategies for achieving multimodal connectivity. Beyond safety, comfort and convenience for pedestrians and bicyclists are also identified as policy goals. Promoting street trees and reducing manmade barriers such as indirect street networks and utility poles are among some of the strategies highlighted to address comfort and convenience. Policies also identify the connection between land use patterns and transportation and opportunities for compact development in new communities. These existing policies provide a foundation for safe, accessible, and convenient active transportation infrastructure.

POLICY GAPS

While existing policies prioritize multimodal network connectivity generally, they lack strong policy language around health equity and addressing transportation barriers within disadvantaged communities. Policies do not have data metrics to drive transportation investments, particularly in areas that are disproportionately impacted by poor healthy retail access. The main focus of active transportation policies is for reduction of vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions rather than for overall public health. Additionally, access to healthy retail destinations is not explicitly identified as an opportunity to improve health outcomes.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Regional and Local Governments should** develop policies that establish baseline data conditions, data metrics, and prioritize data-driven projects to improve equitable access to parks. Health should be incorporated as one of the priority metrics for project identification.
- **Regional and Local Governments should** assess opportunities for green networks that prioritize connections to healthy retail corridors and create comfortable, low-stress routes.
- **Cities and Counties should** adopt policies that prioritize closing first mile and last mile gaps between transit stops and healthy retail corridors. These policies should also prioritize the needs of vulnerable road users.
- **General Plans should include** connectivity along routes to healthy retail as a policy goal.

POLICY BEST PRACTICES

The following are examples of types of policies that can be adopted or strengthened from existing policy language in order to improve connectivity to healthy retail locations.

All Ages and Abilities or “8-80” Policy

Healthy destinations should be easily accessible for children, families, older adults, and people with disabilities. 8-80 is a concept that if a street is safely navigable for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, it will be safely navigable for everyone. Ensuring that routes to healthy retail are designed for people of all ages and abilities is important for equitable healthy food access.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into the Circulation Element of General Plans, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans, or Corridor Specific Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living¹
- Designing for All Ages and Abilities²
- Noteworthy Local Policies that Support Safe and Complete Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks³

Case Study

The City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin developed a Complete Streets Policy⁴ that prioritizes the safety of vulnerable road users and established a goal for users of all ages and abilities to safely, comfortably, and conveniently travel through the street network.

Complete Streets Policy

A complete streets policy formalizes the intent to plan, design, and maintain streets that are safe for users of all ages and abilities. A complete streets policy that prioritizes routes to community destinations (such as healthy retail) can encourage active travel and increase physical activity in communities. A complete streets policy can further address health equity by prioritizing access in communities that are more vulnerable to poor health outcomes.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County level. Could be incorporated into the Circulation Element of General Plans, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans, or Corridor Specific Plans.

Strengthen from existing policy within the City of Sacramento General Plan: “The City shall strive to remove and minimize the effect of natural and manmade barriers to accessibility between and within existing neighborhoods corridors, and centers.” (Land Use Policy 2.5.2)

Policy Best Practices

- Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living¹
- Complete Streets Policy Development⁵
- California Complete Streets Policies⁶

Case Study

The City of Cleveland Heights, Ohio developed a Complete Streets Policy⁴ that emphasizes equity, safety for vulnerable road users at all stages of a project (including construction), and clear timeframes for policy implementation. As a result of strong policy language, City staff have the resources and capacity to deliver people-focused projects.



Data Collection and Evaluation Policy

Data collection and evaluation is critical for identifying and prioritizing routes for improvement. A data and evaluation policy should include indicators that are guided by clear goals for healthy retail access and public health. Indicators may include an inventory of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, traffic injury data, public health data, socioeconomic characteristics, and data gathered through community engagement.

Recommendation

Adopt at regional and local levels. Could be incorporated into General Plans or through Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Safe Routes to Healthy Food⁷

Case Study

Siler City, North Carolina developed a Pedestrian Master Plan⁸ with a particular emphasis on connections to healthy retail. The City used socioeconomic data including population density, race and ethnicity, median household income, and zero car households in addition to locations of existing pedestrian facilities and pedestrian crash history. The Plan includes an evaluation of existing healthy food sites and uses pedestrian facility and socioeconomic demographic data to identify recommended network improvements.

First Mile and Last Mile Transit Connections Policy

Transit is an important mode of transportation for accessing retail stores, particularly for those who do not have access to or cannot drive a personal vehicle. As such, improving pedestrian and bicycle connections between transit and healthy retail can help address connectivity gaps and reduce transportation barriers for accessing healthy foods. Siting transit stops near healthy retail centers is another strategy to expand multimodal options.

Recommendation

Adopt at regional and local levels. Could be incorporated into the Circulation Element of General Plans, through Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans, or through transit planning efforts.

Policy Best Practices

- Safe Routes to Healthy Food⁷
- Making Transit Count⁹
- The Wheels on the Bus go to the Grocery Store¹⁰

Case Study

LA Metro developed a First Mile and Last Mile Strategic Plan¹¹ that outlines strategies for infrastructure improvements around transit, maximizing multimodal efficiencies, and supporting regional sustainability and environmental goals. The plan identifies current barriers to transit access such as long block lengths, freeways, and safety, then assesses the quality of pedestrian and bicycle routes to transit stops and tools to improve these routes.



Greenways Policy

A greenways policy focuses on designing street connections that promote active travel through safe active transportation infrastructure. Green streets also create opportunities for urban greenery along corridors, which enhances comfort for people using active travel modes and provides a host of other environmental and health benefits.

Recommendation

Adopt at regional and local levels. Could be incorporated through Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans or Corridor Specific Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Complete Streets Coalition: Green Streets¹²
- EPA: Learn About Green Streets¹³

Case Study

The San Francisco Planning Department developed a Green Connections Network and design toolkit¹⁴ that prioritizes connections to parks and other community destinations and provides strategies for urban greening and active transportation infrastructure.

In Palmer, Alaska, an Edible Rail Trail¹⁵ creates a green trail connection that also provides free vegetables. Planters along the route are planted with vegetables that reflect the city's agricultural history and provide a health benefit to the community.

Tree Canopy Policy

A tree canopy policy formalizes and prioritizes tree canopy along routes to healthy retail. Tree canopy along streets can provide green connections to community destinations for health, comfort, and mental wellbeing.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated through the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan or through an Urban Forestry Master Plan.

Strengthen existing policy from the City of Sacramento General Plan:

- “The City shall ensure that all new roadway projects and major reconstruction projects provide for the development of an adequate street tree canopy.” (Mobility Policy 4.2.3)
- “The City shall pursue opportunities to enhance the urban forest in existing suburban neighborhoods by undertaking neighborhood street tree planting programs that introduce more trees into the public right-of-way, rather than depending on trees in private yards.” (Land Use Policy 4.2.2)

Policy Best Practices

- Health in All Policies Task Force¹⁶
- Urban Forestry Toolkit¹⁷

Case Study

Santa Monica's Urban Forest Master Plan¹⁸ outlines a vision, goals, and strategies for improving and enhancing the urban forest. The Master Plan includes an analysis of tree canopy coverage and gaps in the tree canopy network, and emphasizes the importance of planting the right trees in the right places.





POLICY GOAL: LAND USE AND SITING

The availability of healthy retail sites is often a barrier in communities that lack healthy food options or have an overabundance of unhealthy food options. Policies should aim to address healthy retail disparities by prioritizing siting in communities with poor health outcomes and limited healthy food options, allowing for creative use of space including healthy food pop-ups and urban farming, and developing incentives for healthy retail conversions.

EXISTING POLICY LANDSCAPE

Existing policies recognize the importance of balancing land uses within neighborhoods so that everyday needs are available within walking distance. Policies include language supporting the development of mixed use centers and connections to grocery stores, farmers markets, and other food stores. Additionally, guidelines are provided for new commercial development to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access in order to promote walking, biking, and transit to these destinations.

POLICY GAPS

While existing policies recognize the importance of healthy food stores within walking distance of neighborhoods, further actionable guidance is needed in order to guide equitable healthy retail development. Healthy retail siting and development policies should include a strong equity component to ensure that healthy food options are provided in neighborhoods with poor health outcomes and limited healthy food options. Policies that allow for innovative use of land, such as pop-up farmers markets and urban farming, or that support conversion of existing stores can help address healthy food gaps in communities.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Cities and Counties should** adopt policies that allow for flexible use of land in order to provide opportunities for healthy food production and vending, even in densely populated urban spaces.
- **Cities and Counties should** establish baseline data conditions, data metrics, and prioritize data-driven projects to improve equitable siting and development of new healthy retail sites.
- **General Plans should contain** statements and policies that prioritize equity in siting of healthy retail and consider the negative health implications of an overabundance of unhealthy retail in communities.

POLICY BEST PRACTICES

The following are examples of types of policies that can be adopted or strengthened from existing policy language in order to improve healthy retail access through siting and development of new locations.

Adaptive Space Policy

An adaptive space policy identifies opportunities to adapt underutilized land and public spaces for healthy food uses. This could include incentivizing development of healthy retail stores on vacant properties, adapting supermarket site requirements to work with smaller store formats, using parking lots or other public spaces for farmers' markets, and encouraging healthy mobile vending. Creative and flexible use of land allows for healthy foods to be more easily accessible even when space for new development is limited.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into the General Plan.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Food, Healthy Communities¹⁹
- Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living¹

Case Study

The City of Oakland created a mobile food vending permit program²⁰ to support street vendors selling healthy foods including fruits, vegetables, and hot tamales. The program legitimized the vendors and facilitated healthy food access to the community.

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) launched a Fresh MARTA market²¹ at a transit station in a community with limited food access. The market was so successful that MARTA expanded it to three additional stations.

Equitable Healthy Retail Access Policy

An equitable healthy retail access policy should aim to prioritize and incentivize healthy retail projects in communities based on socioeconomic factors (such as income), health outcomes, and lack of current healthy food options. A community food assessment should be conducted to determine the need for and types of healthy retail that would be successful in a community.

Recommendation

Adopt at the regional and local levels. Could be incorporated into General Plans or Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Food, Healthy Communities¹⁹
- Community Food Assessment²²
- Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living¹
- Grocery Store Attraction Strategies²³

Case Study

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission created an Equity Through Access Priority Score Map Toolkit²⁴, which identifies a mismatch between vulnerable populations (such as households with one or more disabled person, households in poverty, and people aged 65 and older) and the location of essential services (such as activity centers, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, schools, and parks). This tool allows local jurisdictions to develop policy solutions to address this mismatch, such as prioritizing development of new grocery stores, optimizing transit routes to essential service destinations, or bridging first mile and last mile connections.



Healthy Retail Conversion Policy

Existing corner stores that are located within neighborhoods provide an opportunity to improve community health by offering healthy food options. Healthy retail conversions involve working with business owners to build capacity for stocking, marketing, and selling fresh produce. In particular, healthy retail conversions should aim to target stores located near schools in order to reduce health impacts of high sugar, high calorie foods for children and youth.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into the General Plan.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Corner Stores Network²⁵
- Healthy Food, Healthy Communities¹⁹
- Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living¹

Case Study

In San Francisco, community groups in the Bayview and Tenderloin neighborhoods initiated healthy retail conversions of stores that had few healthy food options and high levels of less positive activity outside the store. These efforts led to the creation of Healthy Retail SF²⁶, which is led by the City's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, to continue providing support to local businesses to sell healthy foods.

Unhealthy Retail Restriction Policy

An overabundance of fast food restaurants, liquor stores, and other unhealthy retail establishments contribute to poor health outcomes in communities by providing convenient and affordable access to unhealthy foods. Unhealthy retail should be restricted in communities where healthy food options are limited or unavailable, and may also be considered around schools, parks, and other community centers. Restrictions should also be accompanied by incentives for healthy retail to locate in these areas.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be adopted through zoning ordinances, development regulations, or through General Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Retail Playbook²⁷
- Model Ordinance Regulating Where Sugary Drinks May Be Sold²⁸
- Model Healthy Food Zone Ordinance²⁹

Case Study

The City of Los Angeles developed an ordinance to ban development of new fast food restaurants in South LA³⁰, which is overburdened by unhealthy options and has high rates of obesity. To complement the ban, the city's redevelopment agency developed a package of incentives for grocery stores including tax credits, discounts on electricity, and expedited project review.



Urban Agriculture Policy

Urban agriculture can help improve healthy food access by allowing for food to be grown locally and within communities. Urban agriculture encompasses a broad range of food-growing practices, including home gardens, community gardens, and urban farms. Urban agriculture policies should consider what types of uses should be allowed and where, and should aim to support existing urban agriculture and remove barriers for new efforts.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be adopted through zoning ordinances or through General Plans.

Strengthen from existing Urban Agriculture Ordinance at the City of Sacramento.

Policy Best Practices

- Equitable Strategies and Policies for Improving Access to Healthy Food and Revitalizing Communities³¹
- Seeding the City: Land Use Policies to Promote Urban Agriculture³²

Case Study

The City of Seattle³¹ adopted a resolution supporting community gardens and urban agriculture land uses, tasking the Department of Neighborhoods with identifying locations that would maximize accessibility for all neighborhoods and communities, especially for low-income and minority residents. Additionally, the City has committed to an “urban village” concept that assigns one garden per 2,500 residents. Land use codes further support urban agriculture by allowing residents to grow and sell food from their backyards, increasing the number of chickens allowed in a backyard, allowing greenhouses on buildings, and allowing for more flexibility in farmers market locations.





POLICY GOAL: SAFETY

A crucial aspect of creating access to healthy retail is addressing personal and traffic safety on routes to healthy retail destinations and while at healthy retail sites. Real and perceived safety concerns can affect the decision to walk, bike or take transit to a store. Beyond personal safety, inadequate infrastructure deters active travel by creating a dangerous and unpleasant environment. Improving both personal and traffic safety at and around healthy retail can increase physical activity and promote access to healthy retail sites, thereby improving community health.

EXISTING POLICY LANDSCAPE

Traffic safety is prioritized through policies such as Vision Zero and through Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans, which aim to address pedestrian and bicycle collisions by identifying opportunities for infrastructure improvements. Additionally, the City and County address bicycle safety through education by encouraging safe behaviors. In terms of personal safety, some mention is made of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, such as well-lit routes, maintenance and clean-up of graffiti, and creating natural surveillance of streets and at commercial retail centers.

POLICY GAPS

Policies prioritize traffic safety generally, but lack prioritization on infrastructure along routes to healthy retail destinations. In addition, there is a strong focus on streetscape infrastructure and built environment improvements, but lack of policies addressing personal safety to and at healthy retail sites. By prioritizing personal safety and CPTED strategies, local jurisdictions can create communities where individuals feel safe and empowered to walk or bike to stores, which increases physical health.

Policy RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Cities and Counties should** develop a framework for community-based safety initiatives in order to reduce over-policing and uplift community pride and ownership.
- **Cities and Counties should** adopt Vision Zero policies that are informed by and implement a data-driven approach to street safety. Vision Zero policies should focus on infrastructure improvements, as well as opportunities for education and encouragement campaigns. Enforcement strategies should consider ways to avoid over-policing and racial bias.
- **Cities and Counties should** adopt comprehensive CPTED policies that require a CPTED review of new park site plans and updates to existing parks. These policies should also incorporate maintenance, lighting, and park activations strategies to implement along key routes to parks and at park sites.

POLICY BEST PRACTICES

The following are examples of types of policies that can be adopted or strengthened from existing policy language in order to improve safety at healthy retail sites and along routes to healthy retail.

Community-Based Safety Policy

Developing a framework for community-led safety initiatives is an important component for equitable healthy retail access by reducing over-policing and increasing positive activity at and around retail sites. A community-based safety policy may include strategies such as maintenance groups or neighborhood watch.

Additionally, to reduce over-policing and negative interactions between law enforcement and community members, a law enforcement partnership policy should aim to create meaningful and positive community-police and youth-police relationships. Policies and programs should build trust in a way that improves overall community safety.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into General Plans or Corridor Specific Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Community Safety: A Building Block for Healthy Communities³³
- Engaging Communities as Partners: Strategies for Problem Solving³⁴

Case Study

In Los Angeles, the Urban Peace Institute's Community Safety Partnership program³⁵ has helped to build trust between residents and law enforcement. The program build capacity for law enforcement officers and residents to develop and implement programs, address quality of life, and access resources such as employment training, medical programs, and counseling.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Policy

CPTED policies aim to reduce opportunities for crime through design strategies and programmatic approaches rather than through enforcement. A comprehensive CPTED policy should address siting and design of new retail stores and allocation of resources to retrofit existing healthy retail sites. Healthy retail corridors should be assessed from a CPTED perspective and identify opportunities to improve natural surveillance, visibility, and natural access control.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into General Plans, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans, or Corridor Specific Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Health in All Policies: CPTED³⁶
- Putting the "Safe" in Safe Routes to Parks³⁷

Case Study

The City of Portland, Oregon has a comprehensive CPTED policy³⁸ that prioritizes and names funding for each kind of development and the associated CPTED principles that will be enacted. This policy should include all the main principles of CPTED, including natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement and maintenance.



Pedestrian-Scale Lighting Policy

Lighting is a critical component of the built environment that helps reduce fear of and opportunity for crime. Lighting along routes to retail and at retail sites should aim to illuminate human activity. This can be accomplished through policies and design standards that prioritize pedestrian-scale lighting and provide context-sensitive specifications for lighting types that reduce glare and maximize visibility.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into the Circulation Element of General Plans, Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans, or street and park design guidelines.

Policy Best Practices

- CPTED and Lighting: Reducing Crime, Improving Security³⁹
- Move This Way: Making Neighborhoods More Walkable and Bikeable⁴⁰

Case Study

Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee⁴⁰ developed lighting standards that prioritize pedestrian-scale lighting and fixtures that reduce glare and light impacts to neighboring properties.

Vision Zero Policy

Vision Zero is a comprehensive approach with the goal of eliminating all traffic fatalities and serious injuries and improving safe mobility. Vision Zero policies should be data-driven, prioritize equity for vulnerable road users and disproportionate traffic death impacts on certain populations, and commit to an accountable timeline and context-sensitive strategies.

Recommendation

Adopt at the County level. Could be developed as a Vision Zero Action Plan or incorporated through the Circulation Element of General Plans or through Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Vision Zero Network⁴¹

Case Study

Portland's Vision Zero Action Plan⁴² was developed based on data highlighting high crash corridors and intersections throughout the city. The Action Plan focuses on vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, people of color, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, and households with limited vehicle access. The Action Plan prioritizes infrastructure gaps and outlines additional educational strategies to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries. The City released a two-year update in 2019 to evaluate implementation efforts to-date and develop updated strategies as needed.





POLICY GOAL: COLLABORATION

Creating avenues for collaboration between agencies and across sectors is critical for ensuring comprehensive access to healthy retail destinations and achieving desired health outcomes in communities. Different organizations across public and private sectors provide valuable technical expertise, programs, and services that can be more effective when leveraged together. Additionally, collaboration between agencies is important for developing and implementing policies to specifically address healthy food access, such as the creation of food access councils or development of food access plans. Collaboration should be formalized through policy in order to build and sustain relationships and improve overall healthy retail access.

EXISTING POLICY LANDSCAPE

Existing policies have a strong emphasis on collaboration for non-infrastructure education and encouragement programs that focus on active travel, healthy food literacy, and partnering with Health Departments to deliver educational programs and activities. Public-private partnerships are highlighted as a strategy to increase access to healthy food within the region, such as partnerships between local government, farmers, and retail business owners.

POLICY GAPS

While there is a strong focus on collaboration between agencies for non-infrastructure programs, there is a lack of policies that identify collaborative opportunities to address infrastructure gaps. Health Departments are identified as a key partner within policies, but additional policies are needed to formalize partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders. In particular, greater public-private partnership strategies can create avenues for innovative funding and implementation of healthy retail access projects.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Regional and Local Governments should** formalize partnerships between health, transportation, public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders around healthy retail access.
- **Regional and Local Governments should** adopt local food procurement policies that aim to connect local farmers with healthy retail vendors, farmers markets, and other opportunities to sell fresh produce locally.
- **Cities and Counties should** formalize community engagement as an ongoing process and a valuable collaborative opportunity to inform healthy retail access projects.

POLICY BEST PRACTICES

The following are examples of types of policies that can be adopted or strengthened from existing policy language in order to facilitate greater collaboration between agencies and other healthy retail stakeholders.

Community Partnership Policy

Formalizing the role of community members and neighborhood organizations as partners in healthy food access planning, design, and implementation can lead to successful outcomes for equitable development, health, and economic vitality. Engaging community members around food access can identify opportunities for culturally relevant stores, food preferences, and job training. Community partnership policies should focus on the value of the community engagement process and identify avenues to sustain ongoing relationships between agencies and communities.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into the General Plan.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Food, Healthy Communities¹⁹

Case Study

In San Diego, Market Creek Plaza¹⁹ has helped spur job growth and support local businesses in a low-income neighborhood. Because of strong community support for the Food 4 Less grocery store in the plaza, the store has remained a successful anchor tenant and attracted other locally-owned businesses.

Cross-Sector Health Partnership Policy

Formalizing partnerships between health, transportation, and other key local agency departments, as well as between other public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders, is critical for carrying forward and sustaining effective healthy retail access projects and programs.

Recommendation

Adopt at the regional and local levels. Could be incorporated into General Plans or Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Plan4Health⁴³
- Healthy Retail Collaboration Workbook⁴⁴

Case Study

The City of Camden, New Jersey developed a Food Economy Strategy⁴⁵ that provides policy recommendations for institutions, government, community organizations, and economic development organizations to pursue collaborative opportunities to improve healthy food access across the city.



Local Food Procurement Policy

Local food procurement policies should aim to establish and expand linkages between local farmers and consumers in order to improve access to healthy foods. Locally procured produce is more fresh, supports the local and regional economy, reduces environmental impacts of food transport, and builds community. Strategies to strengthen the local food economy include connecting local farmers with food retailers, establishing and supporting farmers collaboratives, developing farm-to-school programs, and supporting Community Supported Agriculture programs.

Recommendation

Adopt at the regional and local levels. Could be incorporated into food access plans, the MTP/SCS, or General Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Food, Healthy Communities¹⁹
- Advancing Policies to Support Healthy Eating and Active Living¹
- Model Local School Wellness Policies on Physical Activity and Nutrition⁴⁶

Case Study

In Riverside, a Farm to School Salad Bar Program¹⁹ has brought local fresh fruits and vegetables to an elementary school serving many low-income students. The salad bar is stocked with 50-100% of locally grown food, and the program also includes supplemental activities including food preparation education, farm visits, and gardening opportunities. The program has also benefited local farmers by generating over \$1,700 per month in additional revenue per farmer.





POLICY GOAL: FINANCIAL ACCESS

Beyond physical access to healthy food locations, affordability of healthy foods is a critical component of healthy retail access that influences whether or not households are able to purchase healthy food options. Policies should aim to reduce financial barriers to healthy food access.

EXISTING POLICY LANDSCAPE

In terms of overall access to healthy foods, existing policies primarily focus on development of more healthy food locations through policies that encourage grocery stores within walking distance of neighborhoods. Some policies mention affordable healthy food stores within low-income communities as a priority, but do not provide additional guidance on how to do so. On a regional scale, policies that facilitate connections between local farmers and local food systems include healthy food affordability as a co-benefit.

POLICY GAPS

Policies currently lack a strong emphasis on strategies to ensure that affordable healthy food options are available in low-income communities. Policies should take an additional step by actively tying affordable food programs to siting of new healthy retail in order to ensure that residents are able to afford healthy options.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Cities and Counties should** identify opportunities to reduce barriers to entry for food assistance programs and provide support to program implementer partners.
- **Cities and Counties should** identify funding streams and financial incentives to support healthy food initiatives and retailers located in low-income communities.

POLICY BEST PRACTICES

The following are examples of types of policies that can be adopted or strengthened from existing policy language in order to improve financial access for healthy foods.

Food Assistance Program Marketing Policy

Food assistance programs provide low-income households with support for being able to purchase healthy foods. Local jurisdictions can provide support to existing programs by identifying and removing barriers to enrollment, streamlining processes, and partnering with program implementers to expand promotion and reach in communities.

Recommendation

Adopt at the City and County levels. Could be incorporated into food access plans or General Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Healthy Food, Healthy Communities¹⁹

Case Study

Marin County's Equitable Access to Healthy and Local Food strategy⁴⁷ provides recommendations for improving CalFresh enrollment as part of a comprehensive food access approach. The County found that only half of eligible residents were enrolled in CalFresh, indicating that residents either were unaware of the program or experienced other barriers in applying for the program. To address this challenge, the County identified several recommendations including dual enrollment between Free and Reduced Price Lunch and CalFresh, offering on-demand interviews to complete the application process, and improving client experience when applying for CalFresh.

Healthy Food Financing Policy

Funding streams and financial incentives should be identified and pursued in order to support healthy food initiatives and retailers. Strategies may include Healthy Food Financing Initiatives, revolving loan funds, Community Development Financial Institutions, Tax Increment Financing, façade and tenant improvement loans, and Business Improvement District funding. Incentive packages can also attract new healthy retail development to areas with fewer healthy food options.

Recommendation

Adopt at the regional and local levels. Could be incorporated into food access plans, the MTP/SCS, or General Plans.

Policy Best Practices

- Green for Greens: Finding Funding for Healthy Food Retail⁴⁸
- Healthy Food Financing Initiative Impacts⁴⁹
- Grocery Store Attraction Strategies²³

Case Study

The Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council developed a Food Policy Platform⁵⁰ that prioritizes funding for staff positions dedicated to food access, financial support for the Get Healthy Philly and FarmPhilly Programs, and promoting Healthy Food Financing Initiatives to incentivize supermarkets and retail stores in under-served areas.



CONCLUSION

A strong policy foundation focusing on the five policy goals outlined above has potential to improve health outcomes through a comprehensive approach to healthy retail access that expands beyond the traditional approach of financial access. This report highlighted general policy opportunities based on a literature review of policies at SACOG, Sacramento County, and the City of Sacramento, however, policies can be broadly applied across jurisdictions throughout the County that are interested in improving healthy retail access. Below are more specific opportunity areas for healthy retail access policies at the City and County:

CITY OF SACRAMENTO

Connectivity: City policies identify a need to remove and minimize the effect of natural and manmade barriers within neighborhoods and outline strategies to support pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to community destinations. However, a stronger connection to healthy retail corridors could be made throughout the General Plan and Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans. Additionally, policies lack an equity component to guide active transportation infrastructure investment in communities that are vulnerable to poor health outcomes. Stronger connectivity policies at the City should focus on complete streets, all ages and abilities, first and last mile connections to transit, and establishing data-driven metrics to guide equitable active transportation infrastructure investments to and along healthy retail corridors.

Land Use and Siting: City policies focus on providing development incentives to encourage community-supportive infill uses and pedestrian-oriented development, and also prioritize supporting existing farmers markets and identifying opportunities for additional markets as a way to improve access to healthy foods. The City includes policies to allow urban gardens, particularly in areas that lack access to fresh healthy foods. However, siting of new healthy retail stores is not guided by a health or equity analysis, and there are no policies that provide restrictions on unhealthy retail in communities. Stronger land use and siting policies at the City should focus on metrics for assessing the need for and location of new healthy retail, restrictions on unhealthy retail, and engaging community members in the planning process.

Safety: City policies include a Vision Zero Action Plan to address traffic safety, but lacks CPTED policies to guide development of healthy retail corridors. Stronger safety policies at the City should focus on incorporating CPTED into zoning ordinances and throughout development standards.

Collaboration: Policy direction for coordinating across jurisdictions, such as with Sacramento County or with Sacramento Regional Transit, as well as policies supporting meaningful community engagement around healthy retail access are lacking. Stronger collaboration policies at the City should focus on strengthening cross-jurisdictional partnerships for transportation infrastructure and healthy retail access projects.

Financial Access: Policies to support and incentivize affordable healthy foods in low-income communities are lacking. Stronger financial access policies at the City should focus on providing incentives for affordable healthy retail development in low-income communities and supporting existing food assistance programs to remove barriers to enrollment.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

Connectivity: County policies state that everyday needs such as grocery stores and healthy retail should be within walking distance of homes and provide strategies to support pedestrian-oriented development and safe pedestrian and bicycle networks. However, an equity component is lacking from these policies. Stronger connectivity policies at the County should focus on complete streets, all ages and abilities, first and last mile connections to transit, and a framework for addressing infrastructure inequities in communities in order to create safe and comfortable routes to healthy retail.

Land Use and Siting: County policies support the development of community gardens and other opportunities for accessing fresh produce from neighborhoods. However, siting of new healthy retail stores is not guided by a health or equity analysis. Additionally, the County lacks policies to restrict development of unhealthy retail in communities that are vulnerable to poor health outcomes. Stronger land use and siting policies at the County should focus on metrics for assessing the need for and location of new healthy retail, restrictions on unhealthy retail, and engaging community members in the planning process.

Safety: County policies focus on traffic calming and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to improve traffic safety, but do not include data-driven policies such as Vision Zero. A CPTED policy is included in the General Plan to ensure that residential and commercial building design supports CPTED principles, but does not provide further actionable guidance or specific strategies for CPTED implementation along corridors or for commercial retail developers. Stronger safety policies at the County should commit to Vision Zero and incorporate CPTED into zoning ordinances and development standards.

Collaboration: Policy direction for coordinating across jurisdictions, such as with the City of Sacramento or with Sacramento Regional Transit, as well as policies supporting meaningful community engagement around healthy retail access are lacking. Stronger collaboration policies at the County should focus on strengthening cross-jurisdictional partnerships for transportation infrastructure and healthy retail access projects.

Financial Access: Policies to support and incentivize affordable healthy foods in low-income communities are lacking. Stronger financial access policies at the County should focus on providing incentives for affordable healthy retail development in low-income communities and supporting existing food assistance programs to remove barriers to enrollment.

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