

GPAC Meeting #14

Dear GPAC Members,

On Thursday, March 11th, 2020, from 7:00 – 9:00 PM, the City of Culver City will hold our 14th GPAC meeting. At this meeting we will focus on community health and environmental justice.

Our purpose for the meeting is as follows:

- **Introduce a Healthy Communities Framework and the requirements of Senate Bill 1000**, the Planning for Healthy Communities Act, which has five topic areas related to environmental justice.
- Provide a quick **overview of the disadvantaged communities screening results and community health and environmental justice existing conditions** in Culver City.
- **Refine the disadvantaged communities results and brainstorm on issues, vision, goals, and strategies** relating to the health and environmental justice that can be included in the General Plan.

The memo provides background information and poses some questions for you to consider before the meeting.

Community Health, Environmental Justice, and Planning

Healthy communities are places that foster positive health outcomes for all who live, work, play, and learn in them. The primary measure of a healthy community is the health status of the population, which can be measured through outcomes, such as life expectancy and rates of chronic disease, and behaviors, such as physical activity and healthy food consumption.

Research in multiple fields over many years has demonstrated strong associations between these population health outcomes and a range of factors that are the domain of policies, programs, and design interventions in the physical environment. As the body of research on these factors and their relationship to health has grown, several frameworks or models have been developed to explain or visually represent the complexity of those associations. The General Plan Update (GPU) uses the Healthy Communities Framework (Figure 1) to represent these complex associations. It divides factors into four realms that all influence each other and that, combined, can support or hinder overall community health: Healthy People; Social and Economic Relationships; Physical and Natural Environment; and Policies, Programs, and Plans. The General Plan is an overarching document that can integrate several topics, concepts, and factors to address all four realms of the framework.

Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000), the "Planning for Healthy Communities Act" commonly referred to as the Environmental Justice Element law, was established in 2016 to ensure that general plans explicitly address aspects of the physical environment and civic

engagement that influence socio-economic relationships and health. The GPU will comply with SB 1000 because disadvantaged communities have been identified within the Planning Area of the General Plan and will therefore include a standalone Environmental Justice Element or environmental justice policies integrated throughout other GPU elements. The Environmental Justice Element or policies will meet three important purposes of SB 1000: reducing harmful pollutants and associated health risks in environmental justice communities, promoting equitable access to public facilities, and promoting public engagement. Culver City will address at least the following required topics: Reduction of pollution exposure, including improvement of air quality; Promotion of public facilities; Promotion of food access; Promotion of safe and sanitary homes; and Promotion of physical activity. This process will also provide the opportunity for the City to pursue additional and more robust health policies.

Figure 1. Healthy Communities Framework



Key Concepts

When developing community health and environmental justice policy, it is useful to understand key terms and how they are used within the context of the General Plan. To guide the discussion at GPAC Meeting #14, the GPU Team will use the terms below and invite the GPAC to shape how these are applied to, or interpreted in, the context of Culver City:

- **SB 1000 Priority Neighborhoods.** For the purposes of the GPU, “disadvantaged communities” are referred to as “SB 1000 Priority Neighborhoods.” These are defined as: (1) census tracts that score in the top quartile of the CalEnviroScreen 3.0 Tool; (2) areas that are low-income and disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health

effects, exposure, or environmental degradation; or (3) areas that experience other cumulative health or environmental justice disadvantages.

- **Environmental Justice (EJ).** This is defined in California law as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” People of color, low-income and poor households, and other marginalized groups often have limited access to the health-promoting benefits of planning decisions and instead experience a greater share of the health-harming burdens. The GPU process will take these historical and ongoing social and economic dynamics into account when considering community health and equity.
- **Equity.** Equity is when demographic (race or ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, etc.) and environmental (place) factors can no longer be used to predict health, social, or economic outcomes. These outcomes are not decided by an individual alone, but also by characteristics of the physical and natural environment, which are themselves influenced by policies, programs, and plans and the social and economic relationships that govern the distribution of goods, services, and other amenities in society. The GPU considers three dimensions of equity in governance that can support the achievement of equity:
 - **Procedural.** Relating to influence in decision-making, such as for municipal planning and other processes that distribute benefits and burdens of economic and social policies. This equity dimension is most closely associated with the “Policies, Programs, and Plans” realm of the Healthy Communities Framework.
 - **Distributional.** Relating to distribution of resources, benefits, and burdens. This equity dimension is most closely associated with the “Physical and Natural Environment” realm of the Healthy Communities Framework.
 - **Structural.** Relating to continued disparate or disproportionate procedural and distributional inequities through the systems that created the inequities in the first place. This equity dimension is most closely associated with the “Social and Economic Relationships” realm of the Healthy Communities Framework.
- **Public Facilities.** For the purposes of SB 1000, the State of California Government Code defines public facilities as inclusive of “public improvements, public services, and community amenities.”

Resources and Community Health and Environmental Justice Findings

Because community health and environmental justice are cross-cutting concepts across all elements of the General Plan, this meeting will not cover existing conditions as in-depth as previous GPAC meetings. It is very important that you take at 15-20 minutes to review background information provided for previous meetings. The forthcoming Community Health and Environmental Justice Report includes identification of opportunities, strengths, challenges and threats, such as:

- **Two areas identified SB 1000 Priority Neighborhoods.** Two areas of the Clarkdale and Culver/West neighborhoods were identified as low-income and as disproportionately affected by environmental pollution. These two areas also have a high risk of displacement. See Figure 2.
- **A 7-year gap in life expectancy across neighborhoods.** The Blair Hills and Jefferson neighborhoods have the longest life expectancies across the city, at over 85 years, while the Culver/West neighborhood has the shortest life expectancy at 78 years.
- **Growing concern for Alzheimer's Disease as a leading cause of death.** With an aging and older population and a longer life expectancy, it is likely that the health, social, and economic costs of Alzheimer's Disease will impact residents more in the next 25 years.
- **Adult obesity rates continue to rise.** An increase in adult obesity cases is a health concern for any community, regardless of how low the prevalence may be, and may indicate a need for improvements to the quantity and quality of parks and recreation facilities.
- **Asthma and respiratory disease incidence and mortality rates also on the rise.** The proportion of adults in Culver City with asthma is higher than in the state and county. At the same time, the proportion of youth (age 17 and under) diagnosed with asthma declined significantly between 2012 and 2016 in California, LA County, and Culver City.
- **Widespread air quality and other pollution concerns across all neighborhoods.** More than half of Culver City census tracts fall in the top 5% and nearly all of Culver City falls in the top 10% of the worst-scoring census tracts in the state for pollution exposure indicators in CalEnviroScreen. Indicators of concern are related to air quality, traffic density, and diesel particulate matter (PM) exposure.
- **Cost-burdened renter and homeowner households are vulnerable to income fluctuation or sudden economic emergencies.** In Culver City, 43% of homeowner households with a mortgage and 46% of renters are cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on housing. Housing burden impacts the ability of households to pay for basic needs, including food, transportation, and medical care, the impacts are magnified during times of widespread crisis.
- **Homelessness, a related impact of housing cost-burden, is on the rise in the region.** In 2019, the LA County Homeless Count reported a total population of

236 persons experiencing homelessness in Culver City, a significant increase from 129 in 2016. While it is a regional and citywide issue, during that four-year period, the highest concentration of people experiencing homelessness continued to be near the Culver/West and McLaughlin neighborhoods.

- **Uncertain impact of COVID-19 on long-term health, social, and economic wellbeing in Culver City and the region.** A year into the worldwide pandemic, schools, businesses, recreational centers, and other gathering spaces that provide health and social benefits to residents remain shut or operate in limited capacity. Further, ridership on trains, buses, and other local transit modes is down and it may take time for transit systems to recover. Lastly, across the region, many small businesses have shut their doors due to decreased economic activity, many people have lost employment or income, and it is estimated that an unprecedented number of households of different income levels have outstanding rental or mortgage debt, which may trigger an eviction and foreclosure crisis.

Guiding Questions

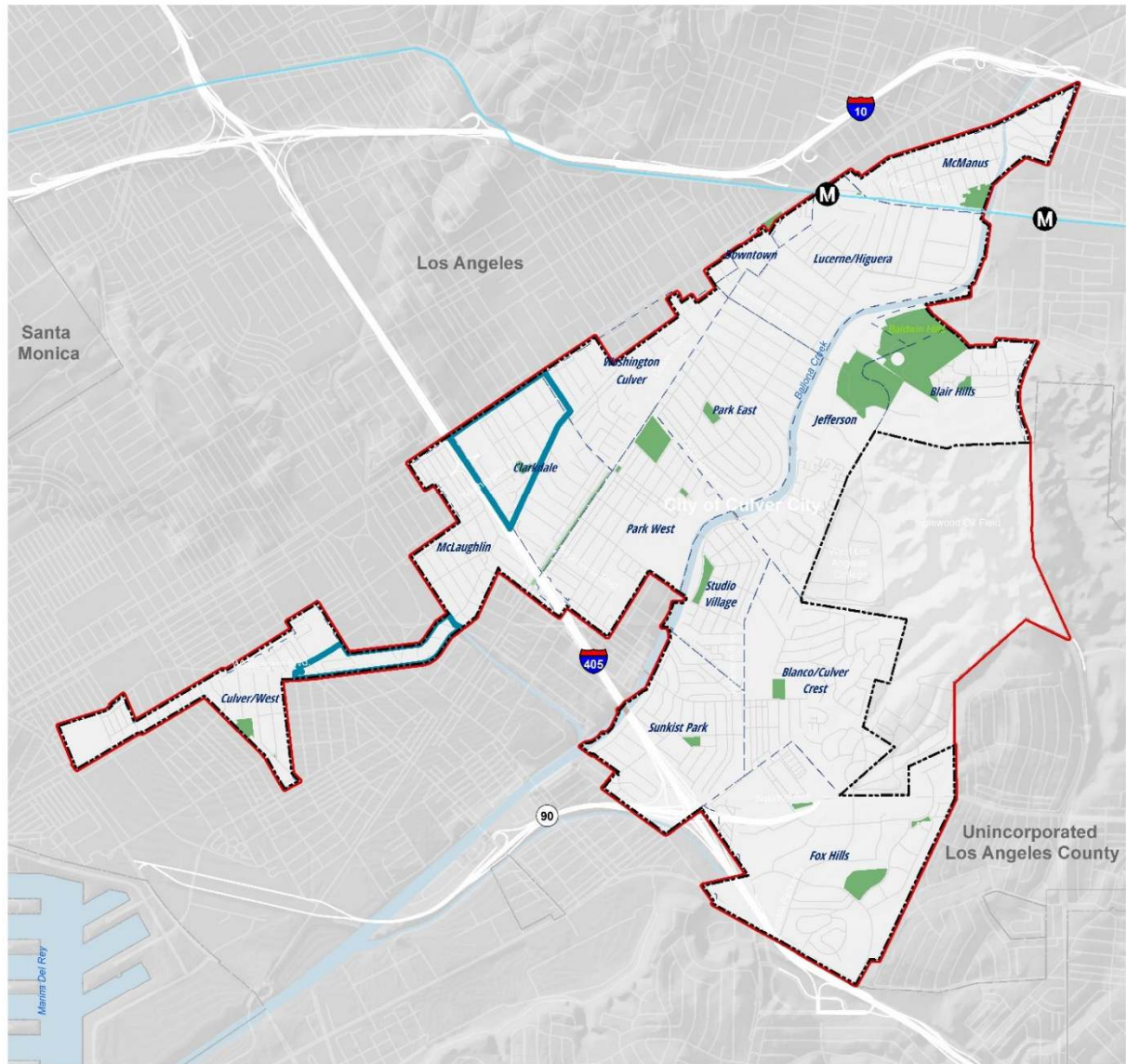
This meeting will focus primarily on receiving direction from GPAC Members on refining the results of disadvantaged communities screening and identifying potential General Plan policies related to health and environmental justice. The team from Raimi + Associates will lead a discussion based on findings derived from existing conditions analyses, conversations with City staff, and results from community engagement to date. In addition, please think about the following questions:

- Looking at the preliminary results (Figure 2), did we miss anything? Are there other areas of Culver City that should be considered as SB 1000 Priority Neighborhoods and why?
- What are the key objectives, citywide and for SB 1000 Priority Neighborhoods, related to healthy communities and environmental justice should we prioritize in the General Plan?
- What types of partnerships should the City prioritize in the General Plan vision, goals, and strategies to support equitable access to the benefits of public improvements, public services, and community amenities to promote health and environmental justice?

Should you have any questions before the meeting, please feel free to reach out. Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you on Thursday, March 11th, at 7 PM sharp. Please plan for the meeting to end around 9 PM.

- The GPU Team

Figure 2. Preliminary Results of Disadvantaged Communities Screening for SB 1000



Jurisdictional Boundaries

- City of Culver City City Limits
- City of Culver City Sphere of Influence
- Culver City Neighborhoods
- Jurisdictional Boundaries

Transportation Features

- Expo Line
- Metro Station

Other Features

- Water
- Parks and Open Spaces

SB 1000 Analysis

- Priority Neighborhoods

0 0.25 0.5 1 Mile



Sources: Raimi + Associates (2020).