

Healthy Neighborhoods For All Element

Adopted December 3, 2025



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Introduction

PURPOSE

To identify and reduce unique and compounded health risks, increase community assets, and improve overall health.

This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element focuses on reducing pollution exposure, improving air quality, and promoting public facilities, affordable healthy food access, safe and healthy homes, physical activity, and overall health. To better address community needs, this Element also encourages and supports inclusive public engagement in City decisions. Together, these efforts work to advance Healthy Neighborhoods across the City and improve the quality of life for all Morgan Hill community members.

Varied development patterns within a city can lead to unequal impacts in communities. Development that generates jobs and enriches a community may also increase air pollution in the surrounding communities. An absence of development can also negatively affect a community. A lack of grocery stores in a community can limit access to healthy food, which has been linked to increased obesity rates and poorer health outcomes. Communities have suffered – and continue to suffer – more from the adverse effects of varied development patterns by carrying a more significant and disproportionate burden of the associated health risks. The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is intended to address the imbalances in our communities.

Senate Bill 1000

This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element satisfies the statutory requirements for the Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan. Senate Bill 1000 (SB 1000), Planning for Healthy Communities Act, was adopted in

2016 which requires local governments to address pollution and other hazards that disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color in their jurisdiction by identifying any “disadvantaged communities” within its planning area. In place of using the State term “disadvantaged communities”, the ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee has coined the term “Opportunity Neighborhoods”.

Opportunity Neighborhoods

Opportunity Neighborhoods (formerly referred to as Communities of Concern) describes areas of the City most impacted and negatively affected by environmental burdens and associated health risks, as shown in Figure HN-1.

Healthy Neighborhoods for All ensures that people of all races, cultures, and incomes are equally and equitably valued, protected, and served. This includes policies and regulations that affect the quality of the environment, such as mobility, parks, open space, public space, public services, and use of land. This Element strives to uphold existing high-quality public spaces and amenities while creating the space for more inclusive practices that foster a Morgan Hill where all community members have equal access and opportunities, regardless of where they live in the City.

The identification of Opportunity Neighborhoods was informed by the *Healthy Neighborhoods for All Background Review*

Report and from input by the ¡Morgan Hill Prospera! steering committee.

Healthy Neighborhoods for All

The City has made efforts to advance Healthy Neighborhoods for All and many related policies have already been adopted by the City Council, including recent amendments to the General Plans Housing Element, as well as policies and actions within the City and Neighborhood Form, Economic Development, Healthy Community, Transportation, Natural Resources and Environment, and Safety, Services, and Infrastructure Elements.

This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element is specifically added into the General Plan to call out its importance but is not intended to replace other environmental justice policies throughout the General Plan and other City plans and policies. This element is rather intended to supplement already existing plans and policies.

However, despite prior efforts, more must be done. Opportunity Neighborhoods experience unique challenges, such as proximity to Highway 101, industrial uses, and heavy commercial uses; as well as unique challenges pertaining to transportation, extreme heat, and concerns of pollution.

The Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element becomes even more critical in addressing and rectifying these imbalances. Major emergency events serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need to prioritize equitable development and ensure that all communities, regardless of their development patterns, are resilient in the face of environmental challenges. To advance environmental justice issues across the City, this Element sets goals, policies, and actions categorized by the following topics:

- A. Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions;
- B. Pollution Exposure and Air Quality;
- C. Promoting Physical Activity;
- D. Affordable Healthy Food Access;
- E. Safe and Healthy Homes;
- F. Increase Overall Health; and
- G. Public Facilities and Infrastructure.

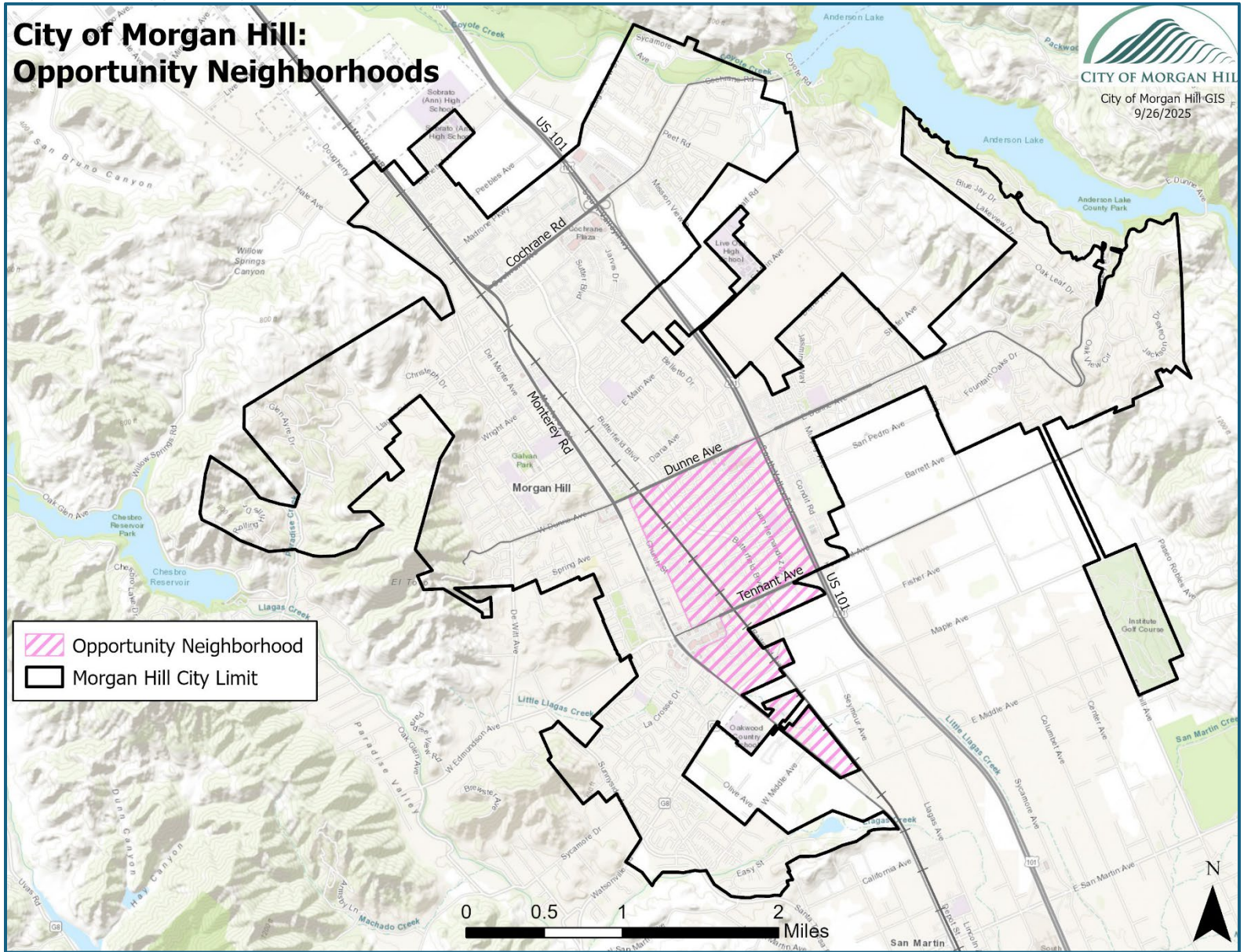
While this Element applies Citywide, special attention is needed in Opportunity Neighborhoods to advance climate, equity, and sustainability goals.

The identification of Opportunity Neighborhoods is important in terms of implementing the City's vision of prioritizing investments in the areas of greatest need. From an environmental justice perspective, Opportunity Neighborhoods are the areas of the City with the greatest need for investments to reverse environmental injustices. Opportunity Neighborhoods are also areas that can be prioritized for federal or state funding.

Ongoing implementation and ongoing monitoring will be critical to achieving the goals of this Element. Through regular General Plan monitoring, the City will be able to report on, and make adjustments to, policies, objectives, and proposed actions based on ongoing community feedback, availability of new information, or changes in circumstances.



Figure HN-1 Opportunity Neighborhoods



Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions

GOAL HN-1 Equitable access to decision-making, safe and welcoming civic spaces, and the resources necessary to live in healthy, connected, and empowered communities regardless of race, national origin, income, or neighborhood.

Advancing inclusive public engagement is fundamental to addressing environmental injustices within Opportunity Neighborhoods. Public input is an integral part of the decision-making process and can help highlight topics and concerns that need to be addressed, as well as offer an opportunity to expand upon issues most pressing to community members.

Building awareness around City initiatives and programming is the first step to gathering input and supporting community members in becoming familiarized with existing policies and actions, which can translate to more meaningful engagement.

Ensuring access to information and opportunities to provide feedback that will be considered as part of the planning process can establish trust between the City and community members. This is critically important in Opportunity Neighborhoods where community members are most vulnerable due to compounded health risks and where the needs are greatest. Public engagement events are opportunities to collect meaningful ideas and input and hear from a diversity of community members and affected stakeholders.

Intentional and inclusive engagement is especially critical in Opportunity Neighborhoods, where over 50-percent of the population is Hispanic or Latino, versus 34-percent Citywide, and where the population of children in Opportunity Neighborhoods is 32-percent versus 25-percent Citywide.

The General Plan contains a couple policies, as shown in Table HN-1, that promote community involvement in City decisions. The policies below build upon these policies to create additional opportunities for meaningful public input.

Policies

Policy HN-1.1 Trust and Transparency.
Foster trust between City staff and community members through transparency and implementing best practices to make information easily accessible.

Policy HN-1.2 Meaningful, Relevant Engagement.
Pursue opportunities to promote engagement at evening meetings, weekend workshops, and community meetings.

Policy HN-1.3 Community Partners.
Partner with community-based organizations on an ongoing basis to develop and implement effective outreach programs, increase opportunities for community involvement in civic processes, and build a deeper understanding of city governance within the community.

Actions

Action HN-1.A Interpretation at Public Meetings. Provide access to Spanish interpretation at public meetings, as requested.

Action HN-1.B Translation for Public Notices. Publish public meeting notices in English and Spanish.

Action HN-1.C Distribution of Information. Distribute City information to all community members such as numbers to call for city and community partner programs, housing needs, and general City information.

Action HN-1.D Engagement. Encourage successful engagement participation by utilizing differing social media platforms and community boards, using clear concise language on agenda items, providing alternative meeting locations, food, interpretation services, childcare, giveaways, or other methods, when warranted, that reduce or remove barriers to participation.

Action HN-1.E Healthy Neighborhoods Promotoras. Evaluate the need to recruit, train, and compensate resident and/or youth ambassadors from Opportunity Neighborhoods to conduct outreach, provide multilingual interpretation, and bridge gaps in obtaining community feedback.

Table HN-1 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Inclusive Public Engagement in City Decisions

Element	Section	Policy/Action
City and Neighborhood Form	Land Use Decisions	Policy CNF-1.1 Coordinated Planning Decisions
Healthy Community	Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Policy HC-3.19 Community Involvement



Pollution Exposure and Air Quality

GOAL HN-2 Pollution reduction in Opportunity Neighborhoods with no segment of the community disproportionately burdened by environmental conditions.

Exposure to pollution and poor air quality directly impacts physical and mental health. Scientific studies link exposure to polluting substances in air, water, and soil to a variety of health problems with short and long-term effects, such as headaches, inflammation of the nose, throat and painful breathing to asthma, heart disease, and cancer. Protecting against environmental degradation of natural resources is critical to protecting human health and wellbeing.

There are many factors that contribute to pollution exposure and poor air quality, including illegal dumping, industries, and exhaust from vehicles.

Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) are tiny particles or droplets in the air that can come from sources such as cars and trucks, industrial emissions, construction activities, wood burning, and even natural sources like dust and pollen. PM2.5 particles are small enough to travel deep into the lungs and can cause health problems when present in high concentrations, including heart and lung disease.

Exhaust from trucks, buses, trains, and other equipment with diesel engines contain a mixture of gases and solid particles. These solid particles are known as diesel particulate matter (DPM) and are a major contributor to PM2.5 pollution. Higher concentrations of DPM can often be found in urban areas with heavy traffic congestion and industrial activity where diesel-powered vehicles and equipment are prevalent.

Both PM2.5 and DPM are significant air pollutants that can have detrimental effects on human health, including respiratory and cardiovascular problems. Reducing PM2.5 and DPM is especially important for reducing pollution exposure and improving air quality for the health and well-being of community members across Morgan Hill.

As part of a comprehensive strategy, it is important to identify lands suitable for residential and prime industrial purposes. This approach is needed to achieve a sustainable and balanced future for the City, striving to enhance the overall well-being of its community members, protect the environment, and promote good jobs.

Policies to limit pollution exposure are included within the Transportation and Natural Resources and Environment Elements of the General Plan and are identified in Table HN-2. The policies in this Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element build on those policies and provide additional guidance. Together, these policies support and promote improved air quality and health outcomes.

Policies

Policy HN-2.1 Reduce Pollution. Strive to reduce pollution exposure and air quality issues experienced in Opportunity Neighborhoods identified in the Healthy Neighborhoods for All Background Review Report.

Policy HN-2.2 Air Quality Monitoring. Collaborate with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) to support the expansion of air quality monitoring efforts in Morgan Hill, prioritizing Opportunity Neighborhoods, to inform area-specific improvement actions and other Community Emissions Reduction Programs (CERPs).

Policy HN-2.3 Land Use Compatibility. Buffer incompatible uses within Opportunity Neighborhoods to reduce exposure to pollution and other health impacts.

Actions

Action HN-2.A Sensitive Site Protection. Require new residential development in Opportunity Neighborhoods located within 500 feet from Highway 101 or adjacent to Butterfield Boulevard to implement appropriate measures to reduce exposure to traffic-related air pollution, including but not limited to, increased landscape buffers and setbacks, restrict outdoor common and private open space adjacent to roadways, and high-efficiency indoor air filtration.

Action HN-2.B Heavy Duty Truck Routes. Limit truck routes adjacent to sensitive receptors where feasible, post anti-idling signage where necessary, and coordinate targeted enforcement in Opportunity Neighborhoods through the evaluation of Chapter 10.60 (Truck Route and Parking Ordinance) of the Municipal Code in conformance with Assembly Bill 98.

Action HN-2.C Reduce Potential Pollution Exposure. Require new development adjacent to incompatible uses to incorporate mechanisms to reduce potential exposure to pollution, including but not limited to, buffers, setbacks, building orientation, and high-efficiency filtration.

Action HN-2.D Zero-Emission Standards. Evaluate and consider zero-emission standards for businesses.



Table HN-2 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Pollution Exposure and Air Quality

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Transportation	Transportation Demand Management	Policy TR-10.5 Air Quality and Transportation Demand Management
Natural Resources and Environment	Air Quality	Policy NRE-10.1 Regional and Subregional Cooperation
		Policy NRE-10.2 State and Federal Regulation
		Policy NRE-10.4 Reduced Automobile Use
		Policy NRE-11.1 TACs and Proposed Sensitive Uses
		Policy NRE-11.2 TACs and Existing Sensitive Uses
		Policy NRE-11.3 Health Risk Assessments
		Policy NRE-12.2 Conditions of Approvals
		Policy NRE-11.6 Vegetation Buffers
		Action NRE-12.A Standard Measures for Demolition and Grading
		Policy NRE-13.1 Building Materials
		Policy NRE-13.2 Construction and Pre-Occupancy Practices
		Action NRE-13.A Building Materials Ordinance
		Action NRE-13.B Construction and Pre-Occupancy Practices Ordinance
	Energy Efficiency	Policy NRE-16.5 Energy Efficiency



Promoting Physical Health

GOAL HN-3 Geographically accessible, safe, inclusive, and active public spaces for all residents.

People who live in Opportunity Neighborhoods in the City are more likely to suffer from diabetes, physical inactivity, and overall poor health.

Public facilities and physical activity are intertwined and play an important role in contributing to public health. Public facilities include public spaces like parks, community centers, and recreational facilities. Individuals with access to public spaces, such as safe and enjoyable parks and open spaces and safe streets for walking and biking, have more opportunities to incorporate activities into their daily lives that support physical health and overall mental well-being.

Connectivity, accessibility, and safety are important aspects of public facilities such as well-lit streets connected to everyday destinations such as schools, parks, and grocery stores. These factors significantly impact individual choices regarding walking/rolling and biking. Opportunity Neighborhoods often lack these attributes—limiting opportunities for physical activity. Investing in improving infrastructure in communities where the needs are greatest will build toward providing safe, connected, and accessible public spaces equitably and support the physical health and well-being of all Morgan Hill residents regardless of where they live in the City.

The General Plan includes policies in other Elements, as shown in Table HN-3, to advance connections, access, and safety of public facilities and promote physical activity. This Healthy Neighborhoods for All Element

provides additional guidance for promoting physical health. Together these policies support public facilities, promote physical activity, and overall well-being.

Policies

Policy HN-3.1 Affordable Recreation.

Ensure affordable access to the Centennial Recreation Center and Aquatics Center and associated programs by offering subsidized fees, expanding free or low-cost recreation activities, and partnering with healthcare and community providers to offset costs to community members.

Policy HN-3.2 Prioritize Parks within Opportunity

Neighborhoods. Prioritize the siting of new parks and recreation facilities within Opportunity Neighborhoods that support physical health.



Actions

Action HN-3.A Health and Fitness. Provide multilingual educational information to community members regarding the availability of financial assistance and no-cost memberships for health and fitness programming and senior adult programs at the Centennial Recreation Center.

Action HN-3.B Inclusive Parks. Design new parks to be inclusive, equitable, and accessible for all ages, abilities, and cultural needs, while transforming existing parks to accommodate the recreational needs of all users, such as cultural programming and multilingual signage.

Action HN-3.C Neighborhood-Serving Parks. Review and consider revising Article I (Park Land Dedication) within Title 17 (Subdivisions) to encourage privately maintained parks remain open and accessible to the public to promote equitable access.

Action HN-3.D Community Events and Recreation. Expand community events and free recreation opportunities, including extended Splash Pad hours and seasonal programming at the Community and Cultural Center.

Action HN-3.E Park Distribution. Ensure an equal distribution of parks and park amenities within the City; strive to achieve a goal that all homes within Opportunity Neighborhoods are within one-quarter mile walking distance of at least one usable park and/or open space with amenities.

Action HN-3.F Bicycle Racks. Review and revise the City's Bicycle Parking Ordinance requiring new developments provide bicycle connections to adjacent uses and install bicycle racks near building entrances to encourage cycling.



Table HN-3 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Promoting Physical Health

Element	Section	Policy/Action
City and Neighborhood Form	Commercial/Industrial	Policy CNF-18.1 Vibrant Job Centers
Economic Development	Commercial Development	Policy ED-7.4 Compatible Uses in Retail Centers
Healthy Community	Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Policy HC-3.1 Universal Recreation
		Policy HC-3.10 Walking Distance
		Policy HC-3.12 Bikeways
		Policy HC-3.13 Sports Fields
		Policy HC-3.14 Streamside Trails
		Policy HC-3.21 Multiuse Facilities



Affordable Access to Healthy Food Options

GOAL HN-4 Equitable access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food within a short, safe distance from home.

Health implications due to food insecurity can have far-reaching consequences on both physical and mental well-being. It can lead to nutritional deficiencies that can hinder proper growth and development in children, chronic health conditions such as type-two diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, obesity and weight gain, complications related to maternal and child health, and can also negatively impact cognitive function. For areas that lack safe, convenient, and affordable access to healthy and fresh food options, more grocery stores, along with produce stands, community gardens, and food banks, in areas lacking access, can play a significant role in reducing food insecurity by offering better options for obtaining nutritious and affordable food.

A multifaceted policy approach can support healthy food consumption and food security. Strategies include identifying opportunities to improve availability, access and affordability to fresh and healthy food, as well as sharing information on healthy food options and nutrition education. Well-connected urban gardens, produce stands, grocery stores and quality public spaces are among the strategies that can be used to support these efforts and offer the potential to further sustainability goals; improve public health and equity through better access to fresh healthy food; promote food system security by reducing reliance on long distance supply chains; reduce the amount of energy used to transport food; and foster economic development opportunities, including micro-

enterprises. At the same time, supporting programs that expand the affordability of fresh food is crucial to making healthy food an option when faced with food insecurity.

The Healthy Community Element contains policies and actions, as shown in Table HN-4, that promote fresh and healthy food by expanding the opportunities for food carts, urban agriculture, community gardens, and residential gardens, as well as food education, particularly to residents who might otherwise have a hard time accessing high-quality fresh food.

The policies below work together to facilitate programming in both public and private spaces to advance the availability, access, and affordability of fresh fruits and vegetables to promote a healthy food system.

Policies

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Policy HN-4.1 | Affordable Produce. |
| | Promote access to fresh affordable produce, such as produce stands and mobile food vendors, within Opportunity Neighborhoods. |
| Policy HN-4.2 | Hispanic Grocery Store. |
| | Advocate for the siting of a Hispanic grocery store within Opportunity Neighborhoods to meet the cultural needs of the area. |

Policy HN-4.3 Healthy Food Literacy. Increase healthy food literacy and provide resources to community members through collaboration with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department, schools, community groups, and other partners.



Actions

Action HN-4.A Fresh Produce Sales and Cultivation. Amend the Zoning Code to permit flexibility for the sale and cultivation of fresh affordable produce via permanent produce stands, mobile produce vendors, community gardens, and urban farming.

Action HN-4.B Food Banks. Support the efforts of local organizations to expand the reach of food bank and pantry distribution centers by extending operating hours and facilitating the siting of new locations within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Action HN-4.C Senior Nutrition Program. Continue to sustain the Senior Nutrition Program, providing free lunch to low-income seniors.

Action HN-4.D Health and Wellness Education. Encourage the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department to provide multilingual health education such as wellness classes, nutrition education, healthy cooking classes, as well as to raise awareness of healthy habits and other current public health concerns within Morgan Hill.

Table HN-4 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Affordable Access to Healthy Food Options

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Healthy Community	Healthy Foods	Policy HC-6.1 Garden Partnerships
		Policy HC-6.2 School Gardens
		Policy HC-6.3 Zoning
		Policy HC-6.4 Open Space Requirements
		Policy HC-6.5 Food Education
		Policy HC-6.6 Residential Gardens
		Policy HC-6.7 Agricultural Retention
		Policy HC-6.8 School Wellness
		Action HC-6.A Open Space
		Action HC-6.B Identify Sites
		Action HC-6.C Zoning
		Action HC-6.D Home Gardens
		Action HC-6.E Produce Carts



Safe and Healthy Homes

GOAL HN-5 Safe, affordable, and stable housing for people to thrive in their communities regardless of race, national origin, income, or neighborhood

Homes designed, constructed, and maintained to promote the physical, mental, and social well-being of occupants offer many benefits, including stability, reduced stress, and good health. Children raised in safe and healthy environments tend to have better opportunities for physical and cognitive development. Access to clean air, natural light and stimulating surroundings positively influences a child's growth and learning capabilities. Location, quality, and affordability of homes also play a role in fostering comfortable and secure living environments for all ages.

The Child Opportunity Index measures neighborhood resources and conditions that affect childhood development. The index has neighborhood-level indicators including access and quality of early childhood education, high-quality schools, green space, healthy food, toxin-free environments and socioeconomic resources as shown on Figure HN-2.

Rising housing costs and lack of affordable homes is a cause of housing insecurity. Households that spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing costs are considered housing-burdened, and those that spend 50 percent, or more are significantly housing burdened. Households that are housing-burdened have fewer financial resources for food, healthcare, and other basic needs.

Within the City, 22 percent of households are housing burdened, and 15 percent are significantly housing burdened. However, renters are more cost-burdened than owners,

with over 25 percent being housing burdened and nearly 24 percent being significantly housing burdened.

Access to safe housing that is sustainable to maintain with an individual's living wage offers economic stability and community stability. People who live in affordable, secure, and well-maintained homes are more likely to be productive in their personal and professional lives.

The benefits of safe and healthy housing extend beyond the immediate inhabitants. As generations grow up in such environments, they are more likely to carry forward healthier lifestyles and contribute successfully to their communities. The Housing Element sets goals, policies, and actions to guide the development of homes. The Housing Element addresses housing concerns relating to home location, home quality, and home affordability. Several Housing Element policies and actions that address environmental justice issues, such as substandard living conditions and affordable housing preservation, as identified in Table HN-5.

Policies

Policy HN-5.1	Promote Affordable Housing.
	Promote development of subsidized and affordable housing across affordable income categories.

Policy HN-5.2 Anti-Displacement and Tenant Protections.

Implement anti-displacement strategies and tenant protections in all neighborhoods.

Policy HN-5.3 Healthy Homes. Partner with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department and community organizations to promote safe, sanitary, and healthy housing practices.

Actions

Action HN-5.A Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

Review and update, where appropriate, the Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance within Chapter 5.36 (Mobile Home Park Rents) of the Municipal Code to protect mobile home park residents from sudden rent increases and ensure affordable housing options.

Action HN-5.B Tenant Protection. Evaluate existing City tenant protection programs, conduct a feasibility analysis, and develop a new program to protect tenants through legal assistance, prevent foreclosures, provide rental assistance, or enforce fair housing laws consistent with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC) policy.

Action HN-5.C Healthy Homes Filtration.

Explore the feasibility of a program to provide residents within Opportunity Neighborhoods with air purifiers or the resources to retrofit their homes to filter air contaminants inside their homes.



Figure HN-2 Child Opportunity Levels

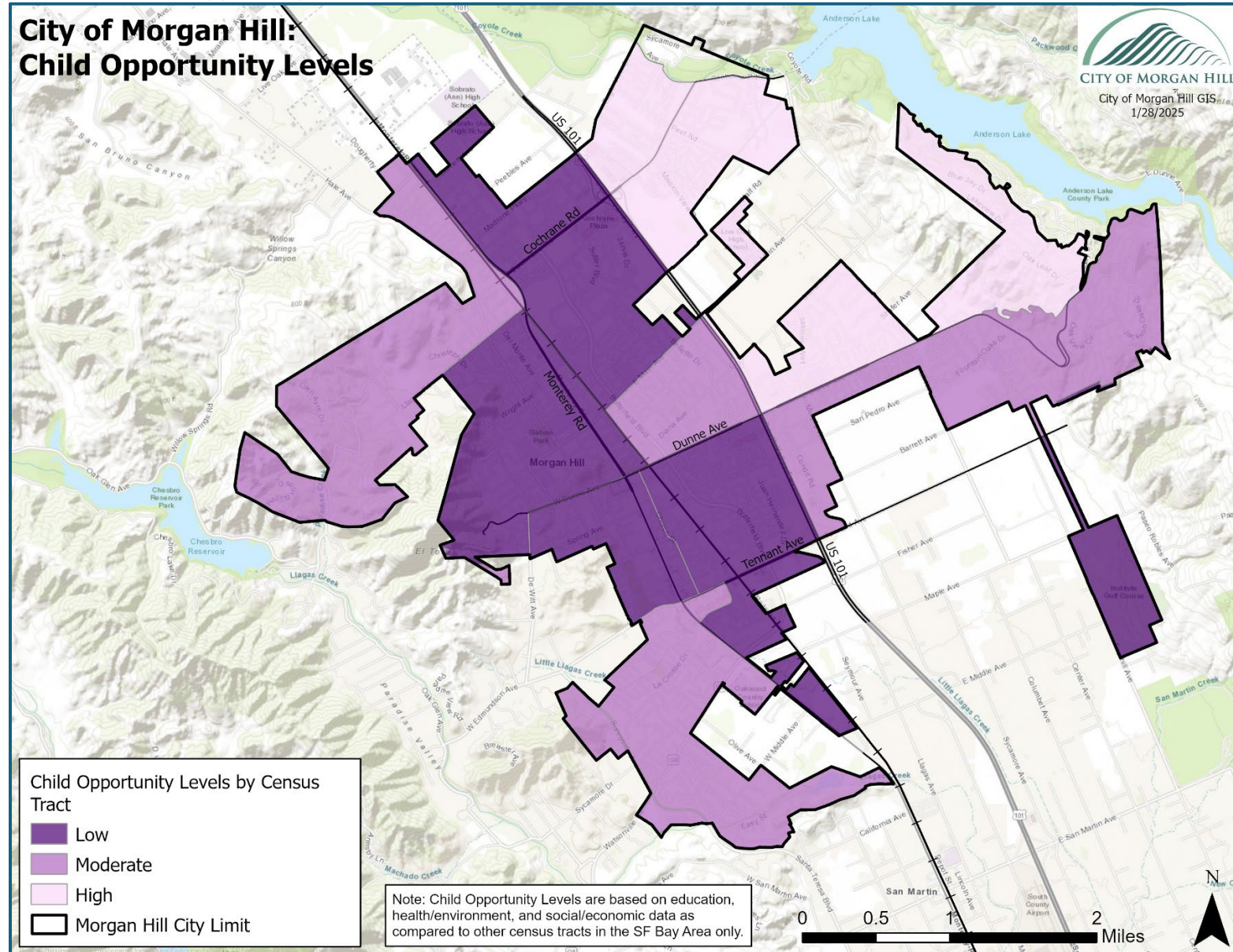


Table HN-5 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Safe and Healthy Homes

Element	Section/Goal	Policy/Action
Housing	Goal 1: Provide a diversified housing stock to meet the full range of future community housing needs	Policy HE-1.4 Market Rate Developments
		Policy HE-1.17 Relocation Assistance
		Policy HE-1.18 Rental Assistance Programs
	Goal 2: Encourage Extremely Low-Income (ELI) housing production, increasing availability of affordable and workforce housing	Policy HE-2.4 Programs Providing Extremely Low-, Very Low-, and Low-Income Housing
		Policy HE-2.14 Support Farmworker Housing
		Policy HE-2.15 Farm Worker Housing Advocacy
	Goal 3: Advance equity and inclusion throughout the City	Policy HE-3.1 Increase Affordable Housing Opportunities
		Policy HE-3.2 Displacement
		Policy HE-3.4 Fair Housing Education
		Action HE-3.T Elevate Morgan Hill
	Goal 4: Preserve and rehabilitate existing housing supply	Policy HE-4.7 Rehabilitation Loan Programs
		Policy HE-4.10 Preserve Existing Mobile Home Parks
		Policy HE-4.11 Rent Stabilization Ordinance
		Policy HE-4.12 Rehabilitation and Sustainability
		Action HE-4.B Preserve Affordable Housing
	Goal 6: Provide adequate housing for groups with special needs	Action HE-4.C Rehabilitation
		Policy HE-6.11 Emergency Home Repairs and Accessibility Retrofits

Increase Overall Health

GOAL HN-6 Equitable access to physical activity, recreation, and wellness opportunities for all residents, especially within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Overall health is shaped by the interplay of physical, mental, and social well-being, and is deeply influenced by the environments in which people live, work, and play. In Morgan Hill, residents of Opportunity Neighborhoods face compounded health risks due to factors such as limited access to medical care, fewer safe and affordable recreation opportunities, higher exposure to extreme heat, and transportation barriers that make it harder to reach essential services. These inequities contribute to disparities in chronic disease rates, mental health outcomes, and life expectancy.

Improving overall health requires a holistic approach that addresses both the conditions that cause illness and the resources that promote wellness. This includes ensuring that all residents—regardless of race, income, or neighborhood—can access preventive healthcare, culturally relevant health education, safe spaces for physical activity, and reliable transportation to medical and wellness services.

Environmental conditions also play a critical role. Extreme heat events, for example, disproportionately affect residents in areas with limited tree canopy and shade, increasing the risk of heat-related illness. Similarly, landscaping choices can either exacerbate or alleviate respiratory conditions such as asthma and allergies. Integrating health considerations into land use, transportation, and urban design decisions can help reduce these risks and create healthier, more resilient neighborhoods.

Partnerships with healthcare providers, schools, community-based organizations, and public agencies are essential to delivering health services and education in ways that are accessible, multilingual, and culturally responsive. Mobile clinics, micro-transit programs, and neighborhood-based outreach can bridge gaps in service delivery, particularly for residents who face mobility, cost, or language barriers.

Prioritizing equitable access to health resources can help reduce preventable illness, improve quality of life, and strengthen community resilience. The policies and actions in this section aim to ensure that every Morgan Hill resident has the opportunity to live a healthy life—supported by the built environment, informed by accessible health education, and sustained by strong community connections.

Several Healthy Community and Transportation Element policies and actions address healthy living and overall health, as identified in Table HN-6; the policies below expand on these policies to promote wellness.

Policies

Policy HN-6.1 Health Advocacy. Advocate for community members health and increase health awareness through multilingual health education materials.

Policy HN-6.2 Medical Siting. Encourage siting of medical clinics, mobile medical clinics, and mobile dental clinics within Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Policy HN-6.3 Transit Access. Advocate for increased transit access connecting community members to alternative transportation to medical appointments, grocery stores, and recreation.

Policy HN-6.4 Urban Heat. Require new development, and pursue funding for existing areas of the City, to accommodate street trees or other shade coverage along key pedestrian and bicycle routes and near transit stops.

Actions

Action HN-6.A Overall Health Education. Partner with the County of Santa Clara Public Health Department to provide multilingual health education materials, through newsletters, community boards, newspaper, and other mechanisms, regarding asthma, allergies, nutrition, overall health, and other current public health concerns within Morgan Hill, including resources for mental health services, substance use services, and suicide prevention.

Action HN-6.B Mobile Clinics. Review and, if warranted, amend the Municipal Code to allow mobile preventative health and dental care clinics.

Action HN-6.C Asthma-Friendly Landscaping. Evaluate and consider revising Chapter 18.64 (Landscaping) of the Zoning Code, and other landscaping policies, to prioritize asthma-friendly plant species.

Action HN-6.D Transit and Micro-Transit Access. Pursue funding for a revived MoGo-style micro-transit program, or alternative service model program, to provide first/last-mile service.

Action HN-6.E Extreme Heat Mitigation. Increase urban tree canopy, shaded areas, and open space within heat-vulnerable communities, especially in Opportunity Neighborhoods, to mitigate extreme heat and improve health outcomes, prioritizing heat-exposed sidewalks, transit stops, parks, and multi-family housing.



Table HN-6 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Overall Health

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Healthy Community	Schools	Policy HC-1.7 Neighborhood Activities
	Youth and Seniors	Policy HC-2.6 Healthy Kids
		Policy HC-2.7 Underage Tobacco Access
		Policy HC-2.8 Underage Alcohol Access
	Access to Health Care	Policy HC-7.1 Mental Health
		Policy HC-7.3 Transit
		Action HC-7.A Medical Zoning
Transportation	Transit	Policy TR-6.11 Transit for a Healthy and Active Community
	Bikeways	Policy TR-8.1 Bikeways for All Abilities
	Pedestrian Network	Policy TR-9.2 Walking as an Alternate Mode



Public Facilities and Infrastructure

GOAL HN-7 Safe, well-maintained, and accessible public spaces, facilities, and infrastructure that support active lifestyles and community well-being.

Infrastructure is not just the physical structures that surround us, it is the essential fabric that connects us to opportunity. Community members drive down roads and wait at transit stops, walk down sidewalks to drop their children off at school, meet with friends and family in parks, borrow books and media from the Morgan Hill library and pass under streetlights. When infrastructure is high quality, located where it is needed, and well-maintained, community members can access economic opportunities, use essential services, and deepen social connections, resulting in healthy and stable communities. Infrastructure lays the foundation for safe, healthy, and connected communities.

Public infrastructure is funded through a variety of funding sources such as the City infrastructure fund, General Fund, grants, development impact fees, and other funding sources. Funding and prioritizing public facilities equitably are critical to advancing Opportunity Neighborhoods and improving access for Morgan Hill residents of all ages and abilities.

The Healthy Community and Transportation Element contains policies and actions, as shown in Table HN-7, that encourage innovative partnerships, funding, and development programs to maintain and develop parks and recreation that current and future residents of all ages, incomes, and mobility levels can conveniently access as the community grows. The policies in this section builds upon the Healthy Communities and Transportation Elements.

Policies

Policy HN-7.1 Active Transportation Network. Implement an active transportation network that links residential uses with schools, shopping, entertainment, recreation, transit, and employment centers, and addresses traffic congestion and safety barriers that limit pedestrian and cycling access to parks and community services.

Policy HN-7.2 New Public Amenities. Prioritize and allocate new public amenities in Opportunity Neighborhoods.



Actions

Action HN-7.A Safe and Active Transportation. Pursue funding to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, including sidewalks, lighting, and traffic calming, to promote safe and active transportation as identified in the Transportation Master Plan and the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, prioritizing Opportunity Neighborhoods.

Action HN-7.B Safe Routes to Schools. Partner with Morgan Hill Unified School District to implement and expand “Safe Routes to Schools”, including trails and bike infrastructure connecting Opportunity Neighborhoods to schools.

Action HN-7.C Lighting in Public Spaces. Review and revise lighting standards for sidewalks, trails, parks, and public and private spaces to ensure they are well-lit to enhance comfort and usability as a community safety initiative.

Action HN-7.D Physical Fitness Park Amenities. Provide public amenities that promote free opportunities for physical fitness, including but not limited to, community gardens, outdoor exercise equipment in parks, and shade structures.

Action HN-7.E Community Schoolyards. Work with the Morgan Hill Unified School District to utilize school playgrounds as “community schoolyards” outside of school hours.



Table HN-7 Additional Policies and Actions in the General Plan Addressing Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Element	Section	Policy/Action
Healthy Community	Parks, Recreation, and Trails	Policy HC-3.1 Universal Recreation
		Policy HC-3.3 Park Land Fees
		Policy HC-3.8 Private Open Space
		Policy HC-3.9 Open Space Requirements
		Policy HC-3.10 Walking Distance
		Policy HC-3.11 Conservation Coordination
		Policy HC-3.12 Bikeways
		Policy HC-3.13 Sports Fields
		Policy HC-3.14 Streamside Trails
		Policy HC-3.15 County Parkland
		Policy HC-3.16 Greenbelt Areas
		Policy HC-3.21 Multiuse Facilities
		Policy HC-3.22 School Coordination
		Policy HC-3.24 Parkland Acquisition
		Policy HC-3.25 Partnerships
		Policy HC-3.28 Funding
		Action HC-3.F Pursue Funding
		Action HC-3.N El Toro Trails
Transportation	Bikeways	Policy TR-8.10 Safe Routes to Schools

