Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) in California’s San Francisco Bay Area operates a comprehensive health system that includes a hospital, health insurance plan, community clinics, public health and preventive programs. Within CCHS’ Public Health Division, the Community Wellness & Prevention Program houses the department’s Injury Prevention Project, which has a long and respected history of implementing and evaluating quality injury prevention programs throughout Contra Costa County. As an example of the work done by CCHS, this document showcases the growth and development of CCHS’ efforts to prevent bicycle and pedestrian injuries in the City of Richmond. It highlights the life cycle of the program and the skills, knowledge, and partnerships gained over time. The work began in the 1980s – when injury prevention was an emerging field – and continues today with CCHS’ work growing increasingly more mature as the injury prevention field evolves and CCHS establishes working partnerships with law enforcement, city planners, traffic engineers, city officials, community groups, and civic leaders.

As with most things, there is a learning curve. It takes time to learn and understand the issues and develop the partnerships needed to make a lasting impact. Nancy Baer, Manager of the Injury Prevention and Physical Activity Promotion Unit and responsible for much of CCHS’ work to prevent bicycle and pedestrian injuries notes, “Half the battle is showing up, the other half is making a contribution.” For CCHS, that contribution includes: maps of pedestrian and bicycle collisions in Richmond; partnerships with the City and community groups, a toolbox of project activities, and the ability to speak to the health impacts of land use and transportation planning.

The life cycle of CCHS' efforts to prevent bicycle and pedestrian injuries in the City of Richmond is much like the lifecycle of the humans it seeks to protect. From the birth of an idea in the early 1980's to the maturity of a complex system in 2010, each phase of the life cycle builds on what came before, learning from successes and challenges and taking advantage of opportunities to grow and move forward.

The accomplishments of CCHS would not have been possible without sustained support. We are grateful for the receipt of two Kids' Plates grants, which not only enabled us to plan and implement our bicycle and pedestrian safety work, but helped us leverage and complement other funding including funds from The California Endowment, Caltrans, and the Office of Traffic Safety, thus contributing to a broader and more significant impact.
CCHS works to develop the skills and knowledge needed to prevent injuries, and build and strengthen relationships with law enforcement and community-based agencies.

Establishes the Community Wellness & Prevention Program to plan and implement “upstream” activities designed to prevent injuries and chronic diseases.

Develops the Spectrum of Prevention as a model for addressing health at seven levels ranging from individual and community education, to training professionals, to fostering coalitions and networks; to changing organizational practice, to influencing policy and legislation.

Forms and assists the California Bicycle Safety Network in fostering safe bicycling throughout the state. Conducts bicycle safety rodeos and promotes bicycle helmet use and bike lanes.

Launches the Injury Prevention Program to prevent residential pool drowning, falls, motor vehicle passenger safety, bicycle injuries, and youth violence.

The broad context within which CCHS’ efforts took place
- Injury Prevention is an emerging field defined by the motto: Injuries are NOT “accidents” -- they can be prevented.
- Injury Prevention is focused on the three E’s: Education, Engineering, and Enforcement.
- Legislation is passed requiring the use of seat belts, car safety seats, motorcycle helmets, and bicycle helmets.
- Violence is recognized as a public health issue.
- The California Strategic Plan for Injury Prevention is adopted.
Growing Up
Safe Communities
and the City of Richmond
2000-2005

- Learns about traffic calming and planning for bicycle and pedestrian safety. Becomes immersed in these issues through reading, trainings, and conferences.

- Continues ongoing work conducting bicycle safety activities. Interest in pedestrian injuries is emerging.

- Uses California Highway Patrol SWITRS crash data to create citywide maps of motor vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian collisions. Conducts neighborhood workshops, and meets with the City of Richmond regarding results.

- Receives Safe Communities planning grant from the California Department of Public Health to plan a traffic calming initiative. Forms West Contra Costa Safe Communities Coalition. Coalition members include staff of elected officials, traffic engineers, and transportation and neighborhood representatives.

- Attends West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC) meetings. Serves on the Technical Advisory Committee. Begins by showing up, getting to know members and contributing when can.

- Begins attending the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (composed of elected officials from nine Bay Area counties and their cities) Pedestrian Committee. Participates in preparation of the Contra Costa County Bike/Pedestrian Plan.

- Continues basic pedestrian and bicycle safety education and establishes the Street SMARTS traffic safety education campaign in partnership with WCCTAC and cities in West Contra Costa County.

The broad context within which CCHS’ efforts took place
- Traffic calming is evolving as a focus for preventing motor vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian injuries.
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration funds Safe Communities efforts in California via the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and the California Department of Public Health. OTS cancels implementation when priorities change after 9/11.
- Physical Activity Movement develops in response to the growing epidemic of obesity.
- Smart Growth and the broader impact of the built environment on health and injuries is emerging.
- Funding cutbacks result in CCHS combining physical activity and injury prevention programs with focus on creating healthy built environments.
The broad context within which CCHS’ efforts took place

- Smart Growth and healthy built environments emerging as a focus for preventing injuries and creating safer and healthier environments.
- The California Department of Public Health, Epidemiology and Prevention for Injury Control Branch and the California Center for Physical Activity support and fund local healthy built environment work.
- Cities throughout California are beginning their periodic review and update of the city’s General Plan.
Provides input on Richmond’s Circulation Element for the General Plan to ensure safe, active, and effective transportation.

Serves on the Technical Advisory Committee charged with improving the streetscape of a major transportation corridor in Richmond. Provides collision data and leads community assessment of bicycling/walking conditions.

Collaborates with the City, urban planning consultants, and a panel of health and environmental experts to develop a Health & Wellness Element for Richmond’s General Plan and establish benchmarks and measurable built environment indicators that reflect health. Receives funding to implement neighborhood-based policy initiatives.

Conducts local neighborhood workshops and conference presentations on health, safety, and transportation planning to help inform others about healthy planning concepts.

Helps the City of Richmond obtain Caltrans Environmental Justice funds to develop a community-driven Pedestrian Plan. Partners with the City and outside consultants to conduct neighborhood workshops and develop the plan.

Helps establish and provide ongoing technical assistance to the Richmond Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The Committee assists the City to apply for and receive a grant to create a Bicycle Master Plan.

Obtains Safe Routes to school funding to encourage walking and bicycling to middle and elementary schools - the project is a strong complement to on-going built environment activities.

The broad context within which CCHS’ efforts are taking place

California cities are in the midst of their periodic review and update of each City’s General Plan.

Attitudes among elected leaders, professionals, and community members are changing as people are more aware of the importance of working across different sectors or silos.

Climate change is emerging as a vital health and environment issue. Legislative and funding support are available for working in an integrated fashion across disciplines.
Garner Your Resources
- A program can be built in steps using initial funding to establish core staffing and expertise, then leveraging other funding sources with overlapping objectives to augment and build the staff and resources needed.
- Showing up is half the battle; the other half is making a contribution. Sometimes this means doing a share of the work, but it can also be funding others to achieve mutual goals.
- Don’t squander the health department’s voice by trying to be everywhere and do everything. Weighing in on key transportation policy and funding decisions from the health perspective can send a strong signal.

Share Your Expertise
- When working with other disciplines, learn their concepts and language, and teach them yours.
- Making training accessible locally can accelerate exposure to emerging information.
- It’s easier to get a place at the table when you have something to offer. CCHS’s ability to access and analyze data on traffic injuries was a pleasant surprise for CCHS’s city planning partners.
- The health department can help integrate efforts between city departments, consultants, external partners, and the community -- helping to create linkages and acting as an information broker.
- The health department’s ability to address the health impact of development plans provides expertise and credibility that complements that of city planners and transportation engineers.

Expect the Unexpected
- Things do not always happen as planned. Having more than one shared goal with partners can provide the basis for developing a “Plan B.”
- Maintaining good communication with partners and funders provides the flexibility needed to adjust to changing conditions.
- It’s important to keep your ear to the ground and be alert for opportunities that are consistent with your overall goals. Look ahead far enough so that you can anticipate emerging trends and be prepared to respond.

Relationships are Key
- With safe communities as the goal, common ground can be found across sectors with traffic engineers, transportation planners, law enforcement professionals, and community groups.
- Good working relationships with key players can help build partnerships towards common goals and create access to resources for both parties.
- City staff can be important advocates for promoting the health department’s role both internally to their colleagues, and externally to consultants and other cities.
- Building relationships and implementing activities over time establishes the expertise and credibility needed to participate in planning efforts at the level of a partner or colleague.
- Walkability is a new and unfamiliar concept for some. Understanding common goals and needs can help reduce conflict.

Lessons Learned
The way a community is constructed, its *built environment*, influences the safety and health of those who live there. Communities depend on land use and transportation planning to provide the foundation for a healthy community and the creation of streets and sidewalks that are safe for walking and biking.

A measure of the sophistication of CCHS' bicycle and pedestrian safety program is their work to improve the health of communities via land use and transportation planning.

For the last several decades, street construction has emphasized getting cars from the neighborhood to the freeway as quickly as possible with little attention paid to the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. That is changing. Many communities are working to plan and construct streets and sidewalks that encourage and improve safety for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Land use and transportation planning decisions are based on various documents that form, in essence, the community's constitution. In California, this begins with the vision and goals set forth in a jurisdiction's General Plan, a binding legal document mandated by the State. The table below describes the planning processes and associated documents that direct how a community's street environment will be constructed. CCHS works at all three levels of the planning process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Process</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Plan</td>
<td>Outlines vision, goals, policies, and broad implementation steps.</td>
<td>“We want a more walkable and bikeable community.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circulation Element</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Our streets will meet the needs of all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists.”</td>
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<td><em>Note: The General Plan or Circulation Element may call for a separate pedestrian or bicycle plan.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Plan</td>
<td>Identifies areas for accommodations for pedestrians, bicycle routes, and standards that govern street and sidewalk construction.</td>
<td>“Sidewalks along major streets will be no less than 6 ft wide.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bicycle Plan</td>
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<td>“We will use traffic calming measures, so cars reduce their speed to make it safer for bicyclists and pedestrians.”</td>
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<td><em>Note: If there is not a separate Pedestrian or Bicycle Plan, these specifics would be included in the Circulation Element of the General Plan.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific Plan</td>
<td>Describes how a specific geographical area will be built or re-built. Establishes policies &amp; standards for the location, i.e. specific types of traffic calming.</td>
<td>“On 23rd Street, we have room to build wide sidewalks, and extend the curbs so pedestrians will be more visible.”</td>
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<td>Redevelopment Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>“On Barrett Avenue, we will encourage bicycling by painting bike lanes and putting up signs.”</td>
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For more information about Contra Costa Health Services’ efforts to prevent bicycle and pedestrian injuries and their work to create healthy communities, please contact Nancy Baer at nbaer@sd.cccounty.us

For more information about Kids’ Plates funding or to purchase a Kids’ Plates license plate, please visit www.KidsPlates.org. For more information about child and adolescent injury prevention efforts in California, please visit www.InjuryPreventionNetwork.org

For more information on the injury prevention and healthy community work of the California Department of Public Health’s Safe and Active Communities Branch, please visit www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/SACB