Executive Summary: HOPE SF Health Task Force Recommendations

HOPE SF is the nation’s first large-scale public housing revitalization project to invest in high-quality, sustainable housing and broad scale community development without displacing current residents. HOPE SF will transform eight highly distressed public housing sites in San Francisco into vibrant neighborhoods with over 6,000 new public, affordable and market-rate homes. HOPE SF is led by the San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Housing with dozens of public and private sector partners. Enterprise Community Partners, The San Francisco Foundation and the Mayor’s Office launched the Campaign for HOPE SF with a goal to raise $25 million for a major HOPE SF evaluation and programs and services over the next five years. Governed by a Steering Committee and a national Leadership Committee, the Campaign is mobilizing local and national philanthropic investment - and leveraging public dollars - to ensure that HOPE SF has the resources necessary to create diverse, thriving communities for all residents.

The Campaign for HOPE SF Health Task Force is a cross-sector coalition of 20 Bay Area community leaders and health experts that met five times in the Fall of 2011 to identify areas of opportunity for the Campaign to improve the health of HOPE SF residents in the next five years. The Task Force’s recommendations will guide Campaign fundraising and grant-making decisions. They were reviewed by other groups including residents.

The Task Force researched a range of place-based interventions in the social, service and built environments, and they drew from a wide body of public health literature that included the Social Determinants of Health and Healthy People 2020. They reviewed community...
feedback and data from a number of sources, which showed that the leading issues of concern for residents are drugs and substance use, safety and violence, health care services, emotional stress, mental health conditions and grief management. Other areas of interest include access to healthier food, nutrition classes, exercise, healthy indoor air quality, and parenting and family support.

Based on their research, experiences and discussions, the Task Force members determined a Vision and Goals for the Campaign for the next five years, as well as five Strategic Priorities (to achieve these goals) that are listed in order of recommended implementation schedule. Each has a menu of possible investments, interventions and programs for the next 1-2 years and 3-5 years.

Vision for Health: **HOPE SF will help create communities and homes in which individuals and families reach and maintain health and wellness.**

Goals for Health: **Together with the residents of HOPE SF communities, the Campaign for HOPE SF seeks to build social, service and built environments where:**

- Residents live in socially-cohesive communities that support meaningful community engagement, and resident leadership.
- Residents are safe from violence and unintended injuries, and the resulting emotional trauma in their homes and in the community, and healed from intergenerational trauma.
- Residents live in communities free from substance use and the impact of untreated mental health conditions.
- Residents have health coverage and are well-connected to preventative and primary healthcare services.
- Residents engage in increasingly healthy behaviors, and participate in self-management of their chronic diseases and other health conditions.
- Children and youth develop in healthy and resilient ways, supported by their families and their neighbors to become the next generation of hope.
- Residents live in homes that are healthy and built or maintained with safe materials.

**Strategic Priorities for achieving our goals in the next five years:**

1. **Strategic Priority #1:** Organize and empower residents to lead and participate actively in community activities that build a strong and cohesive neighborhood.
2. **Strategic Priority #2:** Prevent exposure to stress and emotional trauma through a reduction in violence and unintended injuries, and provide social support to address trauma.
3. **Strategic Priority #3:** Create community-wide support for an environment that encourages early intervention and treatment of addiction and mental health conditions, and reduces the impact of both on individual, family, and community health.
4. **Strategic Priority #4:** Promote healthy living behaviors and conditions (including access to healthy food and physical activity) to improve rates of chronic disease, access to health care and prevention services, and healthy child development and family relationships.
5. **Strategic Priority #5:** Ensure safety and health standards are maintained in the demolition and reconstruction of HOPE SF sites so that the physical environment before and during construction is healthy.

**Implementation Principles:**

The Task Force believes that investments in the strategic priorities will be maximized if implementation is rolled out in accordance with the following principles:
- Focus on the children, especially the youngest of them, and make every step taken toward youth and adulthood a healthy one.
- Build on existing opportunity windows including transition moments from revitalization efforts and other community incidents and events to reach and motivate residents.
- The work of the Health Task Force, Education Task Force and Economic Mobility Task Force are completely interwoven and must be achieved together in order to build truly healthy communities.
- Acknowledge the constant challenges faced by HOPE SF residents, including emotional trauma and violence, which may impact their participation and engagement in health activities and healthy behaviors. Ensure consistency and predictability over time implementing strategies.
- Organize and engage community members in planning and implementation. Seek to have investments that are responsive to resident needs and concerns.
- Build on assets and strengths that currently exist in HOPE SF communities, including what’s working with existing programs and what can be learned from lapsed or unsuccessful programs.
- Allow for flexibility in implementation at each HOPE SF site and over time. Ensure that all efforts are regular, consistent, positive activities that encourage and incentivize residents to contribute to their building a strong and proud community. Promote resident-led activities wherever feasible. Engage in ongoing evaluation and learning to change course if necessary.
- Promote the long-term retention of service connection and community building staff as an important community asset.
Achieving the Strategic Priorities

Priority 1
Organize and empower residents to lead and participate actively in community activities that build a strong and cohesive neighborhood.

The next 1-2 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Identify and support engagement of independent organizing groups to negotiate relationships, build trust, and engage with existing power structures to improve residents’ lives. They can motivate, train, support and employ residents to participate in, lead, and develop new programs and initiatives. They provide residents with an independent voice in articulating concerns and being part of solutions.
- Continue and expand the HOPE SF Leadership Academy, reconvene the HOPE SF Youth Academy, and include a component on health empowerment, safety and health status.
- Enhance and improve existing service connection and community building efforts to organize positive, consistent community activities. Make available flexible funding to support this programming. Social and cultural events co-led by residents can build strong relationships and trust, while lowering stress. They can help to reduce the isolation of seniors and enhance the healthy development of children (especially those recovering from trauma). Some examples of activities include: regular weekly community dinners, music events, art events, or creating or improving community spaces where residents can congregate and socialize.

The next 3-5 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Develop policies and approaches to engage residents to create an environment wherever possible that reflects their priorities and needs. Acknowledge and recognize residents who are building community spirit and community engagement. Publicize the role of residents in crafting health strategies along with the health activities.
- Identify positive role models in the community and develop approaches to learn from them. This could include: people who go to work every day, athletes, ministers, children who are achieving in school, actively engaged resident leaders.

Priority 2
Create opportunities to decrease exposure to stress and emotional trauma through a reduction in violence and unintended injuries.

The next 1-2 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Facilitate safe passage and transportation options that encourage movement within and outside of public housing for shopping, social activities, educational access and encourage employment opportunities for residents. This might include a shuttle service using trained residents as drivers, cab co-op organized and staffed by residents, or a youth shuttle to organized social and sports activities.
- Create new, effective supports for HOPE SF Community Builders and Service Connection staff who are vulnerable to vicarious trauma. Draw from social work or case management models to provide increased supervision, case conferencing, and mental health consultation as necessary for sustained work.
- Build the capacity of the Housing Authority and HOPE SF developers to effectively engage residents prior to and at critical development transitions, such as relocation commencement and construction commencement. SFHIA and HOPE SF staff must also have rapid-response capacity for unexpected incidents such as acts of violence in the community and move-in schedule changes. This could involve communicating new information about changes, holding meetings in advance to discuss relocation and construction schedules, building new relationships with service providers, engaging in grief counseling, or providing service connection information.

- Build a partnership between community, law enforcement, and human service agencies to implement a comprehensive HOPE SF ‘safety strategy’ across sites including prevention, intervention and suppression strategies to create safer environments on HOPE SF developments. Essential to this is creating a visible, ongoing systematic response to violent incidents and drug dealing activities in close coordination with law enforcement (not immigrations or customs enforcement). Possible strategies to be employed include youth employment programs and site-specific neighborhood watch groups. Collaborative efforts include a call-in strategy with SF Police Department and Community Justice Center court access through the Superior Court, District Attorney’s office, and Police Department’s office, among other City agencies.

- Support and expand the HOPE SF Community Building and Service Connection teams to collaborate with local schools, churches, mental health facilities, and community-based organizations to expand and enhance easily accessible, on-site or off-site, developmentally and age appropriate activities for children, youth and seniors. Prioritize programming based on local data and needs, as well as on level of primary interest or perceived need by the residents. Examples of some positive stress-reduction events, many of which are already occurring in HOPE SF sites: volunteer events, mentoring for children, meal programs for seniors, home visiting programs for new parents and home-bound seniors, field trips for children and teens, play groups for babies and toddlers.

Priority 3
Create community-wide support for an environment that encourages early intervention and treatment of addiction and mental health conditions, and reduces the impact of both on individual, family, and community health.

The next 1-2 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:

- Support and expand the role of existing on-site community centers to host regular and consistent positive activities by building capacity to make these centers trusted and welcoming ‘safe hubs’ of community activity and ‘go to’ places to find and use supportive resources when residents are ready.

- Integrate mental health and substance abuse treatment strategies with other services and programs in an interdisciplinary way, so they are seamlessly woven in. Some examples could include: service-enhanced family resource centers, peer-led mental health programs,
12-step programs for different age and gender groups, study sessions for children, art programs, job readiness and training sessions, and other stress reduction activities. These can also help empower community members to address their neighbors’ and family members’ challenges with substance use and drugs.

The next 3-5 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Research possibilities to build a program within a community based organization or City agency to provide financial incentives for completing pre-natal care, well-child visits, parenting classes, health education activities, physical activity programs, increased school attendance and achieving good grades.
- Capitalize on opportunities for residents to be employed in community health and change, and for incentives to positively recognize participation in healthy behaviors. This could include employment as shuttle drivers or cab cooperatives for in-community transportation options, trash and recycling collectors, and event organizers.
- Enhance community builders’ programming work to be able to host more events and activities – in existing, on-site, safe community centers – that enforce substance-free and violence-free communities.
- Bring in effective, on-site parenting groups and educational programs for parents of children of different ages, along with incentives for regular participation. Consider including free or very low-cost child care as an incentive.
- Develop policies at the Housing Authority level to promote age-appropriate programs and activities that enforce substance-free and violence-free communities.

Priority 4
Promote healthy living habits and behaviors (including access to healthy food and physical activity) to improve rates of chronic disease, access to health care and prevention services, and healthy child development and family relationships.

The next 1-2 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Build the capacity of community builders and local community based organizations to provide regular opportunities to learn healthy living habits on-site and seeks to set new community norms around healthy habits for children and adults. Healthy living programming could include cooking demonstrations and cooking and nutrition classes, coaching sessions for sports, regular sports teams, stress reduction programs like yoga and meditation, and all types of physical activity programs for children and adults.
- Develop a program to employ residents as “Promotores de Salud”, who provide health education, services and support to community members, and are generally from the community they serve. They can help address multiple barriers to accessing services, such as those related to transportation, availability, culture, language, stigma, and mistrust.
- Recruit local pediatric health care providers to come on-site to HOPE SF community meetings, events, educational sessions, and physical activity programs to build trusting relationships that may facilitate healthcare utilization.
- Build the capacity of Service Connectors to connect infants and children with these providers and with medical homes. Medical homes can offer a range of information to parents, as well as health coverage enrollment, preventive medical care,
immunizations, dental and vision screening, and developmental screening. Some provide access to other services like legal counseling, mental health, healthcare, housing support, food stability, and more.

The next 3-5 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Determine and invest in the most appropriate way to increase healthy food access and choices. This could include incentivizing the development of full-service grocery stores, attracting mobile markets and farmers markets, providing transportation to grocery stores and guided shopping tours, working with corner stores to provide healthy food options, providing shuttle services to healthy food outlets, building community gardens, creating a common kitchen that hires residents to cook, and new relationships with accessible food banks.
- Support service connection teams to connect residents of all ages to a medical home.
- Organize consistent weekly dinner events with healthy food, music and opportunities for residents to gather and build social relationships.
- Enhance the capacity of HOPE SF schools to provide health and other on-site child and community development programming as part of their community school strategy. Ensure services are easily accessible based on their location in safe settings and their hours.
- Encourage joint-use agreements with on- or near-site schools for recreational use in off-hours.

The next 1-2 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Enhance developer and SFHA communications with residents about the regulatory directives they are following for hazard mitigation and on-going testing throughout the construction process, and the standards to which the new developments will adhere (i.e.: LEED ND, Green Communities).
- Support developers in improving their communication tools around construction timelines so that residents will be even more aware of all construction activity ahead of time.
- Increase resident awareness and education of how to improve child development and prevent childhood exposure to environmental hazards that occur from toxic chemicals, smoking, household pesticides, lead paint and other products.
- Explore the creation of a Citizens Health Advisory Group to advocate for, monitor and organize around government policies and programs that ensure resident health through the revitalization process.

The next 3-5 years – opportunities for Campaign for HOPE SF funding:
- Generate regular opportunities for increased physical activity for all ages, such as hosting regular exercise programs, sporting events, or coaching sessions for different age groups.
- Connect organized residents with the Housing Authority to enforce the use of ‘green’ materials inside and outside the home – prior to and during construction – to eliminate environmental exposure to harmful materials, chemicals, construction dust, mold, second-hand smoke, and aerosolized particles for children and families.

Priority 5
Ensure safety and health standards are maintained in the demolition and reconstruction of HOPE SF sites so that the physical environment before and during construction is healthy.