

Built Environment and Health in Low-Income Communities

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PIMA COUNTY

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

A Healthy Pima County

Every **one**. Every **where**. Every **day**.

What is the “built environment?”

- Where we live, work, and play
 - At any point in our day, built environment plays a role on how we behave
- “Determinant of Health”
- Influences choices made each day



Impact of Built Environment on Health

- Walkability of neighborhood, linked to a lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, negligible street lighting, and minimal green spaces to exercise
- Sedentary lifestyles associated with chronic disease
 - CVD, stroke, diabetes, etc.



Why low-income communities?

- Low income linked to higher disease burden:
- Diabetes increases as income decreases.
 - \$25,000 11.2%.
 - \$10-15,000 11.9%,
 - <\$10,000 20.7%².

- Income plays a significant role in obesity:
 - 33% of adults earning < \$15,000
 - 25.4% of those who earned at least \$50,000 per year were obese
 - Over 25% of Pima County residents were identified as being obese
 - 15% of residents failed to complete 60 minutes of physical activity on any day of the week
 - More consistent associations between weight-status and built environment in low-income communities³

An uphill battle

- Low income communities have⁴:
 - Less open space
 - Greater density of fast-food restaurants
 - Lower density of healthy food options

Locally:

- S. 12th Avenue has few sidewalks, little shade, few physical activity opportunities



Who has a role?

Built environment & health brings together diverse teams

- Planners
- Health Officials
- Civic leaders
- Neighborhood coalitions
- Police
- Transportation engineers
- Designers

Each plays a unique role in influencing the built environment, and all are necessary to affect change.

What can be done?

Institutes of Medicine: *“improvements to the built environment that can increase physical activity should be a priority”*

- Complete Streets Design-Sidewalks, shade trees, bike lanes, lighting reconfiguration
- Increasing availability of space for physical activity
- Mini-parks, increasing trees, upgrading landscaping
- Providing walking/multi-use paths



Ajo Community

- Per capita income: \$19,472
- 47% of population is Hispanic
- 33% of houses are vacant
- Health Department conducting a health impact assessment on proposal to clean up derelict and abandoned properties

AJO PROJECT

Pima County Partners

- Health Department
- Wastewater
- Sheriff
- Development Services

24 properties under review-potential danger to health and safety

- Need arrive at consensus to identify highest priority for action
- Generally cost of mitigation exceeds the value of the properties

Some of the properties



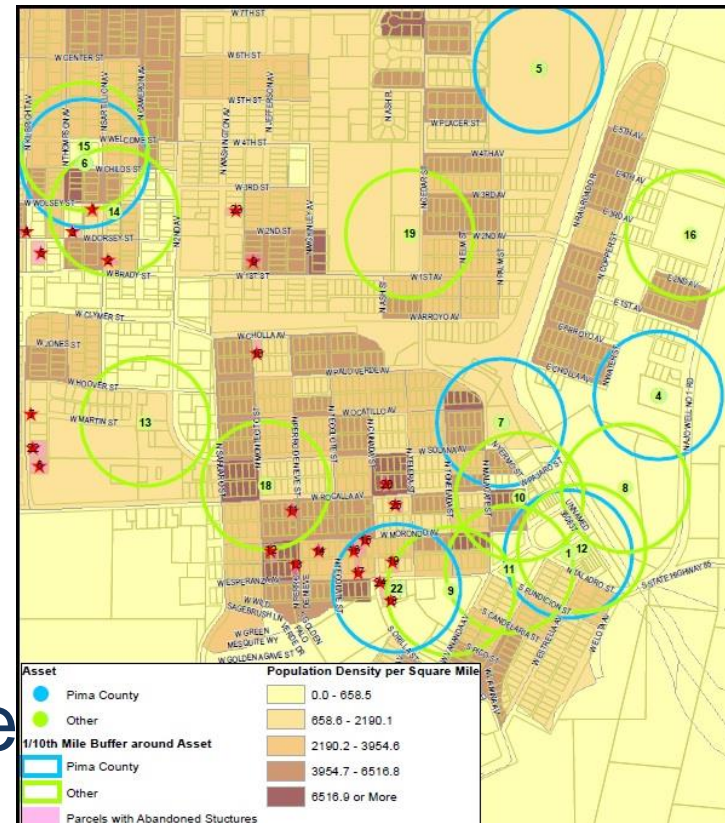
Steps so far

- PCHD worked with PC Development Services to map locations of:

- Abandoned/derelict properties
- Community assets
- Population density

- Worked with PCSO to map crime related to each property

- Additionally, PCHD staff visited sites to determine real-time situation in Ajo



Next steps

- Compile the feedback from all departments involved
- Review health data to determine affect on population
- Review proposed County plan
- Develop recommendations based on the available data
- Distribute report