

## Bernalillo County, New Mexico

Health Disparities and Land Use  
in Albuquerque's South Valley



NIEHS: 1 R25 ES014347-03



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### Three major efforts

- **Land use and health policy town hall.** (To indicate directions for policy changes in the land use arena.)
- **Health equity index.** (Build a foundation for local communities.)
- **Unnatural Causes documentary.** (Use it to educate local policy makers about the effects of land use on human health.)

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### Related efforts

- EPA grant to improve waste handling practices at auto salvage yards.
- AQ Board's EJ Task Force.
- Mountain View sector development plan
- State environmental policy act

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## Social Determinants

- Land use policies and practices.
- Institutional racism.
- Geographic and economic disparities.

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## Goals from Lisle, Sept. 2006

- **Goal 1:** Establish and implement **land use policies** containing criteria that systematically address the impacts of the key social determinants of health.
- **Goal 2:** Establish and implement **environmental permitting policies** containing criteria that systematically address the impacts of the key social determinants of health.

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## Accomplishments

- Held 2 of 7 focus groups, partially paving the way for Health Policy and Land Use Town Hall.
- Placed environmental health language into a local land use plan (still subject to approval).
- Advocated for and participated in EJ task force for AQ board.
- Drafted state environmental policy act.

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## Accomplishments

- Received EPA grant to improve waste handling practices at auto salvage yards.
- Participating in Health Equity Working Group, a coalition of government, academic and private interests.
- Formed Health Equity Index data group with government and academic interests.

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## Lessons Learned

- It can take years to swim upstream.
- Health equity criteria must be measurable and the means to achieve it must be objective.
- The battle for health equity occurs on many fronts (land use, air quality, planning, zoning, economic development, etc...).

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## Challenges ahead

- Town Hall policies must be acted upon once they have been articulated.
- Local policy makers do not prioritize health equity.
- Education is ongoing and essential.

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## To be successful....

...in 2009, we will have:

- Town Hall policies to bring forward for action.
- Passage of the state environmental policy act
- Land use plan that reduces industrial pressure on residents.
- Health equity index (epidemiologic tool to drive policy) under development .

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