FOODD systems





American Planning Association *Making Great Communities Happen*

PLAN4Health

An American Planning Association Product

What is Plan4Health?

Plan4Health is a national movement connecting communities across the country to link planning and public health. Plan4Health is anchored by American Planning Association Chapters and American Public Health Association Affiliates with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Launched in September 2014, Plan-4Health supports creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions in 35 communities. Coalitions work with communities to increase access to healthy food or increase opportunities for active living where residents live, work, and play.

At the national level, the American Planning Association and the American Public Health Association partner with the American Heart Association, the National WIC Association, the Society for Public Health Education, and the Directors of Health Promotion and Education. These organizations pursue a shared CDC platform to prevent chronic disease, help Americans live healthier lives, and support communities to make healthy living easier where people live, learn, work, and play.

Plan4Health reconnects planning and public health, fields that grew out of the same movement to create healthy communities. By reinvigorating the links between public health and the built environment, Plan4Health combats chronic disease by increasing access to nutritious foods and increasing opportunities for physical activity. Plan4Health aims to improve health outcomes through improvements to the built environment by building collaboration, community capacity, and civic engagement. The project will potentially impact more than three million people across the country through policy, systems, and environmental change strategies.

What is a food system?

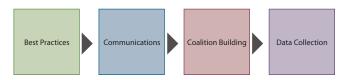
A healthy, sustainable food system emphasizes, strengthens, and makes visible the interdependent relationships between individual sectors (from production to waste disposal) and characteristics (health-promoting, sustainable, resilient, diverse, fair, economically balanced, and transparent) of the system.

What are food systems in the context of Plan4Health?

Plan4Health coalitions approach food systems by identifying the many inputs and outputs that impact a community's access to healthy food. Do schools serve nutritious lunches to their students? Do neighborhoods have access to corner stores, grocery stores, farmers markets, and gardens that supply a range of food at affordable prices? Plan4Health coalitions have worked in many different ways to improve the policy, governing systems, and environments that impact these aspects of communities in their effort to make healthy communities where people live, learn, work and play.

How can this toolkit be used?

This toolkit offers a snapshot of reports, webinars, toolkits, community examples, videos, podcasts, and more about food systems in Plan4Health. It can be read cover to cover or looked at in pieces—each page can be a stand-alone document, to be used to inform and educate about food systems strategies. Additional information about the Plan4Health coalitions, including <u>mini-webinars</u>, <u>videos</u>, and <u>podcasts</u>, is available on the <u>Plan4Health Peer Learning Network</u>.





A community garden in Chatham County, Georgia

Grow

Best practices

Community gardens: Community gardens build resilient and healthy communities. Combating food deserts through the expanded garden space not only increases the availability of fresh produce, but also engages all residents interested in growing food and learning more about the process. Many programs focus on gardens, whether in parks, schools, or other publicly accessible spaces.

- In Summit County, Ohio, the Plan4Health coalition expanded the use of garden space throughout the community, placing an emphasis on farm fresh produce. They developed a <u>Community Garden Toolkit</u> based on their work. Additionally, the coalition launched client choice food pantries in three sites, partnering with five corner stores to implement a farm to community model, and leveraging food assistance programs through mini farmers markets.
- The Mount Hope Coalition to Increase Food Security (Providence, Rhode Island) increased the number of community gardens in the Mount Hope neighborhood, building an 11-bed sharing garden in Billy Taylor Park and a four-bed teaching garden at the Vincent Brown Recreation Center. The new gardens were complemented by programming that engaged 250 individuals through festivals, classes, and events. Community Health Workers and other residents also formed a 14-member Garden Squad to support garden activities.

Home gardens: In many communities, people do not have access to a community garden due to limited mobility or lack of geographic proximity. Home gardens can provide a great alternative to community gardens, but often require creative approaches to address space and capacity needs.

In Kenton County, Kentucky, the coalition developed summer community garden projects, which included working with a local garden designer to create three custom designs for home gardeners. The coalition built garden boxes and provided vouchers for dirt and plants from local nurseries, focusing on low-income neighborhoods that are not served by a healthy corner store. They distributed <u>flyers</u> in both English and Spanish, successfully engaging 63 residents.

Square-foot gardens: Large gardens are often intimidating to new gardeners and are more difficult to maintain and to harvest. Square-foot gardens, garden beds that are just a square foot or two in size, offer a training ground for first-time gardeners—or an accessible solution to gardeners not ready, or not able, to manage a large plot.

The Thomas County Coalition (Kansas) worked to make gardens easier for students and families to access by partnering with local schools to create squarefoot gardens. Planted on school grounds, the gardens offer an opportunity for teachers and students to learn more about how to plant and to grow fresh produce. The small garden size makes maintenance more manageable and brings the food system into the classroom. Five gardens in Thomas County will reach over 360 students and their families.



Thomas County Coalition's square foot gardens

School gardens: School gardens offer many of the same benefits as community gardens, with the additional opportunity to engage students in growing, harvesting, and eating fresh fruits and vegetables. While school gardens may be the perfect tool for learning during the school years, students, families, and school staff also need to coordinate garden care during summer breaks and school vacations.

The Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Communities is working to develop a replicable model with the local schools in Shelby County. The coalition is partnering with the Family Resources and Youth Services Coordinator, a position present in most Kentucky schools and funded based on the number of free and reduced lunches the school receives, to co-create school gardens. By engaging school staff, as well as students and their families, everyone is part of growing and harvesting healthy food.

From our partners



Dig, Eat, and Be Healthy: A Guide to Growing Food on Public Property

American Community Garden Association



From the field



Learn more about Boise, Idaho in the Vista Food Assessment video.



Learn more about the impact of the Mount Hope Coalition to Increase Food Security.



A display case with fresh produce, a result of the Kenton County healthy corner stores initiative.

Distribute

Best Practices

Mobile markets: Mobile markets can address food deserts by bringing healthy food options to neighborhoods in need. Especially in areas where more permanent infrastructure changes are not possible or partnerships with local corner and grocery stores are not fruitful, mobile markets offer a chance for low-income, food-insecure communities to access healthy food.

- In Chatham County, Georgia, the Plan4Health coalition launched the community's first mobile market, which brings fresh produce to target communities across the city. Because of the coalition's efforts, the city passed <u>a mobile market policy</u> in February 2016 which allowed the markets to operate with longer hours and in more locations across the city.
- In Tarrant County, Texas, the Plan4Health project leveraged the momentum of the Blue Zones Project and the support of local partners to update a citywide ordinance and allow produce pushcarts and mobile markets the opportunity sell fresh fruits and vegetables in food deserts in Fort Worth.

Healthy corner stores: Targeting corner store retailers is one approach to increasing healthy food options in underserved neighborhoods. Small stores often carry prepackaged processed foods and are sometimes the only source of food in a neighborhood, making them a potentially key player in increasing healthy food options in a community.

In Kenton County, Kentucky, the Plan4Health coalition pursued a healthy corner stores approach with an eye toward authentically engaging corner store owners. The coalition worked directly with store owners and operators to increase inventory options and drive customers to these options. This included <u>an application</u> that solicited community impact and feedback.



A farmers market in Shawano County, Wisconsin

Farmers Markets: The Farmers Market Coalition defines farmers markets as a public and recurring assembly of farmers or their representatives selling the food that they produced directly to consumers. Farmers markets connect community members to the local food system, offering customers the opportunity to have fresh fruits and vegetables from nearby farms. Farmers markets vary in size and duration, reflecting the needs and the climate of each community.

The Jackson Healthy Communities Coalition (Illinois) leveraged its award-winning farmers market to increase Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) usage. Training to utilize EBT equipment at the farmers market was provided to all four communities in Jackson County in which the farmers markets were located. The result of these efforts was a coalition-based collaboration to provide resources to encourage access to healthy foods by populations with limited resources (e.g., SNAP and WIC recipients).

From our partners



From the field



Watch Emi Randall discuss the Plan4Health work in Kenton County, Kentucky.



Carbondale Golden Beet Award Winners



A farm in Kane County, Illinois.

Connect

Best Practices

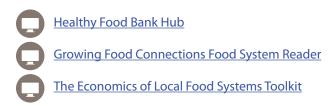
Food hubs: A food hub strengthens the connection between food growers and buyers, and between residents and fresh, local food. As with all community work, it is important to authentically engage with the community, including farmers, businesses, and community members.

In Kane County, Illinois, the Plan4Health coalition supported phase two of a food hub feasibility study – and developed <u>a food hub feasibility toolkit</u> – to identify mechanisms for improving access to fresh foods. The coalition worked closely with farmers, buyers, and community members to identify and vet possible models and sites for a food hub. The coalition intentionally incorporated a health equity lens, ensuring that potential strategies identified for implementation also supported vulnerable communities and advanced access to healthy food for all residents.

Food banks: Food banks provide sustenance to low-income community members who may be unable to obtain food from other sources. They are a vital player in many communities, but sometimes face limited resources and capacity issues.

In Linn County, Iowa, the Plan4Health coalition developed an interactive food assistance map to help residents find the location of nearby food pantries. The map also helped highlight gaps in the food assistance system and identify areas of greatest need. This information resulted in a coordinated mobile pantry system that brings food of high nutritional content to the areas without access to food pantries.

From our partners



From the field



Watch Matt Tansley discuss the process for increasing access to nutritious food in Kane County.



Greater Boston Association of Convenience Stores

The Greater Boston Association of Convenience Stores logos was developed by local youth.

Innovation in Food Systems: Corner Store Association in Boston

What?

The Metro Boston Plan4Health coalition pioneered food systems work by approaching healthy corner stores in an innovative way. In seeking to improve access to healthy food, the coalition initially focused on strengthening distribution networks to support healthy food retail initiatives and work with grocery stores to offer and promote healthy foods. However, it became clear that distribution was not the only barrier facing corner stores—other business-related challenges and competing priorities also hindered stores' ability to carry healthy food options. Instead of letting this prevent the work from continuing, the coalition flexed and developed the Greater Boston Association of Convenience Stores.

How?

The coalition responded to the need on the part of corner store owners to address issues beyond distribution. The Greater Boston Association of Convenience Stores allows corner store owners to have a space for conversing, community building, accessing professional development opportunities and technical assistance, and discussing options for joint purchasing of fruits and vegetables. Framed as an economic development opportunity, the association recognizes the financial barriers to providing healthy food options and contributes to the sustainability of healthy food access by offering a flexible structure that will expand as association membership increases.

The coalition partnered with local consultants who own corner stores in order to determine the framework for the business association. The development process included substantial community outreach to understand the needs of store owners, including informational sessions for corner store owners, postcard campaigns, and targeted outreach to municipal economic development and planning departments, chambers of commerce, and other nongovernmental organizations that work to support businesses. The coalition was able to engage partners to assist with disseminating information about the association and leverage technical assistance resources across the network. The coalition also involved local youth in the project through the development of the Greater Boston Association of Convenience Stores' logo, in addition to the design of another program logo.

From the field



Watch an introduction to the <u>Greater Boston Assocation of</u> <u>Convenience Stores</u>



Interview with Barry Keppard



Healthy On The Go! Implementation Guide



Kenton County's community garden flyers

Communications

Tips from the field

- Kenton County's Plan4Health coalition's <u>healthy</u> <u>corner stores initiative</u> empowered store owners to implement creative marketing tactics. One example is posting recipe cards and nutrition information throughout a store, making it easier for shoppers to identify healthy food options.
- In Kingston, New York, the Plan4Health coalition launched a new <u>website</u> during the project as a platform for engaging with the community, sharing successes via a blog and social media outlets, and informing the community about local health-related events.

Engaging the community



Summit county gardening workshop training

From our partners



CDC Gateway to Health Communication and Social Marketing Audience Profiles



<u>Making Memorable Messages – Plan4Health</u> <u>Communications Webinar</u>



<u>Media 101: Interviews – Plan4Health</u> <u>Communications Webinar</u>



Innovation in Communications: Plan4Health Tarrant County

Plan4Health Tarrant County worked with the Blue Zones Project in Fort Worth to freshen an existing communications campaign to heighten awareness and consumption of fruits and vegetables in five underserved communities. The *Live a More Colorful Life* campaign was implemented through the following strategies:

- Direct Mail: An oversized mailer was mailed to every household to introduce the Power of Color and promote three community engagement events, Fruitful Fridays.
- Billboards and Bus Bench Ads: 12 billboards and 15 bus bench ads promoting the Power of Color, evenly distributed around the region; some billboards and ads were in Spanish. Consistency in design helped to reinforce the message.
- Fruitful Fridays: A community engagement activity distributing a piece of fruit and promoting the Power of Color.
- Mobile Geotargeting Ads: Ads reinforcing the message sent to mobile devices of low-income women in the target area.
- Liveamorecolorfullife.org: All messaging directed people to the existing Live a More Colorful Life website.
- *Sidewalk Graphics:* Placement of sidewalk "hopscotch" game graphics in 75 high-traffic locations across the region, reinforcing the Power of Color.
- Posters, Flyers, Bookmarks: Placement across the region to continually reinforce the importance of fruits and vegetables.
- Door Hangers: Door hangers were distributed to 7,500 homes closest to each corner store participating in the healthy corner store program, promoting the store as the place to shop for Power of Color fruits and vegetables.





Kingston, New York sharing local community garden.

Coalition Building

Tips from the field

- In Kane County, Illinois, the Plan4Health coalition engaged 177 community members in a county leaders' summit to discuss integrated planning efforts. The summit participants included high-level elected officials.
- In Chatham County, Georgia, the Plan4Health coalition approached coalition building with a comprehensive strategy that resulted in authentic engagement; the coalition currently has over 100 members.
- The F.R.E.S.H. Project (Shawano and Menominee Counties, Wisconsin) started as a grant application from various departments in Shawano County government. As the project developed, other individuals and groups in the area were engaged, including three local Native Nations. Lessons learned from the work include: 1) work at the speed of trust; 2) make time for training and capacity building activities to strengthen relationships and to develop shared understanding of activities; and 3) stretch to include new voices and underrepresented communities.

Engaging the community



Live Well Kingston Operational Guidelines



F.R.E.S.H. Project Strategic Plan

From the field



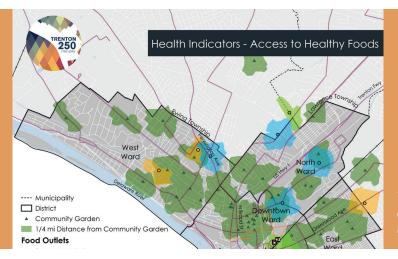
Working at the Speed of Trust: Kari Hopfensperger on Plan4Health

From our partners



Developing Effective Coalitions: An 8 Step Guide





The Boise, Idaho, coalition collected information about where people get their food during a farmers market event.

Data Collection

Tips from the field

- In Austin, Texas, the Plan4Health coalition conducted focus groups to help inform their food systems work, which lead to the development of a food plan that is tailored to community needs around community gardens, healthy food access, and food waste recovery.
- In Boise, Idaho, the Plan4Health coalition worked closely with Boise State University's School of Nursing to conduct a door-to-door survey that helped assess neighborhood residents' level of food access. Data from the survey are included in the <u>Neighborhood</u> <u>Food Assessment Toolkit</u>.

Engaging with the planning and community health center



Growing Food Connections

From our partners



<u>Active Living Research –</u> <u>Tools and Resources</u>



U.S. Department of Transportation— Transportation and Health Tool



Community Commons

Innovation in Data Collection: Assessment in Umatilla County, Oregon

The Plan4Helath coalition in Umatilla County, Oregon completed a needs and readiness assessment, preparing the coalition for policy, systems, and environmental change. Read more about the assessement below.

Phase 1: Building a Coalition

Umatilla County was selected to participate in Cohort Two of the Plan4Health project and received funding to conduct capacity building activities. In our community, building capacity in order to increase access to healthy food and physical activity meant building and fostering a coalition of diverse partners and conducting an assessment to better understand the perceptions and barriers facing our community.

Phase 2: Conducting a Community Needs and Readiness Assessment

After establishing a coalition of 25 individuals and organizations, we set out on the assessment phase. We chose to use the <u>Community Needs and Readiness Assessment model</u> <u>out of University of Colorado's Tri-Ethnic Center</u>. An assessment of this type has never been conducted for Umatilla County, so the survey results provided good baseline data as well as an inventory of healthy living resources in the County.

The University of Oregon's Community Service Center (CSC) was hired to conduct the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA). The county coalition served as the public involvement component. The assessment consisted of a mail-home survey to registered voters, focus groups with vulnerable populations, and community outreach at public events.

Methodology

The CSC conducted a review of existing health related surveys, research, and public health and planning efforts in Umatilla County. When data was missing or incomplete, such as with recreation facilities and food access, the CSC conducted their own data collection to provide documentation of those resources. The data collected was combined with demographic and socioeconomic data from the U.S. Census Bureau to develop health profiles for the county and incorporated cities. The CSC team created maps from this data to show how health and wellness characteristics are distributed within Umatilla County.

In addition to data collection, the CSC team gathered input from residents of Umatilla County to better understand some of the issues and opportunities for action. Conducting a county-wide survey in a rural area can seem like one barrier after another. In order to overcome those challenges, the Plan4Health and the CSC chose a mixed-method approach in hopes of reaching as many community members as possible.



Community workshops in several cities created a direct dialogue with residents that helped the CSC team better understand health and planning needs in the county. Workshops included structured activities and open discussion about health obstacles, desired programs or improvements for many communities in Umatilla County. The community workshops sought to reach vulnerable as well as geographically isolated community members, so they were conducted and in communities that are not typically at the table.

To reach an even broader cross-section of the county, the CSC team also administered a **public survey** designed to gauge residents' current health-related behaviors and attitudes, as well as their access to health assets and other health needs. The survey was provided in both English and Spanish, and was administered in a mixed-method approach, which included:

- 1,500 mailed copies to randomly selected registered voters
- An online survey advertised to the public
- Targeted outreach to groups most affected by chronic disease, including in-person administration of the

survey at outreach events

Finally, the CSC team conducted **stakeholder interviews** with the Umatilla County Plan4Health Coalition members to gather knowledge about key issues and assess capacity for future involvement in the Coalition. After the public input and research phase, the CSC team conducted a **half-day workshop** with the Umatilla County Plan4Health Coalition members to present preliminary findings, including key issue areas where the Coalition might focus on future efforts.

Key Takeaways

The Community Needs and Readiness Assessment allowed the Plan4Health Coalition to gain a deeper understanding of barriers and perceptions in our community. The data collected will guide our actions over the coming years and allow us to make the most of our limited resources in a rural community.

Umailia County Plantitealth wants to know What do YOU think? Please place dots or write in answers below:	Condado de Umatilla Plan4Heatin quiere saber ¿Qué plensas USTED? Por favor, coloque puntos o escribir en respuestas a continuación :		
Which of the following would you be the <u>most confident in to provide you with</u> <u>information</u> about health, physical activity and nutrition resources and programs? Please place up to three dots.	How do you <u>prefer to receive information</u> about health, physical activity and nutriti resources and programs? Please place up to three dots.		
¿Cuál de las siguientes sería estar <u>más conflados en para proporcionarte</u> <u>información</u> sobre la salud, la actividad faica, la nutrición y los recursos/programas? Por favor, coloque un máximo de tres puntos.	¿Cómo es lo que <u>preflere recibir, información</u> sobre la salud ; la actividad física y recursos de nutrición y programas ? Por favor, coloque un máximo de tres puntos.		
Doctors/Nurses (Doctores/enfermeras)	Regional Newspaper (periódico regional)		
	Local Newspaper (periódico local)		
Hospitals (Hospitales)	Local Television program (programa de television local)		
Umatilia County Public Health (Condado de Umatilia, Departamento de Salud)	Local Radio program (programa de radio local)		
State Government (Gobierno estatal)	Books (libros)		
	Magazines (revistas)		
ederal Gavernment (Gabierno federal)	Facebook		
Iniversity or research institution (Universidad o Instituto de Investigación)	Emailed fact sheet (hoja informative enviado por correo electrónico)		
	Mailed fact sheet (hoja informative enviado por correo)		
Neighbor, friend or family member (vecino, amigo o miembro de la familio)	Publically posted fact sheet on bullefin board (Públicamente publicado hoja informativa sobre el fablón de anuncios)		
Elected official (funcionario electo)	Public Workshops/Meetings (raileres y reuniones públicas)		

Key Takeaways:

- A growing urban population in Umatilla County will require expansion of infrastructure and services. This creates an opportunity to emphasize livability and healthy behaviors in the development and improvement of roads, housing, parks, food markets, and public health programming.
- Chronic disease rates are well documented within

Umatilla County. The rate of overweight/obese adults within the County is approximately 72% and is indicative of an overall health and wellness problem in the County. Residents' health perception show that they perceive their health as "excellent or very good" at a much lower rate than state or country. Likewise, residents report their health as "fair or poor" at a rate 10% higher than the state or country.

Umatilla County has a considerable amount of public

lands under County, State, and Federal management. These resources provide picnicking, camping, wildlife observation, fishing, hunting, boating, hiking, mountain biking, swimming, and running opportunities.

• Umatilla County residents primarily purchase fruits and vegetables through large grocery stores. Over one third report gardening or growing their own fruits and vegetables. The largest reported barrier to consuming fruits and vegetables is cost.

Poster used at community outreach events to gather feedback without administering full survey.

Phase 3: Implementation

Through the CNRA, priority areas were identified and best practices that the community may be ready for were recommended. The final report also includes recommendations for the function and structure of the UCo Plan4Health Coalition in the future based on the feedback gathered through stakeholder interviews and the half-day workshop. The graphic below gives a brief overview of the opportunity areas and the broad categories that the recommended implementation strategies fall under. The final report includes a spreadsheet that identifies specific strategies within each category as well as project lead, project partners, and potential timelines for implementation based on community readiness.



The **PLAN4HEALTH** community *envisions* the full integration of **PLANNING** and **PUBLIC HEALTH** where we *live*, *work*, and *play*.

Plan4Health Grantees



Cohort One		Cohort Two	
1 Austin, TX	10 Kane County, IL	1 <u>Ajo, AZ</u>	10 <u>Mount Hope, RI</u>
2 Bensenville, IL	11 Kenton County, KY	2 Baltimore, MD	11 Pierce County, WA
3 Boise, ID	12 Kingston, NY	3 Dover / Kent County, DE	12 Sacramento County, CA
4 Chatham County, GA	13 Linn County, IA	4 Eagle County, CO	13 <u>Shawano and Menominee</u> <u>Counties, WI</u>
5 <u>Columbus, IN</u>	14 Metro Boston, MA	5 Exurban Louisville, KY	14 Tarrant County, TX
6 <u>Columbus, OH</u>	15 <u>Nashua, NH</u>	6 Jackson County, IL	15 Thomas County, KS
7 Dane County, WI	16 <u>St. Louis, MO</u>	7 Lake County, OH	16 Tulsa County, OK
8 Eastern CT	17 Summit County, OH	8 Mecklenburg County, NC	17 Umatilla County, OR
9 <u>Indianapolis, IN</u>	18 <u>Trenton, NJ</u>	9 Greater Helena Area in Lewis & Clark County, MT	