



PURDUE **EXTENSION**

Enhancing the
Value of Public
Spaces:

Creating Healthy
Communities



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Table of Contents

Introduction to Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities	
Introduction	6
Curriculum Overview	9
Meeting Overview and Roles and Responsibilities	13
Community Capitals Framework	16
Appreciative Inquiry Process	22
Making the Connection Between the Built Environment and Healthy Communities	29
The Benefits of Creating Healthy Communities	46
Recommended Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments	88
Envisioning the Built Environment to Create Healthy Communities	
Environmental Applications – Active Living Strategies	
Placemaking – Parks and Plazas	108
Streetscapes	118
Trails	128
Walkability and Connectivity	138
Wayfinding	146
Environmental Applications – Healthy Eating Strategies	
Value of Community Gardens as Public Places	156
Value of Farmers’ Markets as Public Places	158
Policy Applications	
Policies for Healthier Communities through the Built Environment	161
Systems Applications	
Community Coalitions	168
Introduction to Local and Regional Food Systems	232
Crafting a Request for Proposal (RFP) to Find the Right Contractors and Consultants	235

Introduction to Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities

P U E X T . I N / E V P S H E A L T H

PURDUE
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Introduction

Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities

Michael Wilcox and Kara Salazar, authors

Public spaces are focal points for all communities. Whether a town square, courthouse, central park, school grounds, recreational area, or nature preserve, public spaces are where many convene, learn, play, exercise, or simply reflect in that specific space and time. The American Planning Association (APA) describes a public space as a gathering spot or part of a neighborhood, downtown, special district, waterfront, or other area within the public realm that helps promote social interaction and

No matter how we personally use our public spaces, they are, in the end, public. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a public good as “a commodity or service that is provided without profit to all members of a society, either by the government or a private individual or organization.” Beyond the motive (profit or nonprofit) and who is providing the public good (government or nongovernmental), one must consider who is able to access it. In economics, public goods and services (which include public spaces) are nonexcludable—one cannot stop another from consuming or accessing the good or service; and nonrival—one’s consumption does not inhibit another from consuming the same thing. Beyond the

theoretical, access is also a function of numerous factors (financial, cultural, social, physical, etc.) that always need to be considered when planning for high quality, impactful public spaces.

While, some public spaces are congestible—for example, a baseball field can only be used for one game at a time—this doesn’t mean that the space isn’t available to others after the current consumer, perhaps two Little League teams, is finished. What spaces are offered is ultimately up to members of the public, as they are the consumers who create demand and often the funders, via tax dollars, of the supply of public goods or services.



a sense of community. Therefore, how we plan for, use, and maintain our public spaces is of key importance. A great public space goes beyond this basic definition by including aesthetics and design features appropriate for the look and feel of the community, being safe and welcoming, and encouraging community involvement by all ages (APA, 2014). Furthermore, this interaction and involvement can be parlayed into physical activity that can contribute to public health.

However, the public isn’t always directly involved in the provision and management of public spaces. The Project for Public Spaces (2014) states, “It takes a place to create a community, and a community to create a place,” (para. 4) and outlines best practices for public-space development through placemaking.

Effective placemaking processes are rooted in community-based participation and capitalize on a community's assets and potential to create public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being (Project for Public Spaces, 2014). The Land Policy Institute at Michigan State University defines placemaking simply as creating neighborhoods and communities where people want to live, work and play (Graebert et al., 2014). This curriculum focuses on the development and management of public spaces, highlighting best practices and proven approaches of placemaking, while placing special emphasis on the "health" and "play" aspects discussed above. We have developed a structure through which decisionmakers and the public can interact in a collaborative and informed way, positioning the community to enhance the value of its public spaces in a potentially innovative and impactful way. To do this, we use the community capitals framework and the appreciative inquiry process to provide the perspectives needed to achieve great public spaces. In addition, for this new version of the Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces (EVPS) curriculum, the content is split up between introducing our new complementary conceptual framework (Policy, Systems and Environment [PSE]), making the case for creating environments that promote active living and healthy eating and offering solid examples of how communities can create healthy communities themselves. As such, the two curriculum products should be used together. The original provides the fundamental information and tools needed to understand and apply community capitals and appreciative inquiry to a public-spaces planning process, and the new curriculum helps communities focus their efforts on enhancing the public health value of public spaces.

As always, the EVPS program is intended to serve as a "how-to" resource for communities working toward a high-quality action plan to guide implementation of a short term public-spaces project or medium-/long-term plan. The companion PowerPoint presentations and process agendas contain facilitation notes to lead a group through workshops and supplemental follow-on meetings using appreciative inquiry. This curriculum provides background resources, worksheets, and workshop handouts that can be tailored to meet individual community needs. Each of the health-related chapters includes practical examples directly connected to the scientific literature. Also included are technical resources and examples of public-space best practices that promote active living and healthy eating. Throughout the curriculum, strategies are tied to the PSE framework and the corresponding community capitals. The curriculum resources, worksheets, and activities provide the background and tools needed to complete a high-quality action plan, which can result in an on-the-ground project that reflects community values.

Purpose and Audience

The EVPS Creating Healthy Communities program is intended to provide communities with the latest evidence about the key conditions and factors in public spaces that have been shown to positively influence and support the health of people and places. Armed with this information and using the community capitals framework as a guide, community stakeholders will be led through an Appreciative Inquiry process to identify and build on current public spaces assets, enhance existing community plans, inform future efforts, and implement context-specific strategies to create and sustain healthy, thriving community environments. For the purpose of this program, we will define Healthy Communities as communities that are continually developing and enhancing the conditions and resources

in public spaces necessary to create healthy food and active living environments for all its residents and visitors.

The EVPS – Creating Healthy Communities curriculum is designed for use by Extension professionals from program areas such as Community Development, Health and Human Sciences (including the Nutrition Education Program) and Agriculture and Natural Resources.

This curriculum provides Extension professionals the information, tools, processes and research base needed for them to guide decision-makers and local leaders with oversight and management of community public spaces and public health. In terms of public spaces, they might include parks board and planning commission members, public officials and their staff, and members of organizations with missions that include providing services related to programs or management of public spaces. In terms of public health, health coalitions and other organizations working in the realm of active living and healthy eating should play a key role. As always, inclusive and meaningful public participation in the planning process is critical. Stakeholders are the decision-makers and they represent the “customer base” for public spaces. Since the creation of the EVPS program in 2014, our experience has proven over and over that convening a public spaces planning team that is diverse and reflective of the community capitals is highly recommended.

Program Objectives

Communities participating in the EVPS Creating Healthy Communities program will:

- recognize public spaces as community assets
- understand the significant influence of the built environment (i.e., public spaces) on the health of people and places in their community, and
- integrate public spaces into communities’ planning and development activities to contribute to and shape the ongoing process of creating a healthy, thriving, and sustainable community.

As part of the EVPS Creating Healthy Communities

Action Planning Process, communities will:

- relate the benefits of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments to public spaces across the community capitals;
- apply the appreciative inquiry process to identify Healthy Food and Active Living assets in local public spaces using the community capitals framework;
- agree on priorities to support the ongoing process of creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments;
- develop and implement short-, intermediate-, and long-term policy, systems, and environmental change strategies and indicators to support current and future planning projects; and
- identify the tools, resources and technical assistance needed to support the ongoing process and work.

References and Resources

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Curriculum Overview

Introduction to Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities

The Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities program is introduced in this chapter first by bridging the original curriculum and its materials with the new curriculum focusing on the intersection between active living, healthy eating and high-quality public spaces. Building on the context provided by the overview, this chapter describes the intended audience and program outcomes. To maintain consistency and the functionality of the curricula, the original Community Capitals Framework and Appreciative Inquiry Process chapters are included in this introductory chapter.

Making the Connection between the Built Environment and Healthy Communities

Building on the description of the EVPS program and the Community Capitals Framework outlined in the introduction section of the curriculum, this section lays the foundation for the Healthy Communities version of the EVPS program by describing the latest understanding about the influence of the built environment as it relates specifically to the health of people and places. Developed for professionals and community partners who are leading this work in local communities, this module describes the latest theories and models for creating Healthy Communities, as well as the types of strategies that have been shown to lead to meaningful and lasting change – policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies. After establishing a baseline understanding of this information, the module then describes the important connection to the Community Capitals Framework. To further clarify and illustrate the connection between Healthy Communities and the Community Capitals Framework, the module ends by providing an outline of specific examples of PSE change strategies that can be used to create healthy food and active-living environments for each of the seven Community Capitals.

Presentation - Making the Connection to Healthy Communities

Following the workshop introduction and overview of the Community Capitals Framework, this presentation introduces the concept of Healthy Communities by describing the latest understanding about how the built environment influences the health of people and places.

Designed for a community audience, the presentation opens with a brief walkthrough history to describe how the Healthy Communities movement came about and why it is so important. Following this information, the presentation also describes how it relates to the health of people and places today (including a snapshot of local data), how we got to this point, and what we have learned in the last 30+ years. Central to this learning, the presentation describes the latest model for creating Healthy Communities and the types of strategies that have been shown to create meaningful and lasting change in communities in the areas of policy, systems, and environmental change.

Finally, the model and strategies for creating healthy communities are integrated with the Community Capitals Framework to present a combined, updated framework for the workshop. For this portion of the presentation, a corresponding handout is provided that outlines specific examples of healthy food and active living PSE strategies for each of the community capitals to help illustrate and clarify these important concepts.

The Benefits of Creating Healthy Communities

Drawing from a large, growing body of evidence identifying the beneficial impacts and positive influences of creating healthy food and active living environments, this section provides a comprehensive, compelling overview of these benefits and influences as they relate to each of the capitals of the Community Capitals Framework. This information was compiled for two primary purposes: 1) to provide community leaders and partners with the evidence and

supporting factors necessary to make the strongest case for this important work in communities, and 2) to increase awareness about the wide-range of strategies being used to create healthy food and active living environments in communities of every size across the country. This module not only offers a valuable database of evidence-based bullet points to draw from, but also offers a virtual library of references that can be used to connect to more in-depth resources, guides, and toolkits.

Presentation - The Benefits of Creating Healthy Communities

With the foundation of Healthy Communities established in the previous presentation, this follow-up provides community members with an overview of the growing evidence base identifying the significant benefits of healthy food and active living environments. To set the stage for the importance of this work in communities, the presentation opens by first outlining the significant preventive, protective, and health-enhancing benefits of healthy-eating and active-living behaviors. Following this, the presentation shifts to outlining compelling evidence highlighting the significant benefits that can be gained by people and communities related to each of the Community Capitals. This presentation was developed for two primary purposes: 1) to identify and increase awareness about the wide-ranging benefits to be gained from creating healthy food and active living environments, and 2) to make the strongest case for this type of work in communities.

Best Practices for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments

Presentation - Overview of Best Practices

Drawing from a large and growing evidence base of strategies shown to be effective and necessary for creating healthy food and active living environments, this presentation provides community leaders and partners with a snapshot of recommended strategies as they relate to each of the Community Capitals. This information is intended to provide community groups

with a base of knowledge and outline of potential options to consider as they take the next step to engage in the Appreciative Inquiry process. In addition to providing the latest strategies, the presentation also identifies the key overarching factors or conditions necessary to create healthy communities such as increasing access to places and options for healthy-eating and active-living behaviors. Combined, this information provides communities with the opportunity to identify a range of options and strategies to create these conditions based on their identified assets and community context.

Envisioning the Built Environment to Create Healthier Communities

Environment Applications - Healthy Eating Strategies

Community Gardens

Community gardens take many forms, and each is unique to the community it serves. Community gardens bring a host of benefits to those who cultivate and use them, including building community morale, improving the residents' attitudes about their community, improving the quality of life and the physical health of the gardeners, and enhancing eating habits through vegetable consumption. Keys to the success of a community garden initiative consist of building a clear vision, creating strategy for a team structure, and choosing a site wisely.

Farmers' Markets

Farmers' Markets serve as a shared public space yielding numerous benefits beyond economics, such as creating a vibrant, inviting, safe space for diverse communities to come together. This resource outlines the potential social and public health benefits, including improving community and neighborhood access to healthy food. Strategies to consider when planning a farmers' market are discussed. Choosing the correct location and understanding the cost to the community are key factors in this process.

Environment Applications - Active Living Strategies

Placemaking - Parks and Plazas

Parks and plazas are central to community environments that benefit individuals, communities and the greater public through a variety of perspectives ranging from physical enhancements to encouraging healthier lifestyles while also increasing economic activities. With well-thought-out, inclusive decision making, public-space projects can improve the overall health, recreational experience, and quality of life for all community members. Ultimately, enhancing public spaces in your community will not only increase opportunities for active living, but the products and processes can strengthen the community's place identity and a sense of place of its members. This section covers placemaking through parks and plazas as an active-living strategy that can lead to healthier communities with examples, concepts, and considerations for planning such spaces.

Streetscapes

Streetscapes are aspects of built environments that can support communities in becoming healthier. Well-planned and designed streetscapes can provide safe and comfortable public spaces to achieve a range of community goals, including physical health and wellness. Through the streetscape planning and development process, entities have opportunities to efficiently interact, collaborate, and strengthen their community capacity and enhance the value of public spaces. This section introduces streetscapes as an active living strategy from concept to considerations for planning.

Trails

Trails can address a wide range of goals and objectives for individuals and communities at various levels. The development of well-thought-out, pleasant, safe, and effective trails can encourage individuals and communities to use them for recreation, healthier lifestyles, commuting and other everyday activities. Therefore, trails support

communities to become healthier by encouraging physical activity in addition to enhancing the built environments.

As an active-living strategy, this section introduces the concepts, benefits and challenges, and goals and considerations for planning such projects.

Walkability

Walkability is an aspect of built environments that addresses the quality of walking experience. Walkability projects provide many benefits to the entire community, including the support of physical activities and healthier lifestyles. Improving the walkability and connectivity of the built environment has the potential to support and facilitate healthier lifestyles and the wellness of a community. The quality of walkable environments need to be continuously updated and managed to serve and provide safe, convenient and attractive environments for maintaining our collective health. This section introduces the concept of walkability and connectivity, as well as examples of tools and considerations for enhancing the built environment for active living.

Wayfinding

Wayfinding planning and design projects can help community members become more active and healthy as a complement to other built-environment planning and design projects. A successful wayfinding system can influence the travel experience and strengthen a community's identity through a range of features and characteristics represented in public spaces. Wayfinding systems are explicit communication tools that can facilitate active living experiences by assisting people to move around in their built environments. Therefore, wayfinding considerations can benefit communities through effective use of their built environments. This section introduces wayfinding systems as an active-living strategy from the concept stage through considerations for planning to further enhance the value of public spaces that support health and wellness activities.

Policy Applications

Policies for Healthier Communities through the Built Environment

Policies for Health in the Built Environment introduces the comprehensive plan as a community-based document as well as a planning process. The section identifies opportunities to incorporate EVPS: Creating Healthy Communities into relevant elements of the comprehensive plan. The section also describes other local government planning documents that can impact the built environment, such as capital improvement programs, neighborhood or subarea plans, and Economic Development Area plans that represent opportunities to transfer EVPS workshop products into a wider spectrum of community policy for the built environment.

Systems Applications

Coalition Development and Management

Involving the community through a coalition is an important and often effective way to sustain the enhanced value of public spaces for health. Tapping into both health and economic partners in a coalition can ensure the success of public space ventures.

Food Systems Development

Historically, agriculture enabled the advancement of civilizations, providing resources that allowed humans to construct communities, advance knowledge, and develop technologies. Today, our food system is a complex mix of global, national, regional and local agriculture, intricate supply chains, and ever-advancing market technology. This section provides a short introduction to the components, opportunities and implications of developing local and regional food systems in an effort to foster the creation of healthier communities.

Working with Consultants and Preparing an RFP

This project may be the first time you or your colleagues have worked with a designer, planner, landscape architect, or contractor. Preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) is

the first step in finding the right consultant to work with. RFPs are the industry's standard way of communicating your organization's wants and needs. RFPs require that your organization collectively and clearly define the project scope and work through details to help you find the right consultant for your project. RFPs allow all of your possible consultants to get the same information and respond in a systematic way, allowing your group to compare consultants' proposals. It is worth the time and effort to prepare a thorough RFP. This section will provide advice to help your organization use the RFP process to establish a healthy working relationship with your consultants of choice.

Putting Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities into Practice

The following handouts, worksheets, and guidance documents provide the foundation for leading a community through the EVPS: CHC meeting series process with the outcome of completing a high-quality action plan.

- Marketing Materials
- Community Session Agendas and Presentations
 - ➔ Session Facilitation Resources
 - ➔ Action Plan Development Resources, Worksheets, and Templates

Measurement and Evaluation Guide

The Measurement and Evaluation Guide describes the collection of Purdue Extension internal program-related measures for a variety of program areas, including Community Development, Health and Human Sciences, Nutrition Education Program, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Illinois – Indiana Sea Grant. The evaluation components includes participant feedback via surveys, interviews and facilitator tracking. Participant input should be solicited prior to the workshop, after the workshop, before the planning meetings, and at the last planning meeting. The plan can be tailored to the reporting requirements of any participating program areas or organizations.

Meeting Overview and Roles and Responsibilities

Meeting Overview

Sessions	Tools and Processes
<p>Scoping Session(s) Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present the Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces Extension Program and what the action planning process can do for the community• Discuss needs, issues, and local input• Form agenda and set the workshop date• Determine budget and program funding sources• Create contact list of potential participants• Address registration and event logistics <p><i>2-3 meetings (1-2 hours per meeting)</i></p>	<p>TOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scoping Session Overview and Worksheet• List of Potential Participants• Participant Spreadsheet• Marketing Materials <p>PROCESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registration• Participant Survey
<p>Session 1: Education and Visioning Workshop Agenda Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making the Connection to Healthy Communities• Community Data Snapshot - Current Conditions• Visioning and Feedback<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Community Assets and Opportunities <p><i>30-50 attendees (5 hours)</i></p>	<p>TOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop Sign-in Sheet• Demographic Sheet• Assets and Opportunities Prompts• Sticky Walls <p>PROCESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appreciative Inquiry Process• Community Capitals Framework Asset Mapping and Opportunities Identification• World Café-Style Feedback Sessions• Workshop Feedback and Evaluation Survey• Digital Measures Reporting
<p>Session 2: Working Group Meeting - Setting Goals, Objectives, and Identifying Strategies Agenda Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action Plans, Policies, and Recommended Strategies for Creating Healthy Communities• Working Group Sessions - Develop Objectives and Strategies by Goals:• Active Living Environments• Healthy Food Environments• Placemaking <p><i>10-15 attendees (3 hours)</i></p>	<p>TOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshop Sign-in Sheet• Demographic Sheet• Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Prompts• Sticky Walls• Example Strategies Overview• Setting Goals, Objectives, and Identifying Strategies Worksheet <p>PROCESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Digital Measures Reporting

Sessions

Session 3: Working Group Meeting – Action Planning Agenda Topics

- Introduce Planning Tools
- Draft Timelines
- Identify Roles and Responsibilities
- Develop Evaluation Plan
- Create Communication Plan

10-15 attendees (3 hours)

Tools and Processes

TOOLS

- Workshop Sign-in Sheet
- Demographic Sheet
- Action Schedule Prompts
- Sticky Walls
- Worksheets
 - Action Plan Overview
 - Action Schedule - Timelines, Evaluation, and Communication Plan
 - Gantt Chart
 - Strategies, Impacts, Indicators Worksheet

PROCESSES

- Digital Measures Reporting
- Post Program Evaluation Survey
- Facilitator Feedback Survey

Follow-up coaching meetings with local leads as needed; 12- to 18-month follow-up interview.



Program Roles and Responsibilities

Local Leads

Three people that will manage the program process are responsible for plan completion, and can support implementation next steps. Responsibilities include:

- Completing contact list of potential participants and potential leaders using associated worksheets
- Completing scoping session sheets
- Identifying meeting dates
- Reserving meeting locations
- Completing agenda updates based on local needs
 - Discussing needs, issues, and strategies for local input
 - Identifying draft learning and/or program objectives for the action planning initiative
 - Identifying potential desired outcomes
- Determining budget and program funding sources.
Program costs typically include:
 - Lunch (and other hospitality items such as coffee and morning snacks if desired)
 - Meeting room and related equipment
- Inviting participants and managing registration/attendance – two types
 - Steering committee meeting members
 - Identifying and inviting participants that will commit to attending all meetings
 - Targeting 5-10 committee members
 - Time commitment: Approximately 7-10 hours of commitment over three months
 - Education and visioning participants
 - Addressing logistics of who extends invitations and keeps track of RSVPs
 - Targeting 50 participants representing the Community Capitals Framework
 - Time commitment: Three-hour education and visioning workshop and providing feedback on draft action plan
- Coordinating action planning working groups to manage worksheet completion between sessions
- Completing final action plan

Purdue Extension Facilitators

Three Purdue Extension facilitators will lead the community meeting processes, agenda updates, and will coach through the action plan. Responsibilities include:

- Updating and finalizing agendas and logistics with local leads
- Collecting local data and creating maps and graphs needed for program focus areas
- Supporting materials updates as needed, such as draft flyer, registration, and press release templates
- Coaching through the action planning process
- Managing data between sessions with local leads and supporting action planning working groups as needed

Community Capitals Framework

Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu, author

One of the challenges that local leaders and citizens constantly face is finding a coherent way to address the variety of challenges facing their communities, be they urban, suburban, or rural in nature. In many respects, the intent of most community and economic development initiatives is to advance an area's quality of life. But what does "quality of life" mean and how is it measured? Is it the presence of a strong local economy, sound local leadership, quality government services, top-notch public- supported schools, great health care services, or other indicators? The simple answer is yes. In many respects, all of these represent traits that would be associated with a community deemed to have a high quality of life.

As such, the issue at hand is to find a framework that captures the multidimensional nature of community life. Most importantly, it has to be one that has been vetted in peer-reviewed scholarly journals and, as result of this process, found to be both scientifically and conceptually sound. Moreover, the framework has to guide the on-the-ground efforts of community and economic development practitioners.

With these important preconditions in mind, the perspective that one might find appealing is the community capitals framework (CCF), developed and fine-tuned over several years by Cornelia Butler Flora and Jan L. Flora from Iowa State University (2008). The Floras suggest that the lifeblood of any community can be linked to the presence and strength of seven community capitals, resources that can be invested or tapped for the purpose of promoting the long-term well-being of communities (Jacobs, 2011a).

The seven community capitals are natural, cultural, human, social, political, financial, and built. Strong and resilient communities strive for balanced investments in these seven capitals. If communities place too much emphasis

on one or two of the capitals, they can end up suppressing the growth of the other community capitals, a condition that can damage the overall health of the community. For example, places that invest aggressively in built capital (through the pursuit of brick-and-mortar type of facilities) might contribute to the decline of the community's natural and cultural capitals, especially if such facilities are constructed in pristine areas or on lands that are part of the rich history of that locality.

Overview

Natural capital



Natural capital refers to "the landscape, air, water, soil, and biodiversity of both plants and animals" (Flora & Flora, 2008); in other words, our environment. It is also referred to in the literature as "natural amenities" (McGranahan, 1999)—assets that are linked to a particular place, such as weather, geographic location, natural resources, and natural beauty (Emery & Flora, 2006). Since people and the communities they are part of are embedded in the environment, one could argue that natural capital undergirds several of the other capitals. A healthy, functioning environment provides valuable ecosystem services such as food, timber, wildlife habitat, flood control, and recreational opportunities, which are essential for human life. Moreover, people and their communities are unable to thrive in areas where natural capital is neglected and depleted.

Cultural capital



The concept of culture provides a frame of reference for understanding the fabric of community life. This fabric is often connected by a common language, symbols, gestures, beliefs, values, and resources. In a classic textbook definition, culture consists of the material and nonmaterial aspects of a way of life, which are shared and transmitted among members of a society (Rogers et al., 1988). Culture is viewed as a "tool kit of symbols, stories, rituals, even the world-view that shapes individuals" (Swidler, 1986).

It includes the values and symbols reflected in clothing, music, industry, art, language, and customs. It also encompasses events, materials (paintings, books), festivals, museums, and other activities occurring in communities (Flora & Flora, 2008).

Human capital



In its simplest form, human capital reflects the investments that people make in their education, on-the-job training, or health. Such activities translate into improved knowledge, skills, and health status for individuals—factors that increase their human capital stock. As stocks improve, productivity levels increase, resulting in higher earnings for these workers. Human capital also refers to efforts by individuals to enhance their interpersonal and leadership skills in hopes of strengthening their ability to become active contributors to the civic health of their communities (Flora & Flora, 2008).

The benefits of human capital investments are not accrued solely to individuals. Communities with good shares of educated, healthy, and skilled workers also benefit, especially in their capacity to remain resilient during periods of economic uncertainty. Places with a good base of creative, knowledge-based workers, for example, tend to experience economic growth or stability. These workers serve as engines of innovation and entrepreneurial activities, actions that help create a good number of high-paying jobs in communities and regions (Henderson & Abraham, 2005; Metcalfe & Ramlogan, 2005; Munnich & Schrock, 2003). Similarly, the expanding interest in STEM-related occupations—those associated with science, technology, engineering and mathematics—is due, in no small measure, to the fact that STEM-related jobs have outpaced non-STEM jobs by a factor of 3 to 1 in the U.S. over the last decade (Langdon et al., 2011). But communities that want to gain ground in expanding their creative/knowledge or STEM-related sectors will be unable to do so without the presence of a sizable pool of workers with strong human capital credentials.

Social capital



Social capital represents the “glue” that holds a community together and whose presence can spur the type of economic growth that brings benefits to the entire community. In communities where good things are happening across the spectrum—in education, job creation, health care, and community services—a broad-based corps of civic-minded people and organizations is often in place to undergird these important activities. Social capital consists of bonding and bridging activities that occur within the local community setting, as well as linkages that tie community members to organizations and resources located outside the community (also called vertical connections).

Bonding represents the strong interactions and ties that people have with family, friends, neighbors, and close work associates. Bridging reflects the linkages that individuals have with people and groups within the community with whom they have only limited interactions or with individuals and organizations outside of the locality. Granovetter (1973) labels these types of relationships “weak ties” that can be accessed in times of need. Vertical linkages offer an avenue for local people, organizations, and communities to access valuable resources and ideas from outside the community that can be used to support and guide local initiatives. According to Woolcock (2001), the presence of various combinations of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital can have positive impacts on the range of social and economic outcomes that are possible in communities.

Political capital



Several dimensions are associated with the concept of political capital. The first relates to individuals who are in positions of power and influence in the community. As Flora and Flora note, it is “the ability to affect the distribution of both public and private resources within the community (2008).” A second dimension has to do with the ability to gain access to individuals and organizations—the so-called power brokers or movers and shakers—with the resources

to influence important decisions (Flora et al., 2004). A third aspect of political capital refers to efforts that are made to develop new leadership in the community, and/or expand the engagement of citizens in discussions of important community matters through the use of various strategies, such as deliberation forums. By focusing on these various aspects of political capital, we can gain a better understanding of what people and groups are calling the shots in a community, and what groups are having little influence or role in shaping local decisions (Flora & Flora, 2008).

How can you determine the nature of political capital in your community? A good bit of it requires careful monitoring of how decisions are made in a community and who is making them. For example, drawing upon a rich literature on community power, we know that when only a handful of people are making key decisions, an elite leadership structure tends to be in place in the community. On the other hand, if decisions tend to be dispersed across a variety of people and groups, depending on the issue being discussed or debated, a more pluralistic leadership structure might be present (Aiken & Mott, 1970). Other hints of whether influence is shared or held tightly by a small group of elites is when you see (or fail to see) the launching of local leadership development programs, community/town hall meetings, or public deliberation sessions. These activities suggest that local leaders are open to a larger group of people weighing in and actively taking part in tackling important local issues.

Financial capital



Financial capital represents resources needed to fund the provision, construction, and implementation of a variety of programs, projects, and assets that advance the community's economic, social, and infrastructure development. A stable and vibrant community life depends on the availability of reliable financial capital institutions. These include community development banks, credit unions, loan funds, venture capital funds, and microenterprise loan funds. These entities serve as potential sources of a wide range of products and services,

including housing, community facilities, small business loans, and other community services that can serve to revitalize economically distressed communities. Their primary role is to bring financial and business resources to communities to stimulate economic growth and foster a stable regional economy.

The availability of financial capital can contribute to wealth creation and to community economic development activities, especially in low-to-moderate-income households or communities. Community development financial institutions (CDFIs), for example, can provide a wide range of financial products and services for people and communities that traditional financial institutions often bypass. So, too, can grant-making foundations whose activities are intended to address a wide array of local needs and opportunities.

Built capital



Built capital, also referred to as the built environment, is the man-made infrastructure that supports human society—our roads, bridges, airports, water-treatment facilities, buildings (factories, schools, offices, and stores), communication technologies, and public places. The built environment also includes design factors and land uses; for example, how our neighborhoods, communities, and cities are laid out. The built environment can have a significant impact on an individual's physical and mental well-being and on community life.

Connecting the Capitals: The Spiraling-up of Community Capitals

Table 1 provides a synopsis of the seven capitals, with a definition for each and examples of the type of assets that can be linked to it. Most communities would find it challenging to pursue simultaneous investments in the seven capitals. So is there a subset of community capitals that should be given priority attention over the other capitals? The answer depends on each community's unique strengths and needs. There is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to which of the capitals should be given precedence over others in any community.

Table 1. The Seven Types of Community Capitals

	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
 <p>Natural</p>	<p>The quality and quantity of natural and environmental resources existing in a community.</p>	<p>Parks; lakes; rivers; wildlife; forestland; farmland; mountains; other natural resource features.</p>
 <p>Cultural</p>	<p>The values, norms, beliefs, and traditions that people inherit from the family, school, and community. Also includes material goods produced at a specific time and place (such as paintings, books) that have historical or cultural significance.</p>	<p>Cultural events/festivals; musical heritage, libraries; museums; multilingual populations; historical associations.</p>
 <p>Human</p>	<p>Attributes of individuals that provide them with the ability to earn a living, strengthen community, and otherwise contribute to community organizations, to their families, and to self-improvement (Flora et al., 2004). It includes access to education and knowledge development, training and skill-building activities, and efforts to build and expand local leadership.</p>	<p>Formal and informal educational institutions; workforce training programs; adult and youth leadership programs; lifelong learning activities.</p>
 <p>Social</p>	<p>Connections existing among people and organizations that help make things happen in the community. Includes close ties that build community cohesion (bonding) as well as weaker ties with local and outside people and organizations that help promote broad-based action on key matters (bridging).</p>	<p>Activities that build trust among people and groups of different races and ethnic backgrounds; citizen involvement in community discussions and events; community celebrations or parades; involvement in civic and service groups; organizations that link diverse people and organizations together.</p>
 <p>Political</p>	<p>The ability to influence and enforce rules, regulations, and standards. Access to individuals and groups with the power to influence decisions. Participating in civic discourse on difficult public issues.</p>	<p>Elected and appointed government officials; citizen participation in issue forums; Congressional representatives and staffers; political organization leaders; voting rates in local, state, and national elections.</p>
 <p>Financial</p>	<p>The variety of financial resources available to invest in local projects or economic development initiatives. Efforts to build wealth to support community development activities.</p>	<p>Community foundations; grants; microloan programs; revolving loan funds; community development financial institutions; banks.</p>
 <p>Built</p>	<p>Represents the infrastructure of the community—the basic set of facilities, services, and physical structures a community needs.</p>	<p>Broadband and other information technologies; utilities; water/sewer systems; roads/bridges; business parks/incubator facilities; hospitals/health care buildings; main street buildings; housing stock.</p>

What we do know from community studies is that pursuing positive change in one type of capital can create opportunities for improvements in other community capitals (Emery & Flora, 2006).

Assume for a moment that local leaders have reached out to a diversity of people in the community, seeking their input on a new strategic blueprint for the community. The effort to touch base with more people has strengthened communications and dialogue between local leaders and residents. In fact, local leaders have decided to meet every three months with various neighborhood groups as a way to continue to secure input and feedback from local people. This activity has brought about positive changes in two capitals, political and social.

Let's further assume that citizens urged local leaders to help retain and expand local businesses and to invest in new entrepreneurial ventures so that exciting innovations could be seeded in the community. The local leaders ended up launching a new business retention/expansion program, focusing on improving the skill levels of business owners at risk of losing their businesses in an effort to improve their human capital skills. Working with local banks and the community foundation, the local leaders were able to establish a small-loan program designed to invest in new entrepreneurial ventures. The focus on entrepreneurship helped the community retain some of its best educated, creative workers. The financial capital resources available to support local economic development activities were expanded.

In this story, the need to build stronger political and social capital created positive shifts in the human and financial capital assets of the community. It highlights the spiraling-up effect that can occur when investment begins in one of the community capitals. A community's work to build assets in one of the capitals fosters the growth of other capital assets.

In most communities, efforts to develop and sustain a strong, vibrant community are a long-term process. The community capitals framework offers local leaders, organizations, and residents a deeper understanding of the multipronged approach that is needed if communities hope to create the foundation necessary for them to survive and thrive over the long term. While giving attention to all seven community capitals might seem overwhelming, communities should start by focusing on a smaller set of community capitals, and then give attention to the other capitals over time.

Before you know it, the spiraling-up effect will begin to take hold, resulting in visible improvements in the community.

Figure 1: Community Capitals



Based on "Figure 2. The Community Capitals Framework" from Emery, Fey and Flora, 2006. "Community Capitals Framework using Appreciative Inquiry," CD Practice, Community Development Society. Design by Tyler Wright.

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Appreciative Inquiry Process

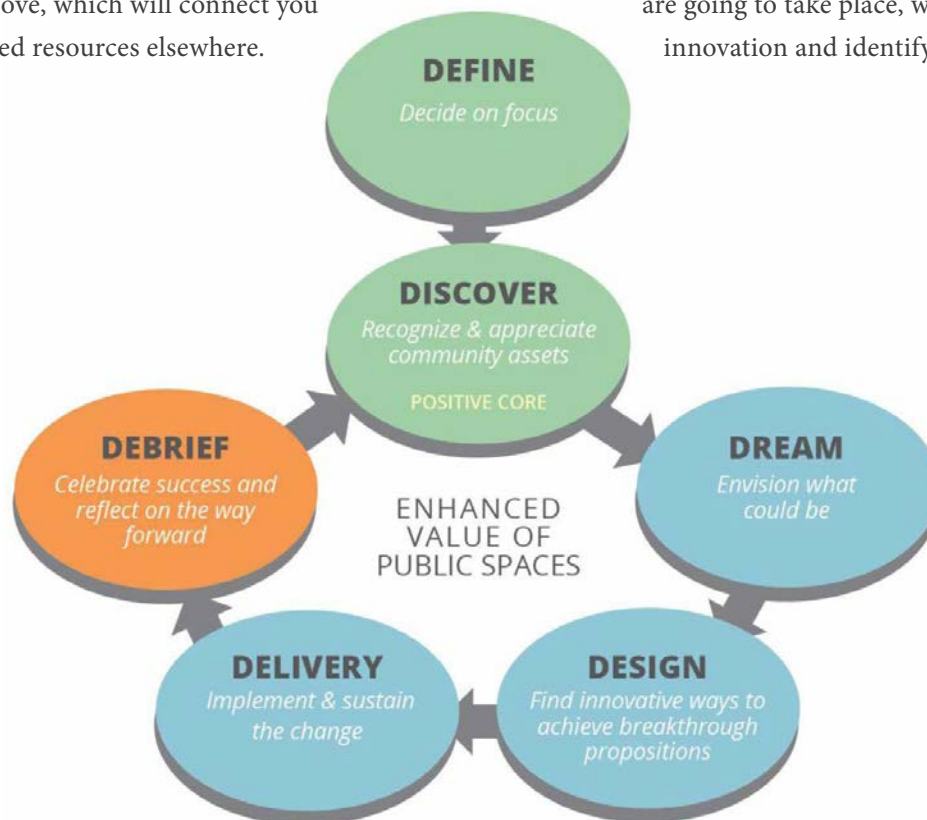
Michael Wilcox, author

This section highlights the phases of appreciative inquiry (AI) so every member of your team or community group can understand the basic framework before you put it into practice (see Applying the Appreciative Inquiry Process, page 15). The information presented here draws heavily from Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) and Emery, Fey, and Flora (2006). Both of these resources, as well as the Appreciative Inquiry Commons hosted online at <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>, provide how-to guidance on using AI in your planning activities.

Here, we strive to connect AI to enhancing the value of public spaces. The worksheets at the end of this curriculum offer a practical means for walking a community group through the process. For a more detailed explanation of AI and step-by-step advice on using it, use the resources noted above, which will connect you to a wealth of related resources elsewhere.

Appreciative inquiry, pioneered at Case Western Reserve University by David Cooperrider and his colleagues in the 1980s, is based on the principle that “through human communication—inquiry and dialogue—people can shift their attention and action away from problem analysis to lift up worthy ideals and productive possibilities for the future” (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2010). In other words, as you seek to enhance the value of public spaces, it’s important to cultivate thoughtful interaction between community members and decisionmakers, and plan for a sustainable future for one of our most important community assets.

This approach is inherent in the name. *Appreciative* refers not only to the community recognizing that public spaces are important, but also suggests that public spaces are an investment whose value can increase (appreciate) over time. *Inquiry* suggests that studying and questioning are going to take place, which might lead to innovation and identifying new possibilities.



Based on Whitney, D., & Trosten-Bloom, A. (2010). *The power of appreciative inquiry: A practical guide to positive change*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. Based on “Figure 1. The Process of Appreciative Inquiry,” from Emery, Fey, & Flora, 2006. “Community Capitals Framework using Appreciative Inquiry,” CD Practice, Community Development Society. Design by Tyler Wright

Traditional needs assessment seeks to identify needs by considering what is, what should be, and the gaps that exist between the two. Often, the focus is on the negative—existing problems and how to solve them. In contrast, AI focuses on what has been, what is, and what *could* be. It then zeroes in on what is working, existing assets, and how to realize identified breakthrough propositions. By intentionally selecting AI, we view enhancing the value of public spaces as an inclusive, thought- provoking, holistic, and systems-oriented process. A community that deploys the opposite is more likely to have public spaces that continue to be one- dimensional, less accessible, and undervalued. AI replaces backward-looking with future-focused. As the famous Irish band U2 once lamented, “You glorify the past when your future dries up.”

AI actively seeks to avoid such a community state of mind through appreciating, imagining, innovating, and delivering. The first step is determining what the group of individuals concerned about public spaces is going to focus its efforts on. Affirmative topics should serve as a strategic starting point.

These topics can cover issues that need to be addressed or positive attributes that need to be enhanced. In either case, they need to be thought of in a positive way. For example, rather than focusing on “reducing blighted public spaces,” the group should consider “ensuring that all public spaces can provide aesthetic value and safety.” In the framework highlighted by Emery et al. (2006), this is the **Define phase**. Because AI is a cycle, you will cycle back to the Define phase.

It is key that the group has broad community representation and that topics are true to the spirit of the community. This requires dialogue and deliberation. In terms of enhancing the value of public spaces, Define might focus on a certain public space or an issue relevant to all public spaces in your community.

Once the group settles on topics, or focus areas, the next step is the **Discovery phase**. While U2’s lyrics provide a stern warning not to be entrenched in the past, the Discovery Phase is an opportunity to honor the past by constructively thinking through what has worked for or benefited the community, and what is working now. While starting with a clean slate is a great catalyst for innovation, it is not a practical way to strategically think about public spaces. Often an existing footprint is both tangible and intangible, and the public space has a recognized intrinsic value to the community.

The Discovery phase is a means to recognize that decisions have been made in the past, best practices have been put in place, *and* mistakes have been made. AI suggests that the community should focus on what has worked in the past and what is working now. This mindset fits nicely into this curriculum’s asset-based approach, and even offers a head start for communities that have paid close attention to their quality of place. This phase can be conducted through interviews or a group forum (see Whitney and Trosten-Bloom [2010] and Emery et al. [2006], respectively).

The next step in the AI process is the **Dream phase**. This is the visualization phase— thinking deeply about what you would like to see in your community. What results are we seeking? In a perfect world, what would your public spaces look like? What roles would they serve in your community? Which individuals, associations, and institutions could be involved, and what role might they play in realizing these dreams? How will we know when the dream has become reality?

The Dream phase allows everyone to collectively think about what the community could look like if effort and resources are strategically employed. Individual dreams should be heard and discussed. From these, a collective vision can begin to take form as the process continues. John Lennon implored that each of us take the time to imagine. The Dream phase is your opportunity to meet his challenge.

Once the questions, “What is, and what has been?” and “What could be?” have been answered, the next step is to determine how best to leverage what is and move toward creating what should be. The **Design phase** is focused on creating the future through thoughtful ideas centered on what the group is proposing to do, who is going to do it, and how it will be done. The “how” does not refer to brick-and-mortar decisions, but rather to organizational structure and the strategies this organization is going to employ to make the Dream phase’s concepts become reality. Developing the details and strategies in this stage is typically conducted as a group exercise; however, actual deployment can be within the scope of an action-oriented core team charged with carrying out the task outlined by the community.

The final phases of AI are action-oriented: implementation and evaluation. As you have seen in the works referenced here, the authors differ on terminology, but the spirit is the same. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) call this the **Destiny phase**, while Emery et al. (2006) divide this phase in two: the **Deliver** and **Debrief phases**. Whichever you prefer, the bottom line is that this is the phase in which you invest sweat equity and evaluate return on investment.

As you implement the action plan and celebrate the results, the following point cannot be overstated: **You must intentionally develop, measure, and report outcomes** (measurable results) that are directly related to the investments of all the community capitals into your community’s public spaces. This is not a terminus; it is a beginning. Robust information-gathering and the critical evaluation of lessons learned are integral to successfully (re-)entering the Define/Discover phases.

Applying the Appreciative Inquiry Process

Understanding AI is critical to successfully enhancing the value of your public spaces. Once the basic framework has been explained and the group has bought in to using it,

the process can begin. As a conceptual framework, AI is relatively straightforward. Putting it into practice, however, can take many forms and use a variety of implementable strategies (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010 and Emery et al., 2006).

For purposes of this curriculum, the exact activities your community chooses to employ AI are completely flexible. They should be determined by the facilitation expertise available, the anticipated size of the group, and the desired outcomes of the specific meeting. Several resources can help you consider what types of activities make the most sense for your situation. These include:

Art of Hosting. Retrieved from
<http://www.artofhosting.org>

Brown, J., & Isaacs, D. (2005). *The world café:*

Shaping our futures through conversations that matter.

San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Cooperrider, D., & Whitney, D. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change.* San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Holman, P., Cady, S., & Devane, T. (2007).

The change handbook. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Kaner, S., Doyle, M., Lind, L., Toldi, C., Fisk, S., & Berger, D. (2007). *Facilitator’s guide to participatory decision-making* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Regardless of what types of activities you choose, you will need a tool to collect all of the information generated by using AI. To make that aspect of the process easier, we have divided the Define, Discover, Dream, Design, Delivery, and Debrief elements of the process into the following worksheets:

Discover: *Worksheet 1.* Asset Inventory by Community Capital

Dream: *Worksheet 2.* Dream Elements by Community Capital

Define/Debrief: *Worksheet 4: Community-based Public Spaces Initiative Planning Team*

NOTE: Worksheet #1 comes in three types! There are the typical handout and spreadsheet versions (discussed above) and a poster-sized version that a group can use, with each member adding assets written on sticky notes, by community capital, to the space provided.

Worksheet 1 provides a place to inventory community assets related to public spaces by community capital (see following chapters).








Using the community capitals framework—as opposed to simply considering, “What do we have in our community that can lend itself to enhancing the value of our public spaces?”—allows participants to recognize assets they might otherwise overlook.

[illegible]

Worksheet 2 - Dream

Worksheet 3 - Design/Delivery

Worksheet 3: Strategic, Material Impacts, Outcome Indicators and Collection Methods by Community Capital

Plan Elements		CAPITAL						
		 Built	 Natural	 Human	 Social	 Cultural	 Financial	 Political
Strategic as	Short							
	Medium							
	Long							
	POTENTIAL IMPACTS							
OUTCOME INDICATORS								
COLLECTION PROCESS								

Adapted from "Visualizing Resilient Communities: A Guide for Practitioners" by the Resilient Communities Institute, 2014. Reproduced with permission from the Resilient Communities Institute.

[illegible]



Dream

The community capitals offer different lenses, or vantage points, and each of these perspectives helps the group recognize how multidimensional every public space is and the potential that lies within it.

Remember, assets are what we want to keep and build on or sustain for future generations. Assets can be tangible (a historic building, the local swimming pool, a 150-year-old tree, specific community residents, etc.). Or they can be intangible (the work of community groups, community pride, etc.) and “invested” in a public space. Thus the asset becomes capital!

As assets are populated on the worksheet, gaps in the inventory become apparent. Encourage participants to think long and hard about what the community has and what they can leverage.

Information tied to each asset will vary depending on the level of detail desired by the group—general categories versus specific assets with contact information, geo-location, potential role, etc. In the end, this worksheet

serves as a resource for recognizing and appreciating what the community has to invest in its public spaces.

Worksheet 2 is designed to be the group’s dreamcatcher while the group envisions what could be and works toward identifying project goals to realize the community’s dream for the future. Using this worksheet to capture these “dreams” can be more effective when considering the following:

- What could your public spaces look like?
- What roles could public spaces serve in your community?
- Which individuals, associations, institutions, and other assets could be involved, and what role might they play to realize these dreams?
- What results are we seeking?
- How will we know when the dream has become reality?

These framing questions enable you to capture concise statements that describe what enhancements to public spaces your community is seeking. The first two questions allude to what could be. The third question brings the

group back to considering Worksheet 1 and the assets that were previously identified. The final two questions look forward to the Design phase and help narrow the big dreams into achievable goals.

These dream elements can come in the form of a narrative or phrases. A dream may be the result of an impact derived from interactions with a public space—for example, a new club forms, participation in preschool programs increases—rather than a dream for the public space itself. In the end, however, each element should be detailed such that the goal is clear.

While the process is flexible, the end result, the goals, should be concrete and SMART:

Specific. The goal clearly defines what the group wants to achieve.

Measurable. Achieving the goal should be tangible by using a metric.

Achievable. The goal should be attainable and not pie in the sky.

Results-oriented. The goal should aim to achieve an outcome, instead of being an activity.

Time-bound. The goal should have a timeframe.

Design/Delivery

The Design and Delivery phases are the core elements of the AI process. After defining the issue, dreaming about the possibilities, and recognizing what the community has to invest, it is time to determine the **how**.

Finding innovative ways to achieve your dreams, and then determining means to sustain such efforts, is paramount. Worksheet 3 is a guide for this important step. It delineates the strategies that will be used to accomplish your SMART goals, identifying potential, anticipated impacts derived from implementing these strategies; determining the indicators (metrics) used to measure your performance, eventually a key piece of your Debrief; and outlining the

process that will be used to acquire the data necessary to measure your project's success.

This information will follow from Worksheets 1 and 2 by selecting the specific goals and assets that will be invested. Examples of each aspect of Worksheet 3 are found in each of the community capitals sections. Use these examples as a guide for completing Worksheet 3.

Begin with some framing questions:

- What strategies can we develop to move the program forward?
- What would implementation of the strategy look like?
- What needs to happen to be successful?
- What is something we can do immediately to take a step closer to that future?
- How will we celebrate our successes?

Strategies come in three different types, each associated with a specific phase of the project. Short-term strategies, which focus on the knowledge, skills, motivation, and awareness necessary for the project to be successful, are associated with a planning phase. Medium-term strategies focus on the behavior, practices, policies, and procedures associated with the project's implementation. Long-term strategies are concerned with situations or the environmental, social, economic, and political conditions that need to be present for the project to succeed. They are part of project management and monitoring.

As you consider and decide on strategies, potential impacts need to be identified. Potential impacts describe how systems or institutions change in response to implementing a particular strategy. Outcome indicators also need to be selected. Outcome indicators represent something we can measure to determine change. These might be statistics, like average household income or per capita income, or more qualitative in nature. Try to find a balance by selecting indicators that require the least work to collect, but that provide meaningful information on the impact of the strategy. Speaking of data collection, be sure to clearly identify who will collect the data and how.

Define/Debrief

Worksheet 4 should be used throughout the AI process as the participants—members of the core group, working group, focus group, etc.—will likely evolve over time, especially as the project takes shape. More than a roll call, Worksheet 4 is another form of asset map that helps the group understand not only who is at the table but also what they bring to the table. The “what” are the assets that each team member can invest; these should be categorized by community capital and added to the asset map developed in Worksheet 1, if they aren’t there already.

As it relates to the Define and Debrief phases, this worksheet includes all of the people associated with helping the group define what it wants to work on, typically which public space and what aspects of it, and the people who will evaluate the project and determine its future course. Having current and accurate contact information is key, as communication is critical to the project’s success.

An Example

The following handouts might be helpful to your group members if they have never used AI before. This exercise compares and contrasts the outcomes derived from deficit-based and asset-based approaches. The comparison is an excellent method to build support for using AI and for introducing the process. These worksheets are based on an exercise developed by one of our authors, Dr. Bo Beaulieu.

Two Approaches to Solving Community Concerns: Problem Solving vs. Appreciative Inquiry

This activity is designed to showcase two distinct approaches for tackling community challenges. The first reflects the commonly used needs approach, which focuses on identifying and prioritizing local problems. The second seeks to highlight the hopes and dreams of local residents, showcasing the talents and skills that individuals can offer to help achieve their dreams (based on Cooperrider et al., 2000, and Emery et al., 2006).

How to use this activity:

1. Divide your workshop participants into two groups approximately equal in size. If you have a large number of people, create groups of about 7-10. You must have an even number of groups; two, four, six, etc.
2. Decide among the entire group what public space you would like to focus on for this exercise. It can be a public space that is considered a gem or, more preferably, one that is facing significant issues.
3. Have group 1 (and groups 3, 5, etc.) complete the problem solving process exercise, while group 2 (and groups 4, 6, etc.) complete the appreciative inquiry process exercise. These activities should take 15-20 minutes. Make sure that groups 1, 3, 5, etc. are not aware of the activity that groups 2, 4, 6, etc. are completing, and vice versa.
4. Ask each group to select a member to record the key highlights of the group’s discussion.
5. Have the recorder, or another member chosen by the group, share the findings of the group’s deliberations. Limit each group’s presentation to 3-5 minutes.
6. Ask the entire group of participants to reflect on the two approaches to identifying community issues. Contrast the positive and negative features of each of the two approaches. Which one would the participants prefer to use in their communities? Why?

NOTE: Participants, whether members of an established or nascent group, often see benefits and limitations in either process. However, they usually recognize the richness derived from using AI and embrace the new ideas that are generated. This exercise is an effective way to “get the juices flowing” before digging deeper into the task at hand using the worksheets.

Making the Connection Between the Built Environment and Healthy Communities

P U E X T . I N / E V P S H E A L T H

PURDUE
EXTENSION

Making the Connection Between the Built Environment and Healthy Communities

Joey Vrazel, author

As we consider the concept of capital as represented in the Community Capitals Framework, we will build on this concept by adding that the most essential capital undergirding the very fabric of a community (beyond those included in the framework) is the health of its people.

As noted earlier, capital is described as “any type of resource capable of producing additional resources” (Emery, Fey, & Flora, 2006). Given this description, it is possible to make the case that the most fundamental resource required to develop and enhance other capitals is a healthy population. In fact, without good health, development is futile. Providing further support for this understanding, the World Health Organization (WHO) expands on the concept of health by describing it as a “resource for everyday life” and “essential for social and economic development” (WHO, 2009).

“People are the real wealth of a nation. The basic objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. This may appear to be a simple truth. But it is often forgotten in the immediate concern with the accumulation of commodities and financial wealth.”

— The Human Development Report 1990, United Nations Development Program (emphasis added)

As we will describe throughout this section, a large body of evidence has revealed that the health of people and places is primarily influenced by and linked to conditions in the larger environment, such as those described in the Community Capitals Framework (e.g., natural, built, and social environments). Drawing from this understanding, we

have further developed the original Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces (EVPS) program to help communities identify, develop, and enhance elements and influences in the built environment — specifically to create healthier communities.

As described earlier, the focus of this work is designing and developing healthy food and active living environments using the community capitals as a guide. To assist with this process, we provide a brief historical review to establish a common understanding of this work; identify the latest population-based models and approaches for building Healthy Communities; and outline examples of policies, systems, and environmental change strategies for creating healthy food and active living environments across each of the seven capitals of the Community Capitals Framework.

Setting the Stage

The influence of the physical environment (i.e., built and natural) on the health of people and communities was understood as far back as the late 1900s. In this era, dramatic improvements in public health were made possible by changes in the built environment. In fact, to the surprise of many, the original role of city planners in the United States was to work closely with the public health sector to implement environmental measures such as the provision of clean water, food, and air; healthier housing; and safer workplaces to protect the public’s health and prevent the spread of disease (Jackson, Dannenberg, & Frumkin, 2013; NALBOH, 2006; Ricklin & Kushner, 2015). Driven primarily by the development of policies related to zoning, housing, and transportation, many of the common causes of infectious disease were eradicated during this time period. Meanwhile, gains in American life expectancy continued to climb through the 20th century (Jackson, Dannenberg, & Frumkin, 2013; Perdue, Stone, & Gostin, 2003). These early efforts provide striking examples of how effective policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies can be in reaching and positively impacting the health of entire populations and communities.

Example Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes in the Late 1900s

<i>Policy Changes</i>	Development and implementation of city zoning and building safety codes
<i>Systems Changes</i>	Establishment of city planners/Changes in how city development was managed
<i>Environmental Changes</i>	Development of clean water supply and sanitation systems

“Many would be surprised to learn that the greatest contribution to the health of the nation over the past 150 years was made not by doctors or hospitals but by the local government. Our lack of appreciation of the role of our cities in establishing the health of the nation is largely due to the fact that so little has been written about it.”

— Dr. Jessie Parfitt, Oxford Public Health Physician

By the mid-20th century, the importance of the connection between public health and the built environment seemed to diminish. Infectious disease had been brought under control and, as a result, government planners turned their attention to promoting economic development through land use and transportation projects. The emphasis in public health shifted to modifying individual risk factors and lifestyle choices (Jackson, Dannenberg, & Frumkin, 2013; Perdue, Stone, & Gostin, 2003; Ricklin & Kushner, 2015).

The decades after World War II featured rising prosperity, abundant cheap fuel, affordable cars, and vast interstate highways — and the face of American communities changed dramatically as the majority of people and businesses moved out of city centers to outlying rural and suburban communities (NALBOH, 2006; Jackson, Dannenberg, & Frumkin, 2013). However, many individuals chose to stay in urban areas and often found themselves in an urban food desert. The healthy eating and active living choices that were available varied greatly by socioeconomic status and thereby impacted different communities to a higher or lesser degree.

An Issue of Access – Too Little and Too Much

During this time period, the shifts in focus by both the planning community and public health sector neglected to identify and consider a completely different kind of threat in the built environment: *an overabundance of poor health choices*. The new threat included automobile-only transportation; easy and cheap access to fast and low-nutrient foods; a *lack of access to healthy and safe choices* such as sidewalks for active transportation; and lack of affordable, nutrient-rich food options.

After decades of exposure to these types of environments, it is now clear that what we choose to eat and how we incorporate physical activity into (or out of) our lives directly affect our health (McGinnis, Williams-Russo, & Knickman, 2002). Although they developed in isolation of each other, type II diabetes and obesity epidemics are unforeseen consequences of this era’s life-threatening habits. (NRC & IOM, 2013).

Late in the 20th century, a major paradigm shift in public health was driven by a large and growing body of evidence revealing that **health is largely determined by conditions in the environments** (i.e., social, economic, and physical) and settings (e.g., neighborhoods, schools, worksites, and churches) **in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age** (Healthy People 2020, 2010; McGinnis, et al., 2002; WHO, 2005; emphasis added). The conditions and environments that impact health and influence health behavior are often referred to as *place* (Healthy People, 2020). Further describing this understanding in lay-

person’s terms — “where you live, determines how you live” (Bell & Rubin, 2007) and “the choices we make are driven by the choices we have” (Trailnet, 2009).

“One number may determine how healthy you are and how long you live. It isn’t your weight, cholesterol count, or any of those numbers that doctors look at. **It’s your address.**”
— Policy Link

In addition to the material attributes of place, we learned that patterns of social engagement and sense of security and wellbeing are also affected by where people live. These patterns and conditions (e.g., education, income, social support, housing, and transit) affect a wide range of health, function, and quality-of-life outcomes and are largely referred to as the **social determinants of health**, or more broadly, the **determinants of health** (Healthy People 2020, 2010; WHO, Commission on Social Determinants of Health, 2005).

Please note – this curriculum does not address air quality, water quality, and sanitation, but many planning departments are able to address this wider range of concerns.

Further supporting this understanding, the Model of Population Health (Figure 1), developed by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute as part of the County Health Rankings, provides an overview of the wide range of factors that have been shown to influence the health of people and places based on the latest data and evidence. Strikingly, the model reveals that when combined, factors in the physical, social, and economic environments (circled in the diagram) account for 50 percent of the influences on health, with an additional 30 percent contributed by health behaviors largely influenced by those external environments. In contrast to what many might believe, health care — both access to and quality of care — only accounts for around 20 percent of health outcomes (UWPHI, 2014).

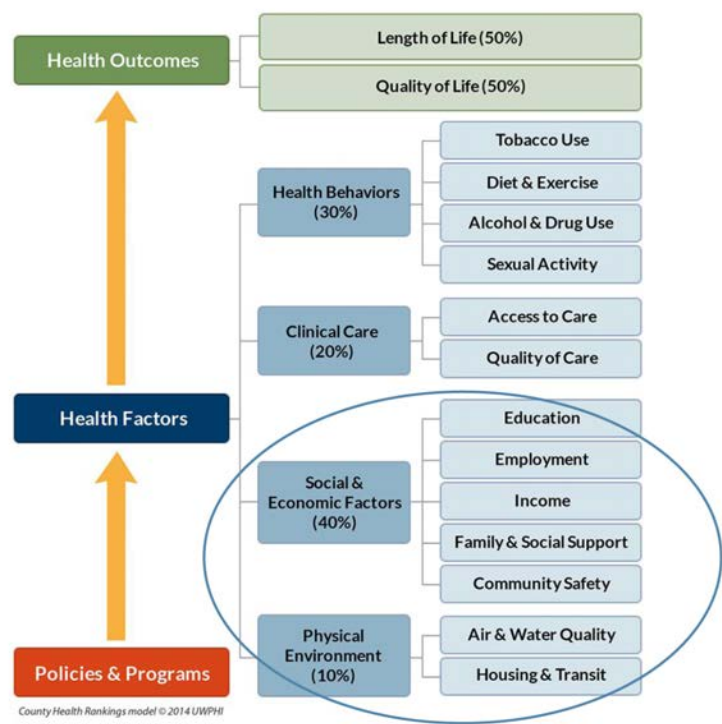


Figure 1: Model of Population Health (County Health Rankings, UWPHI, 2014)

As our understanding of the determinants of health has grown, it has not only revealed the positive influences on health, but as importantly, the negative influences and missing supports that cause significant health disparities among communities and population groups. Outlined in Table 1, we provide a basic comparison of these contrasting conditions.

“It is unreasonable to think that people are going to change their behavior easily when so many forces in the social, cultural and physical environment conspire against that change.”
— Institute of Medicine, 2000

Table 1. Examples of Determinants of Health, Modified from Policy Link

	Conditions That Support Health	Conditions That Create Barriers to Health
<i>Possible impacts from this program</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, Well-Connected Neighborhoods • Adequate Public Transportation • Safe, Well-Maintained Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated, Unsafe Neighborhoods • Limited or No Public Transportation • Unsafe/Limited Parks
<i>Additional impacts</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery Stores • Safe and Affordable Housing • Better-Performing Schools • Child Care and After-School Programs • Financial Institutions • Employment Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Access to Full-Scale Grocery Store • Overabundance of Fast Food Restaurants/ Convenience Stores • Overabundance of Liquor/Tobacco Stores • Poor-Performing Schools • High Unemployment • Inadequate Child Care and After-School Programs

As a result of this understanding, the United States national health objectives (Healthy People 2020) include goals not only to eliminate health disparities, but also to achieve health equity and *improve* the health of all groups. While early strategies for eliminating health disparities focused primarily on preventing diseases or illnesses and providing health-care services, the growing understanding that the absence of disease does not automatically equate to good health led to an expanded focus on improving health. Building on this understanding, health equity is defined as the “attainment of the highest level of health for all people” (USDHHS, Office of Minority Health, 2011).

Even though health care plays a surprisingly small role in premature death (Figure 1), close to 90 percent or more of the *trillions* of dollars we spend on “health” as a nation goes to direct medical care services and less than 5 percent is allocated to population-wide approaches to health improvement (McGinnis & Forge, 1993). Viewed a differed way, Figure 2 dramatically illustrates the breakdown of the factors that make us healthy versus what is (or is not) spent on those factors. This information clearly illustrates the disconnect between what is known and what is invested, and reveals the opportunity to redirect our efforts to what matters most.

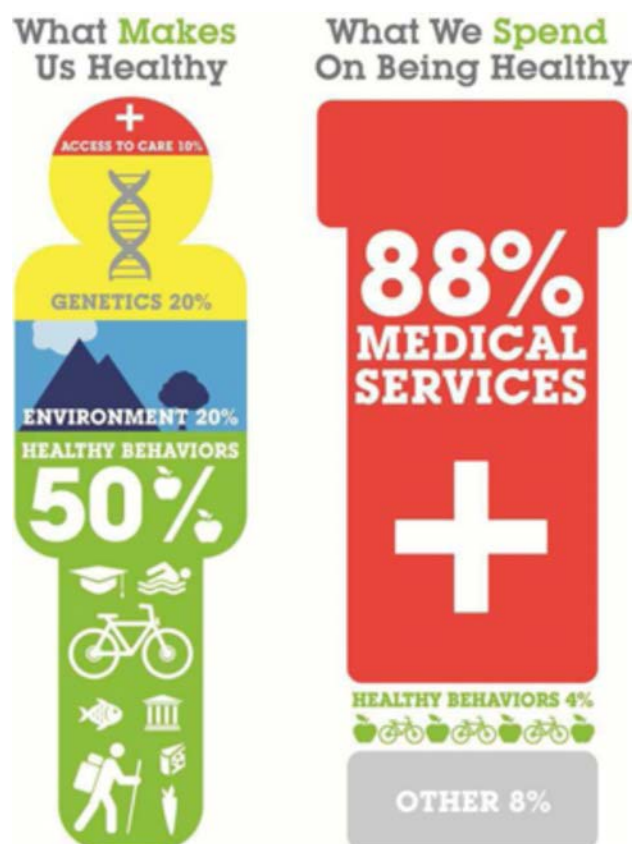


Figure 2: A Visual Comparison of Factors that Influence Health Versus What is Spent on Health; Boston Foundation, 2007.

Incorporating a Socioecological Approach to Health

As mounting evidence indicated that health and health behaviors are significantly influenced by a wide variety of forces, many outside of the control of individuals (Figure 1 and Table 1), the focus of community-based efforts shifted away from medical factors and individual-level behavior-change strategies to the broader influences of the community environment around individuals where behaviors take place (e.g., social, natural, and physical environments) (Figure 1 of the Model of Population Health). This method is widely known as a socioecological approach or environmental perspective (IOM, 2000; McLeroy et al., 1988; Stokols, 1996). Moreover, this understanding underscores the significant impact and influence — both positive and negative — of man-made policies, systems, and environments on the health of people and communities.

That is, community planning affects individual health. Most ecological models show the influences on behavior as a series of overlapping layers, where each “layer” both influences and is influenced by the other layers (McLeroy et al., 1988). A modified version of these models in Figure 3 illustrates the individual surrounded by differing layers (or levels) of environmental influence.

This ecological perspective emphasizes that it takes a *combination* of individual-, environmental- (social and physical), and policy-level interventions and conditions to create substantial changes in health behaviors, and, ultimately, in the health of populations and communities (Krieger, Strunk, & Norris, 2013; McLeroy et al., 1988; Stokols, 1996). This moves us beyond a sole focus on individual-level behavior

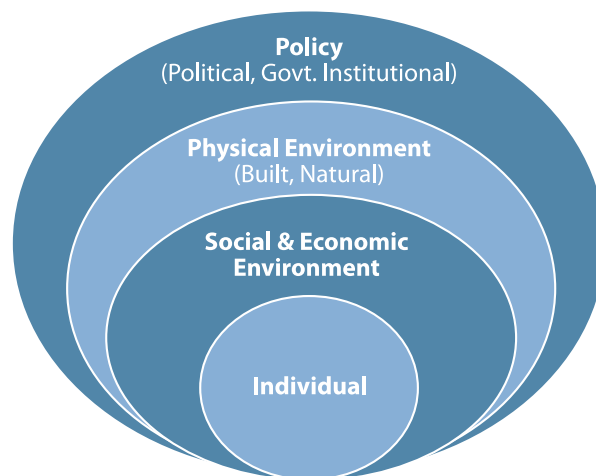


Figure 3: Modified Ecological Approach

change and programs. Instead, we focus on policy, systems (e.g., structures, processes, and procedures), and environmental-change strategies at all layers of influence, because they are the most effective and sustainable way to affect population-level health (Krieger, Strunk, & Norris, 2013; Stokols, 1996). This shifts the focus to different types of action, different targets of action, and new sets of partners (Auspos & Cabaj, 2014). Figure 4 illustrates the general overall process for creating Healthy Communities, which starts with developing policies and creating environments that support and influence healthy behaviors (Keener et al., 2009).

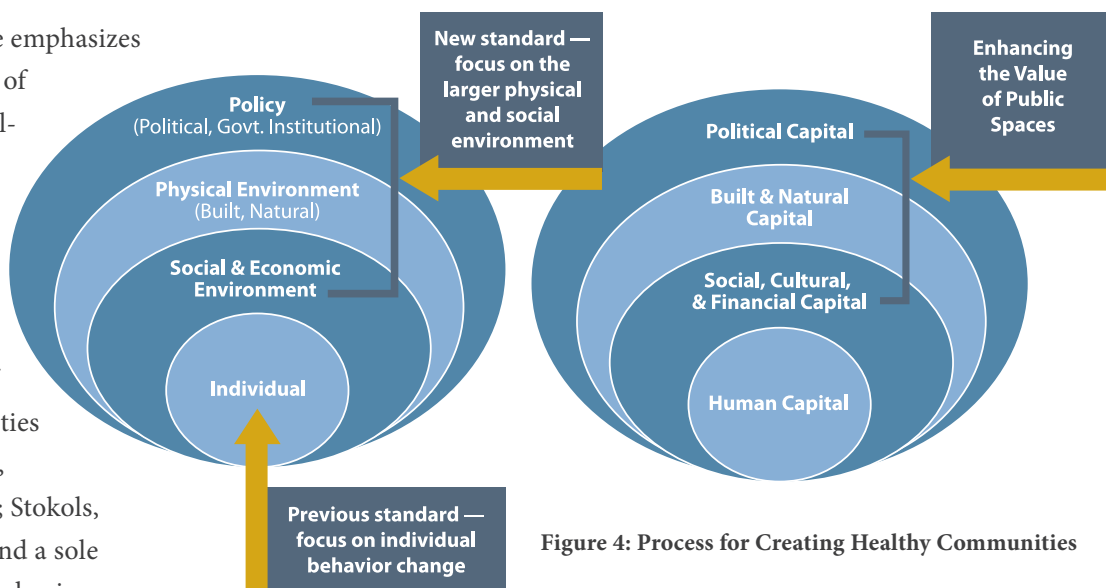


Figure 4: Process for Creating Healthy Communities

Understanding Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change

Recognizing that a policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change approach might be a challenging concept to understand, it is important to clarify the approach. Generally, applying a policy, systems, and environmental change approach is a process that includes identifying and modifying characteristics in the larger environment (e.g., economic, physical, social) that offer or limit opportunities for positive health outcomes (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013a). In addition, PSE strategies go beyond programs and are focused on the structures in which we work, live, and play (The Food Trust [TFT], 2012). Each type of strategy addresses different conditions and influences the various levels of the larger environment; however, the strategies often work hand-in-hand. Following is a brief description of each of the change approaches with a few examples:

Policy change includes written statements of organizational or legislative position, decision, or course of action, setting out a general approach to be applied broadly. Policy interventions might include a law, ordinance, mandate, regulation, rule, or guideline — both formal and informal. Government bodies (i.e., federal, state, and local levels), school districts and schools, park districts, healthcare organizations (e.g., hospitals, health systems), worksites, and other community institutions (e.g., daycare centers, senior-living centers, faith-based institutions, jails) all have and make policies (TFT, 2012). Examples include:

- Developing and adopting a comprehensive or general plan to guide land-use decisions (APA, 2015)
- Establishing healthy concession-stand policies for local parks or public recreation facilities (TFT, 2012)

Systems change includes changes in organizations, procedures, and processes such as personnel, support, or resource allocation and is often developed in connection with policy changes (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013a). Often, systems change focuses on changing infrastructure within particular settings such as local governments, parks, worksites, or healthcare facilities, or instituting processes

or procedures to ensure healthier environments (TFT, 2012). Examples include:

- Developing a food policy council and food systems report (Harper et al., 2009)
- Incorporating health elements, language, and data into comprehensive or General Plans (APA, 2015)

Environmental change is change made to the built (i.e., man-made), natural, social, or economic environment. Physical (e.g., structural or material changes), natural (e.g., enhancing parks and greenspaces), social (e.g., social cohesion, civic engagement), and economic factors (e.g., presence of financial disincentives or incentives to encourage a desired behavior) influence people's practices and behaviors. Examples include:

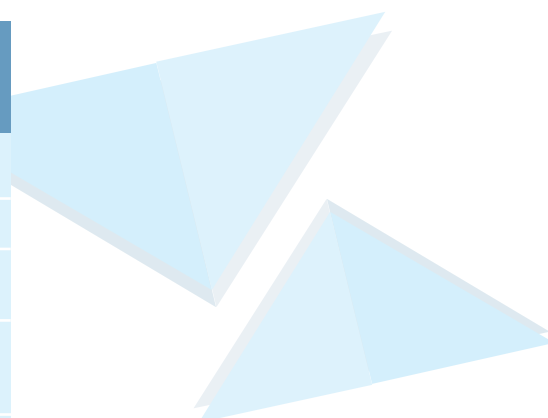
- Incorporating sidewalks, paths, pedestrian-friendly intersections, and recreation areas into community design (APA, 2015)
- Opening Farmers' Markets at community-based organizations in underserved areas (TFT, 2012)



Connecting to the Community Capitals Framework

Building on what we have learned about the Socioecological Model and PSE change, we illustrate below how the levels of influence described by the model are closely aligned with the Community Capitals Framework. Although the terminology and descriptions are slightly different, there is consistency and agreement across the two frameworks regarding the key influences that are necessary for leading and working to create healthier communities.

Ecological Model	Community Capitals Framework
Individual Level →	Human Capital
Social Environment Level →	Social and Cultural Capital
Economic Environment Level →	Financial Capital
Physical Environment (Built and Natural) Level →	Built and Natural Capital
Political Environment Level →	Political Capital





Tying together all of the information presented in this module are specific examples of evidence-based policy, systems, and environmental-change strategies related to creating healthy food and active living environments across the seven capitals of the Community Capitals Framework. Outlined in Table 2, this information provides a compelling overview of the wide range of factors that


can be modified or enhanced in a community to create supportive conditions and environments that in turn lead to healthier communities and people. Combined, the information presented in this module helps to establish an essential foundation of knowledge for community leaders to draw from as they work to build and sustain healthy, thriving communities.


Table 2. Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Strategies for Healthy Food and Active Living Environments Per Community Capital.

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
BUILT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a Complete Streets Policy (APA, 2016b; CDC, 2010; Smart Growth America, 2016) • Authorize an advisory committee to study the availability of healthier food retail options in specific underserved areas (ChangeLabs Solutions, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate health considerations in all governing land-use documents (e.g., comprehensive plan, zoning and other development code, siting policies) (APA, 2015) • Enhance access to public transportation (e.g., adding bus stops and van pool services) to supermarkets and large grocery stores (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a network of walking and biking routes (CDC, 2010) • Develop a permanent structure to house year-round farmers' market(s) (Barbour, Hunter, Jones, & Whiting, 2014)


Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
CULTURAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a policy to provide <i>direct</i> resources (e.g., money, land, pavilion, recreational facilities, sponsorship, and advertising) for supporting community-wide physical activity opportunities (e.g., sports teams, walking clubs, and events) (Active Living Research, 2015; CDC, 2010). • Adopt design guidelines for new public spaces and improvements to existing facilities to strengthen environmental benefits and provide visitor amenities (STAR, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host programs and events in parks and public spaces that bring the community together and encourage physical activity (Trailnet, 2009). • Provide promotional signage, optimal placement, and pricing discounts for fresh fruit and vegetables offered in public food facilities (i.e., government spaces and schools) (ChangeLab Solutions, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install signage (i.e., wayfinding) on already established walking or biking routes to highlight community and community destinations (Hunter et al., 2013). • Establish community gardens to not only increase access to fresh produce, but also provide opportunities for neighbors to connect, learn about nutrition, and possibly even start a business (ChangeLabs Solutions & NPLAN, 2009)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
FINANCIAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute mixed-land use that offers a combination of retail, commercial, and residential uses that allows for easier access to goods and services (APA, 2015) • Develop a policy to offer store owners a discount on their grocery permit fee (from Health Department) if they stock nutritious items (ChangeLab Solutions, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently invest sufficient capital and operational funding to create and maintain parks and public spaces (STAR, 2015) • Connect locally grown foods to local restaurants and food venues (ChangeLabs Solutions, 2013b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance access to public transportation by increasing the number of bus stops and van pool services within reasonable walking distance to neighborhoods (CDC, 2010) • Recruit, support (through funding, zoning, tax breaks), and establish grocery stores in areas where lack of access to healthy food exists (i.e., food deserts) (Bell et al., 2013)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
HUMAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mission statement (or a written policy statement) that includes the support of, or commitment to, employee health and well-being (CDC, 2010) • Establish a human resources policy within local government that requires healthy food options be provided at all meetings (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide flexible work arrangements or break times for employees to engage in physical activity (CDC, 2010) • Provide training to local school system food directors to increase use of local produce (USDA, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bicycle parking (e.g., bike racks, shelters) for employees (CDC, 2010) • Institute and provide healthy food and beverage options in vending machines (CDC, 2010)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
NATURAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a community-wide green infrastructure plan that is integrated with other relevant local plans (STAR, 2015) • Adopt zoning and development regulations that support or incentivize farmers' markets and community gardens (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an advisory board to regularly receive feedback from residents and organizations regarding planning and decisionmaking affecting the quality and availability of parks and public spaces (STAR, 2015) • Develop and support Farm-to-School programs (USDA, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to parks, shared-use paths and trails, or open spaces within reasonable walking distance of most homes (CDC, 2010) • Provide increased public access to county or city public land (or previously vacant land) for green spaces or farmers' market(s) (APA, 2015; ChangeLab Solutions, 2013b)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
POLITICAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and adopt a comprehensive plan including land use and transportation policies (APA, 2015) • Develop and adopt a Food System Plan with necessary supportive policies (APA, 2016a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Wempe, 2012). • Institute a Food Policy Council (Harper et al., 2009; Trailnet, 2009) • Create a community plan to account for the health impacts of new projects (APA, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install bike racks or bike-sharing capability at all public facilities (city & county) (CDC, 2010) • Ensure all government facilities have access to (free) water drinking fountains or dispensers (CDC, 2010)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
SOCIAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with community groups and engage local residents to provide ideas and feedback about improvements to and programming for local parks and public active recreation spaces (PPS, 2016) • Provide guidelines for healthy food and beverage options at food venues and park concession stands for public events, as well as public meetings (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to a broad range of competitive and noncompetitive physical activities that help to develop the skills needed to participate in lifetime physical activities (CDC, 2010) • Accept Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program vouchers or Food Stamp Benefits at local farmers' markets (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to safe, accessible, well-maintained sidewalks to increase social interaction and maximize social capital (NACTO, 2012). • Provide amenities in public spaces such as community gardens, farmers' market(s), tables and chairs, music, and games that encourage social interaction and community cohesion (PPS, 2016)


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Handout 1


Examples of Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Strategies to Create Healthy Food and Active Living Environments per Community Capital

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
BUILT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a Complete Streets Policy (APA, 2016b; CDC, 2010; Smart Growth America, 2016) • Authorize an advisory committee to study the availability of healthier food retail options in specific underserved areas (ChangeLabs Solutions, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate health considerations in all governing land-use documents (e.g., comprehensive plan, zoning and other development code, siting policies) (APA, 2015) • Enhance access to public transportation (e.g., adding bus stops and van pool services) to supermarkets and large grocery stores (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a network of walking and biking routes (CDC, 2010) • Develop a permanent structure to house year-round farmers' market(s) (Barbour, Hunter, Jones, & Whiting, 2014)


Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
CULTURAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a policy to provide <i>direct</i> resources (e.g., money, land, pavilion, recreational facilities, sponsorship, and advertising) for supporting community-wide physical activity opportunities (e.g., sports teams, walking clubs, and events) (Active Living Research, 2015; CDC, 2010). • Adopt design guidelines for new public spaces and improvements to existing facilities to strengthen environmental benefits and provide visitor amenities (STAR, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host programs and events in parks and public spaces that bring the community together and encourage physical activity (Trailnet, 2009). • Provide promotional signage, optimal placement, and pricing discounts for fresh fruit and vegetables offered in public food facilities (i.e., government spaces and schools) (ChangeLab Solutions, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install signage (i.e., wayfinding) on already established walking or biking routes to highlight community and community destinations (Hunter et al., 2013). • Establish community gardens to not only increase access to fresh produce, but also provide opportunities for neighbors to connect, learn about nutrition, and possibly even start a business (ChangeLabs Solutions & NPLAN, 2009)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
FINANCIAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute mixed-land use that offers a combination of retail, commercial, and residential uses that allows for easier access to goods and services (APA, 2015) • Develop a policy to offer store owners a discount on their grocery permit fee (from Health Department) if they stock nutritious items (ChangeLab Solutions, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently invest sufficient capital and operational funding to create and maintain parks and public spaces (STAR, 2015) • Connect locally grown foods to local restaurants and food venues (ChangeLabs Solutions, 2013b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance access to public transportation by increasing the number of bus stops and van pool services within reasonable walking distance to neighborhoods (CDC, 2010) • Recruit, support (through funding, zoning, tax breaks), and establish grocery stores in areas where lack of access to healthy food exists (i.e., food deserts) (Bell et al., 2013)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
HUMAN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mission statement (or a written policy statement) that includes the support of, or commitment to, employee health and well-being (CDC, 2010) • Establish a human resources policy within local government that requires healthy food options be provided at all meetings (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide flexible work arrangements or break times for employees to engage in physical activity (CDC, 2010) • Provide training to local school system food directors to increase use of local produce (USDA, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide bicycle parking (e.g., bike racks, shelters) for employees (CDC, 2010) • Institute and provide healthy food and beverage options in vending machines (CDC, 2010)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
NATURAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a community-wide green infrastructure plan that is integrated with other relevant local plans (STAR, 2015) • Adopt zoning and development regulations that support or incentivize farmers' markets and community gardens (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an advisory board to regularly receive feedback from residents and organizations regarding planning and decisionmaking affecting the quality and availability of parks and public spaces (STAR, 2015) • Develop and support Farm-to-School programs (USDA, 2016) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to parks, shared-use paths and trails, or open spaces within reasonable walking distance of most homes (CDC, 2010) • Provide increased public access to county or city public land (or previously vacant land) for green spaces or farmers' market(s) (APA, 2015; ChangeLab Solutions, 2013b)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
POLITICAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and adopt a comprehensive plan including land use and transportation policies (APA, 2015) • Develop and adopt a Food System Plan with necessary supportive policies (APA, 2016a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Wempe, 2012). • Institute a Food Policy Council (Harper et al., 2009; Trailnet, 2009) • Create a community plan to account for the health impacts of new projects (APA, 2015) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install bike racks or bike-sharing capability at all public facilities (city & county) (CDC, 2010) • Ensure all government facilities have access to (free) water drinking fountains or dispensers (CDC, 2010)

Community Capital	Policy Strategies	Systems Strategies	Environmental Strategies
SOCIAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with community groups and engage local residents to provide ideas and feedback about improvements to and programming for local parks and public active recreation spaces (PPS, 2016) • Provide guidelines for healthy food and beverage options at food venues and park concession stands for public events, as well as public meetings (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to a broad range of competitive and noncompetitive physical activities that help to develop the skills needed to participate in lifetime physical activities (CDC, 2010) • Accept Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program vouchers or Food Stamp Benefits at local farmers' markets (CDC, 2010) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to safe, accessible, well-maintained sidewalks to increase social interaction and maximize social capital (NACTO, 2012). • Provide amenities in public spaces such as community gardens, farmers' market(s), tables and chairs, music, and games that encourage social interaction and community cohesion (PPS, 2016)

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The Benefits of Creating Healthy Communities

P U E X T . I N / E V P S H E A L T H

PURDUE
EXTENSION

The Benefits of Creating Healthy Communities

Joey Vrazel, author

Across the United States, cities of every size have initiated community-wide campaigns to create supportive and dynamic environments that encourage residents to become healthier (Convergence Partnership, 2008; Eitler, McMahon, & Thoerig, 2013; PPS, 2016). Not only have these initiatives improved the health of residents, they have also resulted in an increased sense of community, more vibrant local streetscapes, increased sense of safety, a revitalized local economy, and more (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoerig, 2013; PPS, 2016; Trailnet, 2009).

Drawing from a vast body of knowledge revealing the beneficial impacts and positive influences of creating healthy food and active-living environments, we will provide a snapshot of these benefits and influences as they relate to each of the capitals of the Community Capitals Framework. Before we lay out this compelling evidence, we will first establish a foundation for this work by providing the latest research and understanding about healthy eating and active living behaviors, emphasizing how vital these behaviors are to life and living, and to explain how and why the effects of these behaviors undergird the very foundation of healthy, thriving communities.

Making the Case for Healthy Eating and Active Living Behaviors

In Module 2, we described the unfolding history and research that has led to our understanding of the important influence of the built environment on health and health behaviors. In addition to the background information described in that module, our understanding has been further informed by an increasing range of health-related data that has provided additional clarification and evidence about the primary factors leading to some of our most complex challenges, such as increasingly common and largely preventable chronic diseases. To provide a striking example, research has revealed that three behaviors — physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use and

exposure — are primarily responsible for four major diseases. As illustrated in Figure 1, these four diseases result in over 50 percent of premature deaths in the U.S. (County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency, 2010).

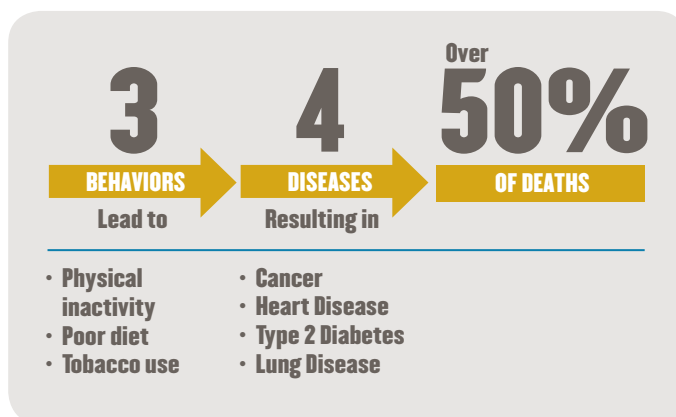


Figure 1: Leading (Preventable) Causes of Chronic Disease (MCGINNIS & FORGE, 1993), Illustration Developed by LIVEWELL San Diego

The key factor to glean from this figure is that the three risk behaviors, the diseases they cause, and the premature deaths that result from these diseases, are largely preventable (Loeppke, 2008). In other words, practicing healthy eating and active living behaviors and not being exposed to or using tobacco are vital to preventing these and other diseases.

Although the effects of these three behaviors in preventing disease is notable alone, it is important to further distinguish and emphasize the added positive impacts of healthy eating and active-living behaviors. Namely, a growing body of evidence has identified that eating a healthy diet and being physically active offers significant additional benefits to improving health — mentally, physically, and socially (CDC, 2016; IOM, 2014).

When you overlay the importance of healthy eating and active-living behaviors for disease prevention and health improvement with an understanding that these essential behaviors require effort and decisions every day,

all-day-long, by every person (and those they care for), it becomes clear why it is so important to create supportive environments that make it easier for people to engage in these behaviors consistently.

To establish a basic but fundamental understanding of the importance of healthy eating and active living behaviors, and provide community leaders with additional evidence to make the case for developing healthy communities, we will

- provide a definition of these phrases to establish a shared understanding;
- outline the national guidelines for each of these behaviors; and
- summarize the latest evidence about the individual benefits that can be gained from meeting the guidelines.

Defining Healthy Eating and Active Living

Although the meaning behind the catchphrases *healthy eating* and *active living* are fairly clear on their own, it is important to provide a more complete definition to ensure that we are working from a common understanding of these phrases as they relate to the focus and work of the EVPS Healthy Communities program. To that end, we offer the following definitions:

- **Healthy Eating** is consuming the recommended amounts and variety of foods and beverages that provide the nutrients needed to create energy for daily living, maintain and improve health, and prevent disease. (For the purpose of this resource, we will use the terms healthy eating or healthy food to include both eating and drinking behaviors and/or foods and beverages.)
- **Active Living** is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines in order to meet the recommended levels of activity needed to perform the functions of daily living, maintain and enhance health, improve quality of life, and prevent disease.

Over the course of the last several decades, our understanding about the significant beneficial impact

of a healthy diet and adequate physical activity has continued to expand. Due in large part to new technology, ongoing research, and regularly updated national reports, we now have enough evidence to make more specific recommendations for these behaviors regarding the amount, type, quality, or effort that is needed to improve health and as importantly, significantly decrease the risks associated with the diseases described earlier (USDHHS & USDA, 2015a & 2015b; USDHHS, 2008a & 2008b).

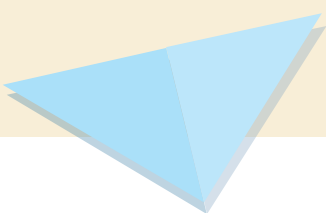
While there is still a great deal to be learned, there is ample evidence to warrant a more substantial effort to promote the importance of meeting these recommendations and the significant benefits that can be gained by individuals and society as a whole by doing so. Outlined below, we provide a brief summary of the latest national guidelines and the known benefits of healthy eating and active living behaviors.

Guidelines for and Benefits of Healthy Eating

According to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, a healthy diet is a pillar of well-being throughout the lifespan. It supports normal growth, development, and aging, helps maintain a healthy body weight, promotes the achievement of healthy pregnancy outcomes, reduces chronic disease risks, and promotes overall health and well-being (USDA & USDHHS, 2015a). So what exactly is needed to achieve those benefits? Unfortunately, the answer is not simple.

Today, we refer to the combinations and quantities of foods and nutrients that individuals consume as an *eating pattern*. Based on this understanding, eating patterns and their food and nutrient components, are at the core of the 2015–2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. A summary of the latest guidelines is given below (USDHHS & USDA, 2015b). Following the guidelines is a brief outline of some of the many preventive, protective, and health enhancing effects of eating a healthy diet.

USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans

1. **Follow a healthy eating pattern across the lifespan.** All food and beverage choices matter. Choose a healthy eating pattern at an appropriate calorie level to help achieve and maintain a healthy body weight, support nutrient adequacy, and reduce the risk of chronic disease.
 2. **Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount.** To meet nutrient needs within calorie limits, choose a variety of nutrient-dense foods across and within all food groups in recommended amounts.
 3. **Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats, and reduce sodium intake.** Consume an eating pattern low in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium. Cut back on foods and beverages higher in these components to amounts that fit within healthy eating patterns.
 4. **Shift to healthier food and beverage choices.** Choose nutrient-dense foods and beverages across and within all food groups in place of less healthy choices. Consider cultural and personal preferences to make these shifts easier to accomplish and maintain.
 5. **Support healthy eating patterns for all.** Everyone has a role in helping to create and support healthy eating patterns in multiple settings nationwide, from home to school to work to communities.
- 

Individual Preventive/Protective Effects of Healthy Eating

- Lowers risk of:
 - Early death
 - Coronary heart disease, stroke
 - High blood pressure, adverse blood lipid profile
 - Obesity
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Certain cancers
 - Bone loss (osteoporosis)
 - Neural tube defects
- Prevents weight gain (through lower calorie intake)
- Supports weight loss and maintenance of healthy weight (with appropriate calorie intake)
- Reduces bone loss
- Mitigates the level of (damaging) free radicals
- Repairs body tissues

Individual Health-Enhancing Effects of Healthy Eating

- Provides essential nutrients for growth, development, and maintenance of body functions
- Improves brain health and mental function (Gómez-Pinilla, 2008)
- Supports a healthy nervous system
- Maintains healthy blood pressure
- Enhances the immune system
- Improves digestion and plays a key role in metabolism
- Provides the building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood
- Supports energy production

For more detailed health benefits related to specific populations, refer to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (USDHHS, 2018).

Guidelines for and Benefits of Active Living

In the past few decades, public health professionals have witnessed an explosion of evidence demonstrating the health-promoting and protecting benefits of physical activity (Haskell et al., 2007; USDHHS, 1996, 2008a). In 2008, for the first time in history, the federal government published national recommendations called *The Physical*

Activity Guidelines for Americans (USDHHS, 2008a, 2008b). Building on the extensive report of the latest science (USDHHS, 2018), the second edition of the guidelines, as outlined below, provides an overview of the specific recommendations per age group that are necessary to obtain a wide range of health benefits (USDHHS, 2018). Following the guidelines is a brief outline of some of the many preventive, protective, and health-enhancing effects of meeting these recommendations.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

- Preschool-aged children (ages 3 through 5 years) should be physically active throughout the day to enhance growth and development.
- Children and adolescents (ages 6 through 17 years) should do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity daily.
- For substantial health benefits, adults should do at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) to 300 minutes (5 hours) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) to 150 minutes (2.5 hours) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Aerobic activity should preferably be spread throughout the week.
- Older adults should follow adult guidelines or be as physically active as their abilities and conditions will allow.

4 Key Adult Guidelines

- Move more and sit less throughout the day
- Substantial health benefits from at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity
- More health benefits from 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity a week
- Muscle-strengthening activities provide additional benefits

In addition to the populations above, the complete *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* provides evidence-based recommendations for women during pregnancy and the postpartum period, adults with chronic health conditions, and adults with disabilities.

Individual Preventive/Protective Effects of Active Living

- Lowers risk of:
 - Early death
 - Coronary heart disease, stroke
 - High blood pressure, adverse blood lipid profile
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Certain cancers (Recent evidence links exercise to lower risk of 13 cancers)
- Prevents weight gain (with appropriate calorie intake)
- Supports weight loss and maintenance of healthy weight (with reduction of caloric intake)
- Prevents falls (especially for older adults)
- Prevents depression and relapse
- Helps control joint swelling and pain from arthritis

Individual Health-Enhancing Effects of Active Living

- Improves brain function and development (Cotman & Berchtold, 2002)
- Improves mental health and mood (Monteiro-Peluso & Guerra, 2005)
- Improves sleep (Loprinzi & Cardinal, 2011)
- Strengthens bones and muscles
- Improves ability to do daily activities
- Helps develop lean muscle and reduce body fat
- Boosts energy level
- Improves overall quality of life

(CDC, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity [DNPAO])

For more detailed health benefits related to specific populations, refer to the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* (USDHHS, 2018).

Making the Case for Healthy Food and Active Living Environments

Our intent in providing the guidelines for healthy-eating and active-living behaviors and, as importantly, highlighting the resulting preventive, protective, and health-enhancing effects of meeting these recommendations is two-fold:

1. to increase awareness and elevate the level of importance of these vital behaviors in our society, and

2. to make the important connection between the necessary conditions and supports needed in communities to enable all residents — regardless of age, ability, or income — to meet these daily recommendations consistently and easily.

With the basis of healthy-eating and active-living behaviors established, we now shift our attention to the larger community environment, around individuals that can support residents in meeting the guidelines and making them easier to achieve.

To help make this connection, we will provide a few examples. First, we will consider the importance of the built environment as it relates to healthy eating. Given the importance of establishing a healthy eating pattern that enables each person to get the nutrients needed for health, we have learned that to do that, people must first have access to a variety of healthy, nutritious foods. In addition to having access, people must also be able to afford healthier food options. Unfortunately, some communities do not have access to a full-scale grocery store within a reasonable travelling distance (i.e., within 10–20 miles for rural communities and within a half-mile to mile for urban communities [USDA, Economic Research Service, 2017]). In addition to lacking easy access to nutrient-rich foods, many of these same communities face an overabundance of low-cost, poor food options from fast-food establishments or convenience stores (making it easy or even unavoidable to make poor choices). In some cases, even when healthy food options are offered in these establishments, they are often more expensive than the same product in a full-scale grocery store. This scenario highlights why having access to affordable, healthy food options is vital to meeting the guidelines and gaining the related benefits.

To provide an example on the active-living side of the equation, we will highlight the physical activity recommendations for children (ages 6–17), which state that each child should get at least 60 minutes per-day of moderate to vigorous physical activity. In light of this recommendation, it is important to consider that even if a



child is fortunate enough to be exposed to a high-quality physical education program in the school environment, and one that is implemented daily, it is unlikely that it will provide the 60 minutes of activity needed. In fact, only Oregon and the District of Columbia currently meet the national recommendations for weekly time in physical education at both elementary and middle-school levels (Society of Health & Physical Educators, 2016), not to mention that this issue becomes an even bigger factor outside of the school year.

Given this scenario, most children need additional options that encourage them to be physically active in the home, neighborhood, or community environment to meet the recommended amount for health. This is one reason why having access to after-school programs, safe neighborhoods, local parks, and/or programs that support walking or biking to school (i.e., Safe Routes to School) are so vital.

Using the Community Capitals Framework to Identify the Benefits and Influences of Creating Healthy Communities

Armed with a baseline knowledge and understanding of healthy-eating and active-living behaviors, we now take the next step to provide further evidence about the extensive positive impacts of creating Healthy Communities. To more clearly identify and promote the wide-range of influences and benefits that create healthier communities, we will use the Community Capitals Framework as a guide. As illustrated in Figure 4, each of the capitals represents a specific type of *resource* for communities to tap into and build on. In addition to the specifics of each capital, Figure 4 also illustrates how the capitals overlap, highlighting the interrelated nature of these factors in a community environment.



Figure 4: Community Capitals Framework for Creating Healthy Communities

Therefore, as we lay out the evidence specific to each of the capitals, we will also identify those instances when other capitals are involved. Given the significance of public spaces and the built environment to this work, we will provide a substantial emphasis on built capital.

To provide an overview of what is known about the positive influences and benefits of creating Healthy Communities, we will outline the information by answering the following questions for each of the Community Capitals:

- How is each respective Community Capital related to *Healthy Communities*?
- What is the relationship between Healthy Food Environments and Healthy Eating to each respective Community Capital? (Which community capitals relate to each influence or benefit?)
- What is the relationship between Active-Living Environments and Behaviors and each respective Community Capital? (What community capitals relate to each influence or benefit?)

How to Use This Information

We have compiled the following information for two primary purposes:

- to provide community leaders and partners with the evidence necessary to make the strongest case for this work in communities, and
- to identify and increase awareness about the wide-range of strategies used to create healthy food and active living environments in communities of every size across the country.

Although this information is comprehensive in scope, it is not intended to represent an exhaustive review of the evidence. Nonetheless, outlining the information based on the Community Capitals allowed us to cast a wide net across what is known and to provide select factors (i.e., selling points) related to each of the capitals. Given the scope of this information, this section is presented as a reference resource for community leaders and partners, a resource they can draw from as needed, based on the healthy food and active-living strategies that a community decides to focus on.

As a reference resource, there are various ways that community leaders and partners can use this information. Depending on the area of interest or need, communities might use this information to:

1. focus on *either* healthy food or active living environments solely, and review the information outlined for that aspect across each section of the Community Capitals; and/or;
2. focus on information related to *both* healthy food and active living environments *related to a specific Community Capital* and review that section solely (e.g., built capital section or financial capital section).

As a final option, users could choose to review the information in total to gain an understanding of the larger evidence base about creating Healthy Communities to inform, guide, and advocate for their own community efforts.

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments Related to BUILT CAPITAL



How is Built Capital (aka the Built Environment) Related to Healthy Communities?

Physical design affects human behavior at all scales — buildings, neighborhoods, communities, and regions. As described throughout the preceding module, the places in which we live, learn, work, and play can affect both our mental and physical well-being. Based on an ever-growing body of research, we know that the built environment offers both opportunities for and barriers to improving and increasing healthy-eating and active-living behaviors communitywide (Eitler, McMahon, & Thorig, 2013). Outlined below is an overview of the key benefits and influences of the built environment related to Healthy Food and Active Living.



What is the Relationship Between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Built Capital?

Access to healthy, affordable food is central to promoting health and well-being. Because of this, the World Health Organization has determined that food is a “social determinant of health” (Marmot & Wilkinson, 2003; ODPHP, 2010). (*Related Capitals* - Human, Social)

As our understanding of the important link between the built environment and healthy food choices has grown, more attention has focused on creating healthier food environments (RWJ, n.d.). For example, a study conducted in 2001 found that for each supermarket in a census tract, white American residents increased their fruit and vegetable intake by an average of 11 percent and African American residents increased their intake by 32 percent (Moorland et al., 2002). Similarly, research has found that fruit and vegetable consumption is linked to what is available in neighborhood retail facilities (Zenk et al., 2005). (*Related Capital* – Human)

Community areas that do not have access to a full-scale grocery store within a reasonable distance (i.e., within 10–20 miles in rural environments and within a half-mile to one mile in urban environments [USDA]) are referred to as food deserts. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, accessibility to sources of healthy food can be measured by several factors:

- 1. the number of stores in a community or the distance to a store (as described above);
- 2. individual-level resources, such as family income or vehicle availability; and
- 3. neighborhood-level factors, such as the average income of the neighborhood and the availability of public transportation (USDA, Economic Research Service, 2017). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Financial)

Research has shown that disparities in access to healthy foods have affected both low-income urban and rural communities for decades. For example, several studies have



Although community gardens and farmers' markets tend to be seasonal sources of food, their prevalence in the U.S. continues to grow, and more and more people have access to markets that are within easy reach of home (USDA, 2014). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Financial, Human, Social, Natural)

In addition to creating access to and increased consumption of healthier foods (e.g., fruits and vegetables), particularly for low-income and disadvantaged populations, initiatives focused on creating healthier food environments have also been

revealed that low-income neighborhoods have far fewer supermarkets compared to middle-income neighborhoods. Digging deeper in the data, research shows that African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods are also less likely than white neighborhoods to have grocery stores (Flournoy, 2011; Moorland et al., 2002; Powell et al., 2007). In contrast, however, these same neighborhoods have been shown to have a high concentration of liquor outlets (Moorland et al., 2002). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Financial)

In terms of creating supportive environments (and in contrast to the previous bullet point), substantial research has revealed that when low-income individuals and people of color have access to local stores that sell a wide variety of high-quality, nutritious foods at affordable prices, they make healthier choices about their diets, have better health outcomes, and benefit from improved local economic development (Flournoy, 2011; Moorland et al., 2002). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Financial)

Initiatives that help to ensure the accessibility of fresh, affordable food such as the development of public markets or community gardens not only improve access, but also provide social and economic benefits for the communities they serve (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Financial)

shown to provide economic development opportunities to producers, distributors, and other members of the local food system; create opportunities for local entrepreneurship, socialization, and community building; and support environmental sustainability (American Planning Association [APA], 2016a; PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Financial, Social, Cultural, Natural)

While many old public market buildings have been dismantled, particularly during the 20th century, inexpensive and lightweight alternatives have begun to take their place. By 1946, there were just 499 farmers' markets left in the United States. That number rose to close to 3,000 by the year 2000, and then shot up to well-over 8,000 by 2014 (USDA, 2014). Many of the great public markets that we know today began as nothing more than simple, informal street markets (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Financial, Human, Social, Natural)

Developing local land-use policies specifically for farmers' markets has been shown to remove or ease regulatory barriers and also provide explicit protections and incentives for communities. Land-use policies can support farmers' markets by making it easier to find sites and less costly to open markets, streamlining local government

processes, optimizing market sites, supporting markets of different sizes, maximizing opportunities for local producers to connect with consumers, and increasing access and affordability (through benefits) for low-income shoppers (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Financial, Human, Social, Natural)

A study conducted in 2009 revealed that residents living in a neighborhood with a high density of food outlets selling abundant options of healthier foods had healthier weights than those which lacked these resources (also known as a food swamp). Additional research also identified that neighborhoods with limited to no supermarket availability had higher adult obesity rates (though it did not examine the availability of farmers' markets or community gardens) (Cobb et al., 2015). (*Related Capital* – Human)

There are several ways that transportation initiatives can improve access to healthy food. Most importantly, because many low-income residents may not have access to a vehicle, public transportation can be extremely useful in bridging the gap. Expanding routes to focus on low-income neighborhoods and linking them to supermarkets and grocery stores can be a powerful tool for health, especially if local residents are made aware of transportation options. Additionally, discounts can be provided for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)Q]-registered users or other low-income commuters (Lee, Mikkelsen, Srikantharajah, & Cohen, 2008). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Financial, Social)



What is the Relationship Between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Built Capital?

Increasing physical activity levels have consistently been shown to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of chronic diseases and related risk factors and improve health. Given this evidence, it is not surprising that research has also revealed that people who are physically active live longer (World Health Organization). Based on the strength of this growing evidence, *emphasizing the importance of placemaking to promote*

attractive, safe streets and other public spaces that encourage walking and biking cannot be overstated (USDHHS, 2008a). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Cultural)

Encouraging (or discouraging) physical activity behavior is largely dependent on design elements in the built environment, such as street layout, land use, the location of recreation facilities, parks and public buildings, and the transportation infrastructure and system. Research has revealed that people are more active when they can easily access key destinations such as parks, green spaces, workplaces, and shops (APA, 2015a; Edwards & Tsouros, 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Cultural, Natural)

Active travel can be a significant source of regular physical activity when built into daily routines, and in most cases requires few skills, little extra time, and little money. Most daily trips are within easy walking or biking distance (Buehler, Götschi, & Winters, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Financial, Social)

The latest research from a large-scale Gallup and Healthways survey shows that residents who live in active-living environments — communities that invest in bike paths, parks, walkability, and public transit — have better outcomes in key aspects of well-being. In addition, a new report, developed as part of the Gallup-Healthways State of American Well-Being series, found that residents who live in active living communities have, on average, significantly higher rates of exercise, healthy eating, and fresh produce consumption. They are thriving in physical well-being as compared to residents in communities with low-active living infrastructure. Not surprisingly, residents in active living communities also had significantly lower rates of smoking, obesity, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and depression (Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Financial)

Results from a recent national survey of Americans revealed that more than half of those surveyed would like to walk more and drive less. Respondents noted that poor

community design and lack of pedestrian facilities were the reason that they did not currently walk. Overwhelmingly, survey participants reported that they supported policies intended to make their communities more livable by reducing traffic speed and creating a safer pedestrian environment (Belden, Russonello, & Stewart, 2003). (*Related Capital – Human*)

On a different survey developed and implemented by the National Association of Realtors (NAR), eight in 10 Americans stated that they preferred living in a community that offered sidewalks and good places to walk. In addition, six in 10 identified that they preferred neighborhood features that included a mix of houses, shops, and services within an easy walk versus a neighborhood that required a car to complete errands (NAR, 2013). (*Related Capitals – Human, Social, Financial*)

Safe, accessible, well-maintained sidewalks are a fundamental community investment that enhances public health and maximizes social capital (NACTO, 2012). Not surprisingly, ongoing studies have shown that residents who live in communities with pedestrian and bicycle-friendly infrastructure tend to be more physically active (ALbD, n.d.; Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013). In fact, research has revealed that people who report having access to sidewalks are 28 percent more likely to be physically active (Brownson, et al., 2001). Another study found that people who live in neighborhoods with sidewalks are 47 percent more likely to be active at least 39 minutes a day compared to residents in areas without sidewalks (Sallis, et al., 2009). Moreover, residents who live in what is considered a highly walkable neighborhood have been shown to engage in about 70 more minutes per week of moderate and vigorous physical activity than residents in a low-walkability neighborhood (Saelens, et al., 2003). This information highlights how having access to adequate sidewalks provides significant support for helping people meet the physical activity guidelines. (*Related Capitals – Human, Social*)

In a recent study, results revealed that children and parents who lived in neighborhoods with more options for buying

healthy food, more favorable walking environments, and better access to high-quality parks were least obese. These findings were consistent regardless of other factors such as genetics, neighborhood income, or parent education levels (Saelens, et al., 2012). (*Related Capitals – Human, Natural*)

Specific features in the built environment influence whether people choose to walk or bicycle for transportation, and these features can be effective tools for increasing daily physical activity. Neighborhoods that have destinations that are well connected and near each other, a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly infrastructure, and accessibility to public transit encourage and support walking and bicycling for children and their families (Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013; Lee, Mikkelsen, Srikantharajah & Cohen, 2008). (*Related Capitals – Human, Social, Financial*)

Residents who live in areas with features such as streetlights, pedestrian crossings, and traffic calming have been shown to walk more (C3 Collaborating for Health, 2012). In fact, in one study, the presence of sidewalks, as well as other street-scale features such as street lighting and traffic-calming measures, were related to actual miles walked per day and transportation-related walking (i.e., walking to reach destinations) (APA, 2015a; Forsyth, et al., 2008). (*Related Capitals – Human, Social, Financial*)

In a study of 37 projects across the U.S., researchers found that *Complete Streets* projects (i.e., streets that enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclist, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities), led to improved safety for all users, increased biking and walking, and revealed a mix of increases and decreases in automobile traffic, depending in part on the project goal. In addition, when compared to conventional transportation projects, Complete Streets projects have been found to be affordable, and are an inexpensive way to achieve transportation goals (Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013; Smart Growth America & National Complete Streets Coalition, 2015). (*Related Capitals – Human, Social, Financial*)



Small and rural towns have great potential for creating feasible *multimodal networks* that serve residents and visitors alike. Although the residents in these communities often live long distances from services, most small towns provide a compact town center well-suited for walking and bicycling trips. Developing multimodal networks that appeal to a range of ages and abilities, such as shared-use paths, sidewalks, and bike lanes, not only significantly enhances a community core, but also provide equitable transportation for people of all income levels (FHWA, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Financial)

Safety is a key consideration for encouraging active transportation. Research has shown that places that offer greater safety features and supports for pedestrians are also the places where there are higher levels of reported walking and cycling (Buehler, Götschi, & Winters, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social)

Traffic calming is a system of design and management strategies incorporated in comprehensive plans or other policies that are used to slow motor-vehicle traffic, often without reducing overall traffic volumes. Strategies include narrowing roads and adding modern roundabouts, chicanes (intentionally added turns in the road), median islands, speed humps, diverters, speed tables and other engineering tools or interventions (Institute of

Transportation Engineers, n.d.). These measures increase safety and create equitable urban environments for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists (FHWA, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social)

People of all age groups — especially children, older adults, and those with limited mobility — are more likely to walk and bicycle along streets that are *appealing and safe*. Characteristics that have been shown to make streets safer and more inviting include sidewalks that are in good condition and have curb cuts (i.e., ramps that are accessible per the Americans with Disabilities Act), traffic that is moving at a slow to moderate speed, and sidewalks and streets designed with some type of buffer from motor vehicles. Amenities along the street including trees, benches, and public art also encourage increased walking (Active Living by Design [ALbD], n.d.; Buehler, Götschi, & Winters, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Cultural, Social)

Along with streetscapes (i.e., features along and on streets), destinations within walkable and/or bikeable distances can encourage physical activity among visitors. Built environment features such as close proximity to desirable and useful destinations like stores and services are strongly associated with people walking and biking as a means of transportation. This finding is also consistent

with studies which find that building communities with nonresidential destinations within walking distance of housing may be beneficial to people's health (Brennan Ramirez et al., 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Social, Cultural, Financial)

According to research, although half of all trips taken in the United States are three miles or less, most Americans drive even to the closest destinations. In fact, only 3 percent of commuting trips in the U.S. are by bicycle. However, the popularity of bicycling has been on the rise. Between 1990 and 2009, the number of bike trips has doubled, and many communities as well as the federal government are embracing bicycling as a transportation solution for a healthy and viable future (USDOT, FHWA, PBIC, 2010). In fact, surveys show that 60 percent of Americans would ride a bicycle if they felt safe doing so, and eight out of 10 agree that bicycling is a healthy, positive activity. Although issues related to bicycling continue to be debated, what we do know is that adding bicycle-friendly features to streets increases safety for all road users, including motor vehicles (Marshall & Garrick, 2011). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Financial)

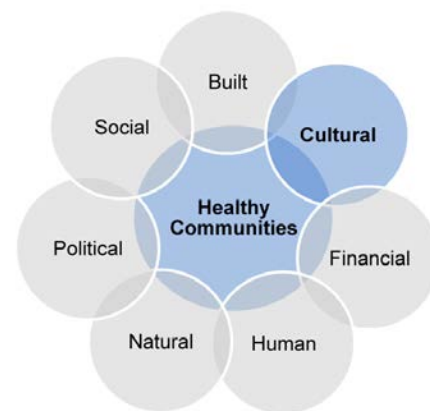
As a final point, *wayfinding*, the process of finding our way from place to place with the aid of signs or maps, has also been shown to be important for encouraging and supporting physical activity behavior. If wayfinding is easy, people are more likely to patronize businesses, visit cultural or entertainment sites, and walk or use public transportation with confidence. If wayfinding is difficult, people may be less willing to explore new places whether traveling on foot or by cycling, driving or using public transit. Wayfinding provides environmental cues and aids such as landmarks, pathways, and signs that help to guide people, identify their location, and return them to their starting point, whether their journey is short — like a quick walk or drive to the grocery store — or long — like a journey to another city by a combination of walking, flying, and taking transit (Hunter et al., 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Human, Financial, Natural, Social)

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments Related to CULTURAL CAPITAL



How is Cultural Capital Related to Healthy Communities?

For communities attempting to create policy, systems, and environmental improvements, the concept of community culture is centrally important to the work. A community's culture influences health and safety behaviors, which in turn influence health outcomes. As it relates to the larger community environment, community culture can provide insight into the most relevant strategies — those that will be defined by community residents, accepted as part of community norms, owned by the residents in the community, and embraced and sustained within the community to form a shared norm of health, safety, and equity (Sims, Mohan, & Aboelata, 2013).



Included as part of the concept of cultural capital are events, festivals, and other activities hosted by communities on an annual, seasonal, or monthly basis. In addition to encouraging positive activities in shared public spaces, which in turn increases “eyes on the street” (a term coined by urbanist Jane Jacobs to describe the crime-prevention effect that neighbors and residents have when they are able to watch over space [Jacobs, 1961]), healthy communities’ efforts can have a marked impact in mobilizing a community’s physical and social structures to enhance perceptions of safety and combat crime. In fact, several strategies have been shown to increase safety in communities by promoting open space and community

activities such as block parties or neighborhood clean-up days; increasing natural surveillance by installing better lighting; creating pedestrian-friendly streets to avoid traffic; hosting community events and meet-ups; and promoting a sense of community ownership by incorporating signs and artwork into public spaces (National Crime Prevention Council, 2003).

What is the Relationship Between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Cultural Capital?

The most successful community campaigns are multicomponent initiatives that focus on a wide range of factors including increasing access to healthy food (Trailnet, 2009). Having access to fresh and local foods is growing in popularity. In addition to small, local grocery stores, there are many types of alternative retail outlets that are great hubs of local food sales such as farmers' markets, mobile markets, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs (APA, 2016a; Lieb, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social, Financial)

Farmers' markets provide farmers with a direct-market outlet for their products and are an excellent way to link local farms with community members. Farmers' markets continue to be important retail outlets for agricultural producers nationwide. The direct economic benefits of farmers' markets include higher profits to the farmers/vendors, local job creation, and increased sales revenue (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013; Lieb, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social, Financial)

Research has shown that farmers' market(s) not only provide appealing environments for introducing customers to new types of locally grown fruits and vegetables, but also often provide customers with new ways to prepare these foods. In addition, local farmers' markets provide direct connections to producers, which allow consumers to gain a better understanding of where their food comes from. In fact, studies

have shown that it is the personal relationship between producer and consumer that motivates many consumers to shop at farmers' markets (ChangeLab Solutions, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social)

Adding amenities and programming to public markets and community gardens can make these public spaces important community destinations for more than just food, especially for disadvantaged and low-income communities. In fact, many farmers' markets have begun to include health-promoting activities and services like cooking demonstrations, health testing, and food assistance programs (SNAP/ Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children [WIC]). Some community gardens and markets also have youth training programs that build leadership, community, and skills (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social, Financial)

Significant research has shown that providing food-assistance programs and bonus incentives at farmers' markets in low-income areas increases purchasing power (Alkon & Mares, 2012; Larsen & Gilliland, 2009; Young et al., 2011). In a 2012 study examining the impact of newly established farmers' markets in two low-income neighborhoods, data revealed that nearly all market



customers (97 and 98 percent) reported eating more fruits and vegetables within a period of two years. Customers also reported high levels of satisfaction with both markets, appreciating their accessibility and closeness to home, affordability and quality of produce, educational offerings, and opportunities to socialize (Ruelas, Iverson, Kiekel, & Peters, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Financial)

Community supported agriculture (CSA) programs are a suggested strategy to increase access to healthy foods and distribute fresh fruits and vegetables from *local farms* to urban and rural areas (Harmon, 2014). (CSA is a partnership between local farmers and consumers, where consumers purchase a share of a farm's products in advance, typically paying in full in the wintertime when farms need capital to prepare for the spring.) Available evidence suggests that CSA participation significantly increases household inventories of fresh fruits and vegetables, and increases fruit and vegetable consumption (Quandt, 2013; Cohen, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social, Financial)

Community gardening has been shown to enhance the fabric of towns and cities through social interactions and accessibility to fresh food. In the U.S. and Canada, it is estimated that there are more than 18,000 community gardens (with many more being planned) and that they are quickly becoming a primary source for fresh food in urban, suburban, and rural areas (Joy, 2014). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social)

Community gardens can bring great benefit to a neighborhood. In addition to increasing access to fresh produce, community gardens provide valuable opportunities for neighbors to connect with each other, learn about nutrition and exercise, and possibly even start a business (ChangeLabs Solutions & NPLAN, 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social)

Urban farms and community gardens can also be used as opportunities to grow and sell culturally appropriate food and to connect multiple generations. Research has shown

that some farming projects support healthier ethnic diets and help people grow culturally appropriate foods for their families and communities, all while connecting multiple generations through farming and diet (Hagey, Rice, & Flournoy, 2012). (*Related Capital* – Natural)



What is the Relationship Between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Cultural Capital?

A growing body of research indicates that properly designed buildings, appropriate placement of structures, easy-to-reach parks, programming of community spaces, and access to healthy foods can have an extraordinary impact on the health and culture of a community. Local government and design professionals play a critical role in shaping the built environment, from streetscapes to transportation systems, which then, in turn, influence social interactions, transportation choices, sense of community, sense of safety, and health (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoeig, 2013; Trailnet, 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social, Political)



Often, the unique features that contribute to a deep-rooted sense of place are ecological, architectural, historic, or geographic. Proximity to natural places has a direct, positive effect on physical and mental health, as well as on stress reduction. Studies have shown that children, in particular, have higher rates of physical activity the closer they live to parks and green space, and report lower levels of stress and adversity (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoerig, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Natural)

Making public places in communities more lively and welcoming provides the conditions and support to encourage recreational physical activity for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Parks, plazas, squares, and even streets offer possibilities for adding permanent or temporary active recreation equipment and programming that can facilitate activities like games and sports participation, dancing, and children's play (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social, Financial)

There is growing interest in living in and visiting places where people can be active, be “out and about,” and socialize in active ways. City festivals, events, and even winter outdoor adventures that feature physical activity and sports are effective strategies to attract tourism. These events also provide an important way to ensure that residents of all ages experience opportunities to participate in traditional, cultural, and seasonal activities that support active living in the city and surrounding areas (Edwards & Tsouros, 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social, Financial)

According to the latest research, consumer demand for active-living communities — walkable, vibrant places designed around transit and green spaces — has never been higher. Numerous studies show that demand for compact, mixed-use, transit-accessible development far outstrips current supply. Walkable communities are in such high demand that they have been shown to achieve 40 percent to 100 percent more in terms of sales and lease prices than traditional, automobile-oriented communities (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoerig, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social, Financial)

Traffic calming — a system of design and management strategies used to slow motor-vehicle traffic — provides additional benefits by transforming a street and giving it a sense of place, and therefore increasing social interactions, housing, and retail businesses (PPS, 2008). These changes not only enhance the sense of place, but also help reduce pollution, noise, and even crime. For example, after the city of Dayton, Ohio, implemented speed reductions and closed some streets and alleys to motor vehicle traffic, *violent crime decreased by 50 percent* (Lockwood, Stillings, & City of West Palm Beach, n.d.; Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013; Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, n.d.). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social, Financial)

Informative, well-placed wayfinding (the process of finding our way from place to place with the aid of signs or maps) has been shown to enhance quality of life for individuals and communities, whether large cities or small towns. Effective wayfinding affects how easily and often we travel and how engaged we are with others (Hunter et al., 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social)

Features that create “streetscape texture,” such as public art, street furniture, and buildings of different types, styles, and colors have been shown to maintain pedestrian interest and increase walking (Vojnovic, Jackson-Elmoore, Holtrop, & Bruch, 2005). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social)

When addressing active living options in rural communities, creative local solutions tailored to specific community culture, geography, climate, and needs are necessary. To create effective solutions, it is important to bring local community members and stakeholders together to initiate conversations and discuss changes and enhancements for each community. As part of this process, it is also important to consider the needs of rural subpopulations, including minorities, older adults, people with disabilities, children, and others when designing environmental, programmatic, and policy changes related to active living. (Yousefian Hansen, & Hartley, 2015). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Social, Financial)

Co-locating recreational activities in community environments can provide broader appeal. For instance, providing adult exercise equipment or walking tracks near children's playgrounds offers parents and guardians an opportunity to be physically active while they are supervising their children. Connecting senior center activities with libraries and schools allows communities to support older adults by taking advantage of existing resources and facilities while also linking these activities to school-based programs for children (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoeirig, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social)

Research has revealed that fitness and exercise programs offered in community settings increase physical activity levels and improve physical fitness for participating adults and older adults, particularly when these activities are offered with social support interventions (Cruz-Ferreira, 2011; Holland et al., 2005). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social)

Organized *fitness* programs have been found to be more appealing to women and older adults than to men and younger adults (Holland, et al., 2005), while organized sport activities appeal more to males (Cochrane-Priest 2008). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Social)

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments on FINANCIAL CAPITAL



How is Financial Capital Related to Healthy Communities?

Communities designed in a way that supports physical activity — wide sidewalks, safe bike lanes, attractive stairways, accessible recreation areas — encourage residents to make healthy choices and live healthy lives. Healthy places in turn create economic value by attracting both younger and older workers and appealing to a skilled workforce and innovative companies (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoeirig, 2013).

As it relates to healthy food environments, the latest research has shown that new grocery stores, corner stores, farmers' market(s), and other food retailers can generate significant economic stimulus for communities



in general, and for communities of color and low-income communities, in particular (Hagan & Rubin, 2013).

From a big-picture population health perspective, the potential financial benefits from Healthy Communities efforts are striking. For example, when reflecting back to Figure 1, which illustrated that three preventable behaviors — poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and tobacco use and exposure — led to over 50 percent of premature death in the U.S., it is clear that the opportunity for prevention is significant. In fact, according to ongoing economic research, in addition to preventing premature death, modest progress against major diseases would also be extremely valuable. Specifically, economic analysis has revealed that a 1 percent reduction in deaths from cancer has a value of nearly \$500 billion. Moreover, research has shown that a cure would be worth about \$50 TRILLION (Murphy & Topel, 2006; emphasis added). Estimates of potential gains (and avoidable losses) associated with prevention, detection, and treatment would cut medical costs nationwide by \$217 billion and reduce health-related productivity costs by \$905 billion by 2023. In fact, from 1970–2000, *gains in life expectancy added about \$3.2 trillion per year to national wealth, with half of these gains due to progress against heart disease alone* (Devol, et al., 2007).

“A healthy population is an engine for economic growth.”

— World Health Organization Commission of Macroeconomics and Health

What is the Relationship between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Financial Capital?

A shared recognition of the role that healthy food access plays in promoting stronger local economies, vibrant neighborhoods, and healthy people has sparked support for different projects and initiatives, bringing an array of approaches from grocery stores to farmers' market(s), mobile markets, food hubs, and community gardens. Food retailers that sell fresh, affordable, nutritious food are critical components of healthy, thriving communities. Without access to healthy foods, a nutritious diet and good health are out of reach. And without grocery stores and other fresh-food retailers, communities are also missing the *commercial vitality that makes neighborhoods livable and helps local economies thrive* (Bell et al., 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Political, Social)

Introducing a full-service grocery store into a community area not only provides a source of healthier food, it creates jobs and becomes an *economic anchor* for other commercial development, which further increases retail activity, job growth, and property values in the surrounding neighborhoods (Urban Land Institute, 2013). This is particularly true for low-income, underserved communities, where a supermarket or other retail outlet that

sells healthy food can breathe new life into neighborhoods that have been disinvested for decades (Bell et al., 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Political, Human, Social)

As noted above, healthy food retailers generate significant economic stimulus by serving as anchors for further commercial revitalization, generating tax revenues and capturing local dollars within the community. In addition, it is estimated that 24 new jobs are created for every 10,000 square feet of retail grocery space. Given that the average supermarket ranges from 20,000 to 50,000 square feet in size, one new store in that size range could generate between 48 and 120 new, local jobs (California FreshWorks Fund, 2012; Hagan & Rubin, 2013; The Reinvestment Fund (2008). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Political, Social)

In the last decade, there has been an explosion of innovative approaches to bringing healthy food retail into underserved communities. One such innovation is the highly successful Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative — a statewide public-private effort that helped develop or improve 88 supermarkets, smaller independently owned grocery stores, farmers' market(s), and other fresh food outlets in underserved urban communities, small towns, and rural areas throughout



Pennsylvania. Launched in 2004, the initiative leveraged more than \$190 million in healthy food retail projects over six years and is responsible for creating or retaining more than 5,000 jobs in Pennsylvania communities. The program has been so successful that it has been adapted and funded in six other states and cities, bringing much-needed financial resources and development know-how to communities seeking to improve healthy food access (PolicyLink, The Food Trust, & The Reinvestment Fund, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Political, Social)

The economic impacts of a supermarket or grocery store in a community are not limited to jobs and income earned. Home values, for example, increase with improved accessibility to neighborhood retail, including grocery and other food retail outlets (Goldstein, Loethen, Kako, & Califano (2008). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social)

Local access to healthy food retail also prevents “leakage” within the local economy by ensuring dollars spent stay within the community rather than going outside of it. Market analysis from a host of cities has quantified the potential for cutting down on this leakage through new local retail outlets. Outcomes have indicated that local purchasing power is greater than what had been previously estimated. These studies have provided support for the development of many new commercial projects in low- and moderate-income communities (Bell et al., 2013; The Office of Housing and Urban Development, 1999; Porter, 1995). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Political, Social)

Healthy food retail development also creates substantial indirect and direct effects, based on the extent to which the activities of one industry are linked to other industries within the local economy. Supermarkets and grocery stores generate direct effects on the economy through the activities related to operation, management, packaging, and shipping. Indirect impacts then occur when these activities require purchases of goods and services, such as building materials from local or regional suppliers. Additional impacts occur when the workers involved in direct and indirect activities spend their wages in the

community (APA, 2016a; Bell et al., 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Political, Social)

Businesses are also starting to recognize the benefits of promoting healthy products. For example, Walmart has cut the costs of fruits and vegetables to its consumers by \$2.3 billion over the past two years and is reporting increased sales of fresh produce (Wohl, 2013). (*Related Capital* – Human)

Although farmers’ markets utilize a different business model than full-service grocery stores, they also provide unique social and economic impacts by keeping consumer dollars within regional economies; adding community vibrancy through the building of social capital, supporting small, local businesses, and preserving regional farmlands (Schmit & Gómez, 2011). Farmers’ markets also bring seasonal employment opportunities to communities (O’Hara, 2011). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural, Political)

In Indiana, over 3,600 farms sell directly to consumers, resulting in close to \$27 million in sales, which represents an increase of 20 percent since 2007. Direct-sales outlets include farmers’ market(s), community-supported agriculture, on-farm sales, and roadside stands. In addition, researchers found that if Indiana residents substituted 10 percent of their current at-home household food budget with locally grown and produced food, this would generate over a billion dollars of economic activity in Indiana (Ellett, Purdue Extension, n.d.). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Natural)

Another dimension of local economic impact is governmental food benefits for low-income consumers that are spent at local retail outlets. Studies quantifying the economic impact of the SNAP and the WIC have shown that these programs can be essential to the viability of some stores and make a significant difference in total purchasing power in the poor neighborhoods that are most likely to lack healthy food. SNAP and WIC — representing approximately an \$85 billion public investment together in 2012 — make a significant, positive impact on the local



economy through the circulation of benefit dollars. In fact, every \$5 in new SNAP benefits has been shown to generate \$9 in local spending at supermarkets, grocery stores, and other approved SNAP-accepting retailers (USDA, Food & Nutrition Service, 2011). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Political)



What is the Relationship between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Financial Capital?

Walking and biking are good for the local economy. Multiple studies show that people who visit shopping districts by bicycle spend more money on a weekly basis than those who visit by car (Clifton, et al., 2013; Flusche, 2009). (*Related Capital* – Social)

Having access to connected sidewalks increases foot traffic in retail centers, delivering the customers that local shops and restaurants need in order to thrive. Retail properties with a Walk Score ranking of 80 out of 100 were valued 54 percent higher than those with a Walk Score of 20 and had an increase in net operating income of 42 percent (Pivo & Fisher, 2010; www.walkscore.com). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social)

Interest in sidewalks has grown so much that they've become a factor in home prices. For example, in a scenario where two houses are nearly identical, the home with a five-foot-wide sidewalk and two street trees not only sells

for \$4,000 to \$34,000 more but it also sells in less time. In addition, a well-constructed sidewalk for a typical 50-foot-wide residential property might cost a builder \$2,000, but can return 15 times that investment in resale value. According to a 2009 CEOs for Cities report, even a one-point increase in a community's Walk Score could increase home values by \$700 to \$3,000 (Cortright, 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Social)

Good wayfinding (i.e., the process of finding our way from place to place with the aid of signs or maps) supports economic and commercial vitality for communities. If wayfinding is easy, people are more likely to patronize businesses, visit cultural or entertainment sites, and walk or use public transportation with confidence. (Hunter, et al., 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Social)

Complete streets promote a balanced transportation system that supports lively streets, where people walk and bicycle to everyday destinations, such as schools, restaurants, shops, parks, transit, and jobs. Lively streets enhance neighborhood economic vitality and livability (Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013; National Complete Streets Coalition & Smart Growth America, 2015; AARP Public Policy Institute, 2014). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Social)

Research on the economic benefits of bicycling is striking. For example, in North Carolina's Outer Banks, bicycle tourism has already generated \$60 million in annual economic activity on its \$6.7 million bicycle infrastructure investment. In 2009, people using bicycles spent \$261 million on goods and services in Minnesota, supporting more than 5,000 jobs and generating \$35 million in taxes (Flusche, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Social)

Addressing the potential negative impact of removing on-street parking for businesses, reports have shown that adding facilities such as bicycle racks and bicycle lanes can actually increase economic activity. In addition to increased economic activity, these amenities have also been

shown to create a buffer from moving traffic that aides both pedestrian and bicyclist activity, which increases physical activity. As a result, urban planners, engineers, and public-health professionals are increasingly working together to create pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environments that promote these activities for both leisure and transportation purposes (Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013). *(Related Capitals – Built, Cultural, Human, Political, Social)*

Research has also revealed that building bike infrastructure creates an average of 11.4 jobs for every \$1 million spent versus road-only projects which create 7.8 jobs per \$1 million (Garrett-Peltier, 2011). Once built, bicycling infrastructure can save Americans significant money. The cost to maintain a bicycle is estimated around \$300 a year, whereas the average American household spends more than \$8,000 a year on its cars (Livable Streets Alliance, 2014). *(Related Capitals – Built, Human, Social)*

In May 2013, Indianapolis, Indiana, completed eight miles of walking-biking infrastructure, called the Cultural Trail, in the heart of downtown for a cost of \$63 million in both public and private dollars. By April 2014, the trail had added more than \$864 million to the local economy (AARP, 2015). *(Related Capitals – Built, Cultural, Human, Social)*

When the housing market collapsed in the late 2000s, the neighborhoods that held their property values the best were high-density communities that featured a mix of uses (e.g., housing, retail, restaurants, and office space) located within a walkable core (Brookings Institute, 2012). Part of the reason these types of communities were resilient is that many baby boomers and young adults are choosing to settle in walkable neighborhoods offering a mix of housing and transportation options and close proximity to jobs, schools, shopping, entertainment, and parks. According to national research, 70 percent of people born between 1979 and 1996 say they want to live in walkable, urban neighborhoods and they don't believe it'll be necessary to move to a suburb once they have children (Nelson, 2011). *(Related Capitals – Built, Cultural, Human, Social)*

Based on a recent report, hundreds of companies across the United States are moving to and investing in walkable downtown locations. As the job market shifts toward city spaces, and as commercial real estate values climb in these places, leading American companies are building and expanding in walkable downtown neighborhoods. When choosing a new location, companies stated they were looking for vibrant, walkable neighborhoods where people want to both live and work. According to the report, this trend is visible across the country, in big cities and small ones, in the middle of the country and the coasts, as well as in secondary markets within larger metropolitan areas (Bushell, Poole, Zegeer, & Rodriguez, 2013; Smart Growth America, 2015; Smart Growth America, 2016). *(Related Capitals – Built, Cultural, Human, Social)*

In addition to walkable downtowns, companies also want the location of their business to be accessible by a range of transportation options, emphasizing in particular commuting choices for their employees, as well as easy access to the rest of the city and the region. From a community perspective, companies also noted that a clean, safe downtown was a fundamental requirement for their choice of where to move (Smart Growth America, 2015; Smart Growth America, 2016). *(Related Capitals – Built, Cultural, Human, Social)*

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments on HUMAN CAPITAL



“There is ample evidence that the short- and long-term economic competitiveness of the United States is directly linked to the health of our workforce.”

— Vitality Institute; Investing in Prevention:
A National Imperative

How is Human Capital Related to Healthy Communities?

Across the business sector in the U.S., there is a growing understanding that good health is good for business. Employers have learned investing in their human capital by offering wellness, preventive, chronic-disease management, and lifestyle programs and services leads to increased productivity, lower health care costs, and fewer sick days taken. In fact, 13 separate studies have shown that worksite health promotion programs produce a positive return on investment. Specifically, calculated cost/benefit ratios have shown that for *every dollar invested in health promotion, businesses saved \$3.48 on medical cost and \$5.82 on absenteeism* (Wellness Council of America [WELCOA, 2011]).

The health of a community and the residents that live there also becomes vital in terms of attracting new businesses. The latest research indicates that when employers are looking for a site on which to build a new plant or move their headquarters, they are now taking into account the health of the community surrounding the site. In today's business landscape, it is no longer just about infrastructure, education, and workforce availability, but also about how healthy the workforce is (IOM, 2015). Not only are healthy employees more productive, but they have been shown to miss less work, have fewer health care costs, experience fewer injuries from accidents, and have better morale (Mid-American Coalition on Health Care [MACHC], 2011).



What is the Relationship Between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Human Capital?

On average, Americans spend at least one-third or more of their day in their work environment. In this environment, they consume meals, beverages, or snacks in worksite cafeterias, from vending machines, and at meetings, conferences, and other events. When employers implement strategies to offer healthier food choices in the work environment, they can influence, support, and improve their employees' diets, and ultimately, their health (MACHC, 2011). (*Related Capital – Built*)

In a large work-related study conducted with three geographically dispersed U.S. companies representing 20,114 employees, research revealed that workers who ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables on four or more days in the past week were 20 percent more likely to have higher job performance. In addition, the study also identified that workers who ate healthy the entire day were 25 percent more likely to have higher job performance (Merrill, et al., 2013).

Strong evidence has revealed that organizations and businesses can implement supportive policy, systems, and environmental initiatives that make healthy food more available, more affordable, and more appealing. Evidence-based strategies include: promoting healthier foods in workplace cafeterias; offering Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs or farmers' markets to increase employees' access to fresh fruits and vegetables; stocking vending machines with more selections of healthy foods and beverages; and implementing a policy to serve only healthy foods and beverages at meetings and special events (CDC, 2007). (*Related Capitals – Built, Natural*)

The latest evidence has also identified clear strategies for what it takes to create a culture of healthy eating in organizations and businesses:

- Lead by example. When organization leaders support and model healthy eating, it makes a powerful statement.

- Sign a pledge or commitment and post it prominently in a common area where employees and visitors can see it. (See sample pledge on page 9 at https://www.heart.org/-/media/data-import/downloadables/fc-healthy-workplace-food-and-beverage-toolkit-ucm_465693.pdf).
- Communicate to your employees that you care about their health and well-being. Provide education and resources about healthy living and eating. Help your workers understand why your workplace is making an effort to provide healthier food and beverages. (See sample email to Employees at link above.)
- Identify and use vendors who provide healthier foods and beverages.
- Recognize employees and departments that step up as leaders in promoting healthier choices.
- Share your commitment with other leaders in your community and challenge them to lead by example, too.
- And finally, select healthy foods when you dine with colleagues and employees. (American Heart Association, 2015). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Social)

Employers can encourage employees to make healthier food choices by adopting evidence-based strategies and policies to improve the “food culture” in worksite cafeterias. Strategies proven to increase the purchase of healthier foods include: limiting the availability of less-healthy items; providing menu and calorie labeling; and marketing healthier choices through signage (Engbers, et al., 2005; MACHC, 2011; Robert, et al., 2010). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Social)

It is not only important for healthy foods to be readily accessible in worksite settings, but they must also be affordable (CDC, 2007). Offering discounts or cafeteria specials on healthier menu items has been shown to increase the purchase of healthy foods in worksite cafeterias (French, 2003). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial)

Two key recommendations from the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* are to increase fruit and vegetable intake and to eat a variety of vegetables (USDHHS & USDA, 2015). Unfortunately, during the workday, many employees eat foods prepared outside the home, including fast foods, which do not include adequate servings of fresh fruits and vegetables. Employers can help their employees gain better access to and consume more fruits and vegetables by partnering with or connecting to Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and farmers’ markets (especially when they can make purchases during their lunch break or on their way home [ENACT, n.d.]). The advantages of participation are that the farmer sells directly to customers, which increases his or her profit margin by shortening the supply chain, and the customer gets produce at its peak flavor and nutritional value (MACHC, 2011; USDA, 2017). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Natural, Cultural, Financial)

Another way that employers can help employees eat healthier in the workplace is to increase the availability of healthier food purchases in vending machines (Engbers, et al., 2005). There are several strategies that can increase the likelihood employees will make the healthier choice:

- clearly identifying healthy items (e.g., calorie content) with stickers or by placing them in the machine where they are more visible (Harnack & French, 2008; Roberto, et al., 2010); and
- offering discounts on healthier items, which has also been shown to increase purchasing and consumption of healthier foods from vending machines (French, 2003). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial)

Limiting the availability of less-healthy food options — to help employees reduce the amount they eat of these items — is an important part of any comprehensive plan to promote healthier choices and better nutrition. Employers who have strong partnerships with their food vendors may have better success at promoting healthier eating in the workplace (USDA & USDHHS, 2010; MACHC, 2011). (*Related Capital* – Built)



What is the Relationship Between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Human Capital?

Included as part of the many benefits of regular physical activity outlined earlier, physical activity (PA) has been found to be “neuroprotective,” helping to guard against diseases like Alzheimer’s. In fact, brain scans of active individuals show substantially more gray matter than their less active peers, which is associated with greater brain health and improved memory. Research has shown that individuals who increased their physical activity behavior over a 5-year period experienced notable increases in their brain’s gray matter function (Raji, et al., 2016). Undoubtedly, this research highlights the importance of meeting the physical activity recommendations and the significant impact it can have on today’s workforce (e.g., improved brain health and memory). (*Related Capital – Social*)

Research has revealed that physically active people have lower annual direct medical costs than inactive people (Naydeck, et al., 2008; Baicker Cutler & Song, 2010). From an employer’s perspective, there are many additional benefits. Specifically, having a physically active workforce has been shown to reduce absenteeism, increase productivity, improve employee morale, and provide positive returns on investments in wellness programs (CDC, 2012; Goetzel & Ozminkowski, 2008; Pratt, Macera, & Wang, 2000; Pronk, 2009; Mills, Kessler, Cooper, & Sullivan, 2007). In fact, studies have shown that providing physical activity programs in the workplace has reduced short-term sick leave by six to 32 percent, reduced health

care costs by 20 to 55 percent, and increased productivity by 2 to 52 percent (USDHHS, 1996; USDHHS, 2002). (*Related Capital – Social*)

In a 2008 study of 192 companies of varying sizes using the same workplace wellness program, which included physical activity promotion, program costs were estimated to be around \$300 per employee per year. After a year, seven of 10 targeted risk factors had improved, resulting in medical savings of 59 percent and productivity gains of 41 percent (Baker, et al., 2008). (*Related Capitals – Social, Financial*)

In addition to improving “the bottom line,” many employers believe that creating a culture of health in the workplace, through programs that encourage and support healthy behaviors like physical activity, are part of an attractive employee compensation and benefits package that can be used as a recruitment and retention tool to attract and keep high quality employees (Fronstin & Werntz, 2004; Kahn, et al. 2002). (*Related Capitals – Social, Financial*)

To provide additional support for the implementation of PA support or programs connected to work environments, research studies have identified that employees who get at least 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week miss an average of 4.1 fewer days of work per year (Goetzel, et al., 2012; Wang, McDonald, Champagne, & Edington, 2004). (*Related Capitals – Social, Financial*)

In a study of General Motors employees, researchers found that moderately active (exercising 1 to 2 times per week) and very active (exercising 3+ times per week) employees had approximately \$250 lower annual paid health-care costs than inactive employees, regardless of weight or BMI. When looking specifically at the subpopulation of obese employees who were physically active, the savings rose to \$450 (Wang, McDonald, Champagne, & Edington, 2004). (*Related Capitals – Social, Financial*)

Drawing from hundreds of studies citing the health benefits of PA (USDHHS, 2008b), a subset of these studies confirmed such benefits specifically for transportation-

related *walking and cycling* (Kelly, Kahlmeier, Gotschi, et al. 2014; Oja, et al., 2011; Active Living Research, 2016; Saunders et al., 2013). Referred to as active commuting, it has been shown that in some cases, bicyclists and pedestrians can achieve greater than 80 percent of recommended daily physical activity levels through transportation-related walking and cycling (Brockman, 2011; Freeland 2012). Research has also identified that among regular active commuters, walkers are more likely to be female and bicyclists are more likely to be male (Brockman, 2011). (*Related Capital* – Built)

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments on NATURAL CAPITAL



How is Natural Capital Related to Healthy Communities?

There is significant and growing evidence that exposure to *green places* has a positive effect on physical and mental health. Among the wide-range of striking benefits, green spaces have been shown to increase physical activity and cardio-metabolic health; reduce the risk of diabetes; lower levels of overweight and obesity; reduce mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress; increase cognitive functions like attention and memory; and provide a platform for social interaction and community activities that build social capital. In addition, green spaces affect other environmental factors that in turn improve health outcomes, such as reducing violent crime;



improving air and water quality; and building resilience to flooding (Beyer, et al. 2014; Gentry, Anderson, Krause, Tucker, & Tuddenham, 2014; South, Kondo, Cheney, & Branas, 2015).

Given the significance of these benefits, it is not surprising that access to green space is considered one of the social determinants of health and is included as part of the national health objectives for Healthy People 2020. Therefore, improving the availability and accessibility of a wide array of green spaces is a major focus of many community-based efforts (Office of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention [OHPDP], 2010). In addition to the health benefits, there are also social environmental benefits for communities as well. For example, research looking at the impact of green spaces on social health have identified that there is a connection between vegetation levels in common public spaces and the strength of neighborhood social ties among community residents (Gies, 2006; Kuo, Coley, & Brunson, 1998).

🍏 What is the Relationship Between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Natural Capital?

Community gardens are on the rise across the country and are producing much more than food. Whether established to promote health or financial security, community gardens are used by, and beneficial for, individuals of any age, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, and also people with disabilities. The term “community” in community gardening refers to the fact that this approach to gardening involves the convergence of multiple individuals, joining together in diverse settings (e.g., schools, neighborhoods, city blocks, faith communities, prisons, nursing homes, and hospitals), to grow food, develop green, open space, and also provide economic development (e.g., “entrepreneurial gardens”) (Draper & Freedman, 2010). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Political, Social, Financial)

Evidence suggests that people who participate or have family members that participate in community gardens were 3.5 times more likely to consume fruits and vegetables

than people without a gardening household member (Golden, 2013). Similar research has shown that families who participate in community gardening are able to offset typically 30 to 40 of their produce needs by eating food grown in their own gardens (Hagey, Rice, & Flournoy, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Financial)

Farmers' markets or Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) distribution programs also create a strong local food system that can provide healthy, sustainable, and affordable foods in season. Locally grown foods travel a shorter distance from the farm to get to the consumer (or the store). This not only allows produce to be picked when it's ripe and full of rich nutrients (instead of too early when it is shipped long distances), but it is also better for the environment since less fuel and packaging is used to truck produce long distances to market (MACHC, 2011). (*Related Capitals* – Natural, Built, Financial, Human)

Cities and towns are also engaging in urban farming or *urban agriculture*, which is *growing food on public land in cities, suburbs, or small towns* (Winig & Wooten, 2013). (Although similar in concept to community gardens [and often referred to as being the same], urban agriculture often includes a level of commerce meaning that the food is grown to be sold as opposed to being grown for personal consumption or sharing [Greensgrow, n.d.].) Urban agriculture projects have been shown to provide a range of benefits for communities of every size, but particularly for low-income communities. In addition to increasing access to healthy food, urban agriculture projects also provide workforce training, job development, and neighborhood revitalization. Across the country, innovative programs and policies are being implemented and city governments are creating urban agriculture-friendly policies to support urban farming (Hagey, Rice, & Flournoy, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Political, Social, Financial)

Considering the availability of public lands in cities of every size, a study conducted with a large-to-medium size city found that their community could grow 5 percent of



its recommended vegetable needs using only half of its vacant or underutilized public land (which translated to about 4,650 tons of produce!). Supporting and developing urban agriculture produces more benefits than just fresh, healthy food. By using local public lands, it can also promote civic participation, public safety, food literacy, job skills, and urban greening — in short, healthier, more vibrant places (McClintock, Cooper, & Khandeshi, 2013; Hagey, Rice, & Flournoy, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Political, Social, Financial)

Urban agriculture and community gardens have also been shown to contribute to a range of social and health benefits. In addition to promoting community engagement and social capital, it also supports crime prevention by activating underutilized community space and increasing “eyes on the street” (Wakefield, et al., 2007). It also provides moderate exercise for people of all ages (Bellows, Brown, & Smit, 2004). Having a local food source can also increase food security in times of natural or man-made disasters that interrupt transportation networks (Brown & Carter, 2003). (*Related capitals* – Built, Cultural, Financial, Social)

Sustainable urban agriculture is an essential tool that can be used in innovative ways to address several challenges that cities and towns face. Urban agriculture not only enhances the environment by increasing the greenery

within cities, but it also decreases energy needs and costs associated with long-distance travel and refrigeration by offering the opportunity to purchase locally grown food. Research has shown that economic development and community revitalization can be achieved when communities gain the ability to grow and market their own food, and when local farmers' markets provide new



opportunities for entrepreneurs and commercial farmers. Furthermore, a city's residents can benefit from cleaner air, lower summer temperatures, and recycled waste water and trash (Brown & Carter, 2003). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Financial, Social)

What is the Relationship Between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Natural Capital?

Evidence has revealed that strategies directed at creating or improving parks and play spaces help to encourage recreational walking, increase physical activity, and help to expand use of the space. Studies have also shown that involving local residents in the planning process of these public spaces helps generate a sense of community and ownership, which in turn contributes to greater use of parks (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Social)

Research has consistently shown that close proximity to parks and green spaces positively impacts physical activity levels, mental health, and cognitive function. In a recent survey of low-income neighborhoods in a large city, findings indicated that residents who lived within a short

walking distance to a park not only had higher reported levels of physical activity but also had the best mental health (as assessed by levels of depression and anxiety) (Sturm & Cohen, 2014). Studies have also shown that children with Attention Deficit Disorder can concentrate better on schoolwork and other tasks after taking part in activities in green settings, such as playing in a park (Taylor, Kuo, & Sullivan, 2001; Taylor & Kuo, 2009). (*Related Capital* – Built)

In a 2008 study conducted in Canada, researchers found that children who lived within 1 kilometer (i.e., slightly more than a half-mile) of a park with a playground were almost five times as likely to be at a healthy weight as those without playgrounds in nearby parks (Potwarka, Kaczynski, & Flack, 2008). (*Related Capital* – Built)

Both the availability and quality of parks and recreation facilities have been shown to have a significant impact on people's ability to be physically active (Kaczynski, Potwarka, & Saelens, 2008; Shores & West, 2008; Reed et al., 2008; Kaczynski & Henderson, 2007). (*Related Capital* – Built)

In addition to location and design, a park's social environment also influences its use and outcomes. Several studies have indicated that safe and supportive social environments in a park are especially important for women and girls (Krenichyn, 2006; Lloyd, Burden, & Kieva, 2008), while for adolescents, participating in park cleanups and planting helped them to develop a sense of community and neighborhood pride (Gearin & Kahle, 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Social)

With clear evidence that parks, playgrounds, and gardens provide important support for physical activity behavior and that they influence a number of health benefits, additional research has shown that these health benefits (both physical and mental) are applicable to a *wide array of accessible green spaces, like bike paths or streets with vegetation* (Berman, et al., 2012; National Park Service [NPS] & CDC, 2016). For example, studies have revealed that visits to green spaces, including walks along tree-

lined streets, are connected to lower levels of stress, an increased ability to focus, and decreased anxiety. In a 2012 experiment, researchers found that people who walked through a green arboretum experienced a 20 percent improvement in a test of working memory (which measures one's ability to focus or concentrate) compared to those who walked on traffic-heavy urban streets (Berman, et al., 2012). Yet another study revealed that people who went for a 50-minute walk in nature experienced less anxiety and rumination, along with increased working memory performance compared to those who went for a similar length walk in an urban environment (Bratman, et al., 2015). (*Related Capitals – Built, Human, Social*)

In addition to being located close to homes, studies have found that the size of an open public space and the amenities and natural features within it are also important factors in encouraging physical activity (Brownson, 1999; Wolter, & Lindsey, 2001). A 2005 study found that a combination of three characteristics of public open spaces — *proximity to home, size, and attractiveness* — appeared to encourage higher levels of walking. Participants noted that they preferred public open spaces large enough to contain trees, water features, and birdlife, and in which they had the opportunity to “lose themselves” (Giles-Corti, et al., 2005). As noted throughout this section, the issue of access to green spaces that are safe, close to home, easy to walk to, and which have well-maintained facilities underscores the need for an equitable distribution of investment in the public realm (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals – Built, Human, Social*)

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments on POLITICAL CAPITAL



How is Political Capital Related to Healthy Communities?

According to the pioneers of the Healthy Communities movement, there are four key factors that are necessary for creating the conditions and supports in communities that lead to healthy and thriving communities (Hancock, 1993):



1. *Community involvement*
This is the bedrock.
2. *Political commitment*
Local government is a key player.
3. *Multisector partnerships*
It takes a whole community.
4. *(Public) Policy, systems, and environmental change strategies*
This creates the conditions for change.

When it comes to the physical design of communities, local government leaders are the most important decisionmakers; therefore, gaining political commitment is the first step in the development of a healthy community (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 1997). Local government has the power to shape the larger community environment through the development of plans, policies, and political decisionmaking that impacts community planning, transportation, housing, community and social services, parks and recreation, education, public works, and many other areas (Hancock, 1993).

Drawing from decades of experience and evidence, we have learned that it is not only important for local governments to provide support, but they must play a primary role in coordinating and facilitating this level of work (Green et al., 2009). In this important community role, local elected officials have the unique ability to convene key partners and decisionmakers, enable information flow and collaboration, advocate for and promote important

community issues, and establish plans and policies that create healthy, thriving communities (Local Government Commission, n.d.).

Finally, to successfully engage in this work, communities must understand that political support is a two-way street. In addition to local decisionmakers, creating healthier communities requires actions and engagement from companies, organizations, and sectors that extend beyond the traditional health sectors (e.g., public health and health care) and include people and organizations that may not have health as their primary mission, but whose decisions have a profound impact on community environments (e.g., business sector) (CDC, 2011). Therefore, the creation of multisector partnerships — public, private, and not-for-profit — and the collaboration between them are fundamental objectives of the Healthy Communities approach (Hancock, 1993).

What is the Relationship Between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Political Capital?

Changes in the food and financial sectors early in the 21st century brought renewed urgency to concerns over hunger, food access, public health, labor, and economic development. As more and more communities started to connect the issues back to the *food system* as a whole, citizen groups and local governments responded by developing partnerships in the form of Food Policy Councils to assess and address the growing issues (Harper et al., 2009). Over the past decade, the number of local and state Food Policy Councils (FPCs) has increased dramatically. Research has shown that FPCs have been successful at strengthening connections between various stakeholders, researching and reporting on food policy issues, educating and promoting awareness, and impacting food law and policy change (Lieb, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial, Natural, Social)

Food Policy Councils typically consist of groups of representatives and stakeholders from all five sectors of the food system — production, consumption, processing, distribution, and waste recycling. The central aim of most Food Policy Councils is to identify and propose innovative

solutions to local politicians, businesses, and community groups to improve local food systems, spur local economic development, and make food systems more environmentally sustainable and equitable. Because U.S. cities and states do not have agencies devoted explicitly to food, FPCs can improve coordination between government agencies whose policies influence the food system (American Planning Association [APA], 2016a; Harper, et al., 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial, Natural, Social)

Research indicates that government agencies, schools, universities, hospitals, and other institutions are purchasing local food more than ever before. To assist with this increased interest, Food Policy Councils can provide influence and support to encourage the growth of local retail outlets and improve market entry for local food producers (Lieb, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial, Natural)

As part of the food system, both community gardens and urban agriculture projects can play an important role in increasing access to healthier food. Although they are similar in concept (and are often referred to as being the same), urban agriculture typically includes a level of commerce, meaning that food is grown to be sold, as opposed to being grown for personal consumption or sharing. (Community gardening typically does not include commercial activity.) Food from urban farms may be sold to restaurants or at farmers' market(s), or even given to a local soup kitchen or church, but the food is raised primarily to be moved (through some form of commerce) from the grower to the user. Because the production and selling of food includes safety and liability issues, as well as commerce and cultural issues, zoning plays a big role in urban agriculture (Greensgrow, n.d.). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial, Natural, Cultural)

Community gardens have been shown to play a valuable role in creating healthier communities. However, they need support from local governments to be sustainable. Across the country, local governments are supporting community gardens in a variety of ways. For example, local governments can adopt land-use laws — specifically

comprehensive plan policies and zoning codes — to help create and preserve community gardens. In some instances, cities provide financial support; others assess municipal land to determine where vacant public lots may be available for community gardens; and in some cases, cities operate their own community garden program (ChangeLabs Solutions & NPLAN, 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Financial, Natural, Social)

Local governments can make public land available to food-growing groups for minimal costs, and public land is not hindered by property taxes. In cities with low property values, urban agriculture has been shown to raise property values and stabilize neighborhoods with vacant and blighted properties — either permanently or until future development occurs (Voicu & Been, 2008). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Natural, Social, Financial)

Agreements with community and resident groups to grow food on public land can offer local governments creative ways to reduce expenses by sharing maintenance costs. In addition to paying for upkeep, urban agriculture also creates green spaces that provide ecological services and

monetary savings to municipalities by decreasing storm water runoff, which can reduce treatment plant loads and pollution of waterways, and increase infiltration (Sherer, 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial, Natural)

Zoning regulations can also be used to help establish grocery stores or markets in food-desert areas, especially when paired with economic incentives. An example of this is the Federal Government’s Healthy Food Financing Initiative, which takes empty, unused, or abandoned lots and repurposes them as community food gardens, urban agriculture projects, or even farmers’ market locations. The use of zoning regulations to improve food access has been implemented at every level including rural, suburban, and dense urban environments (USDHHS, Office of Community Service, n.d.; Winig & Wooten, 2013). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial, Social)

Local zoning regulations can also be used to manage the location and number of commercial food retail establishments, such as fast food businesses, by limiting how many are in a given area and also require a minimum distance from schools (CDC, 2010). (*Related Capital* – Built)



In the past few decades, significant advances have been made to increase access to healthy food due in part to concerted grassroots organizing and strategic advocacy for policy reform. In fact, in a study conducted with elected officials, community leaders agreed that grassroots efforts are necessary to pass reform legislation, and also that improving the food environment requires efforts tailored to the community (Mikkelsen & Chehimi, 2007). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Natural, Social)



What is the Relationship Between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Political Capital?

Local governments have a crucial role to play in creating environments and opportunities for physical activity and active living. City leaders and other decisionmakers can provide leadership, legitimacy, and an enabling environment by developing and implementing policies that support active living for all citizens (Edwards & Tsouros, 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial)

In a recently released systematic review of 90 studies related to supporting and increasing PA behavior, the latest research recommends built-environment approaches at the community level that *combine* one or more interventions to improve pedestrian or bicycle *transportation systems* with one or more *land-use and environmental* design interventions. Transportation system interventions include policies or projects designed to increase or improve street connectivity, sidewalk and trail infrastructure, bicycle infrastructure, or public transit infrastructure and access. Land-use and environmental design interventions include mixed land-use environments that increase the diversity and proximity of local destinations where people live, work, and spend their recreation and leisure time as well

as access to parks and other public or private recreational facilities (Community Preventive Services Task Force, 2017). Although these recommendations are related to the built environment, the strategies require political involvement and commitment to develop, pass, and implement transportation and land-use policies at the local, county, and state level. (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial)

In the last decade, our understanding about how city planning decisions impact the public's health has increased greatly. Most communities use a comprehensive or general plan to guide land-use decisions. Implementation of these plans is accomplished through a series of mechanisms — zoning codes and other regulations, capital improvements programs, and other policies for decision making. Combined, community plans and how they are implemented have a significant impact on community health, and specifically, active living behaviors (APA, 2015b). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Financial)

To complement comprehensive plans and policies, current efforts have also shown that establishing a bicycle and pedestrian advocacy committee (BPAC) can be an effective strategy for improving and increasing walking

and bicycling in communities. Appointed by elected officials, these groups are responsible for providing input to decision-makers on bicycle and pedestrian projects, programs, and policies within a state, region, or local government area (Wempe, 2012). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Natural, Social)

A report prepared by the National Conference of State Legislators found that the most effective policy for encouraging bicycling and walking is incorporating sidewalks and bike lanes into community design — essentially, creating Complete Streets (i.e., streets that enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities). A Complete Street policy supports a continuous network of safe sidewalks and bikeways, which is important for encouraging active travel (APA, 2016b; Teach Robbins & Morandi, 2002). Research has shown that providing convenient, safe, and connected walking and cycling infrastructure is essential to promoting active travel (Buehler, Götschi, & Winters, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Financial, Social)

Unlike urban communities, active transportation is often not an option in rural environments. Because of this, research has shown that investing in and increasing active recreation amenities in rural environments, such as playgrounds, parks, and recreational facilities, and investing in transportation options to help residents get to those amenities is needed (Yousefian Hansen, & Hartley, 2015). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Financial, Social)

As an important part of the built environment, public transit is essential as it vastly extends the distance people can travel by walking, rolling (i.e., wheelchairs), or bicycling. An environment that supports access to alternative modes of transportation beyond cars can help people maintain an active lifestyle. Transit-oriented development (TOD) that places bus or train stops within walking distance of housing, offices, retail, and open spaces makes it more convenient for people who live or work in these communities to travel on foot or by public transportation instead of by car. People

who use public transit walk more on a daily basis than non-transit users (Lee et al., 2008). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Financial, Social)

For rural communities, where resources and budgets are limited, local leaders might consider starting with smaller changes (e.g., repainting existing crosswalks, adding pedestrian signs, updating and promoting Safe Routes to School and shared-use policies, reviewing town-wide snow-removal policies) to build momentum toward larger changes (e.g., widening street shoulders, adding or improving sidewalks, adding physical activity facilities to an existing park or building a new park, budgeting for late school buses) (Yousefian Hansen, & Hartley, 2015). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Human, Financial, Social)

Benefits and Influences of Healthy Food and Active Living Environments on SOCIAL CAPITAL



How is Social Capital Related to Healthy Communities?

There is a wealth of literature emphasizing the importance of social support and connection in improving health and other outcomes at the individual and community level. In fact, the World Health Organization and the U.S. Healthy People 2020 initiative have identified social support and good social relations as key determinants of health and well-being (Kawachi, Kennedy, & Glass, 1999).

Evidence has consistently revealed that people who feel a stronger sense of belonging to their local community

tend to live healthier lives and have fewer mental health challenges than those who lack this emotional/community connection. In fact, studies have shown that a sense of belonging to one's community has a strong impact on health behavior change — that is, the stronger the sense of belonging, the more likely people were to exercise, lose weight, or eat healthier (Hystad & Carpiano, 2012).

In 2010, the Knight Foundation partnered with the Gallup organization to survey 43,000 residents of 26 U.S. cities to determine what attracts people to a place and keeps them there. The study found that the most important factors that create emotional bonds between people and their communities were not jobs, but rather “physical beauty, opportunities for socializing, and a city’s openness to all people.” The Knight Foundation also found that communities with the highest levels of attachment to place also had the strongest economies. Cohesive communities also report higher levels of safety and security, community activity, and emotional health and well-being (Eitler, McMahon, & Thoeig, 2013).

Finally, as described by experts in the field, successfully developing Healthy Communities requires community involvement (Hancock, 1993). To that end, Healthy Communities efforts provide significant opportunities to engage volunteers in shaping, managing, and/or programming public spaces. In addition to helping to develop healthier community environments, research has revealed that volunteering provides significant health benefits such as decreased mortality and improved self-rated health, mental health, life satisfaction, happiness, social interaction, healthy behaviors, and coping ability (Borgonovi, 2008).



What is the Relationship Between Healthy Food Environments, Healthy Eating, and Social Capital?

Initiatives focused on creating healthier community environments, such as resident-led community garden projects, provide opportunities for gathering, socialization, and volunteerism have not only been shown to reduce psychological distress and depression, but evidence

indicates that they also increase perceived safety and mitigate crime (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Natural)

The processes involved with creating healthier community environments provides opportunities and spaces for gathering and socialization. This process also offers opportunities for neighbors to work together on a common project, creating new social connections and networks. For example, community gardens and markets provide ongoing opportunities for local residents to build their social connections and leadership skills, while also creating pathways to self-empowerment and entrepreneurship (PPS, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Natural)

In a 2007 survey of farmers’ market shoppers, participants ranked socialization among the top reasons for their visits, on par with factors such as product quality, convenience, and price (Project for Public Spaces & Columbia University Institute for Social and Economic Research Policy, 2007). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Human, Natural)

In addition to encouraging participants to engage in healthy behaviors such as eating fresh vegetables and increasing physical activity, research shows that many of the qualities of community gardening help stimulate personal and social processes that support physical and mental health (Hale, et al., 2011). Personal processes include opportunities to volunteer, act in a leadership role, organize neighborhood activities, and recruit new gardeners. Social processes include building reciprocity and trust, enabling collective decisionmaking, and fostering civic engagement and community building (Teig, et al., 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Human, Natural)

The collective nature that differentiates community gardens from private gardens means that social interaction is inevitable and the cultivation of meaningful relationships are likely to occur. Collaborative efforts including partnerships from universities, Cooperative Extension offices, summer youth programs, not-for-profit organizations, banks, and health centers are some of the many examples of involvement



from the larger community. These partnerships provide resources for gardens (e.g., volunteers, financial assistance, and technical assistance) that are not available among garden participants themselves (Draper & Freedman, 2010). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Human, Natural)



What is the Relationship Between Active Living Environments and Behaviors and Social Capital?

Increasing PA behaviors is an essential component of any strategy that aims to improve the health of communities and seriously address the problems of preventable chronic diseases. Active living not only contributes to individual physical and mental health, but also to *social cohesion and community well-being* (Edwards & Tsouros, 2006). (*Related Capitals* – Cultural, Human, Natural)

Street-scale features, such as street furniture, crossing aids, and trees, encourage walking in public places and can lead to opportunities for social interaction with other members of a neighborhood or community. These types of interactions, especially when repeated over time, have been shown to build community cohesion and trust (APA, 2015a). In fact, a case study of three neighborhoods found that the following features had the greatest influence on social interaction: seating (both formal and informal), sidewalk width, building facades (e.g., nooks, small setbacks), shade/shelter (e.g., trees, awnings), and unique storefronts (Mehta, 2009). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human)

Parks and trails have been shown to provide social and psychological health benefits for users. Public spaces promote community involvement and social interactions, which can enhance mental health. Access to nature has been shown to reduce stress and restore the mind, leading to higher productivity at work and enhanced learning in school environments (NPS & CDC, 2016). (*Related Capitals* – Built, Cultural, Human, Natural)

A city-wide study conducted in a medium-sized urban environment found that parks with higher levels of social capital were used by more people and increased physical activity behavior. Social capital was measured by indicators such as trust and harmony among park users (“getting along with other park users”), feelings of responsibility for children’s safety in the park, and reporting incidents of graffiti or vandalism (Broyles, et al., 2011). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Cultural)

Research has shown that social support systems, such as walking groups, fitness classes, and walk-to-school programs, help people to become more physically active and are cost-effective. Studies suggest that social support interventions in community settings, such as neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools, can result in a 44 percent increase in the duration of time spent being physically active and a 20 percent increase in the frequency of physical activity (Kahn, et al., 2002; Kouvonen, 2011; Roux, et al., 2008). (*Related Capitals* – Human, Cultural)

Having access to and participating in physically active playtime and interactive recreation is a critical part of children’s early social, emotional, cognitive, and physical developments. This is particularly significant for children living in poverty, who often have fewer resources for in-school and after-school programs, lack safe play areas, and are impacted by limited time and resources from caregivers (Milteer & Ginsburg, 2011). (*Related Capital* – Human)

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Recommended Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments

P U E X T . I N / E V P S H E A L T H

PURDUE
EXTENSION

Recommended Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments

Joey Vrazel, author

After laying the foundation for this work by describing *what we have learned* and identifying *why this work is important*, the next important step is to highlight *what is known* and *what can be done* in communities to create healthy food and active living environments. Building on the foundation established in the earlier sections, the information in this section provides community leaders and practitioners with a comprehensive list of known influencing factors to refer to and use as guidance, as well as a menu of recommended strategies to consider, as they determine how best to create healthy food and active living environments in their own communities.

Identifying What is Known

In the last quarter-century alone, we have learned a great deal about the benefits of community environments that support healthy-eating and active-living behaviors. In fact, during this time period, we have not only been able to identify the *conditions* and *influences* needed to support these behaviors, but as importantly, we have also identified those factors in our communities that present *challenges* and *barriers* to practicing these vital health behaviors. Before communities can effectively consider and determine the most appropriate strategies, policies, and plans to enhance their public spaces, it is essential that those leading the work have a complete understanding of all of the factors involved.

To assist with this process, we developed tables to outline these factors using the Community Capitals Framework to organize and illustrate this information.

The tables outline what is known about the challenges and barriers to creating healthy food and active living environments (and therefore, the factors that present obstacles to healthy behaviors) for each of the Community Capitals. Additionally, we outlined the conditions and

influences that have been shown to develop healthy food and active living environments (and thus support healthier behaviors). Collectively, this information provides practitioners with a general understanding of the wide range of factors in community environments that they might consider modifying, avoiding, or eliminating (i.e., the challenges and barriers), in addition to those factors they might consider developing, enhancing, and/or promoting (i.e., the conditions and supports).


Putting It All Together

With a baseline of the known barriers and supporting conditions established, we will draw from and build on this information by providing an outline of the latest recommendations and best practices for enhancing community environments using the Community Capitals Framework. It is important to note that these strategies are not intended to represent an exhaustive review of best practices; however, they are comprehensive in scope, offering an overview of select strategies for communities to consider.


To illustrate this information, we will first outline a summary of the key influences for creating healthy food and active-living environments specifically related to each of the Community Capitals. We will follow this information with select policy, systems, and environmental-change strategies, and recommended practices that have been shown to address or enhance the identified influences and factors.

Given the significant and interrelated influence of built and political capital on public spaces, we will lead with and present these capitals together. For the remaining Community Capitals, we will present an overview of the factors and strategies for both healthy food and active living environments combined. Finally, at the end of this section, we will present a handout illustrating all of the strategies across each of the Community Capitals for communities to use as a quick-reference sheet.


HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

BUILT CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to full-scale grocery stores within reasonable distance from homes • Overabundance of low-cost fast food and convenience-store food choices • Easy access to low-cost, unhealthy vending options in public spaces • Overabundance of liquor (and tobacco) stores in low income areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to and affordability of a variety of healthy food and beverage options for all users (especially low-income populations) across multiple venues in community environments includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → grocery and convenience stores, → farmers' markets, → community gardens, → urban agriculture, → Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) opportunities → and other food establishments (e.g., restaurants, vending, fast food) • Access to full-scale grocery stores is within reasonable distance of homes and communities (i.e., within 10–20 miles in rural communities and within a half-mile to a mile for urban communities) • Community garden initiatives are found throughout the community • Mobile farmers' markets serve communities with limited or no healthy food options and neighborhoods with an overabundance of fast food options • Expanded access to public transportation options (e.g., bus stops or shuttle services) reaches full-service grocery stores • Wayfinding signage is used to highlight venues that provide healthy food options, particularly fresh produce (e.g., farmers' market venues)

ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT


BUILT CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to safe places to walk and bicycle in public spaces (lack of infrastructure) • Primary focus on street development for automobile transportation only (and parking spaces) • Little or no connectivity to destinations such as schools, grocery stores, or community spaces • Streets and highways built to allow for maximum cars, higher speeds • Heightened risk of pedestrian, bicycle, and car crashes due to poorly built roads, lack of adequate infrastructure for biking/walking, poor lighting, lack of signage, and poor or no street crossings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access to <i>appealing and safe</i> places and physical environments allows participation in active living behaviors. Access to and support from built-environment conditions can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Sidewalks → Bicycle routes (on-road and protected) → Safe Routes to Schools, worksites, & parks → Public transit options (& incentives) → Network of walking and biking routes, parks, and greenways; Provide access within reasonable distance to all → Parks and recreation sites (& reduced price for use) → Trails → Bike storage → Shower/Changing facilities → Access to public facilities for activity (i.e., joint use) → Enhanced neighborhood design • Supportive community and street-scale urban design & land use (see also political capital) include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → City has comprehensive plan in place with health considerations included → Complete streets in key areas → City supports planning, zoning, and public transportation → Building codes are developed to support active spaces and places → Mixed-use development is present → Destinations are well-connected throughout city



	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
BUILT CAPITAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of amenities in town centers and potentially walkable areas, such as benches, shade, trees, and snow removal in winter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety is prioritized and featured through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Traffic-calming measures (to slow motor-vehicle traffic and reduce traffic volumes), including roads that have median islands, speed humps, and narrowing, etc. → Streetscape features such as street lights, benches, art, trees, wayfinding signs, and other amenities → Pedestrian enhancements such as curb ramps, crossing signs, and countdown signals Wayfinding signage connects and promotes key destinations and encourages easy use of walking and biking infrastructure




HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
POLITICAL CAPITAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food system not included in any community plans Lack of coalition support for enhancing the local and regional food system No political involvement or incentives for local grocery stores Zoning laws that do not allow for public lands to be used Restrictive laws governing the sale of locally grown fresh foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No complete streets or similar policy Lack of a comprehensive or general plan to include infrastructure changes or improvements Comprehensive or general plan does not include plans for increasing biking, walking, or transit options Lack of a voice for bike-pedestrian advocacy Little to no funding allocated for bike or pedestrian infrastructure



ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT



	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
POLITICAL CAPITAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City, county, or region has a Food Policy Council A regional and local Food Systems Report has been developed A healthy food and beverage policy has been instituted at all public venues The community is actively involved in local food system development and Healthy Communities efforts City or county has a full-time Food Policy and Systems coordinator Zoning and development regulations support and incentivize farmers' markets and community gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health considerations are incorporated in all governing land-use documents (e.g., comprehensive plan, zoning and other development code, siting policies) Transportation plan prioritizes connectivity and multimodal infrastructure A Complete Streets Policy has been adopted to support walking and biking infrastructure A sidewalk ordinance is in place that requires sidewalks for all new private developments A local and regional Trails Master Plan has been developed and adopted City/county has a bicycle and pedestrian advisory council A Pedestrian and Bicycle Master plan (including Safe Routes to School, Work, and Parks) is in place City and local school-districts have implemented shared-use agreements Connectivity and multimodal infrastructures are prioritized in comprehensive plans, downtown design standards, and neighborhood plans City or county has a full-time Active Living Coordinator City has developed and implemented downtown improvement plan using Main Street Approach (featured as part of comprehensive plan)

Built and Political Capital Strategies for Creating Healthy Food Environments

Recommended strategies address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access** (i.e., both places and options) to a variety of healthy foods and beverages (Increasing access also includes **increasing transportation options** when walking and biking aren't possible, such as offering public transportation)
- **Serves all users** (especially low-income and vulnerable residents)
- **Improves affordability** (and incentivizing) of healthy food items
- **Creates or enhances public spaces** to support and promote food venues
- **Increases business** for local-food venues (e.g., increasing access, improving connectivity, and providing wayfinding signage to identify venues)
- **Increases the involvement of local government and community members** for creating Healthy Food environments (such as a food policy council)
- **Develops assessments, plans, and policies** for creating Healthy Food environments (such as food-system report and plan)
- **Improves and increases healthy eating patterns** population-wide (by making it easier to have and make healthier choices)

STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENTS

Capital	Systems Strategies	Policy Strategies	Environmental Strategies
BUILT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Food-Systems Report (prepolicy and environmental change) • Encourage and provide training for community garden initiatives (ongoing) • Accept SNAP benefits at farmers' market(s) (postenvironmental change) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt policies recommended by the Food Policy Council as a result of the Food-Systems Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to farmers' markets and/or mobile markets • Promote the purchase of fruits and vegetables at local restaurants and food venues • Develop a Healthy Corner Store Initiative to promote sale of fresh produce in convenience stores
POLITICAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Food Policy Council (pre- & post-policy and environmental change support) • Adopt strategies to recruit supermarkets and large grocery stores in underserved areas (Systems & Environment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt zoning and development regulations that support or incentivize farmers' market(s) • Institute a policy to provide healthy food and beverage options at public venues (Policy & Environment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and support supermarkets and large grocery stores in underserved areas (Systems & Environment) • Ensure all government facilities have access to (free) water drinking fountains or dispensers



Built and Political Capital Strategies for Creating Active Living Environments

Recommended strategies address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access and improves connectivity** to places and options for physically active transportation or recreation
- **Serves all users** (including people with disabilities, older adults, children, and others with special needs)
- **Improves safety and reduces crime** in areas that support physical-activity and active-living behavior (through traffic-calming measures, streetlighting, and street crossings)
- **Creates or enhances public spaces** through amenities and features that make it easy and appealing to walk, bicycle, or roll (e.g., street furniture, art, shade trees, and destinations)
- **Increases business** for local venues and public spaces (e.g., increases access to destinations, improves connectivity, and provides wayfinding signage to direct people to destinations)
- **Increases the involvement of local government and civic engagement of community members** for creating Healthy Communities
- **Improves and increases active living behaviors** population-wide




STRATEGIES FOR ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

Capital	Systems Strategies	Policy Strategies	Environmental Strategies
BUILT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct mapping and/or assessment activities to identify current status of built environment • Develop and implement education, promotion, and enforcement activities for all built-environment supports 	*See Political Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement adopted Complete Streets policy • Install wayfinding signage • Install pedestrian enhancements such as curb ramps, benches, trees, and countdown signals • Implement traffic calming and other safety features • Paint and construct infrastructure such as bike lanes, cycle tracks, trails, and sharrows • Maintain a network of walking and biking routes, parks, and greenways; Provide access within reasonable distance to all
POLITICAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate health considerations in all governing land-use documents (e.g., comprehensive plan, zoning and other development code, siting policies) • Develop shared-use agreements between the school district and the city • Develop transportation plans that prioritize connectivity and multimodal infrastructure • Convene a bicycle and pedestrian advisory council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to support walking and biking infrastructure • Adopt a sidewalk ordinance that requires sidewalks for all new private development • Allow and encourage mixed-use and form-based zoning • Develop (systems strategy) and adopt a Trails Master Plan • Develop (systems) and adopt a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master plan (include Safe Routes to Schools, Work, and Parks) • Adopt a snow-removal policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install bike racks or bike sharing capability at all public facilities (city & county) <p>*See Built Capital</p>


Snapshot of Challenges/Barriers, Conditions/Influences, and Factors/Strategies Beyond Built and Political Capital

Financial Capital

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

FINANCIAL CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to healthy food options that are available is too expensive (e.g., convenience stores) • Poor food choices (lacking nutrients, high in sugar, salt, and trans fat) are widely available and cheap • Lack of focus on food-environment factors that attract and retain businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate number of retail establishments sell fresh, affordable, healthy food items to prevent “leakage” of local dollars to out-of-town areas • Economic incentives are provided to support a full-service grocery and economic anchor for community • Growing number of local farm-to-school, hospital, and restaurant programs provide locally grown foods • Healthy Corner Store Initiative is in place to promote sale of fresh produce in local convenience stores • Healthy food and beverage items are promoted with signage and pricing incentives • Healthy vending options are incentivized by offering pricing discounts • SNAP benefits and activities are accepted and supported at all local markets


ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

FINANCIAL CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofit of poor community design is (more) expensive • (Individual level) Reliance on car-only transportation requires significant percentage of income • (Community level) Reliance on car-only transportation dictates funding priorities for road projects to the neglect of active transportation options • Over-focus on economic business growth brings neglect of community factors that attract and retain businesses (Active-Living environments) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of well-connected, walkable, and bikeable areas around local businesses provide amenities (i.e., shops, restaurants, services) • Wayfinding signage is in place to highlight and provides direction to local businesses and public spaces • Dedicated funding is available for sidewalks and pedestrian connections; bicycle facilities and connections; trails; and transit service

Financial Capital Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments


Recommended strategies to address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access** to healthy food venues, other business destinations, and public transportation
- **Improves affordability** of healthy food options and public transportation
- **Increase safety features and reduces crime** through the design of the built environment
- **Increases amenities and improves connectivity** to destinations that offer healthy food and “lively” streets that are walkable and bikeable to multiple destinations such as schools, restaurants, shops, parks, transit, and jobs
- **Increases community and economic development** through access to places and options for healthy food and active living and through businesses and jobs


FINANCIAL CAPITAL		
	PSE Strategies for Healthy Food Environments	PSE Strategies for Active Living Environments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote local farmers’ markets (systems) • Increase number of retail establishments that sell fresh, affordable, nutritious food to prevent “leakage” of local dollars to out-of-town areas (environment, systems) • Provide economic incentives to recruit a full-service grocery to act as economic anchor for community (systems, policy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase connectivity and improve walkable and bikeable areas around local businesses that provide amenities (i.e., shops, restaurants, services) (environment, systems) • Install wayfinding signage to local businesses and public spaces (e.g., farmers’ market(s)) (environment) • Dedicate funding to: sidewalks and pedestrian connections; bicycle facilities and connections; trails; and transit service (systems, policy) • Develop and implement downtown improvement plan using Main Street Approach (could be included as part of comprehensive plan) (systems, environment)

Cultural Capital

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

CULTURAL CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public acceptance (i.e., normalization) of overconsumption of unhealthy food and drink options (i.e., fast food as the norm) Public acceptance of and expectation of large (distorted) portion sizes All-you-can eat options Cultural connection to high sugar, fried food as part of community events and celebrations (e.g., county fairs); absence of healthy food options (especially for those with restricted diets) Connection of food establishments to American society (e.g., McDonald's) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local food outlets promote community connection, events, and education opportunities such as farmers' market(s), mobile markets, community gardens, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) Healthy-eating patterns are marketed and promoted, contributing to healthier social norms Local farms are well-connected through farmers' markets and CSAs Healthy food options are promoted in all retail settings Nutrition education is provided to limited-resource families


ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

CULTURAL CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public acceptance (i.e., normalization) of sedentary behavior Heavy use (i.e., amount of time) of technology and focus on screens (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, TV's, gaming) Car culture (i.e., car-centric society) and focus on parking in public areas Cultural aversion to exercise and physical fitness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging community connection and engagement Active living lifestyles are marketed and promoted to support physical-activity behavior Wayfinding signs are in place to highlight community destinations and landmarks Street improvements and streetscape features encourage community connection Community is designated as a Bicycle- and Walk-Friendly Community Education, promotion, and enforcement activities are conducted to support biking, walking, and rolling community-wide The community is actively involved in local bike- and pedestrian-promotion efforts and Healthy Communities strategies

Cultural Capital Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments


Recommended strategies address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access** (place and options) to opportunities, services, and events (i.e., hubs where people frequent)
- **Improves affordability** of products, services, and events
- **Increases amenities** such as restaurants, shops, parks, plaza’s, town squares, and other places to congregate; walkable, bikeable, vibrant spaces
- **Enhances safety** (e.g., traffic calming, crime reduction, noise and pollution reduction)
- **Improves community design** (e.g., streetscape features, properly designed buildings, connected public spaces)
- **Increases community engagement opportunities** (e.g., city festivals, events, activities, and winter outdoor adventure)


CULTURAL CAPITAL		
	PSE Strategies for Healthy Food Environments	PSE Strategies for Active Living Environments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and offer local food outlets that promote community connection, events, and education opportunities such as farmers’ market(s), mobile markets, community gardens, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) (systems, environment) • Accept and support SNAP benefits at all local markets (policy, systems, environment) • Connect to local farms through farmers’ markets and CSAs (systems) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize connectivity and multimodal infrastructure in comprehensive plans, downtown design standards, and neighborhood plans (policy, systems) • Install wayfinding signs to highlight community destinations and landmarks (environment) • Implement traffic-calming features (systems, environment) • Add street improvements and streetscape features to encourage community connection (environment) • Become a Bicycle- and Walk-Friendly Community (systems)

Natural Capital

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

NATURAL CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No connection to local food supply • Access to utilizing abandoned lots that could be converted to community gardens or urban agriculture projects • Locally farmed foods that are transported out of the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning and development regulations have been adopted to support and/or incentivize farmers' markets and community gardens • Community gardens are established and maintained throughout the community • Codes have been developed to permit spaces for urban agriculture • Growing number of local farm-to-school, hospital and restaurant programs promote locally grown foods • Recommendations from food system report are implemented


ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT

NATURAL CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor park system (not enough for population, not safe, or not well-maintained) • Underdeveloped or no greenspace • Lack of access to parks by walking or biking • Lack of access to trails and recreation areas • Impact of poor weather conditions — too cold in winter or too hot in summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks Master Plan has been developed and adopted • Communitywide green infrastructure plan is integrated with other relevant local plans • Access to parks, shared-use paths, trails, and open spaces is available within reasonable walking distance of most homes (included as part of parks and greenways master plans) • A maintenance and improvement plan is in place and funding allocated for upkeep of all parks, trails, and green spaces, including snow-removal processes

Natural Capital Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments


Recommended strategies address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access** to and **affordability** of fresh, locally grown produce (increasing availability, purchase, and consumption)
- **Increases access** to active-living opportunities in local parks and greenspaces (increasing physical activity behaviors)
- **Supports community development** of urban agriculture and connections to local farms
- **Improves and increases amenities** in well-maintained parks and green spaces (i.e., playgrounds, trees and landscaping, water features, places to walk, sit, and congregate, and restrooms)
- **Improves safety** in parks, greenspaces, and community gardens (“eyes on the street”)


NATURAL CAPITAL		
	PSE Strategies for Healthy Food Environments	PSE Strategies for Active Living Environments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt zoning and development regulations that support and/or incentivize farmers’ markets and community gardens (policy, systems)• Establish and maintain community gardens (environment)• Develop codes that permit spaces for urban agriculture (policy)• Increase number of local farm-to-school, hospital, or restaurant programs supporting locally grown foods (systems, environment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and adopt a Parks Master Plan (systems, policy)• Create a communitywide green infrastructure plan that is integrated with other relevant local plans (systems)• Provide access to parks, shared-use paths, and trails or open spaces within reasonable walking distance of most homes (included as part of parks and greenways master plans) (systems, environment)

Social Capital

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
SOCIAL CAPITAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundant marketing of poor food options (e.g., fast food) • Little to no marketing of healthy food options • Lack of support for healthy food options in public facilities and spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident-led community gardening projects are encouraged and supported • Nutrition education and other activities (e.g., cooking demonstrations) are provided at farmers' market(s) • Community gardens are supported through joint partnerships • Nutrition education and cooking classes are provided at community events to encourage and promote healthy-eating behaviors • Natural environments such as parks and green spaces are used to expand the distribution of healthy foods

ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT


	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
SOCIAL CAPITAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive marketing of products that encourage sedentary behavior • Overfocus on fitness-only physical activity marketing • Lack of support for community-wide changes for enhanced bike and pedestrian infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street-scale features, such as street furniture, crossing aids, and trees are provided in prime areas to encourage activity and interaction • Active-living programs and events at parks and public spaces are provided to support physical activity and social interaction and increase access to nature • Safety and crime-reduction methods such as traffic calming, street lighting, and street amenities (places to congregate, destinations) are in place • Community-level social support systems such as walking and biking groups, fitness classes, and active playtime in parks are available

Social Capital Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments


Recommended strategies address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access** to places and options for healthy food and active living (active transportation and recreation) in social environments
- **Increases and enhances community amenities and safety** (that support social interaction) — destinations, streetscapes, traffic calming, crime prevention through design and people out in public spaces
- **Increases community Involvement/engagement** such as volunteering to shape, manage, and/or provide input on community plans, programs, and events




SOCIAL CAPITAL		
	PSE Strategies for Healthy Food Environments	PSE Strategies for Active Living Environments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support resident-led community gardening projects (systems, environment) • Support education and other activities at farmers' markets (systems) • Partner with other community efforts to support community gardens (systems) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide street-scale features, such as street furniture, crossing aids, and trees to encourage activity and interaction (environment) • Provide active-living programs and events at parks and public spaces to increase physical activity and social interaction; increase access to nature (systems, environment) • Improve safety and crime reduction through traffic calming, street lighting, and street amenities (places to congregate, destinations) (environment) • Adopt shared-use policy with local schools and organizations to allow community to use recreation facilities and outdoor spaces (policy)

HEALTHY FOOD ENVIRONMENT

HUMAN CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness and knowledge about <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> (i.e., amount and type of healthy food and beverages needed for health) • Lack of access to healthy food options and (free) water in settings (e.g., schools, workplaces, and other public spaces) • Lack of exposure to and knowledge about how to eat or prepare fresh fruits and vegetables • Misperception about the cost of purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community settings (e.g., schools, public spaces) provide access to healthy food and beverage options and (free) water • Healthy vending options are offered (e.g., schools, workplaces, and other public spaces) and incentivized by offering pricing discounts • Healthy food and drink options are promoted and displayed in prime locations • Businesses, organizations, and schools participate in and support local Healthy Food or Healthy Communities efforts as an organization (leading to increased awareness, support, and healthier social norms)

ACTIVE LIVING ENVIRONMENT


HUMAN CAPITAL	Challenges & Barriers	Conditions & Influences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness and knowledge about the Physical Activity (PA) Guidelines for Americans (i.e., amount, type, and level of physical activity needed to benefit health) • Lack of confidence to be physically active • Misperception that being physically active requires excessive exercise and high level of fitness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses and schools promote active transportation and safe routes to work and school • Bicycle parking and changing facilities (e.g., bike rack, shelter, lockers, and showers) are provided for employees • Workplaces, schools, and organizations adopt policies and have infrastructure in place to support physical-activity behavior • Businesses, organizations, and schools participate in and support local Active Living or Healthy Communities efforts as an organization (leading to increased awareness, support, and healthier social norms)





Human Capital Strategies for Creating Healthy Food and Active Living Environments

Recommended strategies address one or more of the following influencing factors:

- **Increases access** to options for healthy food and active living opportunities (i.e., recreation and transportation) in the work environment as well as to and from the workplace environment
- **Improves affordability** of healthy food options, and active transportation and recreation opportunities in the workplace as well as to and from the workplace
- **Increases workplace support and promotion of healthy eating and active living environments and behaviors**





HUMAN CAPITAL		
	PSE Strategies for Healthy Food Environments	PSE Strategies for Active Living Environments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a policy to ensure healthy food and beverage options are offered at work, school, and government spaces in cafeterias, through vending machines, and at events (policy) • Promote healthy food items with signage and pricing incentives (environment) • Provide access to local farmers' markets or CSAs to employees (systems) • Provide easy access to free water through drinking fountains or dispensers (environment) • Limit the availability of less healthy items (environment, systems) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote active transportation and safe routes to work and school (systems) • Provide bicycle parking and changing facilities (e.g., bike rack, shelter, lockers and showers) for employees (environment) • Participate in and support local Healthy Communities efforts as an organization (systems) • Promote workplace policies and infrastructure that supports physical activity behavior (policy, systems) • Provide incentives to employees to encourage biking, walking, or public transit options (policy) • Enhance and promote stairwell use (environment) • Adopt a policy to provide reduced fee or free access to local recreation facilities and flexible schedules (policy)

<i>Capital</i>	Healthy Food Policy Strategies	Healthy Food Systems Strategies	Healthy Food Environmental Strategies
BUILT 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt policies recommended by the Food Policy Council as a result of the Food Systems Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a Food Systems Report (prepolicy and environmental change) <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage and provide training for community garden initiatives (ongoing) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept SNAP benefits at farmers' markets (postenvironmental change)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to Farmers' Market(s) and/or Mobile Markets <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the purchase of fruits and vegetables at local restaurants and food venues <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a Healthy Corner Store Initiative to promote sale of fresh produce in convenience stores
POLITICAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt zoning and development regulations that support or incentivize farmers' markets <input type="checkbox"/> Institute a policy to provide healthy food and beverage options at public venues (Policy & Environment)	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop a Food Policy Council (pre- & postpolicy and environmental change support) <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt strategies to recruit supermarkets and large grocery stores in underserved areas (Systems & Environment)	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish and support supermarkets and large grocery stores in underserved areas (Systems & Environment) <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure all government facilities have access to (free) water drinking fountains or dispensers
FINANCIAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide economic incentives to recruit a full-service grocery to act as economic anchor for community (systems, policy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Promote local farmers' markets (systems)	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase number of retail establishments that sell fresh, affordable, nutritious food to prevent "leakage" of local dollars to out-of-town areas (environment, systems)
NATURAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt zoning and development regulations that support and/or incentivize farmers' markets and community gardens (also systems)	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop codes that permit spaces for urban agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Increase number of local farm-to-school, hospital, or restaurant programs promoting locally grown foods	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish and maintain community gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Increase number of local farm-to-school, hospital, or restaurant programs offering locally grown foods
CULTURAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept and support SNAP benefits at all local markets (also systems and environment)	<input type="checkbox"/> Connect to local farms through farmers' markets and CSAs	<input type="checkbox"/> Support (systems) and offer local food outlets that promote community connection, events, and education opportunities such as farmers' market(s), mobile markets, community gardens, and community-supported agriculture (CSA)
SOCIAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Institute and promote restaurant and food venue policies that provide and incentivize healthy food options	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide training for resident-led community gardening projects <input type="checkbox"/> Support education and other activities at farmers' market(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Partner with other community efforts to support community gardens	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement resident-led community gardening projects (systems, environment)
HUMAN 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a policy to ensure healthy food and beverage options are offered through or at work, school, government spaces, cafeterias, vending machines, and events	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to local farmers' markets or CSAs to employees <input type="checkbox"/> Limit the availability of less healthy items	<input type="checkbox"/> Promote healthy food items with signage and pricing incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Provide easy access to free water through drinking fountains or dispensers



Capital	Active Living Policy Strategies	Active Living Systems Strategies	Active Living Environmental Strategies
BUILT 	*See Political Capital	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct mapping and/or assessment activities to identify current status of built environment <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement education, promotion, and enforcement activities for all built environment supports	<input type="checkbox"/> Implement adopted Complete Streets policy <input type="checkbox"/> Install wayfinding signage <input type="checkbox"/> Install pedestrian enhancements such as curb ramps, benches, trees, and countdown signals <input type="checkbox"/> Implement traffic calming and other safety features <input type="checkbox"/> Paint and construct infrastructure such as bike lanes, cycle tracks, trails, and sharrows <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a network of walking and biking routes, parks, and greenways (including snow removal) — and provide access within reasonable distance to all
POLITICAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to support walking and biking infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a sidewalk ordinance that requires sidewalks for all new private development <input type="checkbox"/> Allow and encourage mixed-use and form-based zoning <input type="checkbox"/> Develop (systems strategy) and adopt a Trails Master Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Develop (systems) and adopt a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master plan (include Safe Routes to School, Work, and Parks) <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a snow-removal policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate health considerations in all governing land-use documents (e.g., comprehensive plan, zoning and other development code, siting policies) <input type="checkbox"/> Develop shared-use agreements between the school district and the city <input type="checkbox"/> Develop transportation plans that prioritize connectivity and multi-modal infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Convene a bicycle and pedestrian advisory council	<input type="checkbox"/> Install bike racks or bike-sharing capability at all public facilities (city & county) *See Built Capital
FINANCIAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Dedicate funding to sidewalks and pedestrian connections, bicycle facilities and connections, trails, and transit service (also systems)	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a downtown improvement plan using Main Street Approach (could be included as part of comprehensive plan) (also environment)	<input type="checkbox"/> Increase connectivity and improve walkable and bikeable areas around local businesses that provide amenities (i.e., shops, restaurants, services) (also systems) <input type="checkbox"/> Install wayfinding signage to local businesses and public spaces (e.g., farmers' market(s))
NATURAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and adopt a Parks Master Plan (also systems)	<input type="checkbox"/> Create a community-wide green infrastructure plan that is integrated with other relevant local plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to parks, shared-use paths, and trails or open spaces within reasonable walking distance of most homes (included as part of parks and greenways master plans) (also systems)
CULTURAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize connectivity and multi-modal infrastructure in comprehensive plans, downtown design standards, and neighborhood plans (also systems)	<input type="checkbox"/> Become a Bicycle- and Walk-Friendly Community (systems)	<input type="checkbox"/> Install wayfinding signs to highlight community destinations and landmarks <input type="checkbox"/> Implement traffic calming features (also systems) <input type="checkbox"/> Add street improvements and streetscape features to encourage community connection

Capital	Active Living Policy Strategies	Active Living Systems Strategies	Active Living Environmental Strategies
SOCIAL 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt shared use policy with local schools and organizations to allow community to use recreation facilities and outdoor spaces	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide active living programs and events at parks and public spaces to increase physical activity and social interaction — and increase access to nature (also environment)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide street-scale features, such as street furniture, crossing aids, and trees to encourage activity and interaction <input type="checkbox"/> Improve safety and crime reduction through traffic calming, street lighting, and street amenities (places to congregate, destinations)
HUMAN 	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt workplace policies and infrastructure that supports physical activity behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Provide incentives to employees to encourage biking, walking, or public transit options	<input type="checkbox"/> Promote active transportation and safe routes to work and school <input type="checkbox"/> Participate and support local Healthy Communities efforts as an organization <input type="checkbox"/> Promote active transportation to-and-from work, and to-and-from lunch	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide bicycle parking and changing facilities (e.g., bike rack, shelter, lockers, and showers) for employees that bike to work <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a walking path around business grounds or provide maps to local walking networks <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance and promote stairwell use

Envisioning the Built Environment to Create Healthy Communities

P U E X T . I N / E V P S H E A L T H

PURDUE
EXTENSION

Placemaking – Parks and Plazas

Jayoung Koo, author

Background

Sound public spaces support the efforts of community members to engage in healthy activities, which further enhance the value of such places. Most publicly owned spaces are open and accessible to the public; however, privately owned spaces, such as plazas or memorials, may also be publicly accessible. The goals and functions of a public space should be suitable and appropriate for the size, location, and scope of the area and community, whether small or large, rural or urban. Strong public spaces connect parts of a community and support individual pursuit of active living — and, ultimately, community wellness.

Placemaking through the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process can guide communities as they create publicly shared spaces. This section of the active-living curriculum provides guidance for developing sustainable public spaces with a focus on parks or plazas accessible and open to all people. This strategy informs and guides the initiation of placemaking projects through community partnerships.

Public-space placemaking projects can improve the overall health and recreational experience of all community members. Through the AI process, communities should define their public-space project goals and Discover,

Dream, Design, and Deliver their public-space project plans and designs to complement policy and systems-effort changes for creating healthy communities. For other forms of public spaces, such as trails or streetscape projects, refer to other active-living strategies sections of this curriculum.

Concept

Public spaces are physically shared areas of communities where everyone has the opportunity to access and use the space for appropriate purposes and goals. As illustrated by Carr, Francis, Rivlin, and Stone (1995), public spaces exist in various shapes, sizes, and locations in the forms of parks, plazas, and squares, among others (Table 1). In communities that have experienced growth or change, public spaces that require larger areas (such as community parks) are often found at the edges of towns, where space is more readily available. Smaller cities or towns typically have at least one centrally located public space as well as other strategic locations that fulfill the health, recreation, education, or social goals of the community.

A variety of active-living experiences can take place in public spaces, whether for events or everyday errands. Well-designed spaces can serve community health and wellness goals. The more a public space is used, the more value it contributes to the community. Typically, valuable or personal meanings associated with public spaces can transform them into memorable places.

Table 1. Types and Examples of Public Spaces

Type	Examples
Parks	Playground, sports field, neighborhood park, pocket park
Plazas/Squares	Courthouse lawn, city hall plaza
Streets	Sidewalk, trail
Markets	Farmers' market, pavilion
Waterfronts	Lakeside beach, riverfront
Memorials	Cemetery, memorial park
Gardens	Arboretum, children's garden, community garden

Public life is a product of societal values that reflect the needs, rights, and quests of individuals. Some forces that shape public life include cultural (social, functional, symbolic), technological, and physical (nature, size) attributes and diversity of the community (Carr et al., 1995). Public life takes shape in traditional public spaces, such as streets and sidewalks. Therefore, placemaking efforts aiming to strengthen and enhance the value of public spaces are also efforts to inspire, promote, and facilitate healthier lifestyles.

This process of making public places is conceptually similar to the process called placemaking by the Project for Public Spaces (2016). Placemaking is a “place-led” movement to enhance the quality of life in communities. The placemaking movement builds on the work of mid-20th century activists, designers, and planners who emphasized that cities and towns should be designed for people, not just cars. They also emphasized the social and cultural importance of lively neighborhoods, inviting public spaces, and attention to the activities available in the public spaces.

To this end, placemaking is a concept and process that emphasizes the importance of public spaces where potential users need to be involved throughout the planning process. Nonprofit organizations like the Project for Public Spaces and the Citizens Institute for Rural Design offer a variety of tools and resources to enhance the collaborative process in a community. The first step of placemaking is to identify a space or area where public life occurs.

Benefits and Challenges of Public Space Placemaking

Great public places function effectively, cater to a variety of users and their needs, and adapt to trends and changes of users. Francis (2003) emphasizes that public spaces need to be continuously managed, maintained, and updated to remain relevant. Sound public spaces not only benefit individual users, but also the overall community (Table 2). When working on placemaking projects, communities should define and work on ideas that naturally evolve as destinations, gathering locations, or social spaces for community wellness. The planning and design of public spaces need to be appropriately adaptable to accommodate user trends.

Public engagement through the AI process ideally brings communities together so that they arrive at actionable plans. Collaboration, coordination, and partnerships are essential for the success of a public space project as the uses, functions, and visions depend on both those who influence the creation of the public space and those who will use it. For the remainder of the Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver phases, communities should be open to lessons from other similar projects.

As noted by the Project for Public Spaces (2009), public spaces often have common problems such as a lack of seating options, insufficient gathering areas, unclear or unattractive entrances, or features that do not function as originally planned. In some cases, the planning and design

Table 2. Benefits and Challenges of Public Space Placemaking Projects for Active Living Experiences

	Benefits	Challenges
<i>Physical</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide outdoor destinations where people can participate in healthy activities • Offer comfortable or pleasant areas and features to engage in physical activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration, redevelopment, management, or maintenance of public spaces may be limited • Distances to public spaces can restrict or discourage participation in physical activities
<i>Social</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safe areas for people to engage in healthier lifestyle activities and gatherings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate balance of different user groups
<i>Economic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent properties or businesses may experience increased activities or values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short- and long-term funding strategies to support implementation

of public spaces tend to address a limited range of users and uses. For example, designed pedestrian circulation routes frequently do not align with actual use patterns and, as a result, self-made paths emerge. Thus, working groups should discuss the benefits and challenges of the placemaking project during the initial Define phase of the AI process.

Public space projects require community members to work together with local governments and other relevant agencies that could provide resources and assistance for creating and managing various types of public spaces. The AI process functions as the planning process that provides communities with opportunities to have meaningful interaction and strengthen their community capacity through the Define, Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver phases (Figure 1). Working groups should be resourceful and interact, partner, and collaborate with people of diverse backgrounds and skills during the AI process. During the Define phase, participants should identify and structure effective and efficient public space placemaking project goals, needs, issues, and visions relevant to community wellness. Some public space projects may address and tackle multiple goals, while others may focus on a single goal, such as health or wellness, recreation, safety, or socializing.

Define: Goals and Objectives of Public Space Placemaking Projects

When designing public spaces, communities first should listen to the needs of their community members. A typical planning process identifies priorities, sets goals, and establishes objectives that can be accomplished through an actionable plan. Public space projects may address a range of goals and objectives for individuals and communities at different scales and levels, depending on the type of project (Table 3).

Typical goals and objectives of public space projects depend on the type of public space that a community is interested in designing. For example, park projects may concentrate on recreational goals, while plazas and squares aim for gathering and passive relaxation goals. Waterfront projects may focus on ways to take advantage of access to water bodies but need to address safety issues as well (Figure 2). Farmers' market projects often strive to balance easy access for producers while also providing ample space for customers and events (Figure 3). The development of well-planned and designed places can encourage community members to become more physically active and engage in outdoor experiences impacting their wellness. Thus, during the Define phase of the AI process, communities should develop goals and objectives for public space placemaking projects in ways that address their particular priorities.

Keep in mind that each project has a unique location, set of goals, design style preference, and funding strategies among other considerations (Table 3). Therefore, although all communities can have a central park, not all central parks are exactly the same.



Figure 1: EVPS Workshop, 2015, Indiana. Photo courtesy of Purdue University Extension and Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant



Figure 2: Farmers' Market in Jeffersonville, Indiana. *Photo courtesy of Local Harvest, Inc., 2015.*



Figure 3: Whiting's Waterfront Park on the southern shore of Lake Michigan in Whiting, Indiana. *Photo courtesy of National Journal, 2015.*

Connect Early with Neighbors

If adjacent property owners are affected directly or indirectly by a project, they should be consulted in advance to gain their support. This allows project planners to focus on the contents and not the logistics of getting approval for the public space function.

Table 3. Examples of Goals and Objectives for Public Space Placemaking Projects Relevant to Creating Healthy Communities

	Goals	Objectives
<i>Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide areas for physical activities, relaxation, gatherings, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include areas and features with appropriate amenities for active-living opportunities • Redesign/replace outdated features and equipment for current users
<i>Plaza/Square</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safe and pleasant areas for healthier lifestyle activities • Attract users to central community locations for various activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt outdoor space or reimagine empty lots in downtown/central districts to include features and amenities for community wellness
<i>Farmers' Market</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate space for market and social functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide efficient access for producers • Offer or acquire ample space for customers and events near merchant activities
<i>Waterfront Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract users to the edge of water bodies for a range of healthy activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safe access to water bodies • Provide appropriate features and amenities for users

Discover: Overview

The Discover phase guides communities as they compile and interpret existing public spaces, as well as identify assets and information about a range of community capitals relevant to the project site and context. This helps inform community members about the potential for and suitability of appropriate and relevant public space ideas and designs. Community members and professionals can gain insight and make effective decisions throughout the AI process. Existing and historical information about the uses, trends, incidents and issues of a public space often helps resolve problems and identify and envision considerations that would be most suitable and feasible for a community within the project’s context.

Discover: Inventory of Community Capitals

Community leaders, volunteers, and partners need to acknowledge and compile assets and information about community capitals for the project area, including features within the project boundary that guide them to Dream, Design and Deliver their proposed public-space vision. Working groups should research regulations that affect the

type of public space placemaking project being considered, such as local land-use policies and zoning ordinances. Regulations affecting a proposed location may render certain aspects of a project irrelevant, restrict them, or limit them. Other aspects may be subject to negotiation such as with private landowners. Regulations and similar information are often readily available from individuals or from local community offices, such as the County or City Office of Planning and Zoning, Fiscal Court, historical societies, public libraries, or community newspapers. The types of community capitals needed for the project can be classified into the following categories: built/natural, human/social/financial/political, and historical/cultural (Table 4). Examples of such capitals may include topography, demographics, comprehensive plans, land use, zoning maps and ordinances, property boundaries, existing plan and design documents, transportation planning documents, photographs, news articles, and so on. Once relevant assets and information capitals are collected, the working group will have a better idea of the opportunities and potentials as well as the constraints and limitations of their public-space placemaking project that will support creating a healthier community.

Table 4. Examples of Community Capitals Assets and Information for Public Space Placemaking Projects

Built/Natural Capitals	Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals	Cultural Capital
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maps of project location, restrictions, property boundaries, topography, etc.• Physical condition of amenities or structures• Existing, protected, threatened, or endangered species (plants, wildlife, etc.)• Climate factors (local and regional)• Preservation or conservation information• Locations of wayfinding signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demographics of the community, county, region• Economic indicators of the community, county, region• Planning documents (land use policies, zoning ordinances, etc.)• Types, locations, and numbers of businesses in proximity to the project area• Transportation planning documents, traffic counts, etc.• Funding strategies documents• Local funding sources• List of volunteer organizations, groups or individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historical documents: maps, photos, newspaper articles, etc.• Community programs, regular or special events• Activity or user trends• Landmarks, protected features• Valued spaces, places, locations (sacred places)• Historically valued buildings or districts

Built/Natural Capitals — Assets and Information

Built and natural capitals include assets and information about natural resources, human influenced features, or infrastructure that currently exists in the community project area or context. This type of data may include built environment information such as roads, buildings, parking lots, utility lines, topography and water-sewer systems as well as natural elements such as rivers, streams, lakes, vegetation, wildlife species, or other infrastructure (Figure 4).

This information is publicly available and accessible through local-, regional-, state-, and federal-level public offices and entities such as the Indiana Geographic Information Council (IndianaMAP), Indiana Spatial Data Portal, STATS Indiana, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Geological Survey. Typically, the information is in the form of maps, aerial images, spatial data, reports, or other documents and lists that support decisionmaking phases. These assets and this information present opportunities for working groups to better understand and interpret whether certain sites, locations, or properties are suitable for realizing shared dreams and delivering public-space placemaking projects.

When developing projects, communities should avoid or be considerate of areas that include sensitive habitats, major arterial roads, railroads, or steep slopes within or in close proximity to a potential site. Public-space projects may include sections of streams or flood-prone zones (Figure 5), but safety concerns must be discussed regarding suitability and ultimately feasibility. Overall, these types of capitals inform us about where natural resources or built structures physically exist (or do not exist), and can directly affect a community's dream public-space placemaking project.



Figure 4: An inventory map of the Falls Park project in Pendleton, Indiana, depicting existing features and elements of the park that can be used to aid in discussions about issues, needs, and potential of the park project. Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Sources: City of Pendleton, 2016, and Indiana Department of Natural Resources, 2017.

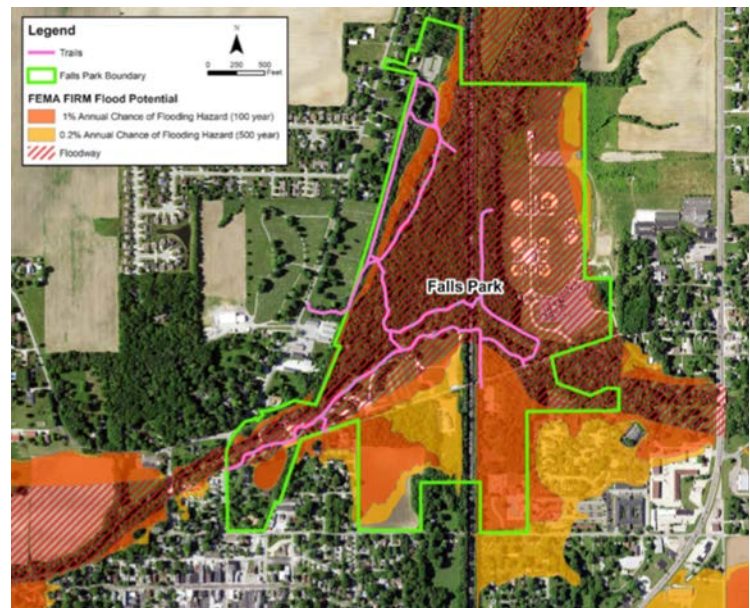


Figure 5: An inventory map of Falls Park and vicinity in Pendleton, Indiana, representing vegetative areas overlaid with the FEMA-mapped 100-year flood plain — where development is highly discouraged. Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Source: City of Pendleton, 2016 and FEMA, 2017.

Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals — Assets and Information

Human/Social/Financial/Political capitals assets and data inform us about change. This change includes demographics, as well as trends in economic performance, development activities, and land-use decisions that influence active-living opportunities and community wellness. Factors such as zoning ordinances, distribution of population, housing occupancy, and economic performance indicators are some examples of these types of capitals (Figure 6). Such capital assets and information can be found through sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau, STATS Indiana, IndianaMAP and local public health agencies. Information from these sources enables effective interpretation of the potential success of the community's public space placemaking projects, user forecasts, and other indirect economic activities that can be generated or strengthened in the vicinity of the public spaces. Local-level assets and information can also be found in reports and documents available through local planning departments, community and economic development organizations, or research groups.



Figure 7: An 1896 Sanborn Insurance Map of Arcadia, Indiana.
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1896.

Cultural Capital — Assets and Information

Cultural capital assets and information provide the foundation for communities to reflect on what, how, or why things have changed or remained the same. Cultural capital examples include information about historic buildings, photos of events and festivals, and excerpts from journals. These can provide detailed information that may not be available through other sources or may have been forgotten. Events or places that might seem unimportant to some members of the community today, such as locations of demolished buildings, heritage trees, or cultural activities, can add depth to the Discover, Dream, and Design phases of the community public space placemaking project (Figure 7).

Additionally, certain personal information may actually provide an opportunity to discuss a sense of identity for the community. Therefore, these qualitative resources from human or cultural capitals can further build on assets as well as strengths and weaknesses of the community and put community identity in a physical and temporal context contributing to community health.

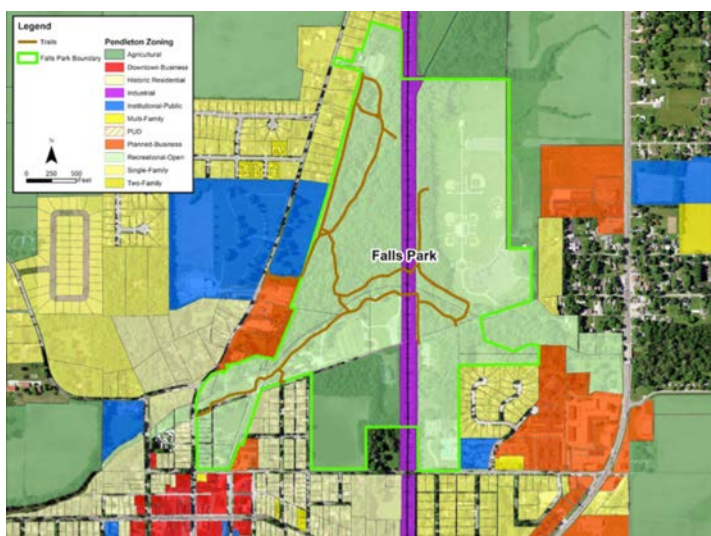


Figure 6: A Zoning Map of the Falls Park area in Pendleton, Indiana, presenting the different types of land uses in close proximity to the public space. Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Sources: City of Pendleton, 2016; Indiana Department of Natural Resource, 2017; and Indiana Department of Transportation, 2006.

Discover: Analysis of Community Capitals

Compilation and interpretation of community capitals can highlight information for the Dream, Design, and Deliver phases of the public space placemaking project and help a community reinstate historic public spaces as part of their community capitals. As part of the Discover phase, an analysis of community capitals can enable the working group to further understand how the community may become healthier physically, socially, and culturally. During this stage, the working group may also come to understand how the community has not changed. The analysis step also prepares the working group to address their community wellness gaps and future needs. The group can highlight opportunities and constraints for their proposed public space project as a strategy to envision a healthier community. An effective analysis can lead to the identification of potential uses for the public space as well as how the project can be effectively and efficiently implemented with or through its community capitals. During the Define and Discover phases, stakeholders have the opportunity to make connections and proposals regarding the public space and its surrounding context.

They can also participate in meaningful discussions with the extended community, based upon the project analysis. A thorough analysis can lead to a more effective placemaking plan or design that is more likely to be regularly used, while enhancing the value of the public space and overall community wellness.

Dream, Design, and Deliver

The working group, stakeholders, partners, and the public should consider a variety of factors to accomplish their ideal dream project so that it will be valued and used (Table 5). Public spaces should be welcoming and pleasant for community members as well as visitors. Appropriate wayfinding features can complement the project to inform users of rules and guidelines that support user experiences and aid in managing the space for all beneficiaries (refer to wayfinding strategies in this curriculum). When done well, public spaces can function or refunction as the center of community wellness.

Table 5. Examples of Features and Aspects to Consider for Public Space Placemaking Dreams

	Parks	Plazas
<i>Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Areas for active and passive recreation• Areas for events and gathering• Amenities and features to support physical activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balance of natural features and hardscape areas• Amenities and features to support a range of healthy activity uses• Attractive or pleasant aesthetics
<i>Users</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active recreationists• Passive recreationists• Event participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passers by• Passive recreationists• Event participants
<i>Features</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fields, sports facilities, event spaces, etc.• Restroom, drinking fountains, seating, shade, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multipurpose event spaces or structures, etc.• Water features, seating, shade, public art, etc.
<i>Other Aspects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ADA compliance

Case Study

18th St. Park, Ferdinand, Dubois County, Indiana

Ashlee Sudbury, author

One of the most important factors in having a vibrant and healthy community is “community.” That is exactly what 18th Street Park has been able to provide for the town of Ferdinand in southern Indiana. Not only is the park located here, but within the same complex you also find a library, community center, and YMCA. The property is located in the center of Ferdinand, adjacent to Forest Park Jr./Sr. High School and one of the largest housing additions in the town. The entire complex is surrounded by a walking trail, maximizing its connectivity. The park benefits from social capital, as local organizations partner on large events and work together very well. Shared parking, event space, and marketing makes 18th Street Park a great asset for the community. The park includes a softball field, sand volleyball courts, outdoor basketball court, shelter house, horseshoe pits, and playground equipment, allowing for organized and unorganized uses. The park also has free Wi-Fi, a year-round water fountain, and restroom facilities that are fully ADA-compliant.

The park provides designated areas for all ages. For example, the recent addition of a preschool playground area, growth of existing playground and adult workout equipment, as well as many other activity-based resources allow all ages and group sizes to participate in physical activity opportunities of their choice.

Because the park and surrounding areas are well-lit with a constant community presence and a diligent police force, personal safety has never been an issue. The YMCA uses the park for summer camp activities and outdoor fitness sessions. The library conducts weekly programs at the YMCA throughout the summer; the town hosts numerous community festivals, including Heimatfest, Fireman’s Ball, Folk Festival, and parts of the Christkindlmarkt. The park is alive with physical activity and community events year-round.

The park has evolved over almost 40 years; the community center is 25 years old, and the YMCA and library are each less than 10 years old. Walking trail connection points were added several times over the last 5 years, along with increased offerings for all ages. The Park Board has led the charge on practically every aspect of improvement over the years. Dedicated citizens and board members work together to develop ideas and raise special funding when needed. However, each year the Park Board allocates funds for upkeep and improvements to existing infrastructure as well as funding for special improvements.

18th Street Park is a true example of a community working together to improve a public space. The park has been a great “path paver,” helping the community recognize the impact of public spaces on its health

and wellness. The town has begun talking about improving pedestrian connectivity in other parts of town, mirroring efforts at the park. The town also looked into replicating some aspects of 18th Street Park in other parts of town, making benefits accessible to more residents.



This photo shows a community event called Heimatfest hosted in 18th Street Park. Photo courtesy of Town of Ferdinand



Summary

Community public space placemaking projects can benefit individuals, communities, and the greater public through the physical enhancement of spaces to encourage healthier lifestyles, while also in-directly influencing economic activities. Through the AI process, communities can develop sustainable public spaces that serve as healthy public-life places. Regardless of the size or scope, public space projects can connect the community with well thought-out and inclusive dreams. When public space projects are accessible and open to all people, they can improve overall community health. Ultimately, enhancing public spaces in one's community increases opportunities for active living and also strengthens the community's place identity.

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Streetscapes

Jayoung Koo, author

Background

Communities with effectively designed, inclusive street networks can support healthy activities for their members. Streets within our built environment not only connect different types of land uses and destinations, but also provide space for people to walk, bike, or drive. Most community streets are public spaces — and those that are private streets may also function as public spaces, depending on location and context.

A streetscape is bounded by the public right-of-way (ROW) from the edge of property boundaries on both sides of the street. Within this scope, the mix of features may include vehicular lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, parking spaces, planting strips, storm water outlets, signage, street lights, utility lines, and amenities such as bus stops. It may also include the facades of buildings. Successful streetscapes tend to be safe, inclusive, pleasant, and appealing in the neighborhood or district and to attract people to engage in healthy activities and active living. Thus, sound streetscapes provide functional and accessible spaces and atmospheres vital for creating healthy communities.

Streetscapes simultaneously support, encourage, and facilitate multiple activities and uses such as farmers' market(s), parades, or entertainment as part of the travel corridor. Well-thought-out and designed streetscapes can become pedestrian-oriented destinations that encourage people to linger and revisit while providing adequate vehicular circulation. Although most streetscapes are subject to volumes of vehicles passing through, current trends in streetscape planning and design focus on rediscovering and rebuilding communities by prioritizing people and curtailing dependence on vehicles (Crankshaw,



Figure 1: Redesigned streetscape in downtown Indianapolis, including bicycle lanes, green infrastructure, and an extended pedestrian crossing. Photo by Pete Fritz, Indiana State Department of Health.

2009; Smart Growth America, National Complete Streets Coalition, n.d.; Dover & Massengale, 2014).

Streetscape projects typically address a range of safety, aesthetic, travel, and health goals in relation to transportation, planning, or environmental sustainability approaches. Completed projects may support increased pedestrian activities, active-living opportunities, or alternative travel modes as well as enhanced ecosystem health. For example, the Complete Streets concept offers walking, cycling, and driving in our built environment in a safe and convenient way (Smart Growth America, National Complete Streets Coalition, n.d.).

Overall, streetscapes can improve a community's physical environment in many ways, while providing a means for active living (Figure 1). The streetscapes described here focus on urban design and public amenities, rather than on transportation planning, for a street environment that includes and welcomes all travelers through the public space: pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

Benefits and Challenges of Streetscape Projects

Successful streetscape designs can have positive impacts on a community's health and wellness, environment, and economy. Streetscapes serve the public in a range of places from downtown civic districts to residential areas. Oftentimes, streetscapes are influenced by the relationship between public and private ownership in and around their built environment. Private properties exist in the urban fabric as backdrops, destinations, or attractions that can encourage activities related to healthy lifestyles. The balance and mix of various streetscape features and elements should be safe, appealing, functional, and convenient for management, so that these elements can contribute to a community's sense of place, first impressions, economic activity, and community wellness. Sound, inclusive streetscapes provide safe and comfortable environments to accommodate many forms of travel: pedestrians, cyclists, public-transit users, and drivers. Such efforts help promote and support healthier lifestyles while alleviating issues such as traffic congestion and pollution. Amenities such as waiting areas or bus stops can promote the use of public transportation while also providing protection from vehicles and bad weather. Designated bike lanes, appropriate bicycle parking features, and pleasing

sidewalks can encourage the health and wellness of cyclists and pedestrians, but also influence a community's commerce activities.

Currently, the majority of streets are physically designed without considering multiple modes of travel. Safety is often up to users, who must be aware of their surroundings. Challenges for streetscape projects cover a range of community capitals including, but not limited to, existing structures; unclear scope (physically, programmatically); compliance with (or lack of) design codes, standards, or guidelines; resistance from potential partners; considerations for environmental impacts; and project funding and management. Moreover, changes in demographics and trends may present inconsistent streetscape aesthetics and vacancies in retail spaces. The benefits and challenges of a community's streetscape project may influence and address these issues during the planning process and affect the outcomes (Table 1). Thus, all community capitals need to be addressed collaboratively to take advantage of benefits while minimizing and overcoming potential hurdles.

Table 1. Benefits and Challenges of Streetscape Projects for Healthy Communities

	Benefits	Challenges
Process (Human, Social, Financial, Political Capitals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New partners and capitals • New relationships and creation of consensus around project goals and visions through collaboration, coordination, and cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for financial capital for project • Conflicts and challenges in reaching consensus • Meeting project deadlines • Adequate parking and private-property owner needs
Product (Built, Natural, or Cultural Capitals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced built environment that connects destinations and attractions • Enhanced alternative travel opportunities through Complete Streets that include sidewalks, bike lanes, etc. • Adoption of plan and design guidelines for streetscapes • Increased direct/indirect economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk or bicycle corridors in updated streets that do not fluidly connect with other streets in the network • Difficulty and expense of updating features to control quality and aesthetics over time • Difficulty of central/strong project management when project partners vary

Planning and Designing Vibrant Streets

Communities will benefit from streetscape projects that effectively engage the entire community through a range of travel modes for a variety of purposes while also providing active living experiences. Many communities continuously work on keeping their “Main Streets” vibrant. Generally, a downtown streetscape is physically linear and narrow with limited space, unless it is associated with another public space, such as a plaza, square, or park that is integrated into the traditionally central activity hub area. The national Main Street Program provides guidance for eligible “Main Streets.” Even if a community does not qualify for a Main Street program, the community can develop a streetscape in ways that follow the approaches and principles outlined in the Main Street Program to pursue their own vision for vibrant streets that complement the creation of healthy communities.

Define

The Define phase of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process is an effective way to begin facilitated community discussions for a streetscape strategy to enhance the value of a community’s public spaces and support active living. Due to the complexity of street networks and the hierarchy of road statuses ranging from federal to local and private, community members must work together with local governments and the state and federal agencies responsible for creating and managing public right-of-ways (ROWs).

Coordination between partners must occur early in the process to identify goals, objectives, anticipated outcomes, and types of projects to pursue (Table 2). During the AI process, community stakeholders should seek opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and partnership through interaction among organizations, all while strengthening their community capacity.

Table 2. Example of Goals and Objectives of Streetscape Projects for Creating Healthy Communities

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance pedestrian experience and opportunities for active living• Introduce inclusive or Complete Streets that are safe for pedestrians and vehicles• Create pleasant and appealing street environments• Revitalize downtown environments to attract more healthy activities
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extend or expand sidewalks for increased foot traffic• Introduce bike lanes or sharrows and bicycle features in close proximity to major destinations or attractions• Increase public gathering opportunities• Facilitate upkeep of building facades and street amenities• Reconfigure parking spaces or increase nearby parking availability
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased foot traffic (including physically active users), activities, events, and businesses• Enhanced, pleasant, and appealing aesthetics• Improved safety and wayfinding measures for pedestrians, vehicular traffic, and cyclists
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Downtown corridors or commercial districts• Residential streets connecting to public spaces such as parks

Working groups should define the scope and goals of their streetscape project vision to build upon and further enhance their community capitals assets that support strengthening community wellness. Streetscape projects can fall under any or all policy, systems, or environmental change examples for creating healthy communities (Table 2).

Community streetscape projects typically focus on the public realm; however, leaders of such projects also should consider partnering with private property owners of parcels abutting the streets or with owners of entrances from the streets adjacent to a potential streetscape project boundary. Communities can benefit from streetscape projects while working in partnership with property owners. The partnership members can collaboratively discuss the desired characteristics of the streetscape features and elements and develop a plan that enhances the value of the public spaces, which may also address issues funded by property owners.

Discover: Inventory of Community Capitals

Once the community identifies and confirms their streetscape project goals and objectives, working groups should further define the scope and parameters of their project while gathering information for a range of existing community capitals. Community leaders and partners,

county Extension agents, and volunteers can compile assets and information for the community capitals (built, natural, human, social, cultural, and financial) that will inform the decision-makers of their potential dream. An inventory of the features and conditions of the existing streetscape project area will help inform community members of a streetscape project’s feasibility and suitability. The community members, partners, and design professionals can gain insight from the collected community capitals assets and information, which will provide insight throughout the Discover|Analysis, Dream, Design, and Deliver phases.

The types of capitals needed for a streetscape project can be classified into the following categories: built/natural, human/social/financial/political, and historical/cultural (Table 3). The specific examples of information for the different capitals range from topography, demographics, traffic counts, parking capacity, transportation planning documents, comprehensive plans, land use/zoning maps and ordinances, and residences and types of businesses, along with the locations of property boundaries. Having existing historical information about the uses, trends, incidents, and issues of the streets often will help resolve potential conflicts and identify the streetscape considerations that would be most suitable and feasible for the community.

Table 3. Examples of Community Capitals Assets and Information for Streetscape Projects During the Discover Stage

Built/Natural Capitals	Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals	Cultural Capital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps of project location, property boundaries, sidewalks, etc. • Physical condition (widths, street amenities, utility infrastructure, etc.) • Existing vegetation and wildlife (protected, invasive, etc.) • Climate factors (local, regional) • Signs of deterioration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics of the community and region • Health indicators of communities • Economic indicators of the community and region • Planning policies, zoning ordinances, and regulations • Types, locations, and numbers of businesses • Transportation planning documents, traffic counts, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic maps, photos, documentation • Community programs, regular or special events • Activity trends along streets and public spaces • Landmarks • Valued spaces, places, locations • Historic/registered buildings/districts

Working groups need to identify and research the different types of public ROWs and their governing rules, as restrictions may apply at various levels and degrees. The different levels of streets (federal, state, local, or private) may include restrictions that limit development, but some may be subject to negotiation. This information may be readily available in local county or city planning and zoning offices, public libraries, or community newspapers. Through a collaborative process, property owners affected by the project should be consulted early in the discussions. Streetscapes are valued and provide a quality environment for active living when they effectively connect properties, public ROWs, and other street networks.

Built/Natural Capitals — Assets and Information

Built and natural capitals assets and information include historical or existing natural resources, human-influenced features, and infrastructure in the community. Examples include roads, sidewalk networks, structures, parking spaces, utility lines, and water-sewer systems as well as topography, hydrology, vegetation, and wildlife species among others.

Much information on built and natural capitals is publicly available and accessible through local, regional, state, and federal public offices and entities such as the Indiana Department of Transportation, Indiana Geographic Information Council (IndianaMAP), Indiana Spatial Data Portal, STATS Indiana, U.S. Geological Survey, and U.S. Department of Agriculture among others. Typically, the information is in the form of maps, aerial images, spatial

data, reports, or other documents and lists that support decisionmaking phases. These assets and information present opportunities for working groups to better understand and interpret whether certain sites, locations, or properties are suitable for realizing shared dreams and delivering streetscape projects, including considerations for street and sidewalk widths, locations of other infrastructure, and limitations of certain features or amenities, depending on the type and width of public ROWs.

These types of capitals inform us about where natural resources or built structures physically exist or do not exist, which can directly affect a community’s dream streetscape project, such as the locations of sidewalks and curb cuts, property boundaries and front facades, planting strips, etc. Overall, the composition of the street corridor and its surrounding context and features can influence active-living experiences and also contribute to favorable lasting impressions of a community (Table 4, Figure 2).

Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals — Assets and Information

The assets and data from human/social/financial/political capitals can inform us about changes such as demographics as well as trends in economic performance, development activities, and land-use decisions that influence active-living opportunities and community wellness. Factors such as zoning ordinances, distribution of population, housing occupancy, and economic performance indicators are some examples of these capitals (Figure 3). Such capital assets and information

Table 4. Examples of Detailed Community Streetscape Project Amenities

Sidewalk Area	Connecting	Private Property
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sidewalks• Crossing signals• Trash cans and outdoor furnishings• Street trees and vegetation• Wayfinding• Tactile paving• Pavement patterns• Curbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Streetlights• Crosswalks• Marked bike lanes, paths, or sharrows• On-street parking spaces• Median	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wayfinding features on buildings• Seating• Planters• Shade structure• Decoration of facades



Figure 2: Streetscape environment of State Street in West Lafayette, Indiana. The streetscape environment includes, but is not limited to, transportation-related features and public amenities that enhance the active-living experience. Photo by Daniel Walker.

can be found through sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau, STATS Indiana, IndianaMAP, and local public-health agencies. Local-level information can also be found in reports and documents available through community and economic development organizations or research groups. Information from these sources enable effective interpretation of the potential success of the community's streetscape project(s), user forecasts, and other indirect economic activities that can be generated or strengthened in the vicinity of the public spaces (Figure 4).

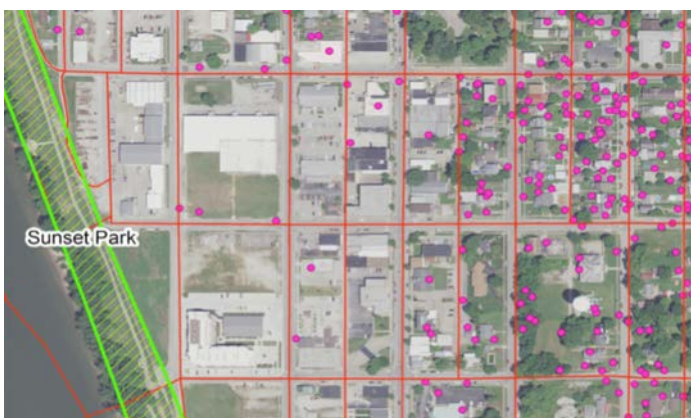


Figure 3: A population-density map (1 dot = 1 individual) within census 2010 blocks (outlined in red) of Tell City, Indiana, adjacent to Sunset Park that runs along the Ohio River. Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013.

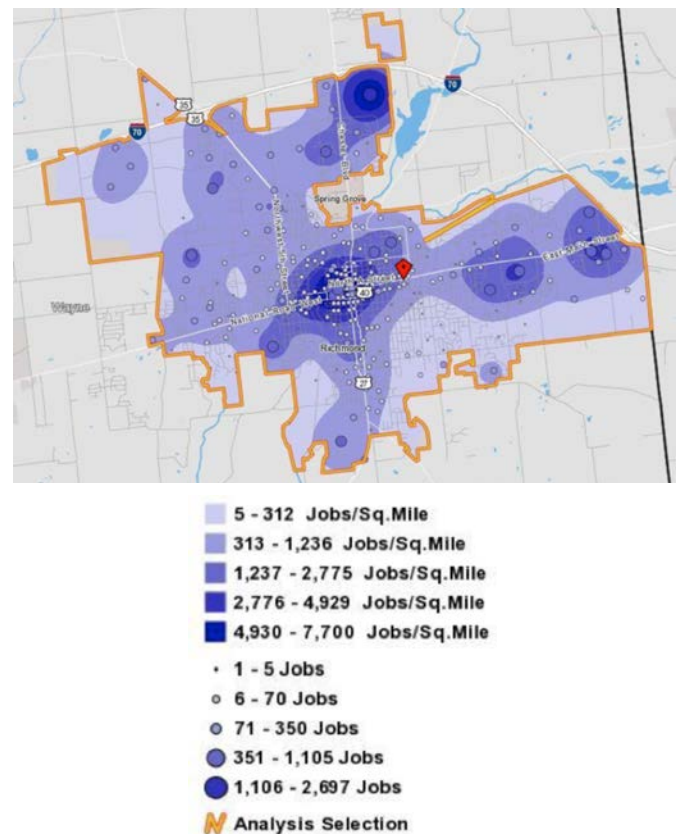


Figure 4: Employment density for Richmond, Indiana. Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2015.

Cultural Capital — Assets and Information

Cultural capital assets and information provide the foundation for communities to reflect on what, how, or why things have changed or remained the same. Cultural capital examples include information about historic buildings, photos of events and festivals, and excerpts from journals that can provide detailed information forgotten or not available through other sources. Events or places that might seem unimportant to some members of the community today, such as locations of demolished buildings, heritage trees, or cultural activities, can add depth to the Discover, Dream, and Design phases of the streetscape strategy (Figure 5). Additionally, certain types of personal information may actually provide an opportunity to discuss a sense of community identity. These qualitative assets and this information from human or cultural capitals can build on assets, strengths, and weaknesses of the community and put them in a physical and temporal context — and can contribute to the creation of healthy communities.

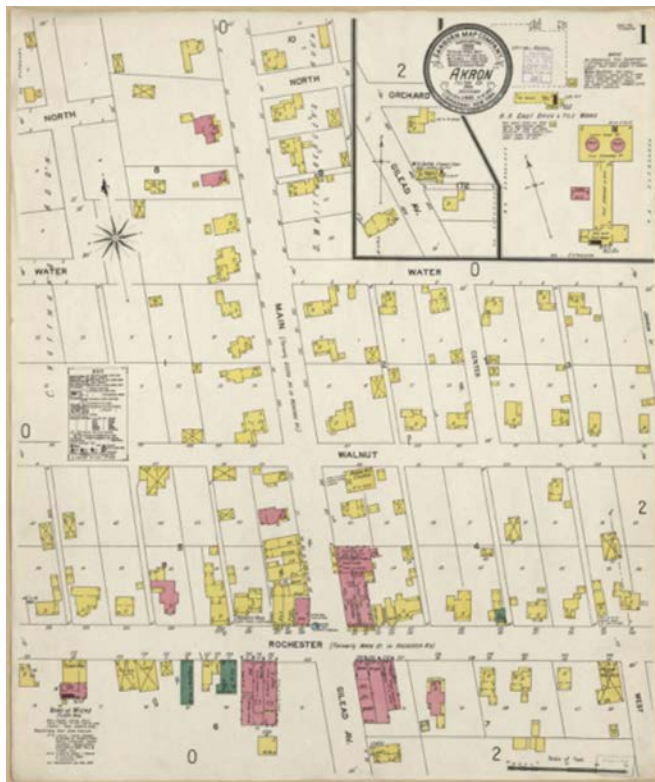


Figure 5: A 1901 Sanborn Insurance Map of Akron, Indiana, depicting the intersection of Main Street and Rochester Street in downtown. Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1901.

Discover: Analysis of Community Capitals

Once assets and information for relevant community capitals are collected, the working group should identify the opportunities/potentials and the constraints/limitations of their streetscape project. As part of the Discover stage, a comprehensive analysis of community capitals can help working groups better understand how the community may change physically, socially, and culturally to support healthier lifestyles and address active living needs. Community working groups can highlight the important assets a community wishes to retain or reinstate for the streetscape project.

The analysis step can help prepare the working group to dream of safe, comfortable, and pleasant street environments that transition smoothly to the surrounding landscapes and address gaps and future needs for their community's wellness. An effective analysis can guide the community to identify potential uses associated with the streetscapes as well as how to effectively and efficiently implement the project with or through its community capitals.

Dream, Design, and Deliver

Communities should Dream, Design, and Deliver ideal streetscapes that benefit all stakeholders while minimizing use conflicts. The community streetscape project leaders, stakeholders, and partners need to collaborate and create a set of guidelines appropriate in scale and character for their public space. The streetscape should be pleasant and welcoming for both residents and visitors while being clearly visible and appealing. The development of safe and inclusive streetscapes can encourage civic, economic, and healthy everyday activities. Successful streetscape designs allocate space for different travel modes, but with minimal overlap. An adequate number of wayfinding signs should indicate relevant services that support positive experiences. Furthermore, streetscape designs should provide pleasant experiences, particularly for pedestrians and those moving slowly.



Each streetscape project presents different problems and scenarios, but should culminate in a creative, functional, and lasting public space. In addition, although the physical boundaries of a streetscape may be limited to the public ROW, a streetscape experience includes the entire visible landscape beyond those property limits. To this end, well-thought-out and intentionally designed streetscapes not only enhance the physical environment, traffic flow, safety, and aesthetics, but also strengthen the community's relationships with users, their health, and active living experiences. With a strategic plan informed by financial capitals and developed through the AI process, communities should be able to take the first step toward effectively and efficiently implementing their dream streetscape design for their healthy community.

Summary

Well-thought-out and designed streetscape projects can provide safe and comfortable public spaces for communities to achieve a variety of goals, including inclusive travel, public safety, lasting impressions, and physical health and wellness. The Appreciative Inquiry process enables community members, local governments, and other state and federal agencies to efficiently interact, collaborate, and strengthen their community capacity to enhance the value of their streetscapes through the consideration of community capitals assets. When delivered effectively, communities can implement their dream streetscapes to provide opportunities for increased physical activities and support overall wellness.

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Case Study

Lafayette, Indiana, Main Street Streetscape Revitalization

Daniel Walker, author

The City of Lafayette (pop. 72,168) in northwest central Indiana undertook a streetscape revitalization project that expanded previous renovation projects to a larger portion of its Main Street in downtown (Figure 1). As Mayor Tony Roswarski has often said, downtown is everyone's neighborhood. Therefore, stakeholders for the project could be defined in the widest terms as everyone in the Greater Lafayette Area. However, specific stakeholders located near or directly affected by the project included the business owners, land owners, residents, city service providers, private service providers, utilities, bicyclists, and the local transit corporation. Direct project partners included Greater Lafayette Commerce, idcmarketing, HWC Engineering, Visit Lafayette West Lafayette, Maximummedia Design, and Milestone Contractors.

Main Street's sidewalks were installed and stamped by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1940 (Figure 2). The surfaces lasted in various states of repair until this project was completed in 2016. After approximately 76 years of use, the condition of the sidewalks and curbs wore on the aesthetic of the downtown district and presented numerous safety hazards to pedestrians. Built 50 years prior to the passing of the ADA in 1990, it is no surprise that certain locations were not compliant. The streetscape was not viewed as a contributing factor that made Main Street a place people wanted to visit or spend time.



Figure 2: A WPA stamp in Lafayette's Main Street sidewalk. The community voiced that it values these symbols of its history (cultural capital), and therefore wished to preserve at least some of these stamps in the project. *Photo courtesy of Bishop, Carson, Pohlar, 2017.*



Figure 1: A mid-block crosswalk was added where the street grid stretched too far to allow pedestrians to safely and conveniently cross from a parking lot to popular dining options. In the past, pedestrians would frequently jaywalk at this location. Bicycle stalls were added as shown above to accommodate bicycling to the area. *Photo courtesy of Bishop, Carson, Pohlar, 2017.*

Project Goals

- Support Main St. as an integral part of the downtown community.
- Support and build upon the unique heritage and environmental character, particularly its historic core.
- Balance the needs and uses by businesses, residents, visitors, institutions, and events.
- Encourage economic development.
- Enhance downtown and its quality of life for all citizens. (Bishop, Carson, Pohlar, 2017)

Despite several downtown plans completed with public input from 1989 to 2008 calling for improvements to the downtown environment (Bishop, Carson, Pohlar, 2017), and significant construction of the same design elsewhere in the downtown starting in 2005 (Malavenda, 2005), there was initial public opposition to the project in 2010. As a result, the city engaged in a series of public discussions related to downtown improvements to gather input on issues in downtown. Several design iterations were contemplated, and meetings were held between upper level city staff and property owners along the project's scope. Leading up to and during the project, the public outreach for the plan included extensive marketing and construction updates provided to the community through local media, including a website that was created to host up-to-date project information.

The project was funded with tax increment financing (TIF) funds, and a mandatory owner-participation fee funded approximately 5 percent of the cost. The accepted bid was approximately \$5,500,000. The project design addressed parking issues for vehicles and bicyclists, added pedestrian amenities, rain gardens, new light fixtures, electrical infrastructure, sidewalk bulb-outs at several intersections, a mid-block pedestrian crosswalk, and several places where outdoor sidewalk seating was added to benefit local restaurants (Figure 3).

Health benefits of this project include:

- removed pedestrian hazards
- rebuilt safer intersections for pedestrians
- increased night lighting
- added security surveillance
- added bicycle infrastructure, such as bike racks and sharrows
- narrowed travel lanes leading to intersections
- slowed vehicular traffic
- became ADA compliant
- added consistent, additional street trees and plantings

In the future, this project will continue to the east, until the downtown portion of Main Street is entirely replaced with a consistent, vastly improved pedestrian environment for all users.



Figure 3: The image above shows expansion of the pedestrian environment through an intersection bulb-out. This area is now used for outdoor seating by a new restaurant that occupies the storefront to the right. Additional brick detail is featured within the concrete framework shown. The approach to the intersection has also been narrowed by this feature, slowing approaching traffic and allowing pedestrians to be clearly visible as they evaluate whether not it is safe to enter the crosswalk. Also note ADA compliant detectable truncated domes installed at the curb ramp. *Photo courtesy of Bishop, Carson, Pohlar, 2017*

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Trails

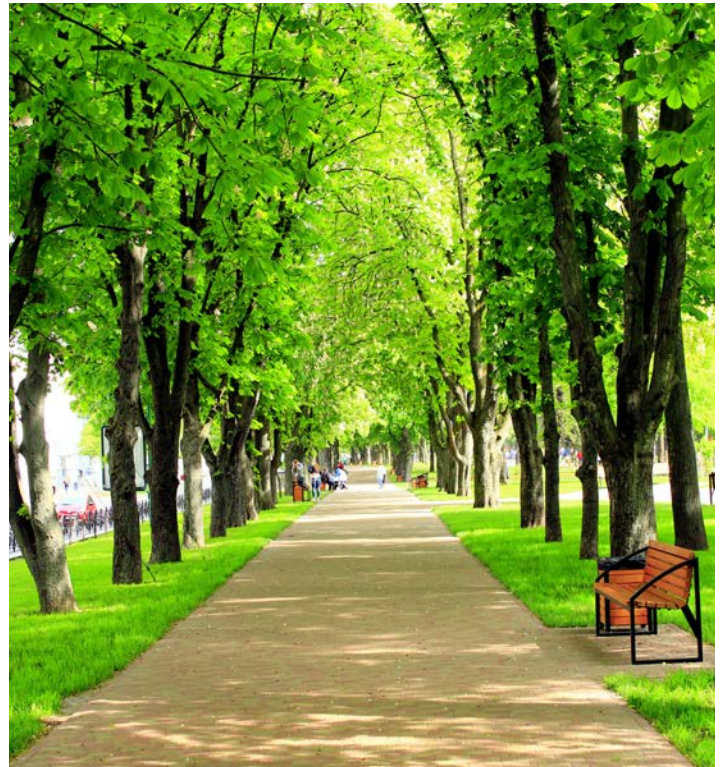
Jayoung Koo, author

Background

Planning, designing, and developing a trail or system of trails is one strategy for enhancing the value of public spaces for active living. Under the Community Capitals Framework, this strategy may be grounded primarily in the built and/or natural capital. However, other capitals are also essential to enhance this type of public space in communities. Naturally or intentionally created trails as public space contribute to communities by creating places for individuals and families to engage in healthy activities and pursue active-living behavior.

In many cases, trails or paths may exist exclusively in towns as part of the built capital or in nature as natural capital. An ideal trail system may comprise multiple trails/paths that are connected in an overall network and connect places and/or destinations to support physical activities. Effectively laid out trails can fulfill multiple goals and objectives of active living, but also have significant indirect benefits for communities, such as increased economic activities that pertain to financial capital. Depending on the form or function, trails may be of natural, built, or even cultural capital (Table 1). Trail systems can include a mixture of different types of trails, depending on how they are planned, designed, and created for or used by different groups such as hikers, bikers, or boaters (water trails).

Trail projects incorporated into transportation, planning, or environmental sustainability projects may further increase opportunities for physical activity as well as offer alternative travel patterns. Trail projects can support the health of natural capital that ultimately influences our overall environments in and around communities. For example, Complete Streets is a concept that includes features to address and facilitate a range of different travel modes — including pedestrian, cycling, and driving — in a safe, convenient, and holistic way (Smart Growth America, National Complete Streets Coalition, n.d.).



Similarly, a greenway can be a travel corridor that includes trails not only for humans, but also for wildlife species and their affiliated habitat. Greenways may include larger stretches of natural features such as rivers, woodlands, and open space; however, certain trails within greenways may have restricted or limited human access to maintain environmental integrity (Nicholls & Crompton, 2005). Trails may come in different shapes and sizes, but overall they serve to enhance the value of a community's public spaces and, ultimately, community wellness (Figures 1 and 2).

Trail Planning as an Active Living Strategy

Trail(s) or a trail system provide areas and opportunities for physical activities, whether recreational or utilitarian. Most often, trails in built environments are both. Trails provide many direct and indirect environmental, social, and economic benefits for healthy communities (Corning, Mowatt & Chancellor, 2012).

Indirectly, trails can help generate revenue through increased economic activities within close proximity or improve financial capital through increased property

Table 1. Conceptualization of Trails as Part of Built, Natural and/or Cultural Capital from a Policy/Systems/Environmental (PSE) Approach

<i>Type of Community Capital Emphasis</i>	Natural Capital (Recreational Trail)	Built Capital (Complete Streets)	Cultural Capital (Tourism Trail, Heritage Trail)
Policy	Propose greenways or conserve areas of environmental health for recreational needs	Reflect and/or impose Complete Street principles on local land-use policies	Utilize programs to preserve culturally significant areas and access to the resources
Systems	Provide for a variety of travel modes such as on foot, bicycles, horseback	Provide for a variety of travel modes such as foot or bicycle	Provide for a variety of travel modes such as cars or bicycles
Environmental	Physically mark and connect points of interest	Physically connect points, but points may not be marked	Preserve destination points with perceived connections
Examples	Delphi Historic National Recreation Trail (Delphi, IN)	Bloomington-Monroe County Complete Streets	Indianapolis Cultural Trail



Figure 1: Born Learning Trail in Decatur, IN.
Photo by Purdue University Nutrition Education Program



Figure 2: Indianapolis Cultural Trail in Indianapolis, IN.
Photo by Purdue University Nutrition Education Program



values (Corning, Mowatt & Chancellor, 2012; Linsey et al., 2004; Nicholls & Crompton, 2005). Well-developed trails can further support the well-being of natural capital through conservation efforts for wildlife habitat while connecting other community capitals through the PSE approach for creating a healthy community.

A trail development process requires community members to work together to generate the most support for the project. The PSE approach enables the working group to better understand their existing and potential assets. Through an Appreciative Inquiry process, opportunities for meaningful interaction and civic engagement can arise at the different stages of Define, Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver (refer to the Introduction section of this curriculum).

Human and social capitals need to appropriately interact with the political and financial capitals of the Cultural Capitals Framework. Leaders and volunteers can share their vision and plan and build their community capacity as they work toward their dream of active living (Table 2). Trail projects can not only benefit communities, but also the process of working in partnership to forge new connections within the community.

Trails address a wide range of goals and objectives focused on enhancing active living for individuals and communities both at local and regional levels. Benefits range from enhancing community capitals such as recreation and physical fitness to place attachment, among others. Pleasant, safe, and effective trails can encourage individuals to be active and pursue wellness (Corning, Mowatt, & Chancellor, 2012). Well-thought-out and planned trails enhance the value of public spaces as part of the built infrastructure. Trails as public space build upon several community capitals and, in return, increase a community’s capacity for becoming a place that nurtures healthy people, healthy families, and overall active living. Although trail projects have positive potential, there are also challenges and limitations. Community trail routes inevitably cut across multiple property boundaries; thus, collaboration is essential to effectively create a continuous path connecting destinations, unless a trail is confined to a few properties. Building social capital may be needed to persuade property owners to participate in the trail-planning process and help the community secure access to or easements for trail placement.

Furthermore, even after the Define, Discover, and Dream phases, the involved partners, leaders, and stakeholders must continue to coordinate internally as well as with

Table 2. Example Goals and Objectives of Trail Projects for Creating Healthy Communities

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create effective connections between destinations to increase physical activity opportunities • Provide opportunities for alternative modes of transportation • Provide opportunities for enhancing community wellness
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish local and/or regional trail networks • Introduce bicycle lanes/paths as part of shared roads • Promote active living programs for healthier lifestyles
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make pedestrian travel safer • Improve wellness of trail users • Increase recreation options • Enrich social capital through the project process

outside partners during the design and deliver process to construct a sound community capital for a healthy community (Table 3).

Define: Start a Trail Project

To begin a trail project for community wellness, the community can hire design or planning professionals to lead the multifaceted trail-planning process on behalf of the community. Alternatively, through the Appreciative Inquiry process, communities can develop conceptual ideas on their own and then later bring in professionals during the Design and Deliver phases for actual construction. How much of the process and outcome the professionals influence is ultimately up to the community. As an active-living strategy, this section presents steps for consideration to help initiate community-based projects.

Trail projects are linear in nature and trail systems can become complex; therefore, building partnerships and effective coordination is essential for their success. This is where consideration of human, social, and political capitals can help communities effectively and efficiently work toward a shared vision for a healthy community. A major trail-project goal should be to Define, Dream, Design, and

Deliver a path or system of trails as public space that the entire community will use.

Ideally, trails should physically start and end at points of interest or destinations that people frequently use, whether for recreation, travel, or health goals. For instance, a trail that clearly connects the center of activities, such as a downtown, to a public space, like a park, will be used more often than one that randomly connects the center of activities to the edge of town in a poorly defined route. Downtown areas are central gathering spots for enhancing social or cultural capital that also contribute to community wellness.

Trailheads, whether at the start or end of a trail, should be welcoming and pleasant as well as clearly visible and marked throughout town to create inviting physical activity experiences. Consideration also should be given to providing adequate parking at trailheads for users. In general, signs used as part of a wayfinding system should indicate the presence of the trail along with maps depicting the trail’s route and relevant services for users, such as accommodations or rest areas available to support active-living experiences.

Table 3. Benefits and Challenges of Trail Projects for Community Wellness

	Benefits	Challenges
Product (Built, Natural, or Cultural Capital)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect destinations for effective engagement in activities• Enhance the physical built environment• Provide opportunities for alternative travel modes• Increase recreational/leisure opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May need to connect disconnected segments• Consider coherent aesthetics and wayfinding features• Plan for long-term management of project
Process (Combination of Human, Social, Financial, Political Capitals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build relationships through collaboration and cooperation• Build community capacity• Identify new partners and capitals• Strengthen consensus building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement an active living strategy in a timely manner• Resolve conflict, if necessary• Reach consensus• Seek funds/means to acquire property or easements

After the Define phase, the Discover and Dream phases will better situate the project in a healthy community’s long-term vision. An inventory of community capitals in and around the project area will help communities discover the potential for and suitability of trail routes throughout the decision-making and design process. As a starting point, mapping the assets, existing conditions, and historical information of an area can help identify and envision the type of trail (as well as the approximate route and distance) most suitable and feasible for a community and its context.

Unless limited to a single property, trail projects most likely will stretch across properties to connect areas of interest in the community. Therefore, many property owners may need to be consulted. Additionally, as a public space, all potential stakeholders and partners must be involved in order to build a trail that will be valued and used. Effective dependence on political and human capital can support overcoming some of these limitations during the earlier Define and Discover (planning) phases. When done effectively, a fully considered community trail project and process can lead to the overall enrichment of a community and contribute to strengthened social and health capitals.

Discover: Inventory and Asset Mapping

Once the working group confirms the set of defined project goal(s), the information and assets for the project area should be identified along with the potential destination points, route(s), trailhead(s) locations, and contents for an effective vision and plan. During this fundamental phase, community leaders, Extension agents, volunteers, and partners should seek, identify, inventory, and map a range of data and assets for the relevant community capitals.

Various pieces of publicly available information can be obtained at relevant offices in the local community such as the County or City Office of Planning and Zoning, historical societies, public libraries, and community newspapers as well as from individuals. Relevant qualitative and quantitative information and assets can also be obtained from various regional and state-wide offices, agencies, departments, organizations, and research institutions such as state universities. The types of information needed can be classified into the following capital categories: built, natural, human, social, financial, political, and cultural (Table 4). Examples of assets and information range from topography, soil

Table 4. Examples of Community Capitals Assets and Information for Trail Projects During the Discover Stage

Built/Natural Capitals	Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals	Cultural Capital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps of project location, restrictions, land parcels • Existing and desired natural resources • Climate factors • Physical condition of spaces and places • Conservation/preservation/development opportunities • Signs of deterioration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics of the community, county, region • Economic indicators of the community, county, region • Planning documents • Types and number of industries • Regulations, standards for cities and counties • Surveys (census, business activities, economic performance) • Potential volunteers (individuals, groups, agencies, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical maps, photos, documentation • Community programs, regular or irregular events • Recreational opportunities • Landmarks, preserved elements • Valued spaces, places, locations • Activity trends

data, buildings, demographics, comprehensive plans, zoning maps and ordinances, and property boundaries to photographs, journals, news articles, and so on. Once the relevant community capitals assets and information are collected, the working group will better understand the opportunities/potentials and the constraints/limitations of their trail project and how it will support and influence community wellness.

Built/Natural Capitals — Assets and Information

Built and natural capitals include assets and information that are historical or already existing in the community. Examples include topography, hydrology, wildlife species, reserves and preserves, geology, and water quality, among others, as well as built infrastructure information such as roads, railroad tracks, buildings, and water-sewer systems (Table 4, Figures 3–4). This information is publicly available and accessible through local, regional, state, and federal public offices and entities such as the Indiana Geographic Information Council (IndianaMAP), Indiana Spatial Data Portal, STATS Indiana, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Geological Survey among others.

Typically, this information is in the form of maps, aerial images, reports, or other documents and lists that support decision-making phases. These assets and this information present opportunities for working groups to better understand and interpret whether certain sites, locations, or properties can help a community realize shared dreams and deliver trail projects. For example, trails may cross streams or flood-prone zones without significant problems, but there are other conflicts to consider and avoid when proposing such routes. These can include sensitive habitat, major arterial roads, railroads, and steep slopes. Overall, this type of data tells us where biotic or abiotic resources physically exist and directly affect the potential trail route(s).

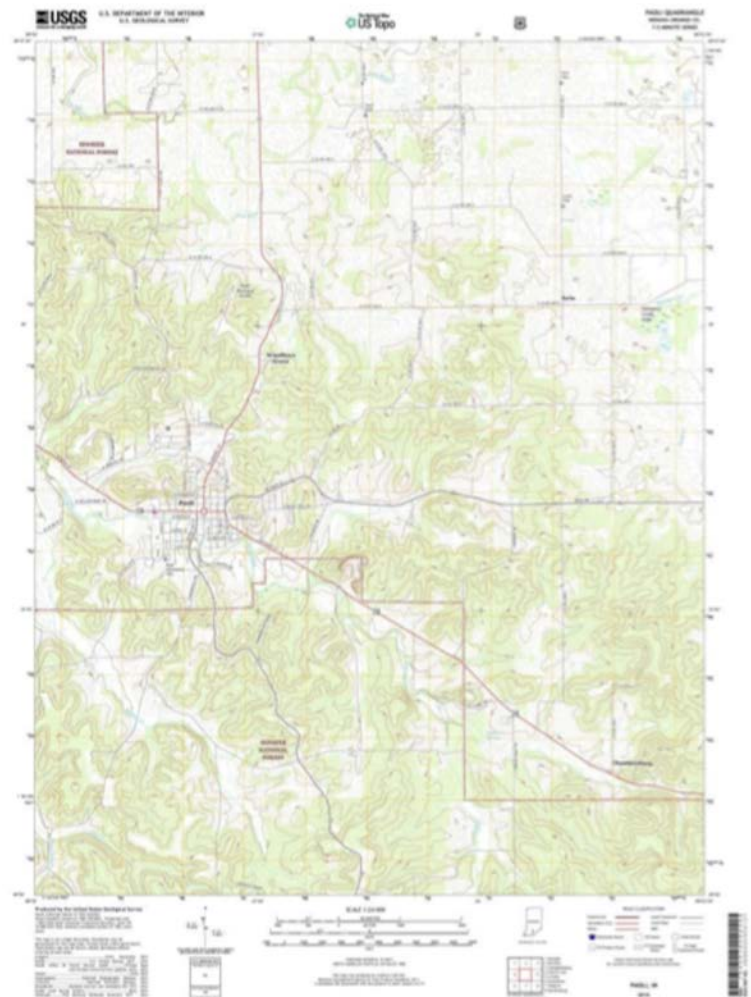


Figure 3: 2016 USGS Topo map of Paoli, Clark County, Indiana. This map depicts topography, a factor that can be used to aid in determining the potential suitability or unsuitability of potential trail routes. *Source: USGS TNM, 2016.*

Figure 4: Soil Map of Paoli, Clark County, Indiana. This map illustrates locations of a range of different silt loam structures that may limit certain development activities. *Source: USDA NRCS, 2017.*

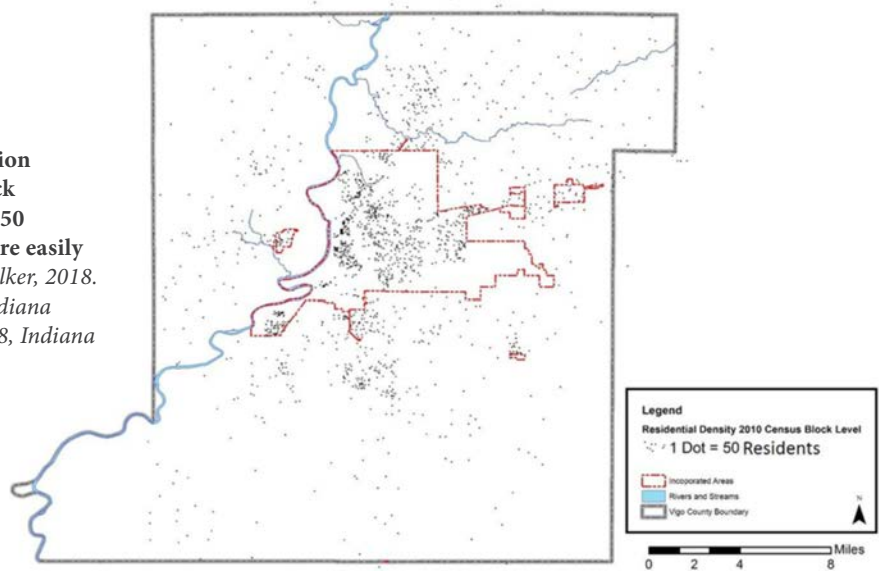


Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals — Assets and Information

Human/Social/Financial/Political capitals assets and data inform us about changes in demographics as well as trends in economic performance, development activities, and land-use decisions that influence active-living opportunities and community wellness. Factors such as distribution of population, associated income, housing occupancy, and economic performance indicators are just some examples of these types of capitals (Figure 5).

This type of information can be found through sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau, Indiana Geographic Information Council's IndianaMAP, and local public health and planning entities. Assets and information from these sources enable effective interpretation of the potential success of the community trail(s) project as well as forecast trail use and other indirect economic activities that enhance the value of public spaces and community health.

Figure 5: 2010 Population distribution of Vigo County, Indiana, at the block level. Note that each dot represents 50 residents, and population clusters are easily recognizable. *Mapped by Daniel Walker, 2018. Data source: Census Bureau, 2010, Indiana Department of Natural Resources 2008, Indiana Department of Transportation 2001.*



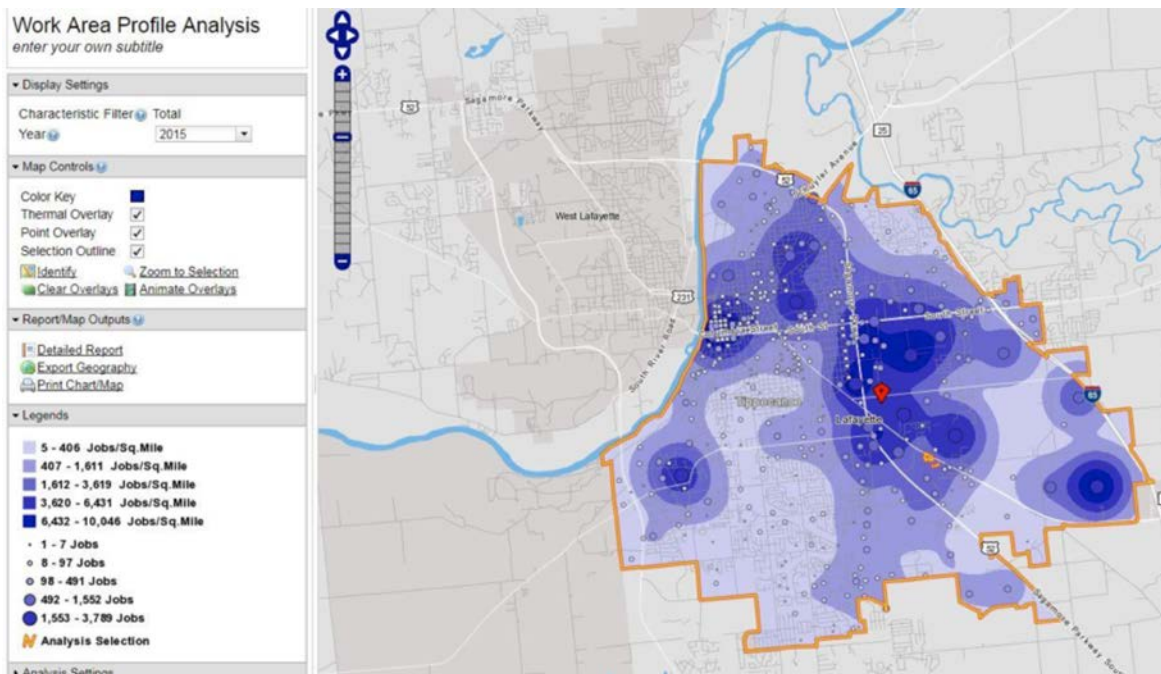


Figure 6: A Work Area Profile Analysis of Lafayette, Indiana.
Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2015.

Local-level data can be found in reports and documents available through community and economic development agencies or research groups (Figure 6).

Cultural Capital — Assets and Information

Cultural capital assets and information provide the foundation for communities to reflect on what, how, or why things have changed or remained the same. Cultural capital examples include information about historic buildings, photos of events and festivals, and excerpts from journals, which can provide detailed information that may not be available through other sources or may have been forgotten.

Events or places that might seem unimportant to some members of the community today, such as locations of demolished buildings, heritage trees, or cultural activities, can add depth to the Discover and Design phases of the community trail project (Figures 7–8). Furthermore, certain personal information may actually provide an opportunity to discuss a sense of identity for the community. Therefore, these qualitative types of resources from human or cultural capitals can further build on assets

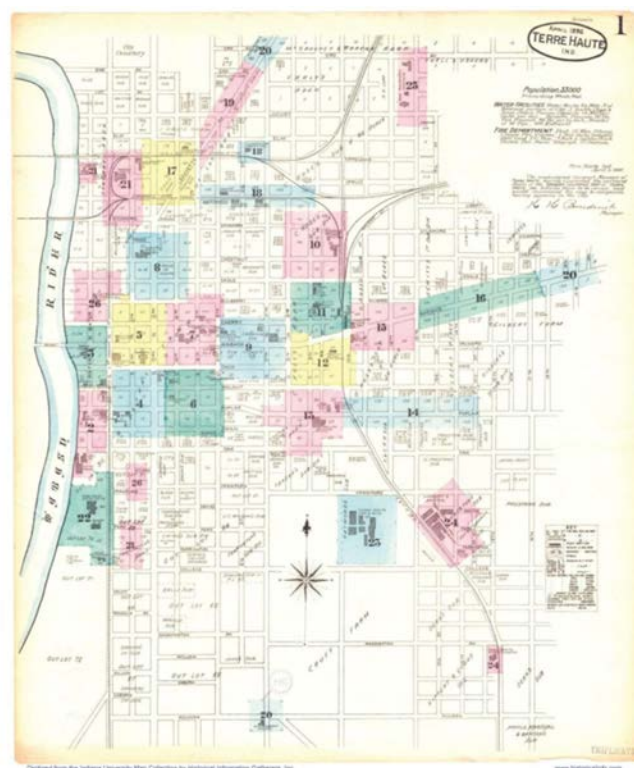


Figure 7: 1886 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Terre Haute, IN.
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, 1886.



Figure 8: 1914 Labor Day Parade in Valparaiso, Indiana, looking east down Main Street (Lincoln Way) from Washington Street.
Photo courtesy of Porter County, Indiana, A Part of the INGenWeb Project.

as well as strengths and weaknesses of the community and put it in a physical and temporal context contributing to community health.

Discover: Analysis of Community Capitals

Community capitals highlight information for planning and designing potential trail projects and can help a community reinstate such public spaces as part of their community capitals. As part of the Discover stage, an analysis of capitals can enable the working group to further understand how the community may change physically, socially, and culturally for the purpose of active living. During this stage, the working group may also come to understand how the community has not changed. The analysis process will also better prepare the working group to address the gaps and future needs of their community. The working group can analyze opportunities and constraints for the proposed trail project as a strategy to envision a healthier community. An effective analysis can lead to the identification of potential uses for the trail as well as how the project can be effectively and efficiently implemented with or through its community capitals. During the Discover and Design phases, stakeholders have the opportunity to make connections and proposals

regarding the route and the surrounding context, as well as participate in meaningful decisions for the extended community based upon the analysis. A thorough analysis can lead to a more effective trail plan or design that is more likely to be regularly used, while enhancing the value of the public space and overall community wellness.

Resources

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Case Study

The Nickel Plate Trail, Howard and Fulton Counties, Indiana

Daniel Walker, author



Figure 1: Biking the Nickel Plate Trail.

Source: <http://www.nickelplatetrail.org/photo-gallery/nggallery/page/4>

The Nickel Plate Trail is one of the premier multicounty trails in Indiana. Its 40+ miles of linear public space link 11 communities in north central Indiana. Initially, land was purchased from the Norfolk Southern Railroad through the federal railbanking program. More information about this program can be found in the resources section. Over time, the trail has expanded and improvements have been made through successful grant applications and donations.

This trail provides opportunities for both urban and rural residents to move between settings. Trail users of all ages engage in the following activities: roller blading, cross country skiing, bicycling, running, and walking. The trail allows users to interact with the area's natural capital, in the form of geographic features such as streams and wetlands as well as various flora and fauna. The trail features restrooms, trail heads with parking, and benches for resting along the route. The Nickel Plate Trail is supported by robust social and financial capital, which includes volunteers who maintain the trail, groups that organize fundraisers and trail events that occur almost monthly, and approximately 35 local businesses involved in fundraising for the trail.

According to Purdue Extension NEP Community Wellness Coordinator for Fulton County Betsy Hines, the trail impacts the health and wellness of area users by providing free opportunities for physical activity. To learn more about the Nickel Plate Trail, visit: <http://www.nickelplatetrail.org/>

Walkability and Connectivity

Jayoung Koo, author

Background

Attention to and interest in planning and design of our built environment has brought renewed focus on connected and walkable development patterns that support pedestrians and active living experiences. Past built-environment patterns often lacked enough safe and engaging outdoor activities close to people's homes and places of employment. The current interest in and need to pursue healthier lifestyles has increased the importance of walkability and connectivity in communities. Furthermore, enhanced walkability and connectivity in healthy communities can indirectly influence the communities' economic performance and increase the value of public spaces.

Walkability and connectivity strategies for active living can guide the development of a sustainable, walkable, and connected community over a wide range of built environment scales and scopes (Figure 1). This section of the curriculum aims to describe and illustrate the benefits of enhanced walkability and connectivity, and

how communities can initiate projects to improve overall wellness and active-living experiences. This section also presents and describes general steps for assessing a built environment and how community groups can enhance their community's walkability.

Trained volunteers can use this document to identify, assess, and develop actionable plans relevant for their community's needs. However, this section will focus less on walkable environments within larger public spaces such as parks or plazas. Information related to the latter topics can be found in other sections of this curriculum.

Concept

What is walkability? Although walking is the most healthy and economical way to travel or recreate, for a long time our built environments developed in ways that were dependent on motorized vehicles and inconsiderate of the pedestrian experience. Litman defines walkability as "the quality of walking conditions, including safety, comfort, and convenience" (2003, 3), whereas Speck includes "interesting" and "useful" as necessary conditions (2012, 11).



Figure 1: Quality walkable environments with space for pedestrians as well as amenities along the Indianapolis Cultural Trail in Indianapolis, Indiana: Virginia Avenue (left), Georgia Street (right). Photo by Purdue University, Nutrition Education Program.

Researchers and organizations such as Smart Growth America, the National Complete Streets Coalition (2015) and the Center for Applied Transect Studies (2009) have been proposing policies and system changes to improve walkable environments that are inclusive and comprehensive for pedestrian and alternative travelers. Properly designated travel paths and lanes for alternative travel modes along with sidewalks and visible crosswalks are additional considerations for walkable environments not exclusive to the urban fabric. Additionally, connectivity of walkable environments between origins and destinations is important for safety and to promote active-living experiences.

Filling in and connecting the missing segments in a sidewalk network can efficiently and effectively enhance walkable environments. Walkability and connectivity challenges and needs are addressed by different disciplines and fields based on their special interests, whether it be transportation planning, landscape architecture, or public health. Ultimately, walkable built environments need to be inclusive, inviting, interesting, safe, and comfortable, so that a variety of travelers will be engaged and continuously use the physical environment. Walkability and connectivity need to be addressed simultaneously to ensure sound

active-living experiences and healthy communities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and even motorists.

Benefits and Challenges of Walkability and Connectivity Projects

Community walkability and connectivity projects support community health and wellness goals by enhancing the physical environment and its aesthetics, and indirectly increasing economic activity and social opportunities depending on the context. Enhancing community walkability and connectivity benefits active-living experiences in addition to providing safer user experiences and an increased community wellness (Table 1).

Walkability projects typically address, promote, and coordinate events and activities for people to engage in the outdoor environment. Community health goals can be addressed through physical planning and improvements to the built environment and support increased outdoor physical activity. Proactive communities have developed and adopted pedestrian/bicycle master plans or other action-oriented policies that promote the implementation of sidewalks and bicycle lanes to increase participation in active-living experiences. A walkable community

Table 1. Benefits and Challenges of Walkability and Connectivity Projects for Healthier Communities

	Walkability	Connectivity
<i>Benefits</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased areas for engaging in active-living opportunities Comparatively efficient and effective use of limited funds to enhance physical-activity experiences and environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased access to extended pathways or segments Completion of well-connected network of quality pathways Less funding required than when creating a new network
<i>Challenges</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often requires collaboration with various agencies, organizations, groups, etc. Funding may be limited or take longer to be accrued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often requires collaboration with various agencies, organizations, and groups Difficulty working in areas in conflict such as ownership, land use policies, etc.

tends to have an up-to-date, well-maintained physical environment that includes a quality sidewalk network connected throughout, which helps strengthen the livability of a community. Ultimately, improved walkability and connectivity can attract a variety of demographics and promote outdoor activities.

Some walkability challenges in communities include poor sidewalks, dead-end paths, and lack of street design standards. Communities may have limited means to develop and manage attractive, comfortable, and safely built environments in the short-term. Often, people need to drive to destinations such as parks and plazas to participate in physical activities. Ideally, communities should plan, design, and deliver walkable environments that overcome such limitations so that people can walk or bike to public spaces to participate in their activities and perform everyday errands.

Process of Walkability and Connectivity Projects

Understanding the built environment's patterns is essential in supporting the pedestrian experience in communities for health, wellness, and safety. Although many of our current built environments discourage people from walking in the community, attention and interest in planning and design have shifted to bring back walkable communities for a variety of goals and objectives including pursuing healthy lifestyles, engaging in more physical activities, and investing in attractive pedestrian focused environments. Many communities have turned their efforts toward reintroducing and strengthening pedestrian paths/networks and increasing connectivity in the community through policy, systems, and environment changes.

Communities can prepare, plan, and implement walkability and connectivity projects for healthy communities by following the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process for working on walkability assessments, pedestrian/bike plans, or streetscape projects among other initiatives. Such community endeavors should be suitable to the needs and goals of working groups and relevant to the location and scope of the project.

Communities may choose to utilize established assessment tools and guidelines that typically recommend minimum standards. Various tools and software services are available for trained volunteers and other decision-makers to use when beginning projects, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's The Built Environment assessment manual (2015) or the Pedestrian Bicycle Information Center's Walkability Checklist survey. Local governments can adopt Smart Growth or Complete Streets policies to include and address a range of walkability features for local planning and design efforts. However, every community has its own unique needs. Therefore, community decision-makers should determine their own goals, objectives, needs, and visions to address prior to planning, walkability, and connectivity projects.

Define: Identify and Plan Goals and Objectives

As the first step of AI, communities should identify their goals and objectives for their community's walkability and connectivity project. For example, a proactive community may discuss and set goals and objectives for improving their public spaces that would be supportive of walking and biking activities.

Communities can also holistically resolve other objectives and visions by addressing walkability or connectivity needs (Table 2). Walkability or connectivity projects can bring about a range of solutions for other community needs by diagnosing the underlying direct and indirect causes and effects that may seem irrelevant at first. Therefore, it is essential for the community working group to clearly identify and define the goals and objectives of their project to lay out a comprehensive blueprint.

Discover: Conduct a Walkability Assessment or Audit

A variety of walkability assessment tools and methods exist that can be used to survey and evaluate the existing built environment conditions of a community. Communities can utilize the findings and conclusions to address or prescribe actionable plans to improve the walking environment (Figure 2).

Table 2. Example of Goals and Objectives of Walkability and Connectivity Community Projects

	Walkability	Connectivity
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage healthier lifestyles • Establish an inclusive travel environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend and expand network of sidewalks and/or bike lanes • Develop fully connected network for physical activities
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and establish sidewalks to be inclusive for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public-transit riders • Enhance public right-of-ways for pedestrian safety and comfort • Reflect or apply Complete Streets principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and link gaps in the sidewalk and/or bicycle networks • Improve accessibility in the sidewalk network • Address infrastructure needs to accommodate wider user demographics and physical abilities
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased level of outdoor physical activity • Enhanced individual and community health and wellness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of destinations accessible by pedestrians and bicycles • Create longer routes to engage in active-living opportunities

There are similarities and differences in how walkability tool developers have approached the process for assessing a community's environment. Some tools are simple and concise, while others are lengthy and detailed. The specifics of questions may differ from being objective to subjective, but the results often provide similar interpretations that could result in similar diagnoses and prescriptions for actionable strategies. Overall, the goal of walkability audits and evaluations is to help communities improve, intervene, or enhance their built environments in order to provide comfortable and safe pedestrian and vehicular environments in which people can travel and engage in healthier activities.

The walkability assessment findings and information need to be analyzed and interpreted accordingly to support decisions related to why, where, what, and how to plan, design, and implement features that will enhance the walkable built environment for healthy communities. Such interpretation is important for communities to

Take a walk and use this checklist to rate your neighborhood's walkability.

How walkable is your community?

Location of walk **Rating Scale:** 1 worst 2 3 4 5 best
problems problems good very good excellent

1. Did you have room to walk?
☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
☐ Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
☐ Sidewalks were broken or cracked
☐ Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc.
☐ No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
☐ Too much traffic
☐ Something else _____
 Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 Locations of problems: _____

2. Was it easy to cross streets?
☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
☐ Road was too wide
☐ Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
☐ Needed striped crosswalks or traffic signals
☐ Parked cars blocked our view of traffic
☐ Trees or plants blocked our view of traffic
☐ Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair
☐ Something else _____
 Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 Locations of problems: _____

3. Did drivers behave well?
☐ Yes ☐ Some problems: Drivers...
☐ Backed out of driveways without looking
☐ Did not yield to people crossing the street
☐ Turned into people crossing the street
☐ Drove too fast
☐ Sped up to make it through traffic lights or drove through traffic lights
☐ Something else _____
 Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 Locations of problems: _____

4. Was it easy to follow safety rules? Could you and your child...
☐ Yes ☐ No Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen by drivers?
☐ Yes ☐ No Stop and look left, right and then left again before crossing streets?
☐ Yes ☐ No Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic where there were no sidewalks?
☐ Yes ☐ No Cross with the light?
 Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 Locations of problems: _____

5. Was your walk pleasant?
☐ Yes ☐ Some problems:
☐ Needed more grass, flowers, or trees
☐ Scary dogs
☐ Scary people
☐ Not well lighted
☐ Dirty, lots of litter or trash
☐ Dirty air due to automobile exhaust
☐ Something else _____
 Rating: (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 Locations of problems: _____

How does your neighborhood stack up? Add up your ratings and decide.
 1. _____ 26-30 Celebrate! You have a great neighborhood for walking.
 2. _____ 31-35 Celebrate a little. Your neighborhood is pretty good.
 3. _____ 36-40 Okay, but it needs work.
 4. _____ 41-45 It needs lots of work. You deserve better than that.
 5. _____ 46-50 It's a disaster for walking!
 Total: _____

Now that you've identified the problems, go to the next page to find out how to fix them.

Figure 2: Walkability assessment tool example presented by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC). Source: Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center.

appropriately understand what could be done to enhance walkable environments for their citizens, whether it be to improve safety, raise comfort levels for all travelers, or provide settings for physical activity.

Community groups should evaluate the most walked sidewalk segments while also assessing the quality of all sidewalk segments and their relationship to the overall system or network. Acting on the evaluation can lead to greater comfort, safety, and aesthetics of the walking environment (Figure 3). When communities become aware of the missing walkways and sidewalks, they understand the disconnections of their built environment and generally extend and expand walkable areas to further improve the pedestrian network (Figure 4).



Figure 3: A walkability assessment addressing safety and maintenance levels from Edgelea Neighborhood in Lafayette, Indiana, reflecting the range of walkability levels from “needs improvement” (red) to “good quality” (green). *Mapped by Daniel Walker. Data Source: City of Lafayette, IN, 2014.*

Discover: Inventory and Analysis

During the Discover|Inventory phase of a walkability and connectivity project, communities should identify the conditions that influence the walkable environment. This includes infrastructure, vegetation, amenities (such as street lights), frequency of foot traffic, people engaged in activities, interest generated by the corridors, and what and how spaces are used. Inventory should also be taken of the built/natural, human/social/financial/political, and historical/cultural capitals, which will provide the foundation for community members during the Discover|Analysis phase of the project on how to effectively interpret and make decisions (Table 3).

Community leaders, Extension agents, volunteers, and partners should seek, identify, inventory, and map a range of data and assets for the relevant community capitals. These types of data can be available through government offices (local, regional, state, federal), professional planning/design offices, and individuals from their personal resources. Relevant qualitative and quantitative information and assets can also be obtained from various regional and statewide offices, agencies, departments, organizations, and research institutions such as state universities. Nowadays, basic information such as maps,



Figure 4: A sidewalk network connectivity assessment from a suburban residential subdivision in Terre Haute, Indiana, highlighting areas that lack sidewalks (red lines). *Mapped by Daniel Walker*

Table 3. Examples of Community Capitals Assets and Information for Walkability and Connectivity Community Projects During the Discover/Inventory Phase

Built/Natural Capitals	Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals	Cultural Capital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routes and conditions of sidewalks and streets • Pedestrian traffic counts and flows • Street vegetation location and conditions • Physical condition and location of public spaces, features, amenities • Origin and destination points • Climate and weather conditions • Types and locations of wayfinding signage system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics (population, age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) • Economic indicators of the community, county, or region • Planning documents (land use, zoning ordinances, development projects, etc.) • Regulations, standards for street/road design in cities and counties • Health indicators (obesity, public health, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical maps, photos, journals, newspaper articles, etc. • Community programs, regular or temporary cultural/civic events • Recreational opportunities • Landmarks, preserved elements, etc. • Valued spaces, places, locations

aerial imagery, and plan documents may be publicly available on the internet. Once the relevant community capitals assets and information are collected, the working group will better understand the opportunities/potentials and the constraints/limitations of their walkability and connectivity project and how it will support and influence community wellness.

Built/Natural Capitals — Assets and Information

Built and natural capitals include assets and information about the existing conditions of the built environment regarding travel, lifestyle, and activities at larger than a segment scale. Much information is publicly available and accessible through local, regional, state, and federal public offices and entities such as the Indiana Geographic Information Council (IndianaMAP), Indiana Spatial Data Portal, STATS Indiana, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Geological Survey, among others. Typically, the information is in the form of maps, aerial images, spatial data, reports, or other documents and lists that support decision-making phases. Other information such as potential road/sidewalk projects, economic development projects, public work projects, wayfinding systems, street-tree plans, and climate/weather or soil information can be found in reports and documents addressing the physical planning and design of community or economic development proposals.

Overall, the assets and information present opportunities for working groups to better understand and interpret suitable planning of potential walkable environments for both short-term and long-term projects.

Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals — Assets and Information

Human/social/financial/political capitals assets and data inform us about changes such as demographics as well as trends in economic performance, development activities, and land-use decisions that influence active-living opportunities and community wellness. Examples include demographics, housing units and occupancy, planning documents, and other data that can help strategically plan the foundation for a community project (Figure 5).

These types of information can be available at the block level or larger scales (block group, tract, district, neighborhood, community, etc.). The social and economic data can help groups understand the larger picture in order to enhance the overall walkable environment. Data and information can be found through government offices at the federal (U.S. Census Bureau, Ag Census), state, regional, and local levels, and community or economic development organizations.

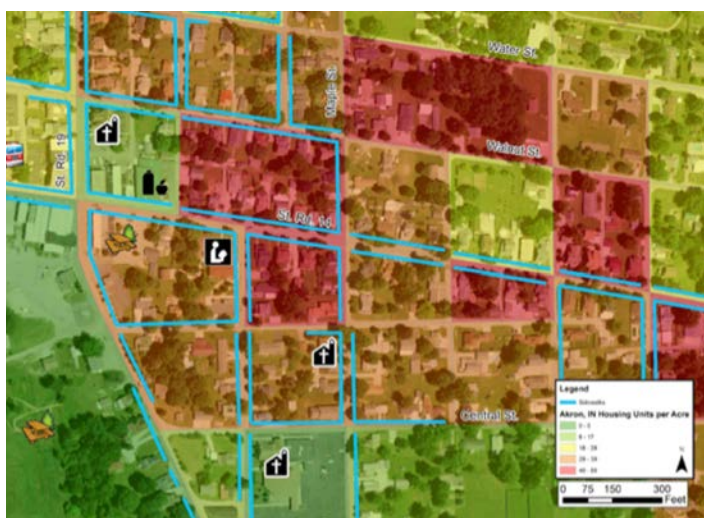


Figure 5: A map reflecting housing unit density of Akron, Indiana, illustrating existing sidewalks and concentration of built structures (housing units per acre) by block level. Mapped by Daniel Walker.
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; USDA NAIP, 2016.

In addition, these resources can help identify potential funding possibilities that may be available for sidewalks, green infrastructure (planters, street trees, etc.), bicycle facilities/furniture, or Complete-Streets-type pedestrian environmental enhancement projects, among others. Community members and volunteers can help locate and compile information to address community goals such as increasing physical-activity opportunities, enhancing public spaces and quality of life, or community and economic development.

Cultural Capital — Assets and Information

Cultural capital assets and information provide the foundation for working groups to reflect on their community's events, values, treasures, and experiences from the past that may further address and support the needs and visions for the future of creating a healthy community. These assets and information help communities determine the mix of social and historical importance that should be reflected in a walkability and connectivity project, making the experience interesting and useful by identifying origins and destinations. Examples may include maps of historical buildings and districts, routes/corridors people travel, locations of community events, or changes in public spaces and their uses over time. Personal interviews and stories of those who experienced the historical and/or cultural events within the community's context may highlight valuable interpretive information and may be of interest to future generations.

Design: Map and Plan for Connectivity

Community groups can collaboratively work on short-term walkability and connectivity enhancements to the environment with the assessment and analyses information from the Define and Discover phases. Project members can further discuss, map, and confirm amenities in areas appropriate for resting. These might complement pleasant walking experiences or fill in missing or disconnected sidewalk segments while extending or expanding the connection of walkable networks.

Simultaneously, working groups can work on envisioning long-term projects such as proposing and developing a network of sidewalks, sidewalk widening, or streetscape-corridor enhancements. Following the AI process, communities should be able to structure a coherent and consistent actionable plan. Effective wayfinding systems can complement the walkable environment and direct people to points of interest or destinations where paths are visibly connected.

Deliver: Find Funding through Collaboration

Strategically, communities should structure their walkability and connectivity plans to include phased projects that are achievable both short-term and long-term. Oftentimes, funding infrastructure projects as a whole may be challenging for a community. However, by planning ahead and having phased strategic plans in place, it may be easier for communities to apply for funding opportunities when they become available. Communities should continue their efforts to implement their walkability and connectivity projects through a shared, holistic vision or a master plan that addresses goals and objectives for community wellness over time.

Summary

Walkability and connectivity projects provide a range of benefits to communities from healthier lifestyles to enhanced economic activity. Communities should fully interpret and plan for their community's healthy, active-living goals. The Appreciative Inquiry process will help communities articulate their targeted outcomes for walkability and connectivity projects by better understanding their community capitals assets and vision of their overall potential for delivering quality walkable environments.

Case Study

Technology Enhances Walkability and Connectivity for Visually Impaired

Broadway Corridor, Gary, Indiana

Daniel Walker, author

The Blind Social Center, America Walks Inc., and the Gary Public Transportation Corporation have partnered with Terri Saltzman, Purdue Community Wellness Coordinator, to enhance the walkability of Gary, Indiana's Broadway Corridor. The area's approximately 100 visually impaired residents now have automatic audio notifications telling them they are in the corridor's public space.

The partnership installed "talking signs" at corridor bus stops. The "talking signs" are speakers, which activate when anyone wearing a special electronic wristband approaches the bus stop. These wristbands were distributed among the area's visually disabled population. When activated, the talking sign informs the person wearing the bracelet of local amenities, telling wearers how far away the amenities are and in which direction.



Figure 1: Visually impaired resident listens to a message from an audio wristband. Photo courtesy of Purdue University Nutrition Education Program.



Figure 2: The Step-Hear system used by the project. Photo courtesy of Purdue University Nutrition Education Program.

Improving the walkability and connectivity of a community's built environment has the potential to support and facilitate healthier lifestyles and the wellness of a community. The typical walkable environment, like all other features and amenities of our supportive infrastructure, must be continuously updated and managed to serve and provide safe, convenient, and attractive surroundings for maintaining our collective health.

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Wayfinding

Jayoung Koo, author

Background

Developing a wayfinding system is an important active-living strategy that enhances the value of public spaces and community wellness. A wayfinding project should be approached systematically from the Define phase through the Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver phases of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process. It should complement the planning and design of public spaces such as trails and parks.

Often, public spaces influence residents' and visitors' visual impressions of a community as well as their perception of community identity. A variety of wayfinding features may not only greet and lead people to destinations and attractions, but also reflect a range of community capitals. To this end, wayfinding is a strategy project focused on creating effective, yet pleasant, visual cues that people can understand, and follow to identify and locate a range of activities that contribute to community health.

Concept

Wayfinding refers to the ability to orient oneself based on repeated cues from the environment, built and/or natural (Lynch, 1960; Morville, 2005). Various physical features and structural elements are examples from the built, natural, or cultural capital assets that exist in communities. These cues can indirectly help people find their way around, feel greeted beyond the initial town entrance or district welcome sign, and feel more secure when uneasy or lost. Additionally, wayfinding features can increase physical activity by offering appropriate information such as distance (physical or temporal) and direction (ultimate or exact route).

Residents typically already know established paths that get them from one destination to another. However, if they perceive routes as too far or harder to walk or run than to



drive, then that perception discourages healthy physical activity. Informative strategies that facilitate everyday errands, exploration, and physical activity not only benefit individual wellness, but also community wellness and the value of public spaces.

While some people are spatially well oriented, others are directionally challenged. The uneasy experiences of the latter group can be changed into positive experiences that benefit the community through an effective wayfinding system that complements the physical features in the built environment and guides people to benefit from active-living strategies.

When wayfinding systems are expanded to and approached from a community level, they can better support healthy communities through guiding active-living opportunities. Communities should make it simple for people to pleasantly move through their environment during

Table 1. Wayfinding Concepts with Goals and Benefits Examples for Wellness of Individuals and Communities

	Individual Level	Community Level
Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate through familiar or unfamiliar environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate travel through the community
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel comfortably and pleasantly through the built environment • Navigate an environment and avoid getting lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear environmental/cultural cues that support and inform positive user experiences and impressions • Unify environmental and cultural character/identity
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear view of and guidance throughout the community's physical environment • Produce varied routes to experience with highlighted destinations to explore • Easily locate where one is in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a stronger sense of identity and safety • Complement built capital assets through connections • Increase the number of people engaging in physical activities in the community • Create efficient navigation around town
Indirect Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve active-living style • Improve cognitive and orientation skills • Build positive and healthy experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide positive impressions and experiences of a community • Increase economic activities • Promote healthier lifestyles and community wellness

activities and commutes by providing effective, efficient, and appropriate wayfinding features (Table 1).

Wayfinding Systems as an Active-Living Strategy

Communities have policies and systems in place that have shaped their current environments. While some communities constantly evolve and change their policies and systems as they strive for better environmental settings, other communities may stagnate or deteriorate for a variety of reasons. A wayfinding project can be an efficient means to approach community wellness from the systems perspective, while also being an environmental strategy.

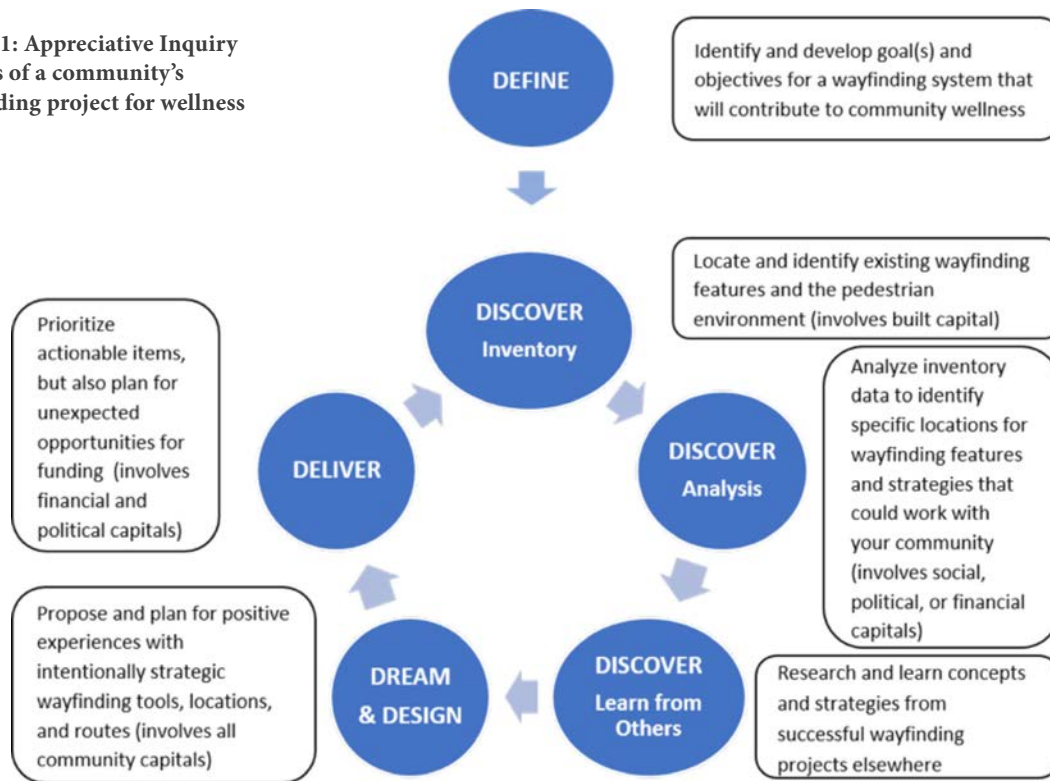
As part of built, natural, or cultural capitals, wayfinding features within a community provide directions and first impressions to residents and visitors. Such visible elements can further offer people the historic and cultural context surrounding public spaces while improving their

active-living experience. This leads to an overall healthier community. Most of the time, people find their way around relatively unmarked routes by understanding spatial orientation, cardinal directions, or clues as visual objects in unique settings. Landmarks such as rivers or city halls are examples of natural or cultural capitals that help people become familiar with their routes and support effective travel to ultimate destinations (Lynch, 1960; Morville, 2005).

Wayfinding requires that both the individual and the environmental settings work holistically. For effective active-living experiences, participants typically go through three steps to successfully reach a destination (Arthur and Passini, 2002).

1. Decide the purpose and/or destination for travelling and how to reach the goal.
2. Execute the plan of activity while processing informational cues around the route.
3. Reach the anticipated destination.

Figure 1: Appreciative Inquiry process of a community's wayfinding project for wellness



To effectively facilitate active-living opportunities, the three steps depend on a community's built environment and must be processed together. Wayfinding strategies can effectively complement the relationship between community systems and environments, which in the end can influence people, families, and communities to improve and enhance their health and wellness.

While a community's scope and scale can influence active-living opportunities, one challenge for smaller communities can be the lack of customary environmental cues (e.g., street signs, named streets) for visitors. In such communities, residents already know where everything is located and, therefore, do not feel it necessary to enhance cues through their built environment. From a community economic development perspective, the lack of wayfinding features can deter tourism and spending by visitors, the very people these communities strive to attract.

Project Development

Active-living experiences can be encouraged by efficient and effective navigational features in a community. Wayfinding features are physically built capital examples; however, the contents when reflecting a community's identity also become a social and/or cultural capital asset. The AI process can benefit communities as they plan and strategize efforts to develop an effective wayfinding project that complements the value of public spaces (Figure 1).

As an action plan, the remaining sections emphasize the Discover phases of the AI process that can strengthen a community's capacity to move a project forward to complement and facilitate active-living strategies. The "inventory," "analysis," and "learning from others" steps help community working groups lead discussions about enhancing the value of their public spaces while also helping community health.

Table 2. Appreciative Inquiry Process of a Community's Wayfinding Project for Wellness

Built/Natural Capitals	Human/Social/Financial/ Political Capitals	Cultural Capital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure maps • Maps, lists of wildlife and plant species • Landmark species • Significant/flagship species • Physical condition of spaces and places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional demographics • Economic indicators • Land use plans • Zoning ordinances • Downtown business district plans, etc. • Other types of planning documents and regulations • Design standards/codes • Gathering locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical maps, photos, documentation, etc. • Historic district designations, including buildings, plaques, etc. • Community programs and events • Gathering places • Cultural landmarks • Valued/sacred spaces, places, locations

Discover: Inventory of Community Capitals

The active-living experience becomes more informed and appealing when wayfinding features are associated with a location, whether they are built, natural, cultural, or financial capitals (Table 2). These community capitals can be found, mapped, and better understood by taking a visual walking tour of the community. Volunteers can identify locations, conditions, contents, features, and design styles and map them with notes and photographs. They should ask:

- What and where do wayfinding features currently exist that inform and direct people around the community?
- What recognizable cultural, historical or physical attributes do residents and visitors associate with or visit in the community?

Communities should also recognize the wider context of the built environment such as local topography, building types, historical features and sites, significance of preservation areas, future areas of development, and traffic flow patterns (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Destinations identified in Fishers, Indiana, as part of the Gateway and Wayfinding Plan. *Source: City of Fishers, IN, 2014.*

Built/Natural Capitals — Assets and Information

Built or natural capitals include assets and information such as points of interest, destinations, existing trails or pathways, historical buildings, existing signage, and landmarks in the community. These assets and information not only inform the working group, but are also important navigation-assisting features. They allow a community to better understand the visually significant cues that already exist and can support active-living experiences.

Existing capitals can be mapped by taking a visual walking tour of the community. Alternatively, a working group can request readily available information from appropriate agencies and offices such as the Indiana Geographic Information Council (IndianaMAP), Indiana Spatial Data Portal, STATS Indiana, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and U.S. Geological Survey. The mapped, existing structural or visible features present opportunities for working groups to better utilize and interpret in realizing shared dreams and to deliver efficient and effective wayfinding projects.

Human/Social/Financial/Political Capitals — Assets and Information

Human/Social/Financial/Political capitals include assets and data to support decisions to predict the types of wayfinding tools and methods that are appropriate to support active-living experiences in a community. A variety of tools can facilitate an individual's travel through both familiar and unfamiliar community settings. Local comprehensive plans, land-use plans, and zoning or signage ordinances provide guidelines for wayfinding features such as locations, restrictions, and limitations for uses and designs. Working groups can access these documents through city or county planning and zoning departments or economic development authorities.

Cultural Capital — Assets and Information

As community working groups creatively reflect on their cultural capital assets and information, these become part of the foundation for a local wayfinding system that supports active living and a strong sense of place. Each community should use and improve their unique built,

human, or social capitals assets to represent their history and culture. The culture of a community will be better understood by residents and visitors when wayfinding cues are incorporated into the navigation experience and regional context.

The process of sharing and exchanging ideas and experiences between community members can also bring the community together and enhance social capital. Cultural capital examples include existing and routine travel routes people use, historical maps, photos, illustrations, journals, diaries, newspaper articles, historical documentation, and past and present cultural events.

Discover: Analysis of Community Capitals

During the Discover|Analysis step of a wayfinding project, community groups must identify existing features, tools, or methods that work well and enhance health and wellness in the community. These groups should strategize and determine where, what, and how to situate wayfinding support tools to most efficiently and effectively guide active-living experiences for residents and visitors. When more information is gathered from community capitals during the Discover|Inventory step, the analysis step is better informed — and so is the plan and design of the wayfinding system to support community wellness. Some tasks for this step include:

- Examine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and limitations of wayfinding features in the built environment.
- Identify potential informative features in the existing environment that may be underutilized.
- Determine which frequently used paths or destinations can further benefit from wayfinding features within the community and enhance active living.
- Identify other routes that could benefit from increased foot traffic and encourage physical activity.

Mapping community capitals makes them more useful and effective in clarifying their spatial relationships within and around the community. The mapped community capitals should help a working group visualize assets



and/or gaps in the existing wayfinding system. A group's analysis should combine the existing community capitals with potential features needed for assisting navigation in areas where multiple pedestrian activities are concentrated. Communities can use this information to determine the most appropriate wayfinding navigation tools for their users.

Working groups should further analyze and establish vehicular and pedestrian pathways within a community, identify paths or routes not widely used in the built capital, and work on improved active-living plans. Once groups confirm the locations for proposed wayfinding features, they should test the effectiveness of the proposed features. Tests should ensure that users easily and clearly benefit from the new features that promote active living.

Specific design contents, styles, and locations of wayfinding features can be conceptualized during this phase. Ultimately, one goal for an effective wayfinding project should be to utilize existing community capitals to increase visibility and awareness of routes for the users, which can support increased physical activity and lead to healthier communities.

Discover: Learn from Others

Information for wayfinding projects may be collected, compiled, saved, and shared through a variety of methods, from traditional hard copy to electronically digitized to interactive tools such as Google Maps and other smart technology applications. Mobile applications and social media also attract and increase interest in community collaboration by allowing users to share or highlight features of interest, value, or concern. Working groups can utilize various modes, methods, and tools to reach out to residents and potential visitors to survey their interests and ideas regarding the wayfinding experience through social and financial capitals.

Communities can also ask visitors to assess the wayfinding system's effectiveness in the built capital after a visit. The working group can use this additional feedback to better understand and prepare for supporting active-living opportunities and experiences. Visualized community capitals can further complement a community's efforts to identify the types of wayfinding tools that could be utilized in addition to identifying appropriate locations for implementation.

Dream and Design

The Dream and Design phases for a wayfinding project should address a systematic strategy for locating or relocating appropriate features, signage, or navigation tools that fulfill a range of community goals including health and wellness (Table 3). Groups should discuss which methods and tools can better support their community members to actively engage in their public spaces and have a healthy experience.

The scale of a wayfinding project may expand beyond a district or neighborhood to include the entire community or town as well as entrance points from major routes

such as highways. Beyond the boundary of a local jurisdiction, identification sign(s) should be located at major entrances to and from destinations, including the town. Communities should make wayfinding features evident and visible, creating user-friendly signage systems that direct visitors to historical or cultural assets such as a historic district, downtown, recreational destination, etc. The styles and forms of signage should be consistent and complement each other so that people in the community clearly recognize their whereabouts, whether touring or engaged in physical activity (Figure 3–4).

Table 3. Examples of Wayfinding Signage Types, Locations, and Functions Relevant to Community Health and Wellness Goals

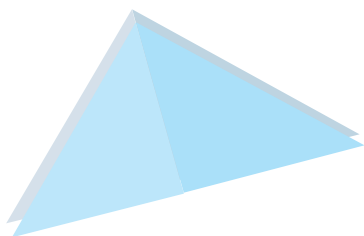
Types	Locations	Functions	Health & Wellness Goals
<i>Gateway or Entry Signs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single spot or all entry points to the district, area, or town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome people Inform people about their location in the town Reflect historical and/or cultural significance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform users of interesting built, historical, or social capitals or of starting and ending points on routes to encourage physical activities
<i>Informational Kiosks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focal points, such as the entrance to an area or center of the district Areas where there is increased foot traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information and direction to people at major destinations or high foot-traffic areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform users of built or natural capitals or of routes to encourage physical activities Inform users of potential health achievements based on distance/calories burned
<i>Pole Banners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Along the street utilizing existing poles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present the identity of the area, community, or town Inform people about specific features/events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform users of destinations or routes to encourage physical activities
<i>Placards or Logos</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On contributing historic buildings or districts Along the streets utilizing existing signs, poles, or other structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display a consistent identity Inform distance to or from certain starting points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform distances engaged in physical activity or calories burned from various destination points



Figure 3: Wayfinding signs in Downtown Rushville, IN. Photo by Smith, 2017.



Figure 4: Wayfinding signs along the Indianapolis Cultural Trail system in Indianapolis, IN. Photo courtesy of REA.



Summary

Wayfinding planning and design projects are most effective when planners consider the full range of community capitals holistically through the AI process. Collaboration and partnership among community members not only makes trips and explorations efficient and enjoyable for residents and potential visitors, but also enhances the value of public spaces.

A well-planned wayfinding system that advantageously utilizes its community capitals helps people engage in healthier activities while strengthening a community's identity. Effective wayfinding features can make physical activities more interesting and informational. As explicit communication tools, wayfinding signage systems not only facilitate travel, but also reflect cultural capitals and complement a community's physical environment. Therefore, encouraging residents and visitors to further discover the value of public spaces contributes to a community that is physically, socially, and economically healthier. When done effectively, a wayfinding system benefits a community in many ways and builds on community capitals.

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Case Study

Bicycle Route Identification and Wayfinding in Huntington, Indiana, and Greater Lafayette's 2014 Wayfinding Project

Daniel Walker, author

Wayfinding is a common issue within Indiana communities. The process of planning and implementing a wayfinding system requires cooperation between different entities, from the Indiana Department of Transportation to local businesses owners, and perhaps consultants such as sign design/manufacture firms or website developers. The scope of the project determines which entities are involved. Wayfinding systems can direct users of a system within a community, such as a bicycle route/trail system or a downtown district. Communities can either develop systems organically or use a consultant.

An example of an organically developed system is the City of Huntington, Indiana. The community had established a system of interlinked bicycle routes and trails that provided connections between community parks and its downtown. Residents needed to both find their way to the system and navigate to different destinations within the system. The Mayor and a community engagement volunteer coordinator designed the routes and had signage manufactured and installed by the city's streets department. The city developed online maps to assist residents in using the trails, as well as partnerships with community organizations to help teach children how to ride bicycles safely.

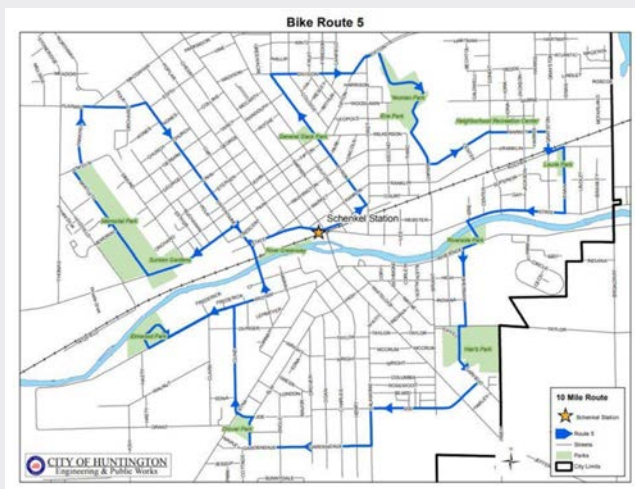


Figure 1: This map depicts one of Huntington's bicycle routes that connect its park system. Image source: City of Huntington, Indiana, website.

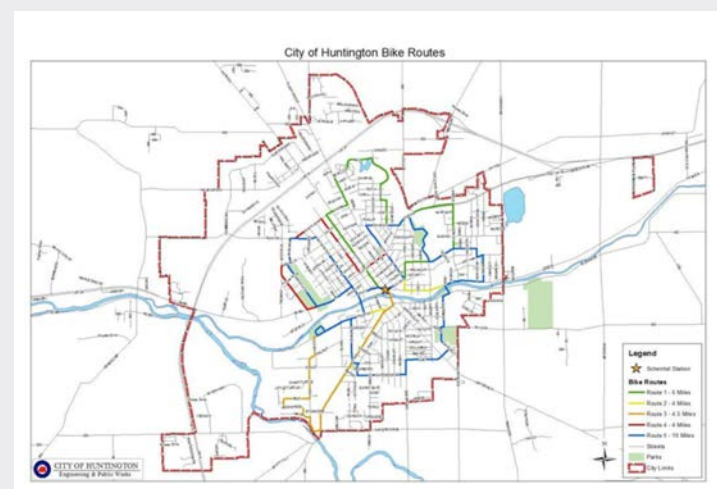


Figure 2: This map shows the entire system of bicycle routes. Note the hub through which all routes pass, indicated by the star at the center of the map. Image source: City of Huntington, Indiana, website.

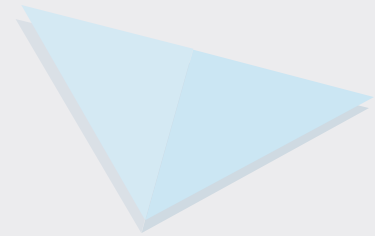


Figure 3: The image above depicts the variety of state and local wayfinding signage that was installed. Note the consistency between state and municipality, and between municipalities. *Image source: City of Lafayette, Indiana, website.*

Wayfinding systems, such as Greater Lafayette’s, involved significant coordination between Purdue University, the City of West Lafayette, the City of Lafayette, the Indiana Department of Transportation, numerous civic institutions in each community, and a consultant. The scope extended miles beyond either city’s corporate boundaries, because it required signage on Interstate 65 exits to guide visitors to the area. The three entities coordinated signage location and content from interstate exits to final destinations, while a consultant handled the design, manufacture, and installation of the signs that were located within city limits within city controlled rights-of-way.

Coordination was extremely important to the success of this project, because signage in Lafayette needed to lead visitors to Purdue University in West Lafayette, and signage in West Lafayette needed to direct people to downtown Lafayette’s many regional amenities and downtown districts. The design theme of the wayfinding program was consistent and incorporated artwork created for a local district branding effort between the two cities, as well as themes from a neighborhood signage program that created unique signage delineating different Lafayette and West Lafayette neighborhoods.

State regulations must be followed for design and placement of signage located on state roadways, such as those that run through the hearts of many Indiana communities. Useful reference documents such as the Indiana Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the Indiana Guide Sign program are available online.



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Value of Community Gardens as Public Places

Emily Toner and Abigail Petersen, authors

Community gardens take many forms, and each is unique to the community it serves. Whether located in a school, church, or workplace, your community's new garden will flow around the answer to these two key questions:

1. What is the purpose of this garden space?
2. Who is this garden serving?

Community gardens bring a host of benefits to those who cultivate and use them, including:

- building community morale and improving the residents' attitudes about their community (Armstrong, 2000);
- improving the quality of life and the physical health of the gardeners (Smith, 2014); and
- enhancing eating habits through vegetable consumption (Armstrong, 2000; Weltin, 2013).

Community gardens often face limited and nontraditional land access, use of reclaimed and sometimes contaminated soils, restrictive legal and political environments, low levels of agricultural expertise and the challenge of sustaining social missions in addition to producing food (Pfeiffer 2014, Reynolds 2011). Given these obstacles, building a clear vision, strategic team structure, and choosing a site wisely will be important for the success of the garden.

Gardening Together

As LaManda Joy says in *Start a Community Food Garden*: “Many people believe the heavy lifting—such as land acquisition and preparation, garden building and soil shoveling—is the hard part of starting a community garden. Don’t get me wrong! It takes a lot of physical labor to build a garden. But in reality, the toughest part is building the community first.”

Joy’s book is a great guide for how to go about organizing and fostering the social aspect of building a community garden. The first six chapters of *Start a Community Food Garden* are an excellent guide for that process:

1. Without Community, It’s Just a Garden: Getting Organized
2. Get the Party Started: Meetings with a Mission
3. Bringing the Garden to Life: Planning and Design
4. Taking Care of Garden Business: A Structure for Sustainability
5. Mobilizing: Developing a Team of Gardeners and Volunteers
6. The Year-Round Community: Keeping It Fun

Choosing a Location

Soil Quality

Given the heavy prior use of most sites chosen to become community gardens (especially in urban areas) it is important to thoroughly understand the quality of the soil at the garden site. This can be achieved through a two-part effort:

1. *Research the site’s history*
Utilize public property-related records as well as individuals who have historic knowledge of the land in question. Find out as much as possible about past use of the site and make note of areas that had intensive use and may need separate soil testing. Even if the site is under the ownership of your group, this is an important step. You may discover information that is key to safely using the site for a garden.

2. Test the Site's Soil

Testing the soil for nutrients, pH and possible contaminants is of utmost importance to understand the quality of your garden site. Lead is a common soil contaminant in the urban setting, even in areas where no industrial activity has taken place. Lead from sources like paint and car exhaust often contaminate urban soil over time. For soil sampling tips, refer to:

- Growing Gardens in Urban Soils by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-03/documents/urban_gardening_fina_fact_sheet.pdf
- Collecting Soil Samples for Testing, <https://ag.purdue.edu/hla/pubs/HO/HO-71.pdf>

Water Access

Convenient access to water is essential to the success of a community garden. A site may seem perfect in all other ways, but without access to water spigot(s) with enough water pressure to serve your garden, the garden's life will be short. Collecting and using rain water is a practice that many gardens employ, but you will likely struggle to meet a garden's needs with rainwater alone. Identifying your water source and solidifying arrangements for how gardeners will access that water is a key part of your planning process for the garden.

Social Considerations

Depending on the goals of your garden, there are many other factors to consider in addition to soil quality and water access. Some questions to consider:

- Does the audience you are reaching with this garden have specific needs for the garden to be accessible? Consider age, physical abilities and language among other factors.
- How will people travel to this garden, and how does the garden accommodate multiple forms of transportation including walking, car, public transport and bicycle?
- What signage will you use to help gardeners and the general public understand the purpose and expectations for this garden?

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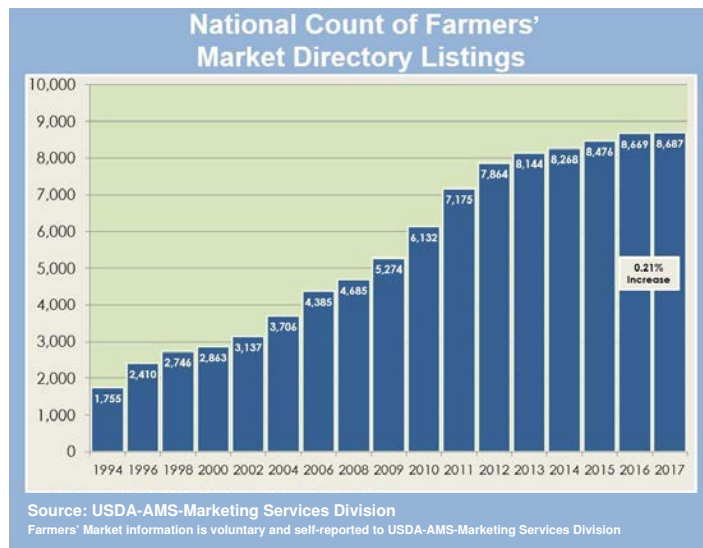
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Value of Farmers' Markets as Public Places

Jodee Ellett, author

The United States has seen an influx of farmers' markets in recent years as local foods have grown in popularity. In 2016, the USDA National Farmers' Market Directory listed over 8,600 farmers' markets – a doubling of markets since 2006.

Farmers' markets are often seen as economic hubs due to their ability to connect shoppers with local farm, food, and craft businesses and provide affordable retail space to start-up producers. However, farmers' markets also serve as shared public spaces with numerous benefits beyond economics, such as creating a vibrant, inviting, and safe space for diverse communities to come together.



Social Benefits

In a study conducted by the Project for Public Spaces, marketgoers most frequently identified the farmers' markets greatest quality as its ability to "bring people together." Farmers' markets attract people from diverse backgrounds spanning various ages, ethnicities, and income levels. Social barriers fade away as people come together to support the community and celebrate their diversity.

Social and cultural benefits may not be automatic, and market managers should make a deliberate effort to welcome all members of the community. These efforts may include:

- Promoting vendors and goods unique to the community
- Developing vendor and entertainer demographics that reflect the demographics of the community at large
- Partnering with community organizations to reach diverse community groups
- Accepting payments from food assistance programs such as SNAP, WIC and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Selecting and designing a location that optimizes social opportunities (Figure 1)

Public Health Benefits

Late in the 20th century, a major paradigm shift occurred in public health, driven by a large, growing body of evidence revealing that health is largely determined by conditions in the environments (i.e., social, economic, and physical) and settings (e.g., neighborhoods, schools, worksites, and churches) in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age (Healthy People 2020, 2010; McGinnis, 2002).

Farmers' markets have the capacity to provide community public health benefits, chief among them improving community and neighborhood access to healthy food. Planning for public health impacts is vital. Some strategies to improve the likelihood of such benefits include:

- Considering the placement of markets in areas with low access to healthy foods
- Considering partnerships with local agencies that can support the market through the ability to provide incentives and double up programs for income-qualified audiences
- Considering partnerships that can improve marketing and outreach to limited resource audiences
- Considering partnerships with educational organizations that may be willing to provide outreach services and demonstrations during peak market hours/seasons



Choosing a Location

Synergy

Synergy is the cooperation of multiple elements to create an outcome greater than the sum of the individual parts. A strategically placed farmers' market will produce optimal community impact by leveraging utilization of other nearby public spaces. Markets adjacent to local parks, town squares, libraries, and storefronts are likely to increase visitation of these spaces. In fact, farmers' markets can increase the collective revenue of other nearby businesses by \$19,000 to \$15 million. (McCarthy, 2012).

By locating a farmers' market near other attractions, these places synergistically work together to increase attendance all around. For instance, visitors to the farmers' market may visit the nearby library out of simple convenience, and vice versa. Further, having multiple attractions in one area may attract patrons who would not have visited any one of the attractions were they to stand alone.

Accessibility

To reap the many social benefits that farmers' markets can offer, the market must be accessible to the community. Accessible locations include those that may be reached by foot, bike, car, and public transit. Spaces designed to attract activity often already meet this requirement.

Perceptive market managers collocate farmers' markets with parks, plazas, community centers, retail shopping, and/or public-transit stops. (Project for Public Spaces, 2016). Smaller markets designed to improve healthy food access may consider collaborating with faith-based organizations, neighborhood centers, and workplaces to create that public space where local food commerce can occur.

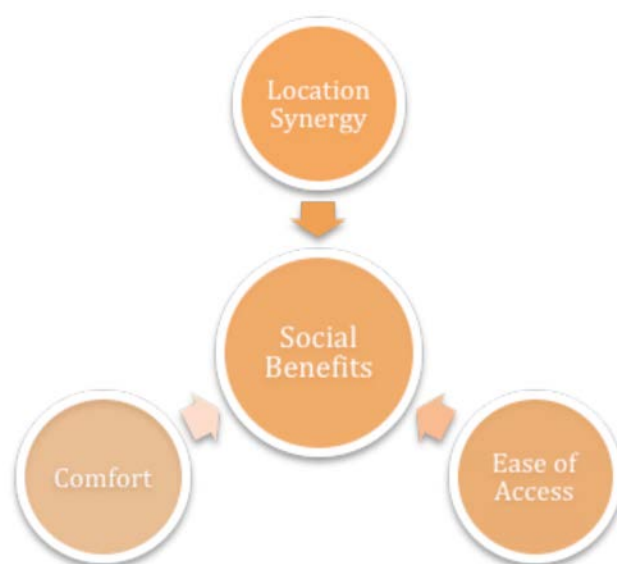


Figure 1: Quality of Location strongly impacts Social Benefits

Comfort

The farmers' market should be a place where patrons feel comfortable. Place your market in an area that patrons perceive as safe. Inviting infrastructure helps create a space where people enjoy spending time. Creating an inviting space can be as simple as thoughtfully placed benches or tables. Designing attractive spaces conducive to live music or education will draw people and can provide ever-changing reasons to return to the market.

Cost to the Community

Open-air farmers' markets are a low-cost option to revitalize a community. They are relatively easy to start up and flexible in terms of space requirements. Cost-effective marketing options include:

- Creating a strong social media presence using outlets such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
- Cultivating a positive relationship with local media outlets
- Posting simple banners and fliers that include information about time, location, activities, and available products



Tools

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Market Development Tools

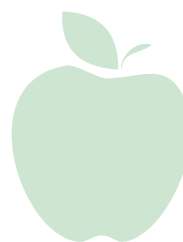
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<http://farmersmarketcoalition.org/education/market-manager-faq/1-market-fundamentals/>. Website with videos, process for development, policies and management.
<https://www.pps.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/RWJF-Report.pdf>



Policy Applications



Putting It All Together

Daniel Walker, author

Policies for Healthier Communities through the Built Environment

At this point, your group has reviewed and compiled a great deal of information about its assets in the built environment. It discussed and recorded the interests of its participants, analyzed the community's condition from a health perspective, and developed specific goals and objectives it wishes to see implemented. While some goals are readily achievable and do not require major policy-level change, the group's medium- and long-term goals may require change in some community policies to allow implementation.

This section discusses an Indiana community's (a city, county, or town) key policy document for guiding long-term land use and development decision-making — the comprehensive plan (the plan).

First, this section provides an overview of the plan as a community document, its common elements, and the planning process. Second, it presents examples of how the goals, objectives, and strategies created through the Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces (EVPS: CHC) program complement the planning process and may be considered during plan development, amendment, or updating. Finally, while comprehensive plans are central to shaping Indiana communities, we acknowledge both that not all Indiana communities have plan commissions, and

that the comprehensive plan is not the only opportunity to implement policies that change the built environment. Therefore, methods such as ordinances, resolutions, and other community plans are discussed.

The Comprehensive Plan

The purpose of the comprehensive plan is to document **policies** that address future community needs during the next 20 years in the following areas: land use, development, transportation and public spaces, lands, and structures. These policies are adopted by the local legislative body to form the foundation of land-use regulation.

The areas listed above are referred to as **elements**. Although Indiana law requires broad consideration of community issues, communities are not limited to these elements; they may include additional elements to address the unique issues they face. The American Planning Association (APA) found that comprehensive plans across the United States incorporate health-related policies in two ways. Some communities establish health as a separate element of their plans, while others integrated health-related goals and strategies with traditional plan elements such as transportation, open space and land use (Ricklin and Kushner n.d.).

This curriculum follows the latter approach, because it is easier for an EVPS: CHC group to address specific issues it has identified under existing elements than to develop a new health element. Below is an overview of the comprehensive planning process that communities follow. It is up to the plan commission to determine the level of public engagement. But note that only one public hearing is required before the commission adopts the plan.

The comprehensive planning process involves:

- Analysis of past, current, and future conditions;
- Community engagement;
- Development of goals, policies, and objectives;
- Development of alternative options;
- Selection of preferred alternative/adoption;
- Implementation;
- And re-evaluation/updating/amending.

Depending on where your community is in planning, the products of your workgroup ideas may be applicable to one or more steps in the process. For example, if the community is in the initial stage of the planning process, the workgroup can contribute at several steps in the planning process, and potentially transfer **goals, objectives**, and long, medium, and short-term **strategies** into the plan. With any community planning process, communicating frequently and working directly with the plan commission, planning staff, and related consultants is necessary to ensure planning efforts are in alignment with community efforts.

Relating Goals and Strategies to Policies and Objectives

Let us examine how a workgroup that has identified “Increase physical activity by establishing bicycle trail links between three municipal parks” as a goal could contribute toward the implementation of this goal through the comprehensive plan. Keep in mind, the framework for action planning used by EVPS: CHC is Goal – Objective – Strategy. Goals represent the community’s wishes in the broadest sense, objectives clearly define how organizations achieve project goals, and strategies are the specific actions a community plans to take to achieve an objective. Note that each community may use the terms “goal, strategy, objective, and policy” in its comprehensive plan differently both from the EVPS: CHC curriculum and from comprehensive plans completed by other Indiana communities. Below is a complete example of the EVPS: CHC structure, from goal to strategies.

EXAMPLE EVPS: CHC GOAL

Increase physical activity by establishing bicycle trail links between Hoosierville’s community-scale parks.

EXAMPLE EVPS: CHC OBJECTIVE

By DATE, develop and use data on existing vacant, for-sale, and brownfield properties located between community parks to identify preferred corridors for bicycle trail links between Hoosierville’s community-scale parks.

EXAMPLE EVPS: CHC STRATEGIES

Acquire strategically located properties identified in the vacant/for-sale inventory.

Short-Term: Within a year, the Hoosierville Planning Office will hire an intern to complete a list of vacant properties, for-sale and brownfield sites within one mile of Hoosierville’s community-scale parks.

Medium-Term: Within three years, the Hoosierville Planning Office complete the inventory of vacant, for-sale, and brownfield properties within one mile of Hoosierville’s community-scale parks.

Long-Term: Within five years, the Hoosierville Planning Office will conduct a public planning process to identify preferred trail corridors using the completed inventory of within one mile of Hoosierville’s community-scale parks.

Comprehensive Plan Connection

Below are several examples of goals, policies, and objectives that relate to the topic of trails, bicycles, and connectivity sampled from comprehensive plans around Indiana.

Example Comprehensive Plan Goals, Policies, and Objectives

- **Muncie-Delaware County, Indiana’s comprehensive plan:**

Policy: Develop and annually update a 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for acquisition and construction of strategic greenway links in the trail thoroughfare plan. (Muncie-Delaware County, IN 2000). The CIP will be discussed later in this section.

- **Kosciusko County, Indiana’s 1996 comprehensive plan has a similar policy to address provision of public recreation areas near its many lakes:**

Policy: “Procure and develop lakefront areas for public recreational use.”

- **Richmond, Indiana (2006)**

Policy: Community Connections – Expand the Greenways and Trails System to Connect Neighborhoods with Parks, Schools, and Other Communities.¹

- **Ft. Wayne (2007)**

Goal: Neighborhoods that are stable and diverse, providing a wide range of housing options, linking residents to a variety of land uses which meet the needs of the community.

Objective H5.D: Promote and comprehensively plan for greenways, bikeways, and trails within new and existing developments.

Objective H5.E: Encourage parks, walkways and open spaces that link to and between neighborhoods, schools, shopping and other amenities.

- **City of Valparaiso, IN (2013):**

Policy: Communities should provide a range of facilities for all modes of transportation which accommodate people of all ages and economic status. This interconnected system should include transit facilities to support those who cannot operate private automobiles because of physical, social, or economic condition as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities which benefit public health and the environment through reduced vehicle miles traveled.

- **Jasper County, IN (2009)**

Objective TR 5.1: Require provisions for sidewalk installation within new residential subdivisions where appropriate. Sidewalks should be designed to connect to existing and future sidewalk and trail systems.

Objective TR 5.3: Incorporate planning for sidewalks, pedestrian/nature trails, and bike paths into updates of the Thoroughfare Plan Map.

Work with your plan commission, staff and / or affiliated consultants to determine what community planning efforts activities are currently underway and how your group will contribute. Some or all of the specific goals, objectives, and strategies your group identifies through the EVPS: CHC workshop process should be aligned to your comprehensive plan's elements when the scope and focus is compatible. Also identify where there is potential to include information gathered through the EVPS: CHC process into other areas of the plan such as inventories of existing conditions, sub-area plans, and individual elements.

If your community has a comprehensive plan, efforts to incorporate workshop goals, objectives, and strategies may be most relevant during a comprehensive plan re-evaluation or update process. The update process generally occurs every three to five years, depending on the amount of growth a community has experienced during that time. During an update, the plan can be evaluated in part with the EVPS: CHC process and through other tools like the Design for Health Comprehensive Plan Review Checklist. Using the goals, objectives, and strategies developed through the EVPS: CHC workshops, your group can work with the plan commission, staff and/or affiliated consultants to develop and propose an amendment to the comprehensive plan.

Next, we will present a series of other avenues for incorporating health into community policies that affect the built environment.

Other Plans and Community Policy Documents Linked to the Built Environment

While evaluating the comprehensive plan for opportunities to improve healthy eating and active living within the community is a method for shaping a healthier community future, this section examines other opportunities that can also yield benefits at the local level. Here we discuss other opportunities for improving the built environment through plans and policies.

¹ A prime example of this is the Cardinal Greenway, connecting Richmond to several other Indiana communities to the north.

■ *Resolutions and Ordinances*

Resolutions are documents that reflect the official opinion or will of a legislative body. Municipalities use resolutions to adopt comprehensive plans. The Indiana Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School Guidebook recommends advocating for passage of a resolution as a method of building community awareness of programs or initiatives. Ordinances are pieces of legislation enacted by local government (e.g., zoning ordinances) and are considered laws.

Some ordinances have been adopted by many communities, as they generally share a common desire. Take "complete streets" for example. More than 20 Indiana local governments have successfully passed an ordinance or resolution adopting Complete Streets Policy according to Health by Design, an Indianapolis-based coalition focused on health in the built environment. Each community adjusts the language of the ordinance to fit its needs; however, the general elements of Complete Streets ordinances are similar.

Another example of an ordinance that supports physical activity is Lafayette's 3-foot safe passing distance for cars passing cyclists. This ordinance establishes a \$50 fine for motorists who do not overtake cyclists at a safe distance. It has served to raise community awareness of cyclists as well as increase safety for those sharing the road. The ordinance can be found in the resources section.

■ *Zoning Ordinance*

Land-use policy can make a profound difference in a community over time. While communities can achieve change in the built environment through thoughtful design and construction of public spaces such as streetscapes, community gardens or trails, the key strengths of land-use policy are 1) it is an enforceable law, and 2) it applies to private land as well as public. Zoning provides local jurisdictions the opportunity to define where specific land uses take place and to control their impacts on neighboring properties and the wider community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that "from a public health perspective, zoning can be instrumental to promote physical activity, increase safety, and promote good nutrition." Past policy in many Indiana communities has permitted sprawling, low-density, autocentric development, which has produced barriers to outdoor physical activity and increased reliance on private vehicles to meet daily needs. The CDC recommends zoning regulations that allow larger areas of mixed-use development, citing several studies that found mixed-use zoning increased physical activity in some way by 161 percent. It also found that mixed-use zoning enhanced walkability (CDC, 2009).

"Mixed use" was defined as the combination of residential with either commercial, institutional or other public land use in the CDC's review. Zoning districts can permit activities and land uses that promote good nutrition in areas where good, nutritional food options are limited. It can also be used to regulate outlets that provide high-fat, low-nutrition foods through a variety of methods such as performance standards and proximity (Mair, Pierce, and Teret, 2005).

■ *Subdivision Control Ordinance*

In Indiana, the Plan Commission is responsible for approving subdivisions. The Subdivision Control Ordinance regulates the division of land and sets standards for physical development of infrastructure and buildings. The ordinance can also include requirements for recreational facilities, conservation of naturally sensitive lands and landscaping (Luzier & Schweitzer, 2017). The Subdivision Control Ordinance can be used to implement walkability by requiring pedestrian infrastructure that connects residential developments to destinations.

■ *Redevelopment/Economic Development Area Plans (RDA/EDA/TIF plans)*

Indiana code (IC 36-7-14) enables local communities to establish "economic development or redevelopment areas" (EDA/RDAs) to benefit public health, safety, morals, and welfare where there are barriers to redevelopment. Within EDA/RDAs, a tool called Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

can be used to finance improvements. TIF allows local units of government to issue bonds (debt) to raise money for construction of public improvements. Within the EDA/RDA, taxes derived from increased assessed valuation (anticipated as a result of the improvements) are dedicated to repaying the bonds.

The local unit of government must also adopt a plan for the area. The plan can specify a wide variety of public improvements that will be made in the area, including trails, parks, open spaces or any other area dedicated to public use or utility. The plan for the EDA/RDA represents a potential vehicle for implementing some of the ideas generated from the EVPS: CHC working group.

It is best to work with redevelopment commission officials when possible to determine what EDA/RDAs exist, the relative health of their budgets and opportunities for healthy eating and active living within the area.

■ *Sub-area Plans or Neighborhood Plans*

Sub-area plans or neighborhood plans are completed for significant areas within a community that have special circumstances or characteristics that differentiate them from the rest of the community. The plans may be initiated by the municipality due to significant barriers to redevelopment, or because community leaders believe the area is ripe for development and a plan is necessary to shape what is to come. Neighborhoods themselves initiate planning efforts as well, and those with strong leadership teams initiate discussions with city officials. Technical assistance is provided to develop a neighborhood plan.

From 2000 to 2005, St. Lawrence McAllister neighborhood leaders in Lafayette, Indiana, met with City Council members to develop a neighborhood action plan. This plan was the basis for continued collaboration with the Tippecanoe Area Plan Commission and eventually yielded a neighborhood plan. The plan was adopted into the comprehensive plan and now guides the Area Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the City of Lafayette's decision-making in the neighborhood.

The town of Rushville, Indiana, identifies "critical sub-areas" in its comprehensive plan and states: "These areas represent significant opportunities for Rushville's success well into the future. They are a representative cross-section of new infrastructure investment, making plans for leveraging current investment, and reinvestment in existing community assets." Sub-area or neighborhood plans that are not part of a comprehensive planning effort can be incorporated into the comprehensive plan by amendment after completion as shown in the St. Lawrence McAllister example. This allows local groups and planners to develop plans independent of the three- to five-year cycle of comprehensive plan updates.

Sub-area plans present an opportunity for planners, neighborhood residents, and businesses to plan at the neighborhood scale rather than the county or city scale. These groups can focus on quality-of-life issues (e.g., healthy eating and active living) in detail and pay special attention to how the neighborhood's built environment affects residents' activity levels and ability to access healthy foods. Neighborhoods can collaborate with planners to develop neighborhood-scale policies, goals and strategies that are tailored to the neighborhood's unique assets.

The Historic Centennial Neighborhood in Lafayette, Indiana, has its own neighborhood plan. Within the plan, best practices for healthy eating and active living including wayfinding, multi-modal transit, traffic calming, mixed-use development, accessible foods (mentioned explicitly), public safety and historic preservation are all discussed and included as objectives for the future of the neighborhood. A link to this plan is provided in the resources section.

■ *Capital Improvement Programs/Plans (CIP)*

Capital improvement plans guide the near future of the community by laying out which major public investments will be made, and prioritizing them according to public safety and funding availability. For example, the CIP may include land acquisition, infrastructure construction, trail construction and many other such improvements. Kelly and Becker consider CIPs, "probably the most important long-range decisions made by most local governments." (Kelly and Becker, 2000)

The authors also discuss the role of the individual citizen. The citizen's role is minimized if discussions about the CIP are centered on project details rather than the prioritization and rationale behind undertaking the projects. By working with elected officials and staff to participate in the CIP discussion, citizens can bring issues of healthy food access and physical activity into focus as projects are prioritized and funding decisions are made

■ *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans*

"Bike-Ped" plans focus on safety and infrastructure maintenance and transportation network development for pedestrians and bicyclists. Residents who have pedestrian infrastructure in their neighborhoods are 47 percent more likely to be physically active (Sallis, et al 2009). Typically, key routes are identified through collaboration with the public (via open houses and/or surveys), planners, engineers and local bicycle advocates. Bike-Ped plans are clearly tied to Complete Streets initiatives and should be referenced by engineers during design of street projects within the community's jurisdiction for efficient implementation. If a Bike-Ped plan does not exist for your community, consider how adopting such a plan may benefit your community in terms of enhancing opportunities for active living.

■ *Corridor Plans*

Corridor plans address specific areas of high significance in communities that feature a variety of land uses. A corridor plan could take the form of a streetscape revitalization project on a downtown Main Street, or the commercial area along what was formerly a four-lane divided highway bypass that has gradually become the community's center of retail activity. Corridor plans have a strong focus on transportation, presenting an opportunity to incorporate active living best practices into their designs such as wayfinding, complete streets, walkability and trails. The timing of the EVPS: CHC workshop may not coincide with a corridor-planning effort; however, it is important that participants continue to take an active role in their community by participating as much as possible in any planning effort on corridor planning so community health can be considered during the planning process.

Summary

There are many opportunities to influence how your community uses its public spaces to enhance access to healthy eating options and active living opportunities. The comprehensive plan is one way to incorporate long-term goals for the built environment. Shorter-term goals may be better achieved through other means or adjustments to a range of policies or ordinances that implement the plan. Passage of an ordinance or resolution with a distinct objective such as Complete Streets is a method for addressing the shorter-term goals and strategies your group may have generated through the Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces workshop process. Such opportunities to impact your community should not be missed!

Below you will find additional resource to support your efforts.

Resources

The Design for Health Comprehensive Plan Review Checklists

Published in 2007, this can be used to evaluate your community's comprehensive plan and identify opportunities to use it to improve healthy eating and active living within your community. It guides review of elements such as Urbanization and Redevelopment, Open Space and Parks, Water Resources, Transportation and Land Use. <http://designforhealth.net/resources/legacy/checklists/>

DeVens Massachusetts Enterprise Commission Resolution

Although this is not an Indiana community, the form and content of the document could serve as a template for an Indiana county or municipal redevelopment commission wishing to make a commitment to best practices for enhancing health through the built environment. <http://www.devensec.com/news/Healthy-Communities-Proclamation-signed-11-7-13.pdf>

Statewide Complete Streets Campaign

This resource contains information about Indiana communities that have adopted Complete Streets ordinances and resolutions. <http://healthbydesignonline.org/IndianaCompleteStreetsCampaign.html>

Indiana Department of Transportation Complete Streets Policy
This document details the state's policy for Complete Streets. Many Indiana communities have transportation corridors that are administered and maintained by INDOT. Therefore, understanding this policy and opportunities to communicate community needs is important. http://www.in.gov/indot/files/AM_CompleteStreetsGuideline.pdf

Historic Centennial Neighborhood Plan

A sub-area plan embodying a host of best practices related to active living and access to health foods. <http://www.lafayette.in.gov/DocumentCenter/View/871>

City of Lafayette Ordinance 2014-08: An Ordinance Establishing a 3-foot Safe Passing Distance Between Motor Vehicles and Bicycles

This ordinance could be easily adopted by a community seeking to enhance awareness of cyclists and to enhance their safety. The ordinance is available at: http://bikewalkgreaterlafayette.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Lafayette-Ordinances-2014-08_3-Foot-Safe-Passing.pdf

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Systems Applications

Community Coalitions

*Blake Connolly, Carol Smathers, Jennifer Lobb,
and Donna Vandergraff, authors*

A coalition is a group of individuals representing diverse organizations who agree to work together to achieve common goals. Involving the community through a coalition can be an effective catalyst for planning, developing, and enhancing community public spaces for improved health and wellness.

Tapping into both health and economic partners in a coalition can ensure the success of public-space endeavors. Coalitions have the benefit of bringing both professional

and grassroots groups together in a way that often achieves better results than one group could alone. They maximize the influence of individuals and organizations, create new collective resources to reduce duplication of efforts and infuse many variations of partner resources into community initiatives and outcomes.

The factsheets below will provide an overview of coalitions, tips for forming and maintaining an effective coalition, and tips for using a coalition as an agent for change in the community. This series was compiled by The Ohio Center for Action on Coalition Development and Ohio State University Extension.



Factsheets

1. Building Coalitions: Introduction
2. Policy, System and Environmental Change
3. Establishing a New Coalition
4. Coalition Structure
5. Coalition Leadership
6. Community Coaching to Enhance Coalition
Capacity and Effectiveness
7. Community Assessment
8. Coalition Goal Setting
9. Effective Coalition Meetings
10. Communication in Coalitions
11. Decision Making
12. Increasing Coalition Effectiveness
Through Community Mobilization
13. Financial Resources for Coalitions
14. Evaluating Coalition Progress and Impacts
15. Common Difficulties Faced by Coalitions



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



Building Coalitions: Introduction

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-1

Community Development

Date: 10/15/2014

Carol Smathers, Field Specialist, Youth Nutrition and Wellness, Family and Consumer Sciences, Ohio State University Extension

Jennifer Lobb, Graduate Research Associate, Ohio State University Extension

This is the first in a series of fact sheets on coalitions that was initially compiled by The Ohio Center for Action on Coalition Development. This series will provide the reader with an overview of coalitions, tips for forming and maintaining an effective coalition, and tips for using a coalition as an agent for change in the community.

What is a Coalition?

A coalition is a formal alliance of individuals or organizations that come together to work for a common goal. It is one type of collaboration. Collaborations are defined as mutually beneficial and well-defined relationships that exist for the purpose of achieving a common goal. Other types of collaborations include the following:

- **Committees:** Formal groups that hold delegated power to perform specific functions for larger collective groups or organizations.
- **Networks:** Informal, nonhierarchical groups of individuals or organizations with flexible roles and low-key leadership.
- **Partnerships:** Associations of individuals or organizations who share resources, profits and losses to carry out joint business.

Collaboration is more formal, more durable and more involved than networking, cooperating or coordinating (Butterfoss, 2007). It can be an effective and rewarding way to reach members of the community. There are advantages and disadvantages to collaboration; both should be considered before forming a coalition. The advantages of collaboration may be immediate or long-term, direct or indirect. Some partners may benefit from their involvement in the collaboration more than others. The assumption behind any collaborative effort, however, is that the collaboration

will achieve goals in a more efficient, effective and sustainable way than any one individual or organization could accomplish on its own.

Potential advantages of collaboration include the following:

- More effective and efficient delivery of programs
- Elimination of duplication and reduced competition
- Improved communication and trust building
- Improved public image and increased credibility
- Improved needs assessment
- Consistency of information
- More opportunities for professional development
- Increased availability of resources
- Improved outreach to stakeholders
- Increased support from stakeholders and others in the community

Potential risks faced by collaborators include the following:

- Turf protection and mistrust
- Slow decision making
- Conflicting interests
- A drain on resources
- Implementation challenges
- Communication challenges
- Loss of autonomy and reduced independence
- Changes within member organizations (budget cuts, changes in administration, etc.) that may affect member commitment

These risks can be minimized through careful planning during a coalition's formation process. Because coalition building involves a long-term investment of time and resources, however, a coalition should not be established if a simpler, less complicated structure is capable of managing the task at hand (Butterfoss and Francisco, 2004).

Elements of a Successful Coalition

- Common goals
- A clear mission or vision

- Good communication
- Equal opportunities for participation
- Group ownership and delegation of group activities
- Efficient, effective meetings
- Shared or situational leadership
- Sharing of resources and information
- Ongoing evaluation of coalition activities

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Policy, System and Environmental Change

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-2

Community Development

Date: 10/15/2014

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Policy, system and environmental (PSE) change is a way of thinking about how to improve health by modifying the policies, systems and environments in a given community. PSE change seeks to make healthy choices more practical, easy and accessible to all members of a community. It may involve creating laws, changing organizational policies or shaping landscapes. A coalition needs to understand how to generate PSE change in order to efficiently and effectively improve the health of its community in a sustainable way. The social-ecological model and the health impact pyramid are two helpful frameworks that can be used to think about PSE change.

The Social-Ecological Model

The social-ecological model is a framework that can be used to identify various factors in one's environment that influence behavior. This model posits that behavior is influenced by factors at the following levels:

- Individual: knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and personality traits
- Interpersonal: friends, family and peers that provide social identity and support
- Organizational: rules, regulations, policies and structures
- Community: social networks, norms and standards
- Public Policy: local, state and federal policies and laws

The social-ecological model asserts that behavioral influences interact across these different levels. Effective community change occurs when the most relevant influences at each level are identified and influences at multiple levels are

addressed.

The Health Impact Pyramid

The health impact pyramid is a five-tier pyramid that describes the relative impacts of different types of public health interventions. The five tiers are as follows:

1. Interventions designed to address socioeconomic determinants of health
2. Interventions that change the context of health-related decisions (such as policies that encourage public transit or building designs that encourage stair use)
3. One-time or infrequent protective interventions with long-term benefits (such as immunizations)
4. Clinical interventions
5. Counseling and education

The base of the health impact pyramid is the broadest, indicating that interventions at the lower levels have a greater potential impact than those at the top of the pyramid. Interventions focusing on the lower levels of the pyramid tend to be most efficient and effective because they reach broader segments of society and require less individual effort (Frieden, 2010). The interventions in the bottom two tiers can be used to reach communities while the top three tiers require individual contact. Although evidence-based clinical interventions can improve health, interventions in the top tiers are limited by individual barriers, such as lack of access to care. Top-tier interventions are also costly, using more resources to reach fewer people. Frieden recommends that interventions be implemented at each tier of the pyramid to achieve maximum, sustainable improvements in community health.

Both the social-ecological model and the health impact pyramid are helpful frameworks that coalitions can use to think about the various factors that affect the health of their communities. When factors are identified, coalition members can brainstorm PSE changes to address the most relevant influences. The process of identifying community health influences and working toward PSE change can benefit a coalition beyond improving the health of their community. This process may result in improved collaboration; improved coordination, growth and development of programs; and leveraging of resources to have a greater impact in the community. Most importantly, this process is more likely to result in sustainable community change than would individual efforts, reinforcing the need for collaborative work. PSE can keep coalition members engaged in the work of the group and pave the way for further collaboration.

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Establishing a New Coalition

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-3

Community Development

Date: 11/18/2014

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Who Should Initiate a Coalition?

The people who lead, participate in and eventually implement the activities of the coalition will affect the growth and development of the group. Individuals who initiate a coalition must be committed to the success of the group and must be able to cope with competing external pressures. The initiating organization must also demonstrate their commitment to the collaborative effort.

Who Should Belong to the Coalition?

A coalition is composed of individuals or groups who share a common concern and goal. Questions to consider when seeking individuals or groups to invite to join the coalition include the following:

- Who can help the situation? Who might hurt the situation?
- Who has experience in dealing with the issue?
- Who is affected by the issue?
- Who might stand to gain by supporting the issue?

Potential individual and groups to consider include the following:

- Civic groups
- Nonprofit organizations
- Allies from the private sector

» They are often interested in helping to improve the health of their

communities and may have resources to share.

- Policy makers
 - » They can provide valuable advice, assistance with evaluation and endorsement of plans or policies.
- Key decision makers in the community
 - » They can help to increase the credibility of the coalition. Bringing key decision makers on board during the formation of the coalition gets them interested in the issue and helps to keep the coalition alive through constant visibility with community leadership and the press.
- Individuals who possess less common skills such as evaluation and advocacy
- Individuals and groups who can provide technical support and assistance to the coalition on topics such as leadership development, meeting facilitation, action planning and community assessment

How to Recruit Members

Member recruitment requires good communication skills. Potential members will want to know how they will benefit from the collaboration. It is helpful to develop a strategy for selling potential members on the idea of organizing a coalition around a specific issue.

Potential topics to address when recruiting members for a new coalition include the following:

- How the activities of the coalition will relate to the interests and activities of the potential member's organization.
- How the issue to be pursued by the coalition will be best served through collaboration as opposed to existing organizational efforts.
- How, in specific terms, the potential member's organization will benefit from the coalition's efforts.
- How the potential member can contribute to major decisions that must be made about the coalition and its goals.
- The resources that will be needed from potential members in order for the coalition to function adequately.
- The shared resources that will be available to coalition members.

It is important to note that coalition membership can sometimes be affected by community demographics and economic conditions (Kegler et al., 2010). Potential

barriers to coalition membership include the following:

- Long working hours or multiple jobs
- Competing family responsibilities, especially for families with young children
- Discomfort with joining a coalition due to lack of familiarity with business processes
- Lack of reliable transportation; or, in rural areas, lack of time to travel long distances for meetings

It is also important to note that having a full range of representation from community sectors is not always possible in rural areas due to the limited existence of different agencies (Kegler et al., 2010).

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Coalition Structure

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-4

Community Development

Date: 10/15/2014

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Every coalition has a unique structure that is determined by the goals and resources of the group. Some coalition structures are more formal than others. One coalition may have paid staff, for example, while another is dependent upon volunteer leaders. A coalition's structure does not need to be complex, but taking the time to develop a structure is important because clearly defined roles, rules and procedures are positively associated with member engagement and community capacity (Garland, 2004).

A coalition's structure may include an official name, vision and mission statements, action plans, role descriptions, bylaws, committee or workgroup guidelines, agendas, meeting notes, and other written records. Many aspects of structure will be discussed in this fact sheet and in future fact sheets. Additional tools for the development of coalition structure can be found at coalitionswork.com/resources/tools.

Coalition Identity

Coalition structure begins with an identity. Developing coalition identity in the form of a brand is an easy way to engage members early in the coalition formation process (Butterfoss, 2007). A brand is a name, logo and/or design that is used to identify a group and differentiate it from its competitors. A good brand is simple, easily recognizable, easily understandable and easily reproducible in one- or two-color print (Butterfoss, 2007). In addition to engaging members, development of a brand can enhance the image and visibility of a coalition, reinforcing its identity and mission in the community.

Rules and Procedures

Rules and procedures can be beneficial to any coalition, regardless of the size or purpose of the group. Written rules can help to ensure fairness and consistency, promote productivity, reduce conflict and keep a coalition focused on its scope and purpose (Butterfoss, 2007).

If a coalition chooses to formalize its structure through incorporation, rules known as bylaws must be written and filed with the state. Bylaws serve as legal documents that guide the operation of the coalition. Rules and bylaws may outline the following:

- The purpose of the coalition
- Requirements for coalition membership
- Officer titles and responsibilities
- How and when meetings should be conducted

Nonprofit Status and Incorporation

Incorporation, the act of registering as a legal entity, is a prerequisite to obtaining nonprofit status. There are advantages and disadvantages to incorporation, and both must be carefully considered before beginning the process.

Advantages of Incorporation

- Tax-exempt status
- Increased opportunities to apply for grants
- Reduced liability
 - Incorporation protects coalition members from being held personally liable in the event of a lawsuit.
- Increased credibility and visibility

Disadvantages of Incorporation

- Ongoing time, effort and cost required to obtain and maintain tax-exempt status
- Need to adhere to formal operating rules and procedures
- Need to formally disband if group ceases to operate
- Potential need to consult an attorney for specific legal advice

Additionally, incorporation may affect the coalition itself in the following ways:

- Incorporation can reduce member participation, as they may feel that it is the organization's responsibility to complete activities rather than their own. This is not necessarily the case, however, as a coalition that is incorporated can still ensure clear roles and responsibilities for members (Raynor, 2011).
- Incorporation may make it more difficult for a coalition to make the case that it speaks for a broad group of organizations, given that an incorporated coalition exists as a separate entity (Raynor, 2011). An incorporated coalition must take extra care and effort to demonstrate that it is committed to a common goal.
- Incorporation may create a higher potential for competition between the coalition and member organizations. See the 15th fact sheet in this series titled *Common Difficulties Faced by Coalitions* for more information on this type of conflict.

In their early stages, coalitions often use the nonprofit status of one of their lead organizations. This type of arrangement may be possible for the life of a coalition, or it may lead to competition and conflict (Butterfoss, 2007). It is ultimately up to each coalition to decide whether incorporation is worthwhile.

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Coalition Leadership

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-5

Community Development

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The people who lead, participate in and implement the activities of the coalition affect the growth and development of the group. Coalitions with strong leadership are better able to create policy, systems and environmental change in their communities (Roussos and Fawcett, 2000). This type of leadership requires a variety of skills, many of which are listed in this fact sheet. A coalition may benefit from a leadership team made up of people with different experiences and skills, given the diverse nature of skills required for success.

Common Leadership Roles

- Coalition Coordinator or Facilitator: conducts meetings, plans and implements activities, provides general oversight to the coalition
- Committee Chairs: conduct workgroup meetings, serve as liaisons between committee and coalition
- Secretary: notifies coalition members of upcoming meetings, takes meeting minutes
- Treasurer: prepares budget, manages resources, maintains financial records

Shared leadership is recommended for coalitions, as it exposes the coalition to new ideas, reduces dependency on a single person, helps prevent burnout and provides more members with leadership opportunities. A coalition should foster an environment where future leaders can develop, and it may want to consider creating terms of office to encourage diverse leadership.

Leadership Skills

Different skills may be more or less important at different stages of coalition development. During the formation process, for example, facilitation and listening skills are often useful for the recruitment and engagement of diverse members. In a more mature coalition, negotiation and advocacy skills may be needed to bring about more complex environmental change (Roussos and Fawcett, 2000).

Members of the leadership team should possess good communication, negotiation and networking skills. They should also be able to do the following:

- Set priorities
- Delegate tasks to coalition members
- Encourage shared leadership
- Encourage information sharing
- Understand how their community operates
- Frame the mission and vision of the coalition to stakeholders in order to engage other leaders throughout different community sectors
- Practice cultural competence
 - Roussos and Fawcett define cultural competence as the respect for, engagement with and mutual influence among people of different ethnic, racial and economic backgrounds.

The Role of the Facilitator

The facilitator brings diverse ideas together and rallies members around a common concern or goal. There are specific skills and qualities that can help a facilitator effectively manage a coalition. Some of these skills (problem solving, conflict management and decision making) are covered in later fact sheets in this series. Other skills may come with experience. An effective facilitator should strive to do the following:

- Do more listening than talking
- Discern when to facilitate and when to participate
- Steer the group away from competitiveness
- Provide positive feedback and reinforcement of good work
- Engage all members in the work of the group
- Keep all meetings focused on the goals of the coalition
- Establish brainstorming sessions where members can freely share ideas
- Involve all members in coalition meetings, including the quiet ones
- Develop an awareness of what is not being said and how to have it stated

- Tie together various questions and concerns raised in group discussion
- Lead thorough discussions of controversial issues that result in a group consensus
- Make sure that all members are aware of decisions that are made by the group
- Create an environment of trust where members can share their ideas comfortably and confidently
- Structure opportunities for members to participate in coalition activities, such as conducting a community assessment or recruiting new members
 - These opportunities provide members with a chance to acquire and develop new skills, which keep them engaged in the work of the coalition (Kegler and Swan, 2012).

Qualities of an Effective Facilitator

- Honesty
- Transparency
- Positivity
- Belief in the coalition
- Flexibility in coordinating meetings and activities
- Neutrality
- Attention to/support for member concerns

Although these qualities are especially helpful when possessed by the facilitator, other coalition members and leaders may possess qualities that could be beneficial to the group. It is important to recognize and utilize these leadership skills, as equal voice and participatory leadership are encouraged within coalitions to move the group forward and to help reduce conflict. Additional proactive strategies to manage and reduce conflict are covered in the 15th fact sheet in this series titled *Common Difficulties Faced by Coalitions*.

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Community Coaching to Enhance Coalition Capacity and Effectiveness

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-6

Community Development

Date: 10/15/2014

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Community coaching is a change strategy that can help a coalition increase community capacity, overcome challenges to community development and increase the effectiveness of its collective efforts. Community coaches encourage coalition members to reflect on group functions and activities in light of group goals, priorities and the community change that the group desires to see. Community coaching will look different for each coalition, as every coalition has unique goals, objectives and priorities.

Community coaching is different from facilitation and the provision of technical assistance. Community coaches do not guide coalitions to predetermined outcomes, initiate specific changes or advocate for specific actions. Rather, community coaches ask questions that help coalition members reflect on assumptions, think critically about the functioning of the community and encourage the design of interventions intended to create positive changes specific to the community.

Community coaches are typically more focused on coalition processes such as group dynamics, structure and efficiency instead of the actual content of the coalition's work. Community coaches may focus on coalition and community readiness, visibility in the community, and member roles and relationships with the community. A coach who is involved with an obesity prevention coalition, for example, works with the coalition to implement effective strategies in the community but need not be an expert in nutrition. He/she is not responsible for setting the goals or agenda of the coalition. Instead, a coach encourages a coalition to stay focused on its mission and vision, which helps the group remain strategic about initiating,

implementing and sustaining community change.

Community coaches may help a coalition do the following:

- Focus conversation during meetings
- Explore possibilities for group action
- Identify potential partners in the community
- Establish goals and objectives
- Remind the group of its vision
- Develop action plans
- Recognize and celebrate success

A community coach can also help a coalition transition from a needs-based approach, to community change, to an asset or strengths-based approach by doing the following:

- Guiding coalition members through an assessment of strengths and weaknesses
- Encouraging members to consider how they might use their assets to enhance group effectiveness
- Highlighting the assets of coalition members and encouraging them to use those assets to frame solutions to problems
- Encouraging the coalition to consider how it might mobilize the community to address community problems or improve community health
- Helping the coalition grow through problems, see issues and concerns from a broader perspective, and learn from other members and members of the community (Emery et al., 2011)

When to Use a Community Coach

Community coaches usually come to coalitions in one of three ways:

1. A lead organization requests the assistance of a coach in working toward a specific initiative.
2. Grant support for a specific program involves coaching.
3. The coalition determines there is a need for a coach and secures a coach for their efforts.

A coalition may decide to use a coach for any one of the following reasons:

- Loss of momentum
 - A coach can bring new ideas and energy to a coalition.
- Discouragement and negativity
 - A coach can help a coalition recover from setbacks and develop a positive outlook by reminding members of their assets and successes.
- Rapidly changing communities
 - A coach can help a coalition find resources and develop relationships that will increase its capacity.
- New leadership structures
 - A coach can help coalition members recognize the assets of both coalition and community leaders.
- Increased emphasis on impact
 - A coach can enhance a coalition's efforts to mobilize individuals around community change.
- Increased return on investment
 - A coach can help a coalition recognize and make the most of its assets to generate community change.

Community coaches may attend coalition meetings, participate in subcommittee meetings, or regularly communicate with coalition leaders via email or phone. Coaches may also provide coalitions with monthly or quarterly updates in which they share reflections and thoughts related to the work or progress of the group.

Characteristics of an Effective Community Coach

To be effective, a community coach needs to build a relationship marked by trust and rapport with the coalition with which he/she is working. Community coaches recognize that every voice has value and that every community has assets to shape a better future. They also recognize that community change requires the participation and engagement of all coalition members (Emery et al., 2011). Specific skills that a coach should possess to best engage with a coalition include the following:

- Active listening
- Cultural competence
- Conflict resolution

- Networking
- Goal setting
- Problem solving

Additionally, helpful qualities of a community coach include the following:

- Empathy
- Trustworthiness
- Responsiveness to change
- Team-oriented thoughts and behavior
- Willingness to engage in joint learning

Techniques Commonly Used in Coaching

Community coaches generally do more listening than talking. They are not afraid to use silence, providing coalition members with time to think about the best course of action to take in any given situation. Coaches often respond to questions with thoughtful questions that cause a coalition to reflect on problems, clarify ideal outcomes, consider potential solutions and identify preferred actions.

The Six Rs of Community Coaching (Emery et al., 2011) provide various questions that a coach may explore with members of a coalition. The six topic areas with sample questions are listed below.

1. Coaching for *readiness*: Is the coalition ready for community change?
2. Coaching for *relationships*: To what extent are coalition members connected with one another and to others in the community?
3. Coaching for *reflection*: What is the coalition doing that is working well/not so well? Why are these efforts working/not working?
4. Coaching for *results*: What has the coalition achieved? What can it achieve?
5. Coaching for *reach*: How will the coalition leave a lasting impact in the community?
6. Coaching for *resilience*: Is the coalition making plans for sustainability? Is it is prepared to bounce back from resistance or disappointment?

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Community Assessment

Building Coalitions Series

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Community Development

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Community assessment is the process of identifying the strengths, assets, needs and challenges of a specified community. Assets refer to the skills, talents and abilities of individuals as well as the resources that local institutions contribute to the community. Local institutions may include political, religious, educational, recreational and youth organizations; community, civic and service groups; local businesses; nonprofit organizations and volunteer groups.

A community assessment involves (1) an evaluation of the current situation in a community, (2) a judgment of what the preferred or desired situation in that community would be, and (3) a comparison of the actual and desired situation for the purpose of prioritizing concerns. A community assessment is usually performed early in the development of a coalition to better understand the community and decide how the coalition might best address its concerns (Butterfoss, 2007).

Community assessment is sometimes referred to as *needs assessment*, but there is an important distinction between the two. In a needs assessment, the focus is limited to discrepancies between what is and what should be in a given community. This type of assessment forces a community to focus on its deficiencies and ignore what it is doing well (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993). In contrast, a community assessment seeks to empower community members by allowing them to take ownership in affecting the health of their community instead of providing them with a prescription of what their community needs.

Key Principles of Community Assessment

- Residents are the best experts on the community in which they live.

- All residents have skills, abilities and talents that they can contribute to the community.
- A strong community is built upon the talents and resources of its members.

The Purpose of a Community Assessment

A community assessment can be useful in mobilizing a community to action as it identifies and matches the skills of community members with the resources of organizations. A community assessment can also be used to do the following:

- Create a coalition action plan
- Establish objectives for a program or intervention
- Select the strategies to use in a program or intervention
- Establish a baseline for evaluating progress in the community
- Identify new ideas, strategies, partners and resources that can be used in working toward a common goal

Conducting a Community Assessment

The process of conducting a community assessment can be divided into three phases: pre-assessment, assessment and post-assessment. Questions to consider during the pre-assessment phase include the following:

- What is going to be assessed?
- What is already known?
- What data will need to be collected?
- How and by whom will data be collected?
- How and by whom will data be analyzed?

A community assessment begins with the community. During the pre-assessment phase, the coalition can also identify community partners, ask them to self-assess their resources and ask them to identify the health issues that they believe are most important to address (Butterfoss, 2007).

Once these questions have been answered, the coalition can proceed through the following steps to conduct their assessment. Technical assistance with the following steps is often available from local Extension offices, local health departments and other local non-profit organizations.

1. Determine the purpose and scope of the assessment.
 - a. Decide whether the assessment will focus on a specific population within the

community versus the community at large.

- b. Decide which health topics to prioritize, limiting the scope of the assessment to what can reasonably be accomplished.

2. Define the goals and objectives of the assessment.

3. Select data collection methods to use.

- a. Find out whether the desired information exists or if a new data collection effort is needed.
- b. Common methods for new data collection include surveys, interviews, focus groups and observation.

4. Select or design the necessary instruments and procedures for data collection.

- a. Look for valid and reliable instruments that have been tested in similar communities with similar populations. It is much easier and less costly to adapt an existing instrument than to create one from scratch.

5. Pilot test the instruments and procedures.

6. Prepare a timeline and budget.

7. Collect the data.

8. Analyze the data.

9. Prepare and disseminate a report of the findings.

10. Evaluate the assessment's merit and worth.

- a. Consider what worked well, what problems were encountered and what could have been done better.

Tips for Effectively Reporting a Community Assessment

- Prepare multiple reports using a variety of media.
- Include an executive summary.
- Keep a logical sequence in mind, using language that is easily understandable.
- Highlight the information that community members perceive as most important.
- Explain why the needs assessment was completed, what is now known that was not known before and how the new information will help address

discrepancies in the community.

- Acknowledge limitations and alternative explanations for the findings.
- Keep the information relevant, practical, credible and understandable.

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Coalition Goal Setting

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-8

Community Development

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Strategic planning is the systematic process of identifying issues to focus on and activities to implement with the assets, challenges and opportunities of the coalition in mind. Strategic planning involves the development of a vision and mission, formation of goals, and establishment of objectives to accomplish the goals.

A **vision statement** provides a brief description of where the coalition would like to be in the future while a **mission statement** describes the general focus or purpose of the coalition. The vision and mission provide direction to a coalition.

Goals describe the specific actions that a coalition will take to work toward its vision and mission, and **objectives** are specific steps that will be taken to accomplish the goals.

A well-written strategic plan that is clearly communicated to coalition members is a defining characteristic of an effective coalition (Butterfoss, 2007). Providing members with the opportunity to participate in goal development can improve engagement and commitment. Additionally, having a clearly defined vision and mission can reduce conflict within a coalition, as it minimizes confusion and competing interests regarding the purpose of the group.

Establishing Coalition Goals and Objectives

The first step in goal setting is making use of the community assessment to develop a list of coalition priorities. Once priorities are identified, coalition members can share the problems or needs that are being addressed by their individual agencies and organizations. The coalition can then discuss potential group goals that either address additional problems or enhance present work on existing problems. During

the goal-setting process it is important that all coalition members do the following:

- Allow each group member to share his/her interests and abilities
- Draw on each other's strengths
- Be honest, up front and willing to modify ideas for the goals of the coalition
- Recognize that hidden agendas can jeopardize the work of the coalition

SMART criteria can be used in the development of goals and objectives (Butterfoss, 2007). Using SMART criteria, goals and objectives should be as follows:

- **Specific:** What will be achieved? In what quantity? By whom?
- **Measurable:** Can information on the objective's outcome be collected and detected?
- **Achievable:** Is the coalition capable of achieving the goal?
- **Relevant:** Does the objective fit with the coalition's mission and vision?
- **Time Sensitive:** Is there a timeline by which the objective will be achieved?

Logic model development can also help a coalition identify and clarify objectives. Logic models illustrate how the activities that a coalition plans to do are associated with the outcomes that it hopes to achieve. A logic model contains three basic components: inputs, outputs and outcomes.

- **Inputs** are the resources (staff, money, educational materials, etc.) that are necessary to carry out a coalition's activities.
- **Outputs** are the activities that a coalition carries out to meet its objectives. These may include services provided, events conducted and products delivered as a result of a coalition's work. The number of people reached by any given activity is considered an output.
- **Outcomes** are the desired changes that occur as a result of a coalition's activities. Outcomes can be subdivided into immediate, mediating and ultimate outcomes.
 - *Immediate outcomes* include changes in awareness, knowledge attitudes and skills (McKenzie et al., 2013).
 - *Mediating outcomes* include changes in behavior or in the environment.
 - *Ultimate outcomes* include changes in individual health status, quality of life or in the health of the community. Ultimate outcomes should be written to reflect a coalition's mission and vision.

The best way to write a logic model is to consider what the group ultimately wants to accomplish and then work backwards, thinking about the smaller changes, activities and resources that will lead to the realization of that goal. Logic model templates are provided for reference at

uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodelworksheets.html. When a logic model is developed in one of these ways, it can help a coalition do the following:

- Clearly communicate a purpose
- Write goals and objectives
- Recognize the resources required to achieve goals
- Obtain additional funding
- Evaluate progress

Evaluation of coalition efforts will be discussed in more detail in the 14th fact sheet in this series titled *Evaluating Coalition Processes and Impacts*; however, it is important to note that evaluation cannot take place unless goals and objectives are established. Goal setting and evaluation go hand in hand. Evaluation holds a coalition accountable to its efforts and goals, and evaluation findings can be shared with stakeholders and community members to gain support for future efforts and goals (Roussos and Fawcett, 2000).

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Effective Coalition Meetings

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-9

Community Development

Date: 10/15/2014

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Effective meetings begin with a purpose and an agenda. The coalition facilitator is responsible for communicating the purpose to members and conducting the meeting according to plan. At the start of a meeting, the facilitator should go through the proposed agenda, briefly explain each item and its time limit, and ask for any questions.

The Meeting Agenda

A meeting agenda should include the following:

- The date, time and place of the meeting
- A statement of the main purpose of the meeting (whether it is a regular meeting or a special meeting)
- Agenda items
 - Include who is responsible for presenting each item.
 - Include time allotted for each item.
- The date and time of the next meeting
- Any special upcoming meetings or events

The coalition facilitator should send the agenda to members prior to the meeting and ask whether anyone has items that they would like to add. The facilitator can ask that members who wish to add items to the agenda notify him/her at least two days prior to the meeting. The facilitator can also ask members to respond to the agenda notification, indicating whether they plan to attend the meeting.

Conducting Meetings

Coalition facilitators face a variety of challenges when it comes to leading effective meetings. Below is a list of potential difficulties identified by Butterfoss, along with tips for how to deal with them.

1. **Starting and ending on time:** The facilitator should be mindful of time, making every effort to stick to the agenda so that the coalition can start and end meetings on time. He/she should be realistic about the number of items included in the agenda and the time that is allocated to each item. It may be helpful to keep a written record of unfinished discussion items and discussion items that are off the agenda so that the coalition can stay on task and revisit those items later.
2. **Difficulty making decisions:** Leading the group through a decision-making process that consistently results in group consensus is a skill that is developed over time. Clear communication of goals and priorities can help speed up the decision-making process. The use of prioritizing tools, such as rating, can also help the group make difficult decisions.
3. **Questioning decisions that have already been made:** Involving all members in group discussions, including the quiet ones, can help to ensure that everyone has a say in decisions. It can also help ensure that all members understand what the group has decided and why.
4. **Preferring to deal with small issues:** The facilitator should allot time for topics based on their significance. Placing the most critical or time-consuming items at the top of the agenda will help encourage members to arrive on time and give key items their full attention.
5. **Key persons not attending:** When key members fail to attend meetings, the facilitator should try to find out why they are not attending. If members do not feel like meetings are worth attending, this sentiment can be improved by ensuring that real work is done at each meeting. If meetings are held primarily for announcements and information sharing, it may be more effective to send out email updates. If members are not attending because they are unable to make meetings, ask coalition members to list their preferred meeting times and experiment to find the best time for each group.
6. **Follow-through on tasks is lacking:** Action items should be assigned to members at each meeting, and meetings should be adjourned with a summary of action items and assignments, including deadlines. The facilitator or appropriate committee chair should follow up with each member prior to the next meeting to stimulate action and check on progress.

Meeting Notes

It is not always possible for every member to attend every meeting. Meeting notes help keep members informed about the work of the coalition, regardless of whether they are in attendance at each meeting. Meeting notes typically contain the following:

- The date, time and place of the meeting
- A list of members and officers present
- The reports of officers, chairs and committee representatives
- Votes that are taken during a meeting
- Elections and nominations
- Important announcements

Conference Calls and Video Meetings

Conference calls and video meetings are increasingly utilized by coalitions as alternatives to face-to-face meetings. These meeting formats can save time and money, especially when coalition members live in rural communities and/or have to travel a significant distance to attend in-person meetings.

Conference calls and video meetings are like face-to-face meetings in that they follow meeting agendas and are led by meeting facilitators. The biggest difference in these meeting formats is the equipment that they require. To conduct a conference call or video meeting, the meeting facilitator will need to use a hosting service. A hosting service, found online, will provide the facilitator with a phone number and/or web address that members can use to join the meeting.

For conference calls, all members who wish to participate in the call need to have access to a telephone. It is best to use a phone with the speakerphone feature when participating in a conference call, as this is more comfortable than holding a phone up to one's ear for the duration of a lengthy meeting.

For video meetings, each member will need to have access to a computer with an Internet connection and a webcam. Members will also need to have speakers and a microphone on their computer unless conference calling will be used for the audio portion of the meeting.

Conference call and video meeting etiquette is similar to general meeting etiquette in many ways, although there are a few extra things that members should do to ensure that they are clearly heard and understood by other on the call.

Tips for a Successful Conference Call or Video Meeting

- Identify yourself before speaking.
- Enunciate clearly.
- Speak slightly slower than usual.
- Speak in a normal tone and at a normal volume.
- Wait for others to finish before speaking.
- Call in early so that the meeting can start on time.
- Stay on the line for the entire call, or let others know at the beginning that you will need to leave early.
- Be present. Pay attention and set aside other tasks during the meeting.
- Choose a quiet location with minimum background noise.
- Look into the monitor when speaking in a video meeting.
- Test all equipment before the start of the meeting.

Healthy Meeting Guidelines

Healthy meeting guidelines are often written by health-conscious organizations to create meeting environments that foster good health. Healthy meeting guidelines can help a coalition to lead by example, given that many coalitions are formed to improve the health of communities. Healthy meeting guidelines may include the following:

- Recommend healthful food items to serve at meetings and events.
- State that the coalition will not provide food at gatherings unless meetings are held during meal times.
- Suggest that stretch or activity breaks be incorporated into meetings that are over an hour in length.

Examples of healthy meeting guidelines and assistance in guideline writing may be available from local Extension offices, local health departments and other local nonprofit organizations. These organizations may also be able to provide technical assistance in setting up conference calls and video meetings, if needed.

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Communication in Coalitions

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-10

Community Development

Date: 10/15/2014

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Both coalition members and coalition leaders need to have good communication skills in order for the group to function effectively. Coalition members use communication to develop understanding and respect for one another, share information, challenge each other to think differently about problems and solutions, and find the best possible solutions to the issues around which the group has formed. Coalition leaders use communication to bring individuals together around a common goal or concern and effectively facilitate meetings. Effective communication can help coalition members to remain satisfied with the group, and increased satisfaction can lead to a greater sense of community and increased community capacity (Kegler and Swan, 2012).

Foundations for Effective Communication

Effective communication can help a coalition avoid many potential difficulties. Poor communication, on the other hand, can result in turf disputes, interpersonal conflict and decreased member engagement. The following communication tips can help a coalition avoid these potential difficulties:

- Clearly define coalition goals and objectives, and ensure that all members understand them. It is helpful to have each member share how their personal goals relate to the coalition goals so as to avoid future misunderstandings and disagreements. Additionally, members should understand what they are expected to contribute toward the achievement of coalition goals.
- Use between-meeting communication as warranted to avoid surprises and make meetings more productive. This is especially important for large

groups, as reaching a consensus may take more time than it would take a small group.

- Form subcommittees as needed to clarify and report on specific issues between meetings. Subcommittees may help a coalition by recommending a course of action or working out a compromise.
- Keep members informed about the policies and actions of the organization through newsletters and regular meetings. It is helpful to hold discussion meetings even when no decisions have to be made so that members remain engaged in the work of the coalition. Coalition meetings should involve real work or discussion for the coalition — as opposed to just announcements and updates — to retain member involvement.

Communication, Cohesiveness and Synergy

Effective communication within a coalition can contribute to group cohesiveness and synergy. Synergy is the degree to which a coalition combines the strengths, perspectives, knowledge and skills of its members to best achieve its goals. It exists in the presence of group trust and solid leadership, both of which are enhanced by effective communication (Jones and Barry, 2011).

The following communication tips for coalition members can help a group obtain a higher degree of synergy:

- Share ideas.
- Listen to others and respect their opinions.
- Allow all members to have an equal chance to be heard.
- Clarify what others have said.
- Share the responsibility of seeking information and opinions.
- Support fellow members through praise and agreement.

Communication and Community Capacity

Networking, the exchange of information for mutual benefit, is a form of communication that often occurs between coalition members and members of the community who are not involved in the coalition. Research has shown that networking can benefit a coalition via increased member engagement, commitment and satisfaction (Butterfoss, 2007). It can also lead to increased community capacity as coalition members find access to resources, tools, partners and opportunities that exist outside of the coalition. According to Valente et al., coalitions need to balance their efforts between creating a dense, cohesive group and making connections to outside resources to achieve maximum effectiveness.

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Decision Making

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-11

Community Development

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Coalitions commonly need to decide which issues to prioritize, what activities to implement, which strategies to utilize in reaching out to the community, and the best ways to make use of limited resources. Coalitions that make effective decisions usually use a decision-making process. A group decision-making process typically involves the following steps:

1. Define the problem. Divide large problems into subproblems as needed to allow for better understanding among group members.
2. Gather and share information on the problem.
3. Make a list possible solutions to the problem.
4. List the pros and cons of each potential solution.
5. Choose a solution to pursue.
6. Carry out strategies to solve the problem.
7. Evaluate the decision that was made.

Decision-Making Methods

The most common decision-making methods employed by coalitions are consensus and majority rule.

Consensus is the synthesis of ideas. A consensus is reached when all members mutually agree to a decision and feel like their views have been addressed. The consensus method of decision making takes longer than majority rule, but it contributes to group cohesion and can lead to higher levels of support for implementation of the decision (Butterfoss, 2007).

Majority rule is a process in which a group discusses a decision to be made and then takes a vote. While this method is quick and efficient, its major drawback is that the minority must go with the decision even if they are not supportive of it. This can create division and frustration, and members in the minority may not commit to the decision or wholeheartedly help to accomplish the task. Butterfoss suggests the following techniques to lessen frustration when utilizing majority rule:

- **Blind vote.** This technique is recommended when important or complex decisions need to be made. Blind vote may be as simple as a secret ballot that provides anonymity to the vote.
- **The 70/30 rule.** This rule requires at least 70 percent of the members to agree before a decision is made.
- **Levels of consensus.** This technique provides the facilitator with a way to gauge consensus, and it can be helpful when agreement does not seem imminent. In levels of consensus, the facilitator asks each group member to hold up one, two, three, four or five fingers reflecting his/her level of support for a specific decision. One finger indicates full support for the decision and five fingers indicate no support. The facilitator may then ask level four and level five individuals to share specific concerns.
 - The levels of consensus technique can be paired with the 70/30 rule, where at least 70 percent of the members must be supportive of the decision before it is finalized.

In extreme cases, situations may arise when a decision must be made without adequate time to allow for group discussion. If a coalition leader is charged with single-handedly making a decision, he/she should try to contact at least a few of the group members for their input and ideas. A decision that is made by a single person on behalf of the group may or may not reflect the collective opinion of the coalition. This method of decision making may occasionally be appropriate for minor decisions, but it should be avoided as much as possible. Members are more likely to commit to and support decisions when they are part of the decision-making process.

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Increasing Coalition Effectiveness Through Community Mobilization

Building Coalitions Series

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Community Development

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Community mobilization is the process of engaging various sectors of a community to address a health, social or environmental issue (CDC, 2011). It is a capacity-building process that enhances the ability of a community to work together toward a goal that the community has identified as important. Community mobilization brings together individuals and groups who might not typically be involved in community decision making, empowering them to take action to facilitate change in their own community.

Mobilization efforts that are community driven are central to the idea of community mobilization. Sustainable change takes place when communities are able to identify and solve their own problems through their own efforts (Florida Department of Health, 2012). When a coalition works to facilitate community mobilization, both the coalition and the community benefit. Community mobilization can result in increased collaborative efforts within the community, and this collaboration can lead to more effective and efficient delivery of programs. The community buy-in that results from this type of collaboration can lead to more powerful, longer-lasting community change.

Benefits of Community Mobilization

- Increased community support for an issue
- Increased community awareness of an issue and what is being done to address the issue
- Increased sharing of resources and information

- More effective and efficient delivery of programs
- Decreased competition and redundancy of efforts
- Increased community capacity
- Sustainable community change

Key Components of Community Mobilization

Community mobilization, like coalition formation, begins with the identification of individuals and groups who share a common concern or goal. The community assessment can be a useful tool in identifying groups and individuals to include in mobilization efforts. Interested parties may come from political, religious, educational, recreational and youth organizations; community, civic and service groups; local businesses; nonprofit organizations and volunteer groups. Each of these parties will have different resources, skills and capabilities to contribute to the cause. Some of these parties may already be engaged in efforts related to the common issue of concern. It is important for the community to recognize and support these efforts to maximize its effectiveness and minimize frustration.

Elements of Community Mobilization

- A common community vision
- Leadership to guide the process
- Concerned citizens who envision a change for the community
- Dedicated citizens who are willing to work until change is realized
- Plans, goals and objectives to achieve community change
- Recognition of and encouragement for all who contribute the cause
- Time, patience and perseverance

When members of the community come together around a common issue, there are endless opportunities for involvement. Community members can write grants, plan activities, promote the issue to others in the community, seek additional support and more. Effective community mobilization occurs when individual strengths and capabilities are recognized and matched with these opportunities.

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Financial Resources for Coalitions

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-13

Community Development

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The work of community change often requires significant human and financial resources. While it is possible for a coalition to do some activities with minimal funding, a coalition's ability to secure resources affects its capacity, sustainability and ability to produce change in the community. Identification of support for doing the work of community change should begin early and continue throughout the life of a coalition (Roussos and Fawcett, 2000).

Financial support is available from many sources, both public and private. Multiple sources of funding may be preferred to avoid total obligation or association with a single source. Additionally, multiple funding sources can stabilize a coalition and ensure its survival. The management of multiple funding sources often requires administrative work and the need to comply with a variety of regulations, however (Butterfoss, 2007). If possible, it may be helpful to appoint a fundraising chair or include a grant writer in the coalition to oversee the management of multiple funding sources.

Total Identification of Resources

Prior to seeking out funding, a coalition needs to identify its existing resources, including what is currently available and how much is expected in the future. Coalition resources may come from any of the following:

- Grants
- Donations
- In-kind (non-cash) contributions

- Membership dues
- A lead organization's budget (if an organization pays for staff or covers basic operating expenses)

Once resources have been identified, a coalition needs to estimate its projected expenses, which include the following:

- Coalition operating costs (staff, rent, utilities, insurance, Internet, etc.)
- Program supplies and other costs associated with coalition activities (photocopying, office equipment, paper products, educational materials, etc.)
- Other necessities such as mailing fees and mileage fees

In addition to listing these expenses, a coalition may want to make a wish list of things it would like to do or have if funds are available. If multiple members request certain items, the coalition may want to seek out funding so that it can pursue those requests.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a way for organizations to seek financial support through the marketing of their activities and services to the community. Fundraising can help a coalition do the following:

- Diversify its funding sources
- Transition from one source of funding to another
- Acquire resources to implement activities when funds are lacking or uncertain
- Acquire additional funds to cover initiatives that will help the community thrive

Fundraising requires pre-planning and organization; it is not something that can be done well in response to a crisis (Butterfoss, 2007). Successful fundraising is the result of building credibility and ongoing, two-way relationships with potential donors. These relationships can help a coalition maintain a constant funding level, which enables them to carry out programs rather than constantly search for program funds.

Tips for Successful Fundraising

- Create a list of potential donors. Keep track of when requests for funds are made and what each donor gives to the coalition.
- Explain the vision of the coalition and why funding is needed to accomplish its work.

- Explain how funders will benefit from making a donation. Find out what appeals to each donor (recognition, for example) and think about how to give it to him or her.

When fundraising, a coalition may sometimes be offered in-kind contributions in addition to or in place of monetary funds. When special events are planned, a coalition may even want to seek out certain in-kind contributions from select donors to minimize program costs. Food and paper products can be used at planned events, for example, and office supplies can help with everyday operating activities.

Grants and Contracts

Grants and contracts can be helpful when a coalition is unable to secure all the funds that it needs from within its own community. Grants come from federal, state and local agencies; foundations; private businesses; and corporations. Grants can provide the necessary resources to start a new project or expand an existing project, enabling a coalition to do work that it might never do otherwise (Butterfoss, 2007). It is important to note, however, that incorporation is often required of an organization that wishes to apply for grants. More information on incorporation is listed in the fourth fact sheet in this series titled *Coalition Structure*.

Prior to applying for grants, it is also important to keep in mind that there will always be more requests for funds than there are funds available. There are many challenges associated with grant seeking that a coalition should consider, as the time spent applying for grants, if not done carefully, may be better spent elsewhere. These challenges include the following:

- Eligibility requirements, including incorporation
- Rules and restrictions on how money can be used
- Ongoing reporting requirements
- Disrupted cash flow
 - Delays typically occur between invoice submission and the receipt of funds.
- Need to submit a grant proposal, which often includes the following:
 - A description of the coalition, including its background and qualifications
 - A description of the problem to be addressed
 - A description of the solution proposed, including specific program objectives
 - A description of the methods that will be used to meet the

objectives

- Documentation of the group's ability to carry out the objectives
- Financial needs associated with the request, including a budget and evidence that the effort will not rely solely on the funder's support.
- Documentation that a systematic evaluation will be carried out to demonstrate that funding has made a difference

It can be discouraging when a coalition submits a grant proposal that is not funded. In this situation, the coalition has a few options. They can submit a revised proposal, abandon the project, resume fundraising efforts or pursue other avenues that might solve the problem with fewer resources. When considering the latter option, it is important to keep in mind that people, goods and services can be valuable resources in addition to money.

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Evaluating Coalition Progress and Impacts

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-14

Community Development

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Evaluation and monitoring of coalition activities is essential for successful coordination of community programs and sustained coalition efforts. There are three general levels of coalition evaluation (Butterfoss and Francisco, 2004):

1. Evaluation of processes that sustain coalition infrastructure and function (process evaluation)
2. Evaluation of programs designed to achieve coalition goals (impact evaluation)
3. Evaluation of changes in the health status of the community (outcome evaluation)

The first level of evaluation typically considers what has been done by the coalition, how many people have been reached, and whether the coalition itself is functioning optimally and as intended (Butterfoss and Francisco, 2004). There are a variety of coalition assessment tools that can be used for this type of evaluation available at coalitionswork.com/resources/tools.

The most common methods for evaluating coalition processes are surveys, questionnaires and the review of coalition records and reports. Additionally, an event log can be an especially useful way to monitor a coalition's success. An event log is a running record of coalition activities, including the people who are involved and the number of people reached. Data from an event log may help a coalition acquire funding and community support, as well as make future plans and decisions (Chalmers et al., 2003).

Questions that may be asked in the first stage of evaluation include the following:

- How long has the coalition been together?
- How often does the coalition meet?
- What type of structure has been developed for the coalition? (officers, membership guidelines, etc.)
- What types of individuals and organizations are represented?
 - Are there certain groups that are not represented by the coalition?
 - Are these the right types of individuals to accomplish the work of the coalition?
- What has the group done in training coalition members and other professionals in the community?
- Is the coalition serving as an advocate for issues in the community?
- Do all members of the community have equal access to the coalition's efforts?
- Has duplication of services been reduced/eliminated?
- Have existing funds been used effectively? How?
- Has the group been able to access new funds because of working together? How?
- What is the coalition doing that is really working well?
- What are the major problems faced by the coalition?

The second level of evaluation asks whether specific program objectives were met by the coalition and whether the programs were carried out as intended. A coalition logic model (discussed in the eighth fact sheet in this series titled *Coalition Goal Setting*) can help a group discern whether they have achieved success in carrying out planned activities.

Questions to ask in the second stage of evaluation will be specific to the coalition logic model, but general questions to consider include the following:

- Did the coalition achieve its goals?
- Did the coalition use its resources in the most efficient way possible to achieve its goals?
- Is the community aware of the coalition's efforts? Are they supportive of its efforts?
- Did elected officials support legislation proposed by the coalition?

The most common methods used for this type of evaluation include surveys, interviews, focus groups and structured observation. Evaluators typically need to gather information from community members who were affected by the coalition's

activities to assess whether and to what extent the coalition achieved its objectives.

The third level of evaluation is a big-picture evaluation of what the coalition has accomplished. This evaluation takes time. Its ultimate purpose is to detect any changes to the health of a community that can be attributed at least in part to the coalition's efforts. Like the second level of evaluation, questions to ask in this stage of the evaluation will be specific to the coalition's mission.

Common methods used in the third stage of evaluation include surveys, interviews and document review. Evaluators can gather and aggregate information from community members to detect a change in health status. They can also obtain statistics from existing reports and compare data over time to look for changes in the health of the community.

There are many benefits to coalition evaluation. When the right questions are asked, the data collected from an evaluation can be used to do the following:

- Determine whether coalition objectives were met
- Improve program implementation
- Increase community awareness and support of the coalition
- Provide accountability to the community, to stakeholders and to funding agencies
- Inform policy decisions

In addition, evaluation can help a coalition identify quick wins and successes that help to increase member commitment and build coalition credibility when recognized.

Despite its many benefits, evaluation is often overlooked because coalition funds are more likely to be spent on intervention than on evaluation. To ensure adequate resources for evaluation, it is wise to build evaluation activities into the coalition's program planning process. Technical assistance with evaluation is often available from local Extension offices, local health departments and other local nonprofit organizations.

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Common Difficulties Faced by Coalitions

Building Coalitions Series

CDFS-15

Community Development

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Dealings between coalition members are usually harmonious, given that a coalition is an alliance of individuals brought together by a common interest or goal. Controversy and conflict do occasionally develop, however, especially when groups are large and diverse (Jones, 2005). When left unresolved, conflict can seriously damage a coalition's efforts to reach a common goal. Recognizing potential difficulties that a coalition may encounter and dealing with them before they escalate can protect the work of the group.

Coalition processes that help prevent unnecessary conflict include the following:

- Effective communication
- Shared understanding of member roles, purposes and meeting processes
- Flexibility and the ability to adapt goals, roles, etc., as needed
- Careful member recruitment
 - Individuals and groups who have only a partial or marginal relationship to the coalition mission may increase the risk for conflict.

Potential Benefits of Conflict

While the presence of these processes will help a coalition avoid unnecessary conflict, there are other sources of conflict that a coalition may encounter. Coalition members can expect tension to occasionally occur, so they need to be prepared with strategies to effectively manage conflict. When conflict is appropriately managed, it can actually benefit a coalition by doing the following:

- Identifying problems that would have otherwise remained hidden
- Improving understanding of the issues that led to the conflict
- Generating new ways of thinking about issues and processes
- Improving standards, regulations and policies
- Increasing member engagement
- Engaging interested individuals who had been formerly uninvolved
- Building a coalition's capacity to deal with differences

Poorly managed conflict, on the other hand, can create frustration, divide groups and alienate members. Recognizing potential sources of conflict and developing strategies for conflict management are critical for the success of the coalition.

Common sources of conflict include disagreements over goals, resources, methods, public identity, personalities and mixed loyalties. Turf battles are another potential source of conflict. A turf battle occurs when one organization perceives another as a threat or competitor instead of an ally. Mistrust and lack of familiarity are common causes of turf battles. One party may not believe that their goals are compatible with the goals of the other party; they may feel like the exchange of resources between organizations is unequal; or one party may not be willing to change its mission, goals or activities to reflect those of the coalition. When a turf battle takes place, the organizations involved defend their resources rather than sharing them in the pursuit of a common goal. Turf battles, like other unnecessary sources of conflict, are best avoided via good communication and a shared understanding of goals, roles and purposes.

Strategies for Managing Conflict

When conflict does occur, coalition leaders first need to assess the issue of controversy and decide whether or not it is critical to the work of the coalition. If it is not a critical issue, it is best to use an avoidance strategy and divert attention to the work of the coalition.

If the issue is critical to the work of the coalition, compromising, collaborating, welcoming differences and bargaining are usually the best strategies for managing conflict. These cooperative strategies build an atmosphere of trust, calmness and reason, as they allow individuals to share their needs and concerns, listen to the needs of others and utilize group problem-solving processes to arrive at acceptable solutions.

A group problem-solving process typically involves the following steps:

1. Define the problem.

- a. What is happening?
 - b. Who is affected?
 - c. How frequently does the problem occur?
2. Determine what is causing the problem.
 3. Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem.
 4. Assess the consequences of each solution.
 - a. Who will be affected?
 - b. What are the costs?
 - c. What are the benefits?
 5. Select the best solution.
 6. Develop an action plan.

Additionally, Butterfoss recommends the following tips for effective conflict management:

- Practice active listening.
- Keep emotions in check.
- Separate the people from the problem.
- Focus on the interests of the group instead of the individuals or organizations involved in the disagreement.

When working through conflict and solving problems as a group, it is helpful for a coalition to develop objective criteria that can be used in making decisions. Ideally, group decisions will lead to mutual gain, benefiting the coalition as a whole.

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Introduction to Local and Regional Food Systems

Jodee Ellett, author

“How we eat determines, to a considerable extent, how the world is used.”

— Wendell Berry

Humans have been cultivating plants and animals for consumption for nearly 10,000 years. Historically, the production of food, or agriculture, enabled the advancement of civilizations, providing resources that allowed humans to construct communities, advance knowledge, and develop technologies.

Today, our food system is a complex mix of global, national, regional and local agriculture, intricate supply chains and ever-advancing market technology. Our modern food system is complex, and unlike most systems (such as energy or transportation), food is more than utility. Food is woven into our cultures, homes, schools and communities and yet not always readily available due to a multifaceted combination of socioeconomic factors that can affect distribution and affordability (Powell, 2007).

Have you ever purchased products because of their social or environmental benefits? Have you purchased shoes from a company that pledges to donate a pair of shoes for each pair purchased? Did you make the decision to purchase based on that social value? What about food businesses that pledge money for research into conservation efforts, such as saving bees or pollinators? Did that environmental bottom line make a difference in your food purchasing decision?



Why Local Food?

Ask your group why they buy local and you'll get several different responses. For example:

- Support for local farmers
- Keep dollars in local economy
- Higher-quality food
- Higher nutrition when picked ripe and is fresh
- Reduce food miles (the distance food is transported from producer to consumer, as a unit of measurement of the fuel consumed)
- Greater community resilience or self-reliance
- Increase availability of culturally appropriate food not available in stores
- Transparency in food production practices

Consumers and communities invest time, effort and money into local food systems for many reasons. As noted above, some communities simply lack access to healthy, fresh foods and seek ways to increase healthy food access for residents. Some consumers are concerned about global carbon emissions and source local food to reduce their environmental footprint.

Whatever your reason for purchasing and promoting local food in your community, it is important to understand the various aspects of a local food system and the inherent challenges when relocalizing food production and consumption.

The Triple Bottom Line

Local and regional food businesses are inherently tied to the “triple bottom line,” where the benefits of doing business are measured as part of a sustainable business model in three areas: social, environmental and economic (Table 1). Many local food-and-farm businesses are woven into the fabric of the communities in which they sell goods and purchase supplies. For many of the local farmers behind these businesses, their environmental and social values are reflected in the food they produce and sell through production practices (i.e. organic, no-till, etc.) or marketing practices (i.e. accepting WIC, etc.).

Value Chains

One of the challenges of establishing a local food system is establishing new coordination systems to get food products to market. Often farmers sell direct to the consumer through sporadic markets such as seasonal farmers’ markets, or community-supported agriculture (CSA) or farm stands. For some farmers and home consumers, this small system is enough. But what about buyers such as schools, universities, hospitals, retirement communities and other food services and grocers who purchase larger quantities for their consumers? How can we coordinate enough locally produced food to enter these wholesale markets? Coordinating storage, processing and transportation represents significant barriers for relocalizing the food system.

The Fresh Stop Markets and trainings in Kentucky where “fresh food is a basic human right” are having an impact in communities where there is no access to healthy food. Using public spaces such as churches, community centers and businesses as pop-up market sites, the Fresh Stop Markets are addressing food insecurity. Local farmers who sell to the markets, like Rootbound Farm say, “Fresh Stop Markets allow us to build food justice into our business plan.” (New Roots, 2018)

Communities and organizations can have a major impact when they work together to organize and value local food together. When groups focus on an issue in the food system, like healthy food access, they can make adjustments to the supply chain to overcome the problem. Groups can work to build on the assets in their communities (farmers, markets, food businesses) to turn a competitive supply chain into a value chain – where collaboration, transparency and fairness address the environmental and social aspects of the food value chain (Tropp, 2018).

Table 1: Local Food System Assets and Activities and Their Impact on the Triple Bottom Line.

Environmental	Economic	Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Storage and distributionFarmers’ MarketsOnline food purchasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community foundationsGrants and loansBusiness development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">School and community gardensFood literacy educationCulturally appropriate food

Key Elements of Local and Regional Food Systems: Foodsheds, Local Food, and Community Food Systems

From farm to table, locally produced food follows a fairly linear progression from Inputs>Production>Processing>Distribution>Markets>Consumers>Waste. This process can become cyclical as wastes are introduced back into process (i.e. compost). Some key terms to know are:

Foodsheds – this term refers to the geographic footprint of where food comes from. For example, your farmers’ market may have a rule that farms are located within 100 miles of the market, or located in-state. The concept of a foodshed is based on the ‘watershed’ concept that describes the drainage of natural water systems, like the Mississippi water basin.

Local Food System – this term is often used to describe the assets necessary to grow, transport and purchase local food. Local food systems are represented by the circles in the diagram and is associated with business and consumer demand.

Community Food System – this term describes the food system issues in your community. “Community food system” refers to the social aspects of food such as food insecurity, public health concerns, youth food literacy and planning. These are the opportunities in our community where local food may be able to address complex problems. By working in concert and making simple, coordinated, creative decisions, community food systems can make a positive change toward integrating local food into the community.

In addition, local and regional food systems can play an important role in community development across a myriad of issues, including:

- Food security (i.e. diversification of food availability in terms of place and product)
- Public health (i.e. the introduction of local food policy councils)
- Economic development (i.e. diversification of food and farming systems)
- Education (i.e. farm-to-school programs)
- Planning (i.e. local land-use planning initiatives)
- Job creation (i.e. derived from new ventures and expanded businesses)
- Community resiliency (derived from the social, economic, and environmental benefits)



Figure 1: Community Food System

Creating healthy communities through developing local and regional food systems requires exploring the wide variety options available and considering the benefits and costs. While this serves as a short introduction, taking the time to thoroughly research your community (i.e. assets, current initiatives, agricultural production trends, etc.) and the broad topic of food systems will help ensure that your initiatives will be successful.

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Crafting a Request for Proposal (RFP) to Find the Right Contractors and Consultants

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Now that the hard work of creating a healthy vision for your community is complete, it is time to find a design consultant or contractor to build your vision. But all of the effort put forth by community leaders in establishing that vision can be wasted if you entrust that vision to the wrong contractors. A contractor is a valuable member of the project team, and their commitment to your project can keep you on schedule and budget, or alternatively, an unorganized contractor can cause delays and cost overruns.

One way to ensure you find the right contractor is to solicit proposals from any group you consider hiring. The construction industry's standard process for soliciting potential contractors is called a request for proposal (RFP), and part of its purpose is to ensure the vision and its realization are aligned. The construction industry's standard process for soliciting prospective consultants, an RFP introduces your project in a systematic format, which allows contractors to determine if they have the skills and resources you require and if your project would be a good fit for their company. If so, the company will respond to the RFP.

This publication will describe what goes into a good RFP and provide advice on how to create one for a design consultant or contractor.

Your goal as author of an RFP is to produce a professional, clear, and concise document that offers a number of viable responses from which to choose the best consultant for your organization. Commonly, an RFP has a standard format that allows you to make apples-to-apples comparisons on factors such as contractors' abilities, project prices, final delivery dates, and other details concerning the project.

If you invest the time to create a clear RFP, your effort will result in a smoother construction process and a better end product. Because preparing an RFP is the first step in establishing all relationships associated with your project, it should be clear, concise, and convey a detailed description of your project.

Set the Right Tone

The primary reason for writing an RFP is to identify and ultimately hire a contractor who is capable of completing your project to your specifications within an appropriate budget. The person or firm you hire should understand your organization's needs and provide a healthy working environment. Your organization's relationship with your contractor is one of the most important factors in determining a successful project. Most projects have numerous components, but can typically be managed by being clear what your project is (and what it isn't) before you release your RFP.

The care you put into writing an RFP is likely to set the tone for all future business relationships and interactions with your contractor. If your organization wants a casual working relationship, then your RFP document should be a clear reflection of your needs and expectations.

If your RFP does not demonstrate a well-thought-out, clear project, it could limit the number of contractors who respond to your RFP. If contractors feel there are too many unknowns, they will often not even attempt to respond, feeling they are not able to bid the project successfully. It is essential to clearly state the project's parameters and expectations to avoid costly misunderstandings later.

Begin with a Template

Begin the RFP authoring process by finding a template that matches your needs. There are many “how-to” templates and checklists available online that list the elements for writing successful RFPs. Be patient. It may take a little research to find the right template that best fits your project’s criteria. There is not a single boilerplate that will fit your project perfectly, because each project is different. Still, there are standard topics that every RFP needs to cover. And even with a template, be prepared to modify the text or to add categories to better define your project.

Find a Template

There are a number of resources to help you find the right RFP template for you. You may have to review several to find a good fit for your community and project. Some good resources include:

Housing and Urban Development HUD Exchange
www.hudexchange.info — search for “Example of A Request for Proposal (RFP) Between an NSP Grantee and Developer for a Public Facility”

National Park Service
www.nps.gov — search for “rfptemplate”

Craft Your RFP

A successful RFP must go beyond simply filling in the blanks on a template. As an organization you must collectively determine and clearly articulate the scope of the project and define the items in the RFP that identify with your specific project.

If this is your first experience in creating an RFP, try to include someone in your committee with construction experience. Just the process of creating an RFP will help your organization clarify the collective vision of the project. “A problem well-put is half solved,” as John Dewey observed. Some organizations fail to take the important step of clearly, fully defining the project, which can cause issues later when uncertainties arise during the construction process.

Confidentiality is vital to the RFP process. Insist that all applicants submit their RFPs in a sealed envelope. It also is a good practice not to discuss submitted bids with other contractors interested in the project to avoid the appearance of favoritism, or expose a firm’s business operations to a competitor. Companies put a lot of work into responding to RFPs, so it is important that the details of each bid are kept confidential.

Elements of an RFP

While each RFP will be specific to each project, there are a number of basic items you will want to include in each one. Here are nine items you should always include in your RFP.

1. Introduction

An RFP introduction should provide an overview of your organization and general details about the project. Since your RFP is an invitation to join a working relationship, it is a good idea that contractors understand who they will be working with and what your organization stands for. You might also choose to include a broad description of the project in this section.

2. Definitions

Make sure to define any words that are important to the project to keep everyone on the same page. Clarify and define any jargon that might have different meanings in different trades. For example, you may wish to clearly define the definitions of terms like “contract,” “contractor,” and “subcontractor” to avoid confusion.

3. Scope of Work

Make sure your RFP provides a detailed breakdown of your project. Make sure to include the basic information, including location, background, description, and schedule of the work, and include all the services you want performed, as well as any special considerations, expectations on codes, inspections, or reference materials a contractor should be familiar with in order to fully understand the elements of your project. Do not hesitate to include copious details about the project in this section. After reading this section the contractor should have a solid understanding of the project.

4. Timeline

Always include a preliminary timeline for the project, with the understanding that timelines have the potential of being negotiated once you select a contractor. Timelines help contractors estimate their staffing and equipment needs and the duration they will need to be onsite. Understanding the project timeline is also helpful if the project is in a climate where harsh weather can limit windows for construction.

Contractors need to be able to assure you they have the manpower and ability to finish your project in the designated timeframe. At the same time, you need to be realistic about how long it will take to fulfill the contract. You may include incentives to keep the contractor on schedule, including bonuses for early completion or fines for going over schedule. But you can't do any of that unless your RFP includes a clear and realistic timetable.

5. Examples of Previous Work

Every RFP should ask about a prospective consultant's previous work. You should know if they have experience working on projects of this size and scope. The best way to do this is to visit previous clients and sites. In your RFP, ask and expect to speak with at least three references for each candidate. And when possible, ask the owner (or a company representative) to visit some of their completed projects with you.

You can learn much by interviewing and walking the site with a former client. Getting a project's history from the owner or someone involved in the day-to-day construction is relevant and is worth the effort. Don't be shy about asking about the overall project costs and what the role of the prospective contractor was for the project.

6. Budget and Payment Schedule

By the time you start assembling your RFP, your organization should have established the amount they can spend. You should not disclose how much you plan to spend on the project; they will provide you with that information. Your RFP should state a payment schedule. A typical approach would be to pay a partial amount after each phase of the project is completed. Although you state the payment schedule in the RFP, consider having some flexibility with the contractor and allow negotiations to alter the payment if necessary.

7. Company Information

Make sure your RFP asks that contractors or consultants share what distinguishes them from their competitors and how they are the best candidates for the job. Do they have a novel approach to your project? Let them tell you how their company fits in with your vision.

An RFP should ask the contractor to name specific individuals who will be in charge of each aspect of the project and who will have overall responsibility. For example, you might establish a healthy working relationship with one individual during the contract negotiations only to discover another person will be your contact in the construction phase.

You can also request that interested contractors provide fee structures for all levels of employees working on your project. You should request information about any subcontractors, the services they will provide, and any specific job certifications for anyone they plan to have onsite. It will also be helpful to be clear about whose job it is to secure the permits and whose responsibility it is to document the construction process.

In addition, you should learn the following about the company:

- legal description;
- financial information;
- whether there are any legal actions against the company;
- if they have any pending lawsuits;
- if they have worked under any other business names in the past;
- how long they have been in business;
- the amount of their largest contract;
- the amount and types of insurance coverage they carry and make sure that the awarded contractor is aware that they are responsible to provide that their subcontractors are covered as well

Finally, ask contractors how they propose to manage the construction project. Do they plan to have a construction trailer on site? Do they plan to use any large equipment on the site? It would be good to know how long they plan to have any equipment on the site and whether they own or plan to rent it. How will they secure the site during construction and for their employees? Another question that could affect your bottom line is the location of their office or storage yard. Lengthy travel times can add up over the course of your project.

8. Submission Instructions

It is essential to design your RFP so that each contractor's submission is responded to in the same order — this makes an apples-to-apples comparison easier. The thoughtful work that went into creating your RFP will pay off when your organization sits down to review all the submissions. There are few things more difficult for an organization to do than to review a completed RFP and try to select

a contractor or consultant when each submission is in a different order or format.

A reasonable timeframe should be established for how long the RFP will be active and out for bid. Depending on the scale of the project, your organization might consider hosting a prebid meeting where contractors and owners can collectively meet to discuss the project. During such meetings, contractors will ask questions and receive clarification on any items that they were unclear about in the RFP.

But be aware that prospective contractors need ample time, well-written documents and clear, consistent drawings to respond to an RFP. In some cases, two to three weeks may be enough, but the time you set should depend on the scale of your project. If a contractor plans to use subcontractors, it might take a little longer to prepare an accurate price. Once a bid is submitted, make sure it clearly states how long their price will be honored. The contractor has invested a lot of work in creating your bid. Be respectful of the time and investment they have put into your project to get an accurate bid.

Finally, remember, if you set a timeframe, you are required to stick to it. Be prepared to reject any bids submitted after that deadline.

9. Communication Expectations

It is good practice to inform the contractor of your expectations with respect to communication during the construction process. Do you want a weekly field report or weekly meetings with the entire team? Then your RFP needs to clearly state how you want your field observations to be recorded. If you want reports to go to everyone on your team, state it clearly in the RFP.

Any specific management requests should be stated explicitly, so the contractor can calculate the time and funds needed to accommodate your requests. For example, it might be critical to hold weekly meetings with everyone with one type of project, but another may only require a weekly email summary. Be aware that any requests will likely require some additional time. Discuss and negotiate a comfortable balance, especially if your budget is limited.

Other Factors to Consider

It isn't enough to just plan what you want. There are a few other factors your organization should consider while crafting the RFP.

Written Advertisements

An RFP does not usually include a written advertisement, but you should prepare one. A good advertisement summarizes and provides an introduction to the scope of your project for government agencies, the general public and other listservs or public venues that announce RFPs are available.

A good advertisement should provide:

- General information about the project;
- Contact information, so contractors can reach you;
- Pertinent dates;
- A description of the submission process;
- And the schedule for any prebid meetings.

Your written advertisement should have an inviting tone and include enough information so a contractor can decide if they want to pursue your RFP.

Legal Protection

Problems will arise in any project, so it is important that both sides of the contract understand how to resolve conflicts quickly and to all parties' satisfaction.

It is a good idea to have legal counsel in place before you need them. At a minimum, you should have an attorney review your contract before you sign anything. Good attorneys can save you time, money and stress in the long run.

Request for Qualification (RFQ)

In some situations, you may have multiple projects you would like to consider. This is most applicable to design projects, but when that is the case, you can choose to issue a request for qualifications (RFQ). The process is similar to an RFP, but you use the submitted information to narrow down a pool of companies to bid on each project when funding for those projects becomes available.

For example, park districts often have a number of projects they want designed and built. An RFQ allows the park district to work with different firms and spread the work around, while still only choosing from consultants who have been approved through the RFQ process. If a company has already been determined to be qualified, it avoids a lapse of time when the projects or funding do become available.

Postconstruction Management

Your contractor should present to you all the warranties associated with your project and their expiration dates. Depending on the type of project you are working on, your contractor might be able to set up a maintenance plan for your project. That way, you will know how to care for it after it is finished.

Finally, do not pay in full until *all* the work is complete.

Summary

Most construction projects are high stakes, have many variables, and do not always follow a straightforward process. Your organization needs to discuss specific details, and you need to reach consensus within your organization before you begin writing your RFP. Your organization must establish the scale of the project, determine its budget, define the finished product, and set a realistic timeline for its completion — just to name a few important considerations.

RFPs should clearly define the parameters of the project and should also give contractors information about the project so they can determine if their company is right for it. A thoughtful and thorough RFP starts your project off right. By establishing a good working relationship with your contractors and consultants, you set the stage for healthy communication between all stakeholders involved in the project to create a community amenity to be enjoyed for years to come.

Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities

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