

ACTIVE

LIVING



Cover Image: People traveling to work in Columbus, Indiana, on Bike to Work Day, 2015



American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

PLAN4Health

An American Planning Association Project

What is Plan4Health?

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

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

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

What is active living?

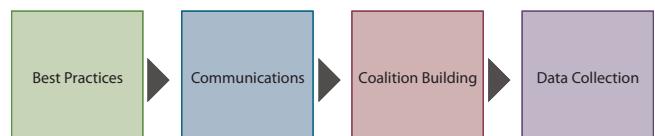
Active living is all about incorporating physical activity and movement into everyday activities. For example, taking the stairs instead of the elevator or biking to work are part of an active lifestyle. Increasing daily physical activity can prevent obesity and promote health for people of all ages.

What does active living mean in the context of Plan4Health?

Plan4Health coalitions approach active living by considering how the built environment supports or hinders active living. Do neighborhoods have sidewalks, bike lanes, and calm traffic? Are there trees, parks, and trails that are safe and accessible for everyone? Plan4Health coalitions have worked in many different ways to improve the policies, governing systems, and environments that impact these aspects of active living in their efforts to make healthy communities where people live, learn, work and play.

How can this toolkit be used?

This toolkit offers a snapshot of reports, webinars, toolkits, community examples, videos, podcasts, and more about active living in Plan4Health. It can be read cover to cover or looked at in pieces, as each page can be a stand-alone document to inform and educate about active living strategies. Additional information about the Plan4Health coalitions, including [mini-webinars](#), [videos](#), and [podcasts](#), is available on the [Plan4Health Peer Learning Network](#).





A group of third grade students in Columbus, Indiana, conduct a walk audit on their campus as part of Walk to School Day.

Active Commuting

Best practices

Bike-friendly businesses: Business and workplace policies and amenities that support biking—including incentives such as free bike share memberships and bike parking, showers, and locker rooms—promote active transportation by addressing common barriers to commuting by bike.

- In Columbus, Ohio, the Plan4Health coalition created a [Bike Friendly Business program](#) to educate and encourage business about how they can be more bike-friendly. The program also educated businesses about how biking can help their bottom line by fostering happier and more productive employees, lowering health care and transportation costs, and strengthening employee recruitment and retention rates.

Smart Trips: Reframing the way people make travel decisions can have a big impact on active commuting. Smart trips is a framework for encouraging people to reduce the number of solo driving instances and increase walking, biking, carpooling, and riding public transportation.

- In Austin, Texas, the Plan4Health coalition used this framework to develop [Smart Trips Austin](#) and an accompanying toolkit that was used to educate community members. The toolkit was used in household outreach, property visits, and at community events, resulting in a 44 percent decrease in driving trips and a 15 percent increase in active trips (public transportation, walking, bicycling).

From our partners



[Transportation and Health Toolkit](#)



[Bicycling and Walking in the United States 2016: Benchmarking Report](#)



[Safe Routes to School by the Numbers: Using Data to Foster Walking and Biking to School](#)

From the field



[Alex Smith from Columbus Public Health discusses active living strategies.](#)



A complete street in Nashua, New Hampshire.

Complete Streets

Best practices

Intersection redesign: Complete streets are designed for people of all ages and abilities using multiple modes of transportation, including walking, biking, driving, and public transportation. Creating complete streets requires policy changes which in turn enable the community to redesign existing streets into complete, connected streets.

- In Columbus, Indiana, the Plan4Health coalition collaborated with the state department of transportation and other partners to develop the [City of Columbus Intersection Study](#), a compilation of intersection design options to educate the community about complete streets. The coalition also held a walk and bike to school event that involved over 1,400 children.

Level of Traffic Stress analysis: One method for assessing the state of street completeness is using an algorithm to measure the Level of Traffic Stress. Such analysis looks at the availability of routes between people's origins and destinations that do not require travel that exceeds their tolerance for traffic stress and are direct.

- In Nashua, New Hampshire, the Plan4Health coalition found that such algorithms existed only for analysis of bicycling networks. The coalition developed a Level of Traffic Stress algorithm and a [complete streets policy audit](#) to analyze the safety of walking in a given area.

From our partners



[Complete Streets Toolkit](#)



[Complete Streets: Active Transportation, Safety, and Mobility for Individuals of All Ages and Abilities](#)



[Complete Streets with Smart Growth America](#)

From the field



[Meet the Bensons, a Wisconsin family that walks and bikes to school.](#)

The Klopfenstein Amphitheater for the Performing Arts in Linn County's Lowe Park.



Natural Design

Best practices

Greenways: Trail systems and greenways are connected networks of trails in multiple jurisdictions that can increase the number of people using trails for transportation and recreation. Greenways involve building out from specific locales of parks and trails to make a more connected network across a region.

- In Columbus, Ohio, the Plan4Health coalition developed a [strategic plan for the Central Ohio Greenways](#). The plan includes recommendations to improve access to trails and provide trail-based programming for all Columbus residents. The Ohio Greenways project is focused on building trails and ensuring connectivity between trails and from neighborhoods to trails.

Biophilic Design: The concept behind biophilic design is integrating interactions with nature into buildings and communities. It can be applied at regional, community, and neighborhood levels, and to streets and buildings.

- In Linn County, Iowa, the Plan4Health coalition paired biophilic design with other active living principles to focus their work to build a healthy community. The coalition created a guidebook, [Step into Nature with Marion](#), with six key ideas: preserve a connected network of “green” spaces, promote interactive neighborhoods, ensure that active living is a just a step away, prioritize people-powered movement, develop a community culture of active living, and collaborate with other sectors to be more active.

From our partners



[Healthy Community Design Toolkit](#)



[Parks, Trails and Health Workbook](#)



[Landscape Performance for Healthy Communities](#)

From the field



[Listen to Scott Ulrich discuss the chronic disease prevention work in Columbus, Ohio.](#)



Jackson County Healthy Communities Coalition members.

Innovation in Active Living: Planning for Rural Communities

Many best practice documents emphasize implementation in urban environments. The Jackson County Healthy Communities Coalition (Illinois) created a planning playbook to support rural communities in active, healthy design. Read the playbook introduction below and the full playbook [here](#).

The city of Carbondale Planning Services Division, with assistance from the Jackson County Healthy Communities Coalition's Plan4Health grant, has developed **Bike * Walk * Eat: A Planning Playbook for Rural Communities** to serve as a general reference for rural southern Illinois communities. This playbook is by no means a comprehensive review of the literature on the topic, but instead draws on the experiences of those involved to provide an introduction to certain concepts and serve as a guidebook of example policies and resources for its readers. Each community is encouraged to utilize this playbook as a starting point from which discussions regarding the policies and practices of their respective communities may begin.

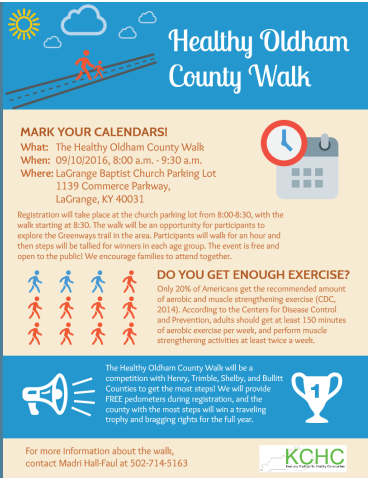
As communities seek to grow and prosper in the future, they are confronted with new challenges that come with the demands of both younger and disparate populations. While previous population growth was centered on the automobile, many current planners are focusing more on the movement of pedestrians. This type of planning meets the needs of both the younger population seeking to utilize alternative modes of transportation, as well as low-income populations which often go without access to

reliable transportation. In rural areas, characterized by large lot sizes, scarce resources, and a lack of fixed mass transit routes, the challenge of meeting these types of needs can be daunting.

To come closer to an equitable community, one which provides equitable access to resources for all its residents, communities must plan for alternative modes of transportation. Proper planning must be considered to accommodate walkers and bicyclists, the preferred method of transportation for some and the last resort of transportation for others. Fostering these modes of transportation, coupled with a mindful eye on supporting access to healthy foods, will encourage and establish the groundwork for a healthy community.

The planning staff of the city of Carbondale hope this document will begin conversations within rural communities and encourage future planning centered on increasing access to healthy foods and providing for an environment that fosters active transportation.

*Chris Wallace, AICP
Director of Development Services
Carbondale, Illinois*



Healthy Oldham County Walk

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
What: The Healthy Oldham County Walk
When: 09/10/2016, 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.
Where: LaGrange Baptist Church Parking Lot
 1139 Commerce Parkway,
 LaGrange, KY 40031

Registration will take place at the church parking lot from 8:00-8:30, with the walk starting at 8:30. The walk will be an opportunity for participants to explore the Greenways trail in the area. Participants will walk for an hour and then steps will be tallied for winners in each age group. The event is free and open to the public! We encourage families to attend together.

DO YOU GET ENOUGH EXERCISE?
 Only 20% of Americans get the recommended amount of aerobic and muscle strengthening exercise (CDC, 2014). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults should get at least 150 minutes of aerobic exercise per week, and perform muscle strengthening activities at least twice a week.

The Healthy Oldham County Walk will be a competition with Henry, Trimble, Shelby, and Bullitt Counties to get the most steps! We will provide FREE polo-shirts during registration, and the county with the most steps will win a traveling trophy and bragging rights for the fall year.

For more information about the walk, contact Madri Hall-Faul at 502-714-5163

KCHC

Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Communities promotional flyer for county walks.



Seguridad para Peatones

austin smart trips

SmartTrips Austin's Bilingual Pedestrian Safety Brochure.

Communications

Tips from the field

- In an effort to engage all community members, the Bensenville, Illinois, Plan4Health coalition developed all communications in both English and Spanish. This includes a ["Bike to Metra" brochure](#) to help residents begin commuting by bicycle to the commuter rail system.
- The Nashua, New Hampshire, Plan4Health coalition worked with [New Hampshire Public Radio](#) to showcase the work under way through an interview with the coalition director.
- The Bike Ajo coalition in Ajo, Arizona, leveraged digital [storytelling](#) to empower participants to combat, in their own compelling voices, the personal impact of inequities in public health. Bringing together new media tools and social networking makes it possible for participants to extend their reach beyond peer groups and into the general population to prompt dialogue, identify opportunities for community mobilization, and address decision makers.
- The Kentucky Coalition for Healthy Communities implemented County Challenge Walks. The walks are designed to focus on the total number of steps taken in an hour, and not on the speed at which the individual completes the course. By tallying steps, people of all ages and abilities are able to participate in some, or all, of the walk. The walks were scheduled to occur in several locations at the same time and date in order to declare a county winner at the end of all walks.

Engaging the community






[B-Well Bensenville: Active Transportation and Complete Streets videos](#)



[A Good Start: Bobby's Story](#)

From our partners

-  [CDC Gateway to Health Communication and Social Marketing Audience Profiles](#)
-  [Making Memorable Messages – Plan4Health Communications Webinar](#)
-  [Media 101: Interviews – Plan4Health Communications Webinar](#)



Setting up a pop-up traffic calming demonstration in St. Louis (left). One of the St. Louis neighborhoods using tactical urbanism to create temporary street infrastructure improvements (right).

Innovation in Communications: Traffic Calming in St. Louis

What?

The St. Louis Plan4Health coalition pioneered active living by addressing the high-speed traffic and car-centric neighborhoods across the city. Making permanent street-design changes to the community was not a possibility without policy change—but instead of allowing this to be a barrier, the coalition reimagined street design through temporary pop-up traffic calming demonstrations. They focused on four neighborhoods to highlight the possibilities of creating a better pedestrian experience and make the streets of St. Louis safer and more accessible for residents in the most vulnerable neighborhoods.

How?

The coalition reimagined street design through pop-up traffic calming demonstrations across different neighborhoods. Instead of a space dominated by vehicles, the pop-up demonstrations created spaces that accommodate walkers, bicyclists, and vehicles in colorful and inspiring displays. They followed a tactical urbanism approach, changing the built environment in a fluid and meaningful way with creative approaches to uplifting and recycling existing resources. With spare tires painted bright, cheerful colors, and reusable plastic flower pots, the coalition used simple materials to create brand new spaces.

The coalition developed a lending library of materials and instructions on how to implement the demonstrations. The toolkit is easy to share with neighborhoods across the city, and ensures that pop-up demonstrations can continue in the future.

The coalition engaged local residents and decision makers to ensure that everyone could experience the possibilities of policy change. Community members were involved and experienced firsthand the changes that could result from redesigned streets. The coalition worked with the community to educate residents on the benefits of traffic calming to create safer streets.

From the field



St. Louis Plan4Health Traffic Calming Demonstrations video



[Slow Your Street: A How-To Guide for Pop-Up Traffic Calming](#)



Connect Columbus (Ohio) discussing street design options at the 2015 Open Streets Columbus event.

Coalition Building

Tips from the field

- The Linn County, Iowa, Plan4Health coalition [convened a joint board meeting](#) between the Iowa Public Health Association and the Iowa Chapter of the American Planning Association. Through discussions during the meeting, the boards were able to see the extent of connection between the two groups, thus building stronger coalition ties.
- In Austin, Texas, the Plan4Health coalition designed a comprehensive outreach strategy that engaged over 100 local community-based organizations. Through this broad group, the coalition was able to develop champions to help in the implementation of these programs and initiate policy change.
- Over the course of the Plan4Health Project period, the Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition in Maryland grew the coalition from seven original organizational members to 47 unique and diverse organizations and agencies. In the span of one afternoon coalition leadership presented the Plan4Health project at a meeting with business and philanthropic leaders in the top floor of a downtown office building and then the same coalition leadership conducted community outreach at a neighborhood association meeting in one of West Baltimore's more disinvested communities.

Engaging the community



[Interview with Laura Garrett, Columbus, Indiana](#)



[Crosswalk Celebration - Baltimore Greenway Trails Coalition](#)

From our partners

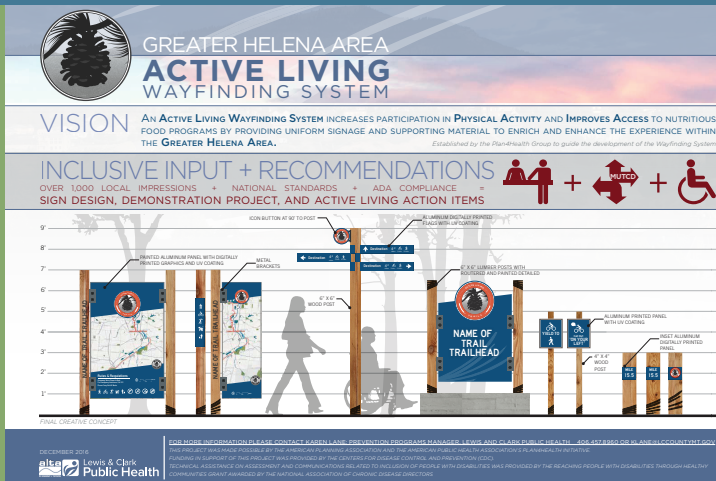


[Developing Effective Coalitions: An Eight Step Guide Collaboration Assessment Tool](#)



[Community Partnerships Part I: Innovative Partnerships to Improve Health](#)

Innovation in Coalition Building: Wayfinding in Greater Helena, Montana



The Healthy Communities Coalition developed an Active Living Wayfinding System to help align the recently revised Greater Helena Area Transportation Plan, the City of Helena Growth Policy, the Lewis and Clark County Growth Policy, and the Downtown Helena Master Plan.

Leveraging support from the [National Association of Chronic Disease Directors](#), the coalition completed an accessibility audit to ensure all residents could use the wayfinding system. Read more about the coalition's work to make the system accessible below.

Practice Guidelines from the Montana Disability and Health Program

Public Health Issue: On-line and social media technologies provide popular tools that are being used to elicit public input on community plans and development projects. More and perhaps different people are reached with these technologies than with more traditional opportunities (e.g., in-person forums). Yet these technologies require internet access and a high level of computer literacy skills, and most of these technologies present significant problems for people who are blind or have low vision and use screen reader technologies.

Public Health's Role : Local health departments seek public input to assure optimal public health outcomes in a range of community plans and projects. They promote opportunities for public input to individuals and organizations representing the diversity of the community, conducting targeted social marketing outreach strategies to assure representation of traditionally underserved populations. Health departments assure that the range of opportunities for public input are equitable and fit the varying literacy, linguistic and cultural characteristics of their community. As such, local health departments are uniquely positioned to expand the opportunities afforded by on-line and media technologies to be available in accessible formats.

Guidelines:

- Include a disability organization(s) in planning committee.
- Involve staff and/or consultants with experience and commitment to including people with disabilities in public input processes.
- Identify on-line or social media products for eliciting public input that are accessible to people using screen reader technologies.
- If on-line or social media products are unavailable in accessible formats:

- Ask vendors for a timeline for making the products accessible and monitor for progress.
- Capture public input opportunities afforded through on-line and social media products and promote equitable opportunities (e.g., an accessible on-line survey, targeted interviews and discussion groups using a script that parallels the process a person using the on-line or social media opportunity would follow).
- Evaluate whether people were satisfied with the alternative opportunities.
- Assure that data collected using alternative methods are included with data collected using the on-line or social media products.

Application

For the Greater Helena Active Living Wayfinding System Plan4Health project, Lewis and Clark Public Health recruited the local Montana Independent Living Project (MILP), to participate as a partner in the planning group. The committee worked with the Montana Disability and Health Program to develop an accessible on-line survey that presented a list of destinations identified through public input to a Wiki-Maps site. The survey was tested by staff who used screen readers and then was promoted via emails to CIL staff, peers, and consumers. Respondents completed the survey independently as part of an interview or during discussion groups. They selected their frequent destinations and travel routes from the list then added any other destinations they frequented that were not on the original list. MTDH summarized the results for the project consultant, and the planning committee monitored for inclusion of those data with information provided to WikiMaps. The timeline provided by WikiMaps for having a product that is accessible with screen reader technology is forthcoming.



The Level of Traffic Stress street map displaying the walkability of streets in Nashua, New Hampshire.

Data Collection

Tips from the field

- The Nashua, New Hampshire, Plan4Health coalition used both qualitative and quantitative data to assess biking and walking conditions. This included data on all of the roads in the city to quantify bikeability and walkability, map potential origins and destinations, and identify stressful or broken connections. The coalition developed a [complete streets guide](#) with this data.
- In Columbus, Indiana, the Plan4Health coalition held public input events around designing bicycle and pedestrian crossing treatments at several intersections along a critical east-west bicycle/pedestrian route in the community. The [open house events displayed five stations](#) where residents were asked to provide input on potential routes and crossing treatments at specific intersections.
- Recognizing that numbers do not always capture the lived experiences of residents, Centralina Health Solutions (Mecklenburg County, North Carolina) used walk audits to gather data and to connect with community members. The coalition hosted a [walk audit training](#) to define walkability and to introduce audit tools.

Engaging with the Planning and Community Health Center



[The Benefits of Street-Scale Features for Walking and Biking](#)



From our partners

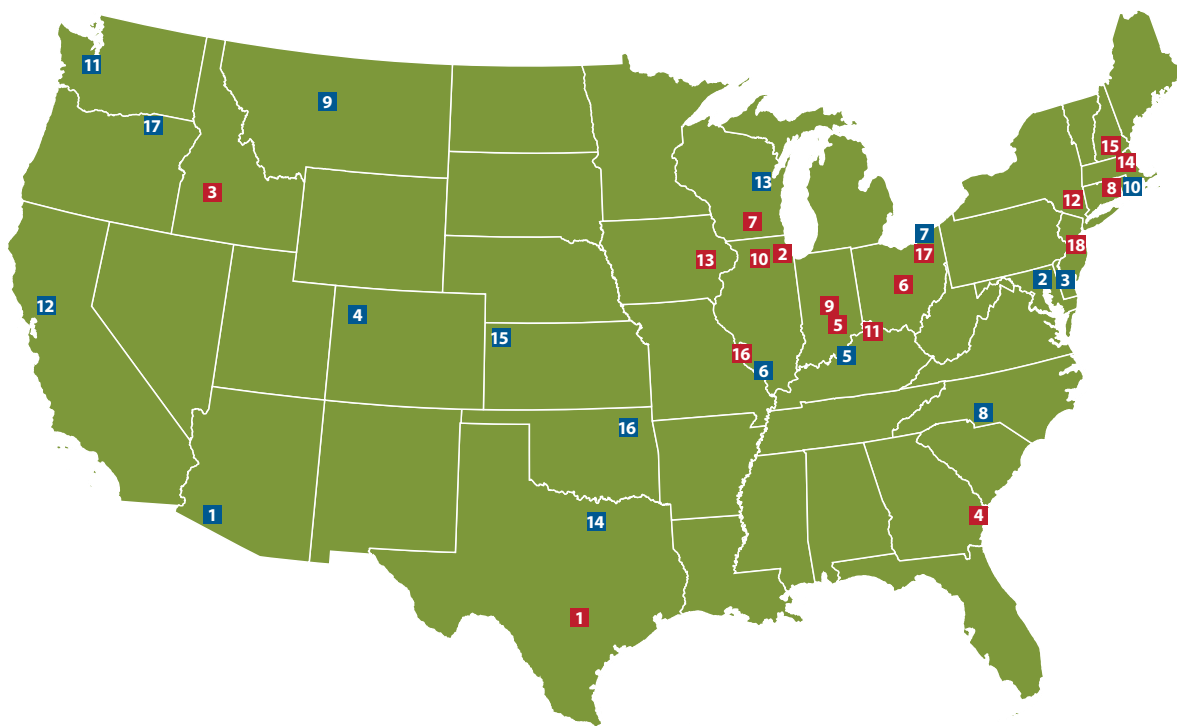
[Active Living Research – Tools and Resources](#)



[US DOT – Transportation and Health Tool Community Commons](#)

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

Plan4Health Grantees



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