

Plan4Health: Health by Design Indianapolis & Marion County, IN

SUMMARY

Plan4Health connects communities across the U.S., funding work at the intersection of planning and public health. Anchored by American Planning Association (APA) Chapters and American Public Health Association (APHA) Affiliates, Plan4Health supports sustainable, cross-sector coalitions. Health by Design, a coalition promoting spaces that encourage healthy living, is developing an initiative to make Indianapolis and Marion County more pedestrian-friendly. Strategies include a pedestrian master plan and education for planning and public health professionals.



CHALLENGE

The 2014 County Health Rankings listed Marion County at 86th out of the 92 Indiana counties in health factors and 78th in health outcomes. The American Fitness Index places Indianapolis 47th out of the 50 most populous U.S. metro areas based on measures of health, community resources and policies that support physical activity. The 2013 community health needs assessment indicated that overweight and obesity trends in Marion County's children and adults

have increased continually over the last seven years, with two out of every three adults being either overweight or obese. Despite the fact that 67 percent of residents live within a 10-minute walk to a park or greenway and 54 percent live within a 10-minute walk to a full-service grocery, active transportation infrastructure remains underutilized and the vast majority of residents drive to their destinations.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

Indianapolis residents can join Health by Design in this effort by talking with local leaders about the need for a city where you can walk safely to parks, grocery stores and other destinations. Visit www.healthbydesignonline.org to learn more.

To find out more about other coalitions participating in Plan4Health, check out www.plan4health.us or follow the project on social media with #plan4health.

"This is an incredible opportunity for us to build on past work and help all Indy residents find their own way toward a more walkable community."

- Kim Irwin

Contact

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SOLUTION

Committed to addressing the challenges residents experience when walking in Indianapolis, Health by Design is developing a comprehensive campaign for promoting walking and a pedestrian master plan. The two strategies will work hand-in-hand, as the branded communications campaign will broaden the appeal of walking and urge municipal leaders to include the needs of pedestrians in planning, and the master plan will build on infrastructure investments from the City of Indianapolis. In addition, by working in collaboration with Health by Design's established coalition, the effort will reach a broad audience and will increase general awareness about the importance of active living.

RESULTS

While Health by Design and its coalition are in the early phase of their project, they are off and walking, working with a consultant to guide the master plan development and engaging a number of partners in conversations about the best ways to connect residents to the campaign. Incorporating research conducted by the coalition and ensuring the consultant has key local partnerships has ensured that the master pedestrian plan off to a strong start. The partners' energy, ideas and hard work have helped to give shape to a communications campaign that will strengthen implementation of the policy, systems and environment changes. Initial conversations have helped to identify the audiences and mindsets that the team will tackle, making sure that once walking to the grocery store is possible, it is something that residents will want to do.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

The pedestrian program, communications campaign and master plan being coordinated by Health by Design are integrated strategies that will move the community toward a greater awareness of and desire to walk. Continue to watch this program in the months ahead as it plans to launch its branded pedestrian campaign and engage residents in activities. This will make the most of the strong connections between planning and public health professionals and leverage the work of the Plan4Health initiative—and will continue to demonstrate to communities across Indiana how we can change our environment to make the healthy choice the easy choice for ourselves, our children, and future generations.

Plan4Health is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the CDC or imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. Learn more about Plan4Health and the National Implementation and Dissemination for Chronic Disease Prevention project at www.cdc.gov/communityhealth.