

Plan4Health: Tarrant County

Tarrant County, TX

Summary

Plan4Health connects communities across the country, 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 creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions. Plan4Health Tarrant County aims to build on existing efforts and improve access to local, fresh food in southeast Fort Worth through partnerships, new initiatives and incorporating a public health perspective into planning efforts.

Challenge

The target areas within Tarrant County, Texas - Southeast Fort Worth - have a combined population of more than 100,000. Residents are predominantly African American and Latino/Hispanics, with these two demographics comprising 78 percent and 18 percent of the population, respectively. Residents tend to have lower incomes levels and lower education levels compared to the county as a whole. Chronic disease rates are higher compared to the rest of the county as well. Recent data revealed higher rates of diabetes (12.6 percent), heart disease (6.4 percent), high blood pressure (29.9 percent), and overweight or obesity (71 percent). Community leaders have recognized chronic disease as a major concern and recent feedback found that the top five priorities to address chronic disease disparities included food access.

Solution

Plan4Health Tarrant County will increase the availability of healthy foods by promoting retail policies and practices, including piloting food carts and a mobile food market as well as recruiting stores to participate in a Healthy Corner Stores program. These efforts will serve as a model for other municipalities within Tarrant County and beyond. Additionally, the coalition will work to incorporate health considerations into the city's planning and zoning efforts and use media campaigns to increase engagement and to improve the dialogue between the community, partners, and stakeholders.



Your Involvement is Key

To learn more about Plan4health Tarrant County and all coalitions participating in Plan4Health, check out the project website (www.plan4health.us).

Join the national conversation at the intersection of planning and public health on social media by using and following #plan4health.

Results

On March 9, 2016, the Fort Worth Zoning Commission unanimously approved the ordinance amendment that provides for the creation of a mobile fresh market. These "markets" are trucks that can operate within residential areas selling fresh, whole, uncut fruits and vegetables. Previously the ordinance allowed for ice cream trucks to operate in neighborhoods, but did not allow for fresh produce sales. The next step is approval by the city council on April 5, 2016!

Contact

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"The Plan4Health Tarrant County project provides an incredible opportunity to make healthier choices easier in neighborhoods with inequitable access to healthy foods."

- Brandy O'Quinn, Public Affairs Manager, Blue Zones Project - Fort Worth

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.