

# Plan4Health: The Delaware Plan4Health Initiative Kent County & the City of Dover, DE

## 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. The Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living seeks to incorporate health and equity in future comprehensive plan updates. Using community feedback, the coalition will create guidelines to increase access to healthy food and build spaces that encourage physical activity.

## Challenge

Kent County, the smallest county in Delaware, has a population of 172,000, which has increased 36 percent since the year 2000. Within Kent County, the City of Dover is diverse with 42 percent and nearly 7 percent of the population identifying as African American or Hispanic, respectively. Nearly 13 percent of Kent County residents are living below the Federal Poverty Line and the educational attainment level and rates of age-adjusted death from chronic disease and adult inactivity are worse when compared to the rest of Delaware. The obesity rate in Delaware has doubled since 1990 and children in Kent County are the most overweight in Delaware. Additionally, Kent County contains multiple food deserts and has the fewest miles of off-road trails in Delaware.

## Solution

The Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living will integrate health and planning efforts with community engagement. The coalition will conduct health and equity assessments, including feedback received from an adapted phone survey, and other data sources to draft land use planning, design, and policy recommendations. In preparation for the update process for the Kent County and City of Dover Comprehensive Plans, the coalition will conduct charrettes and develop a guidance document that details design strategies for locations that aim to improve health and equity.



## Your Involvement is Key

**Residents in Kent County and the City of Dover can stay up-to-date on coalition news and events by visiting the coalition website ([www.deplan4health.org](http://www.deplan4health.org)), Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/deplan4health/>) and following @DEplan4health on Twitter.**

**To learn more about the Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living and all coalitions participating in Plan4Health, check out the project website ([www.plan4health.us](http://www.plan4health.us)).**

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

## Results

The Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living seeks to change the approach in which comprehensive plans are updated to include considerations for health and equity. Using feedback from the community, the Coalition will create land use, design and policy guidelines for planners and public health professionals seeking to improve the physical environment of where residents live, work and play in order to increase access to healthy food and build spaces that encourage active living.

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*"Kent County is very excited about the opportunity to engage with the citizens of the county on how the built environment affects public health and identify potential policy changes that will improve the quality of life for our citizens."*

**- Mary Ellen Gray, AICP, Assistant Director for Kent County Planning Services**

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](http://www.cdc.gov/communityhealth).

**Success Stories**

<http://nccd.cdc.gov/nccdsuccessstories/>

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