

Plan4Health: A Master Pedestrian Plan for Indianapolis

"A walkable city is one that supports both healthy living and vibrant, safe, and equitable neighborhoods. This unique partnership between the City of Indianapolis, the Marion County Public Health Department, and the Health by Design coalition set its aim on assuring health and equity data is engrained in the traditional decision making processes which is a win, win, win for our residents."

*Sandra Cummings, MSW
Chronic Disease Coordinator
Marion County Public Health Department*

A Next City article released in August 2015 discussed investments made in Indianapolis to support walkability and highlighted Health by Design as a key effort in combating the community's poor health.

Success Stories



SUMMARY

Plan4Health connects communities across the country, funding work at the intersection of planning and public health. Anchored by the American Planning Association (APA) and the American Public Health Association (APHA), Plan4Health supports creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions. Health by Design, a coalition dedicated to encouraging healthy living, is developing an initiative to make Indianapolis safer and more accessible for people who walk. Strategies include implementing a comprehensive pedestrian program, adopting a pedestrian master plan, and executing a community-wide campaign to promote walking.

CHALLENGE

The 2014 County Health Rankings listed Marion County 86 out of the 92 Indiana counties in health factors and 78 in health outcomes. That year the American Fitness Index placed Indianapolis 47 out of the 50 most populous metropolitan areas in the United States based on various 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 continually increased over the last seven years; two out of every three adults are overweight or obese. Despite the fact that 67 percent of residents report living within a 10-minute walk to a park or greenway and 54 percent report living within a 10-minute walk to a full service grocery, the vast majority of residents drive to their destinations. Active transportation infrastructure either doesn't exist or remains underutilized.

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SOLUTION

Health by Design is committed to addressing the challenges residents face when it comes to walking in Indianapolis. The coalition is developing and implementing a comprehensive pedestrian program, which includes a pedestrian advisory group and the prioritization of pedestrian-related policies, procedures, and practices. Hand-in-hand with this strategy is the development and adoption of a pedestrian master plan, which includes establishing goals, processes, and a timeline for the plan and builds on the city's infrastructure investments. Bolstering these efforts is a community-wide communications campaign to promote walking.

SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS

The pedestrian program, communications campaign, and master plan are all integrated strategies that will move the community toward a greater awareness of and desire to walk. The strong connections between planning and public health professionals fostered through the Health by Design coalition are evident in the development of the Plan4Health initiative—and will continue to demonstrate to communities across Indiana how to change policies, systems and environments to make healthy living easier where people live, learn, work, and play.

Join Health by Design and the WalkWays initiative by speaking with your local leaders about the importance of walking to parks, grocery stores, and other destinations in Marion County.

If you are not in Indianapolis, start a conversation about walking in your community. For more information about all of the coalitions participating in Plan4Health, check out www.plan4health.us and join the conversation on social media with #plan4health.

RESULTS

Health by Design is leading the effort to develop a master pedestrian plan that will cover the entire county of nearly one million people. The coalition is focusing on adoption of the plan followed by plan implementation. One component of the coalition's work that played a key role in the plan development was the online tradeoff survey that Health by Design launched in October 2015 to learn more about community priorities given limited resources. The coalition far surpassed their survey response goal with over 1500 people participating, furthering the coalition's understanding of community mindsets about how, where and on what to spend limited resources.

As part of Health by Design's communication campaign, the coalition hosted open houses with over 200 total people in attendance and continues to provide opportunities for the public to share feedback. The coalition is bolstering their online presence by providing resources about the community's walkability efforts on their website (<http://indywalkways.org/>).

Plan4Health is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The views expressed in this success story 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 of Chronic Disease Prevention project at www.cdc.gov/communityhealth.

Success Stories

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