

# Draft Resource Guide

FRAMING  
QUESTIONS  
AND LINKS TO  
DATA

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# BIG IDEAS INITIATIVE

The Washington American Planning Association's (APA's) Game Changing Initiative intends to help planners bring about far-reaching and fundamental change around our state's most critical challenges. This Initiative is organized around Ten Big Ideas, which include addressing climate change, rebuilding infrastructure, protecting ecosystems, growing economies, and supporting sustainable agriculture. Planning to improve community health is also one of the Ten Big Ideas.

The Health and Planning Working Group believes planners could benefit from resources to start a conversation with decision-makers, build support, and jump start a planning effort. To this end, the Working Group has developed a user-friendly resource guide to make it easier for planners to incorporate health considerations into their words.

Please email Julie Bassuk at [julieb@makersarch.com](mailto:julieb@makersarch.com) with your comments and questions or if you would like to get involved.

# INTRODUCTION

The following pages contain a series of framing questions and corresponding links to data. Each question is from the perspective of a planner wanting to incorporate health into planning. The example messaging bullets outline possible talking points when communicating the importance of health in planning to the community. The links are meant to provide additional and supplementary information.

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## FRAMING QUESTIONS

The following questions are addressed within this document on the following pages:

1. Why should my community incorporate health into planning? 2
2. How should I begin? What data should I gather and how can I track progress? 3
3. How/Why should I complete a baseline assessment in my community? 4
4. How/Why should I encourage physical activity in my community? 5
5. How can I improve access to healthy food? 6
6. How should I incorporate health into my comprehensive plan update? 6
7. How can I provide fair access to opportunity? 7

# FRAMING QUESTIONS AND RESOURCES

## 1 WHY SHOULD MY COMMUNITY INCORPORATE HEALTH INTO PLANNING?

### Tacoma Pierce County Health Department

<http://www.tpchd.org/environment/planning-healthy-communities/healthy-community-planning-toolbox/>

### APA Game Changing Initiative

[future link to policy on health in community planning](#)

## EXAMPLE MESSAGING



- Environmental factors beyond the control of individuals such as safe places to walk, play, and be active, contribute to increase obesity rates, especially in our children.
- Local governments can enact policy and environmental initiatives that support healthy eating and active living that benefits all people including children and aging populations.



- Planning and design that encourages and enables easy access to walking, bicycling, transit, and other means of exercise in safe and inviting environments provides residents with ways to be active and get places every day.

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# 2 HOW SHOULD I BEGIN? WHAT DATA SHOULD I GATHER AND HOW CAN I TRACK PROGRESS?

## **Community Commons**

Community Commons is an interactive mapping, networking, and learning utility for the broad-based healthy, sustainable, and livable communities' movement. Registered users have FREE access to thousands of map-able geographic information systems (GIS) data layers and tables displayed at varying geographies for all communities in the United States and many more opportunities and information. The Commons is a democratized learning and innovation platform for further a systematic approach to make public data accessible for all with easy-to-understand visualizations such as maps, reports, charts, dashboards and animations, etc.

Community Commons is an initiative of Advancing the Movement, and powered by Institute for People, Place and Possibilities (IP3). In-kind and technical support has come from scores of individuals and organizations around the nation.

<http://www.communitycommons.org/>

## **Center for Disease Control (CDC)**

Designing and Building Healthy Places provides a comprehensive resource site for healthy communities planning, including a Healthy Community Design Checklist.

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/default.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/toolkit/>

## **American Planning Association's (APA)**

Planning and Community Health Center is a comprehensive resource site for research, tools, programs focused towards local government planning.

<https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/>

## **Tacoma Pierce County Health Department**

<http://www.tpchd.org/environment/planning-healthy-communities/healthy-community-planning-toolbox/>

## **Public Health Seattle and King County**

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/ehs/healthyplaces.aspx>

The site provides an overview of healthy places, resources and health indicators. It also contains community health data by jurisdiction.

## American Public Health Association (APHA)

The APHA site has Programs, resources and strategies for creating more healthy communities.  
<http://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/healthy-communities>

## Change Lab Solutions

<http://changelabsolutions.org/>

ChangeLab Solutions provides community-based solutions for America's most common and preventable diseases like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and asthma. Our solutions promote the common good by making healthier choices easier for everyone.

## Healthy People

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/default.aspx>

Healthy People provides science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans. For 3 decades, Healthy People has established benchmarks and monitored progress over time in order to: Encourage collaborations across communities and sectors, empower individuals toward making informed health decisions and to measure the impact of prevention activities. Contains many useful indicators to measure changes.

## Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

<http://www.psrc.org/growth/wctoolkit>

[Composed of planners and professionals in the fields of public health, social equity and sustainable development, this workgroup is tasked with developed planning resources to support healthier communities in South King County.](#)

## Tacoma Pierce County Health Department

<http://www.tpchd.org/environment/planning-healthy-communities/healthy-community-planning-toolbox>

Healthy communities toolbox to assist Washington state communities integrate health and equity into planning.

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## ACTIONS

to help streamline messaging and communication around health

- A list of opportunities, issues, and/or concerns about the project that you need to consider as you proceed
- A picture of how people get their information in your city
- Recommended techniques to inform and involve various audiences including events, meetings, media, locations to distribute materials, post information
- What languages you may need to translate or interpret at events
- Suggestions on who else you should talk to
- Modification of key messages if needed based on input. What 3-4 main points about this story do you want your audiences to understand? Key messages may answer the questions "why is this important?", "why should I care?", "what should I do?", and "how can I learn more?"
- Commitments to participate in your education network or advisory committee



# HOW SHOULD I COMPLETE A BASELINE ASSESSMENT IN MY COMMUNITY?

## **Leadership for Healthy Communities**

The Leadership for Healthy Communities web site provides links to databases that track healthy eating, active living and childhood obesity prevention policies and programs nationwide.

<http://www.leadershipforhealthycommunities.org/resources-mainmenu-40/databases-main-menu-117>

## **Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)**

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an annual statewide telephone surveillance system designed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). BRFSS monitors modifiable risk behaviors and other factors contributing to the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the population. The survey is conducted in all 50 states and U.S. territories. New York State has participated annually since 1985. Statewide representative samples are collected monthly and aggregated into yearly datasets. Questionnaires, datasets, survey results, documentation and much more are all available at the CDC website. New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) generated BRFSS Summary Reports are available in electronic format from 1995. Previous reports are available upon request by sending an e-mail message to [brfss@health.state.ny.us](mailto:brfss@health.state.ny.us). Available information includes:

- BRFSS Summary Reports
- Expanded Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (Expanded BRFSS)
- METRIX: NYSDOH Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System, 2009 questionnaire, data file and documentation
- Chronic Disease Prevention: Information for Action Reports

## **US Census Data**

US Census Data and the American Communities Survey Data provide information at the census tract and block group levels that include some data related to certain chronic disease risk factors, such as % minority, % Hispanic, & with income below poverty line, % zero car households, % low English proficiency, % children and seniors and others.

## **Local Jurisdictions**

Local jurisdictions can provide a wealth of GIS data related to healthy community planning. Some hospitals are also able to share community health data. Some jurisdictions can provide mapping services while others may provide data only.

- Crime and Injury Data (Police Departments)
- Accident locations and data
- Healthy food data can be derived from business licenses for food establishments, farmer's market and community gardens data
- Barriers to physical activity
- Parks, recreation and open space distribution and use data.

## **Local Health Department Data**

Local Health Departments can provide data such as community profiles with population data, health outcomes and risk factors.

# 4 HOW/WHY SHOULD I ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN MY COMMUNITY?

## **National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)**

<http://www.naccho.org/topics/HPDP/chronicdisease/lhc.cfm>

Comprehensive resource site for healthy communities planning.

## **Active Living by Design**

<http://activelivingbydesign.org/>

Investing in Healthy Community Change offers funders of all sizes and community change agents insights for investing in healthy community change.

## **Active Living Research**

<http://activelivingresearch.org/toolsandresources/all>

Active Living Research offers a range of tools and resources to help practitioners, policy-makers, and advocates create more activity-friendly environments. We have measures to assess schools, parks, streets, and other neighborhood settings to see how well they support physical activity; research summaries on how policies and environments can influence physical activity in schools, parks and recreation facilities, and other neighborhood settings; inspirational stories of real life policy and environmental change; and educational webinars, presentations, and videos. Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

## **Local Government Commission, Active Living**

<http://www.lgc.org/active-living>

Resources for Active Living and Healthy Community Planning.

# 5 HOW CAN I IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD?

**Policy Link's** compilation of food policies at local, state and federal level.

<http://www.policylink.org/focus-areas/healthy-food-access-portal>

**American Planning Association (APA) Food Interest Group (FIG)** and multiple resources on planning and food access.

<https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/fig.htm>

<https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/food.htm>

<http://www.tpchd.org/environment/planning-healthy-communities/healthy-community-planning-toolbox/>



# HOW SHOULD I INCORPORATE HEALTH INTO MY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE?

**The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department Healthy Communities Planning Toolbox** provides methods and processes that help incorporate health into community planning.

<http://www.ipa.udel.edu/healthyDEtoolkit/docs/CompPlanAssessmentTool.pdf>

<http://www.tpchd.org/environment/planning-healthy-communities/healthy-community-planning-toolbox/>

## EXAMPLE MESSAGING



- We are creating a healthy and safe place to live and work by making improvements in our City.
- We are providing safe, comfortable places to walk and affordable, healthy food.
- We are providing more choices on how to get around the City.
- We strive for a county with neighborhoods where it's safe to walk or bike, where fresh, affordable and culturally appropriate food is easily available, where schools and childcare settings provide healthy food and drinks and plenty of physical activity, and where we all can breathe smoke-free air.



- The City plans to increase access to opportunities for physical activity by creating a pedestrian and bike master plan, improving routes to schools, developing better park facilities, etc.
- The City wants your input on how to improve opportunities to walk, ride bikes, or participate in outdoor recreation.

# 7

## HOW CAN I PROVIDE FAIR ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY?

### The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

[http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/equitable\\_development\\_report.htm](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/equitable_development_report.htm)

Resource site with research and publications.

### Policy Link

<http://www.policylink.com/>

Policy Link's work is grounded in the conviction that equity – just and fair inclusion – must drive all policy decisions. Provides comprehensive resources for equity-based programs, publications, partnerships and equitable food access resources.

### Health Impact Project

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/health-impact-project>

The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is a national initiative designed to promote the use of health impact assessments (HIAs) as a decision-making tool for policymakers.

### School Siting

<http://www.caactivecommunities.org/our-projects/school-siting/>

[http://www.healcitiescampaign.org/healthy\\_zone.html](http://www.healcitiescampaign.org/healthy_zone.html)

### Healthy Zoning Regulations

[http://www.healcitiescampaign.org/healthy\\_zone.html](http://www.healcitiescampaign.org/healthy_zone.html)

## EXAMPLE MESSAGING



- Everyone in our City has the right to live in a community where they can find healthy food and safe places to walk and exercise.
- The City plans to increase access to healthy food by creating space in our parks for community gardens.



- We want our children to have access to healthy fruits and vegetables.