



KANSAS PLANNING GUIDE

Incorporating Health into Local Community Planning



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Local planning decisions are closely connected with the health of individuals and communities and can impact a wide range of public health issues. The field of planning originated to address the spread of infectious diseases and other public health issues from overcrowding, pollution, and poor sanitation in rapidly growing industrial cities.¹ Current planning efforts are increasingly being used to address emerging public health challenges of chronic diseases from a lack of physical activity and access to healthy food, in addition to improving health inequities experienced by different populations in the United States.

The early history of the planning field introduced several policies in relation to zoning, housing, and transportation, bringing together the planning and public health professions.² These tools can also be used to address current chronic health issues — including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer — and health inequities that are a result of a lack of physical activity and healthy food. This resource highlights how community health advocates and planners in Kansas can leverage local community planning activities to create community conditions supporting equitable and meaningful access to affordable healthy food and opportunities to be physically active.

How to Use This Guide

Community health advocates and planners can use this resource to explore how local community planning efforts to support the health and well-being of Kansans by incorporating public health goals into traditional planning elements. The guide includes specific examples from existing local community plans in Kansas to illustrate how language around health can be incorporated into the plans. This resource is merely a starting point to provide guidance on how community health advocates working across Kansas can better leverage local community planning to advance efforts to build a healthier Kansas.

Using Local Community Planning to Promote Health

There is a growing interest in Kansas and across the United States on the link between health and community planning. Long-term community planning decisions made around land use, housing, transportation, agriculture, economic development, and the environment impact how people live, learn, work, and play. These factors affect the overall health and well-being of community members. Incorporating public health priorities into local planning efforts, including comprehensive plans, Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) and Health in All Policies (HiAP) initiatives can reduce structural barriers to improving the health and well-being of individuals and local communities in Kansas.

Comprehensive Plans

DEFINITION: Comprehensive Plan

The American Planning Association defines a local comprehensive plan as “the adopted official statement of a legislative body of a local government that sets forth (in words, maps, illustrations, and/or tables) goals, policies, and guidelines intended to direct the present and future physical, social, and economic development that occurs within its planning jurisdiction and that includes a unified physical design for the public and private development of land and water.”³

Please note: Kansas state law does not define a comprehensive plan.

A comprehensive plan is a tool that can be used by city, county, regional, and metropolitan planning agencies in Kansas to set the framework for long-range, broad, and specific aspirations and goals for their community.⁴ A comprehensive plan (or comp plan for short) usually

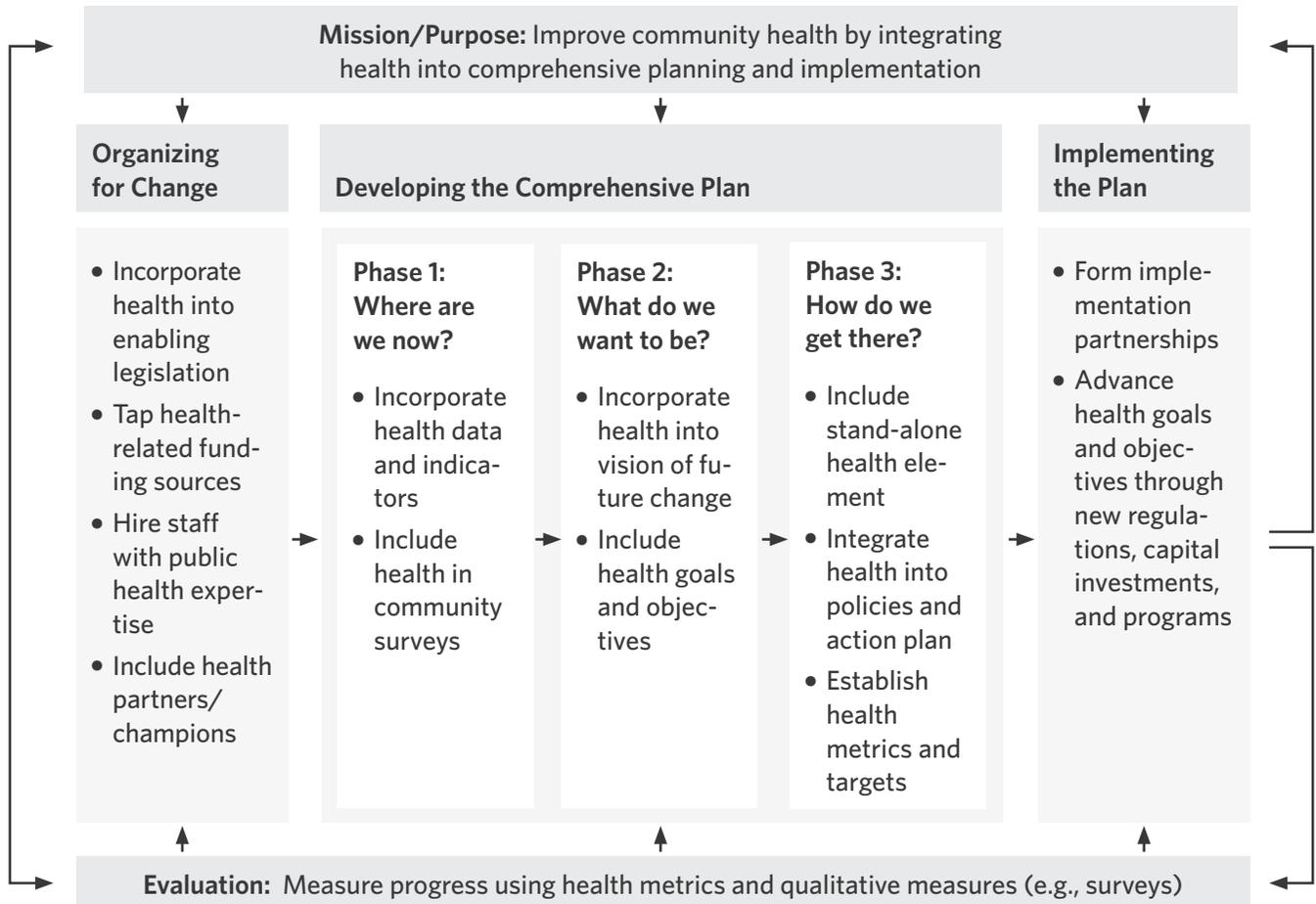
identifies policies, guidelines, and resources needed to move the community in the direction of its stated goals and identify actions for implementation. Local governments use comprehensive plans to address a wide variety of interrelated socioeconomic and environmental issues in their jurisdiction that impact the health of community members. These plans help shape decision-making when planning for the future of the community, typically focusing on a period of 20 to 30 years.⁵

While Kansas state law does not define the term “comprehensive plan”, local Kansas communities address a wide range of community needs and priorities as part of their comprehensive planning process. Community issues and priorities included in a comp plan are then incorporated into local laws, government policies and procedures, and resource allocation.⁶ Comprehensive planning may include topics as diverse as transportation, housing, agriculture, economic development, the environment, utilities, business development, food access, and other aspects of the built environment.⁷ Comp plans often dedicate specific chapters to different topic areas. Comprehensive plans also often build off of and incorporate other community planning documents, such as master bicycle and pedestrian plans, subdivision plans, park plans, affordable housing plans, and food systems plans, to name a few.

Comprehensive plans can impact a community’s natural environment, built environment, recreational spaces, housing, and community design. Plans can include policy recommendations that preserve farmlands and support community gardens and pollinator-friendly environments in local communities. Comp plans can support the inclusion of specific types of healthy food access in different zoning districts throughout the community. For example, comp plans can support the development of farmers’ markets and grocery stores and affordable public transportation, especially for those who do not own automobiles, to create opportunities for community members to make healthier choices around where they get their food and what kind of food they eat. Comprehensive plans can also propose policies and strategies for improving access to bicycling and walking, parks and trails, and recreational settings that can help foster an active lifestyle among community members.

The American Planning Association’s Comprehensive Planning for Health Process Model provides a valuable framework for how health priorities can be addressed in designing the comprehensive planning process, structuring the plan itself, and implementing it.

Comprehensive Planning for Health Process Model



Source: *Healthy Plan Making*, Am. PLANNING ASS'N 36, available at https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/research/public-health/pdf/healthyplanningreport.pdf.

Health Impact Assessments

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process used to examine the potential health impacts of proposed projects, policies, and planning decisions on transportation, agriculture, housing, food access, and other community priorities. The HIA process typically employs “a combination of procedures, methods, and tools” and takes a collaborative approach that involves a diverse range of experts, decision-makers, and community stakeholders.⁸ An HIA can also be a valuable tool for assessing the impact of planning decisions and proposed policies and government actions on populations experiencing health disparities.⁹ The recommendations offered by an HIA can help planning agencies identify the positive and negative health effects of proposed policies and make informed decisions around creating local plans that lead to positive health outcomes for all.

Using Health Impact Assessments in Planning

In 2013, the Kansas Health Institute, together with other community stakeholders, conducted a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) in Wichita, Kansas. The HIA examined how proposed plans for improving Wichita's transit system could affect the health of city residents and offered evidence-based recommendations to minimize potential negative health outcomes. Specifically, the HIA explored health factors in relation to access to healthcare, recreational resources, and food sources; air quality; pedestrian access and physical activity; secondhand smoke exposure; and other community features.¹⁰

Health in All Policies

Local planning decisions can benefit from using a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach when evaluating possible goals and actions as part of the planning process. HiAP is a "collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by incorporating health considerations into decision-making across sectors and policy areas."¹¹ Taking a HiAP approach to planning can help ensure that health and equity considerations are embedded into local government decision-making processes, community goals, and policy implementation. This approach can help local planners formally and systematically integrate health considerations outside of the health sector and across all elements of planning.

Addressing Health Equity Through Local Planning

Many populations across Kansas face serious issues related to health inequities. Most often, low-income residents, communities of color, older adults, and individuals with disabilities have fewer opportunities to achieve optimal health. In addition, health inequities may be present as a result of where an individual lives. For example, those living in suburban and urban areas often have greater access to healthy food and recreational facilities and sidewalks supporting physical activity than rural residents, leading to health inequities experienced by rural residents. Populations experiencing health inequities and their specific needs may not be recognized if they are not included in decision-making around community planning goals, implementation policies, programs, and resource allocation. It is important to explicitly and intentionally consider social justice and equity and include populations experiencing health inequities in the local planning process to ensure community planning goals and policy recommendations meet the needs of those experiencing poor health outcomes as a result of community design, access to resources, and other local policy decisions.

DEFINITION: Health Equity

Health Equity is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.¹²

Public health advocates and planners can work together to address health inequities by including impacted communities in identifying priorities and long-term goals. Active participation by impacted communities can help ensure that health- and equity-focused goals are integrated throughout local planning efforts. Taking an equitable planning approach to creating community environments and infrastructure can increase access to healthy food and reduce food insecurity, create conditions supporting active lifestyles, reduce rates of preventable diseases, and improve the health and well-being of all Kansans.



Guiding Principles for Integrating Health and Equity Into Comprehensive Plans

In 2015, the American Planning Association (APA) developed comprehensive plan standards recognizing the impact that planning activities can play in creating health inequities or improving health outcomes in local communities. The standards developed by the APA define a set of principles, processes, and attributes that can be implemented through a set of best practices. “[I]nterwoven equity” is a principle recommended by the standards framework to ensure that there is “fairness and equity in providing for the housing, services, health, safety, and livelihood needs of all citizens and groups.”¹³ In addition, these standards specifically recognize the need to identify and address public health needs through the “healthy community” principle that supports “provisions for healthy foods, physical activity, access to recreation, health care, environmental justice, and safe neighborhoods.”¹⁴ A scoring matrix and recommended planning practices for incorporating these principles into comprehensive plans can be found on APA’s website, at http://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/sustainingplaces/complanstandards/pdf/scoringmatrix.pdf.

Comprehensive Planning in Kansas

Kansas state law enables cities and counties to enact and enforce planning and zoning laws and regulations “for the protection of the public health, safety and welfare.”¹⁵ The governing body of any city or the board of county commissioners of any county is authorized under Kansas law to create a planning commission for the city or county by adopting an ordinance (in the case of a city) or a resolution (in the case of a county).¹⁶ Once a planning commission has been established for a city, the commission may develop a comprehensive plan for the city and any unincorporated territory located outside of the city but within the same county in which the city is located.¹⁷ A county planning commission is authorized under Kansas law to develop a comprehensive plan for the coordinated development of the county.¹⁸ When a city creates a comprehensive plan that affects property located outside the corporate limits of the city, the city is required to give the county written notice of the plan.¹⁹ On the other hand, if a county creates a comprehensive plan that affects property located within a three-mile radius of the corporate limits of a city, the county must give written notice of the plan to the city.²⁰

While unlikely, it is possible for a city and county in Kansas to develop a comprehensive plan that affects the same area of land. This could lead to conflict if the city and county plans impacting a specific area of land identify different goals for the same land. The legal requirement for counties and cities to notify each other if their plans include areas that could overlap should help cities and counties avoid this type of situation. However, if a conflict between a city plan

and a county plan occurs, Kansas law provides direction regarding how this conflict can be resolved through the process of developing specific zoning and subdivision regulations.²¹

If a city or county decides to create a comprehensive plan, Kansas state law directs the planning commission to include “comprehensive surveys and studies of past and present conditions and trends relating to land use, population and building intensity, public facilities, transportation and transportation facilities, economic conditions, natural resources,” and other elements.²² The comp plan must also include a set of recommended policies for the development or redevelopment of the city or county proposed by the planning commission.²³ At the same time, a city or county may be able to use its home rule authority to exempt itself from the planning commission’s recommendations, so long as the city or county’s decision is not arbitrary or unreasonable.²⁴ See the discussion in the zoning section, below.

How Is a Comprehensive Plan Adopted?

While Kansas law indicates that the planning commission may adopt or amend the comprehensive plan in whole or in part by resolution, a comprehensive plan will not be effective until it is approved by the local governing body.²⁵ A public hearing is required before adoption of the plan by the planning commission. A notice of the public hearing has to be published at least once in an official city or county newspaper at least 20 days prior to the hearing.²⁶ A local governing body is the governing body of a city or the board of county commissioners.²⁷ This includes the mayor and council, mayor and commissioners, and board of commissioners as the affected city or county may require.²⁸ Once a comprehensive plan has been approved through the respective ordinance or resolution, local governments in Kansas have the authority to adopt, amend, or override the recommendations set forth by the planning commission. If the governing body makes the decision to override the planning commission’s recommendation, it must not abuse its discretion in doing so; meaning the decision must have a reasonable basis.²⁹

How Are Interlocal Agreements Used in Local Planning?

Two or more cities or counties in Kansas can establish a regional or metropolitan joint planning commission by entering into a written interlocal agreement to jointly perform planning powers and responsibilities.³⁰ The cities and counties may also use interlocal agreements to adopt a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan created through an interlocal agreement is required to include a provision attesting that the comprehensive plan is consistent with the Kansas legal requirements regarding the adoption of a comprehensive plan.³¹



How Often Are Comprehensive Plans Updated?

In Kansas, planning commissions are required to review and reconsider comprehensive plans at least once a year and propose any amendments, extensions, or additions to the plan or any part of the plan as necessary. Comprehensive plans can be amended as a whole or in parts. The required process for adopting the amended plan or part of the plan, is the same as the process for adopting the original plan.³²

Updating a Comprehensive Plan

The City of Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas, are currently updating their community's Comprehensive Plan. Originally created in 1992, this comp plan update seeks "to ensure that the plan remains current with the changing environment of the community and the needs and desires of its citizens."³³ The plan applies to Lawrence and unincorporated Douglas County. A Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing and guiding the process for amending the existing plan along with the city-county professional planning staff.³⁴ After months of community input, the committee published an Issue Action Report to highlight the principle issues to be addressed in the plan update. For instance, the report identified that the existing comprehensive plan "[did] not provide a strong policy foundation" for supporting local food system development and recommended that the Douglas County Food Policy Council create a Food Systems Plan to incorporate by reference into the updated comprehensive plan, upon adoption.³⁵

What Happens When a Comprehensive Plan Is Adopted?

According to Kansas law, approved comprehensive plans "constitute the basis or guide for public action to ensure a coordinated and harmonious development or redevelopment which will best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare as well as wise and efficient expenditure of public funds."³⁶ If there is a comprehensive plan in place, the Kansas Supreme Court has held that local governing bodies should consider the plan when making development decisions, even though governing bodies are not legally bound by the comprehensive plan.³⁷

Once a comprehensive plan is adopted, a city or county must get certification from the planning commission before constructing any public improvement, facility, or utility that is addressed in the comprehensive plan.³⁸ If the planning commission issues a report indicating that the public improvement, facility, or utility is not in conformance with the comprehensive plan, the city or county governing body overrides the planning commission. If this happens, the comprehensive plan will be automatically amended for the area affected by the public improvement, facility, or utility.³⁹ However, as indicated below, a city or county governing body must have a legitimate reason for overriding the decision of the planning commission and cannot be unreasonable or arbitrary when making zoning decisions that do not follow the recommendation of the planning commission.⁴⁰

Implementing Local Community Plans

There are several land regulation tools used by local governments to implement local community plans, including zoning and subdivision regulations and design guidelines.

Zoning Regulations

In Kansas, the governing body of any city may enact zoning regulations via ordinance and the board of county commissioners of any county may enact zoning regulations via resolution.⁴¹ A local government can revise its zoning ordinances once a local plan is adopted so that zoning regulations reflect the plan's goals and policies.⁴²

DEFINITION: Zoning

Zoning is the division of city or county land by legislative regulation into districts ("zones") for different uses, such as for open space, residential space, commercial space, or other purposes.⁴³

A Kansas city may establish zoning regulations for the area within the city limits as well as for property located within a three-mile radius of the city, so long as this area is not already subject to county zoning regulations. However, a city in Kansas is never allowed to enact zoning regulations governing land located more than half of the distance to another city, unless an interlocal agreement with the other city is in place providing otherwise. If a city proposes to adopt zoning regulations for land outside the city limits, written notification must be given to the county at least 60 days before such action is taken.⁴⁴ A county has the authority to establish zoning regulations for all, or any portion of, the unincorporated area of the county.⁴⁵ If a county adopts zoning regulations governing the same area of land zoned by a city, all city zoning regulations that are in place as well as the city's authority to enact zoning regulations for that area of land terminate on the date that the county passes its zoning regulations.⁴⁶

Zoning regulations can be amended to remove barriers to allow the development of parks and playgrounds to encourage community members to participate in physical activity and to increase access to healthy food. For example, the comprehensive plan for Garden City, Kansas, includes the following recommendation as an implementation strategy relating to land use: "Update zoning ordinance to support community gardening in single family zoning districts."⁴⁷ Consistency between local plans and the zoning ordinances can contribute to the effective implementation of the plan.

Legal Factors Guiding Local Zoning Decisions in Kansas

The Supreme Court of Kansas, in a triad of cases between 1971 and 1984, provides direction to cities and counties regarding how local zoning decisions should be made, including the impact of local plans on these decisions.

Impact of Local Plans on Zoning Decisions

The governing body of a city or county is not obligated to follow the recommendations of land use plans. At the same time, local land use plans carry advisory weight that the city or county must consider when making zoning decisions.⁴⁸ As a result, these governments must have a legitimate basis for disregarding the zoning recommendations included in a local land use plan when making a zoning decision.⁴⁹

The Supreme Court of Kansas demonstrates this in *Coughlin v. City of Topeka, Kansas* (1971). In this case, the city commission of Topeka, Kansas, sought to re-zone one block of a residential district to accommodate a medical office facility. The planning commission did not approve an application requesting this change. Shortly after the planning commission's decision, the city commission voted to approve the application and passed an ordinance making the zoning change. The Kansas Supreme Court ruled for the group of homeowners that sued Topeka's city commission holding that the city's re-zoning ordinance was unreasonable.⁵⁰

General Factors Guiding Zoning Decisions

Even if a city or county does not have a local plan, zoning decisions must reflect a reasonable assessment of local conditions and needs. The Supreme Court of Kansas provided direction to cities and counties in the *Golden v. Overland Park* (1978) case regarding what is "reasonable" by providing a list of factors cities and counties should consider when making zoning decisions. The factors from the *Golden* case include:⁵¹

- the character of the neighborhood;
- the zoning and uses of property nearby;
- the suitability of the subject property for the uses to which it has been restricted
- the extent to which removal of the restrictions will detrimentally affect nearby property;
- the length of time the subject property has remained vacant as zoned; and

(continued)

Legal Factors Guiding Local Zoning Decisions in Kansas (continued)

- the relative gain to the public health, safety, and welfare by the destruction of the value of plaintiff's property as compared to the hardship imposed upon the individual landowner.
- a consideration of the recommendations of permanent or professional staff, and
- the conformance of the requested change to the adopted or recognized master plan being utilized by the city [or county].

The Supreme Court of Kansas illustrates the use of these factors in *Taco Bell v. City of Mission, Kansas* (1984). In this case, the planning commission and the city council denied the initial request to construct a drive-thru restaurant on a vacant site that was previously zoned for retail development.⁵² The Court allowed Taco Bell's zoning request to move forward, determining that the denial of the zoning request was not reasonable based on the factors identified in *Golden*.

Subdivision Regulations

Once a comprehensive plan is in place, local governments can also adopt and amend their regulations governing the subdivision of land.⁵³ These regulations define how property will be divided and require the proper design for new developments, such as streets, open spaces, parks, water, and other services, facilities, and improvements.⁵⁴

DEFINITION: Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations divide "a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two or more parts for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of sale or building development, including resubdivision."⁵⁵

As with zoning regulations, a city may adopt subdivision regulations for land located within the city limits as well as land within a three-mile radius of the city that does not extend more than half the distance to another city. A county may adopt subdivision regulations for all, or any portion of, the unincorporated area of the county.⁵⁶ If a city proposes to adopt subdivision regulations affecting land outside of the city which is already governed by the county, a joint commission for subdivision regulation must be created. A joint commission must also be created if the county adopts subdivision regulations for land that is already being regulated by a city.



The joint commission is required to include three members of the county planning commission and three members of the city planning commission. The joint commission for subdivision regulation is then given the authority to adopt subdivision regulations for the land located within the area of joint regulation.⁵⁷

Design Guidelines

In addition to zoning and subdivision regulations, design guidelines can be a beneficial tool when implementing a local community plan. Design guidelines generally apply to buildings, parking lots, streets, sidewalks, building siting, trails, crossings, and signage. These guidelines can also be used to meet community goals for stormwater management, preservation of natural areas, water and energy efficiency, and pollution prevention.⁵⁸

Adopting Design Guidelines to Shape New Development

Overland Park, Kansas, has adopted three sets of design guidelines: mixed-use, architectural, and site design standards. These guidelines are meant to be used in tandem with the city's "Unified Development Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan to establish expectations for new development and redevelopment in the city."⁵⁹

Understanding the Planning Process

Communities across Kansas use local plans to enhance the long-term sustainability and prosperity of their communities. Local plans operate on different scales across rural, suburban, and urban areas in Kansas. When using local plans to support policy change for promoting healthier environments, it is important to answer the following questions, as a starting point:

- Does the community have an existing comprehensive plan or other local plan guiding government decision making?
- Who is involved in the local planning process?
- How much are existing plans currently used to direct development decisions?
- Is there a process for updating, editing, amending, or revising local plans?
- Are there any discussions regarding the development of new community plans?
- Are other sector-specific plans (master bicycle and pedestrian plans, park plans, food systems plans, etc.) incorporated by reference into the comprehensive plan?
- If the community does not have a comprehensive plan or other types of planning documents, why? Is there any community interest in developing local plans?

How to Find Local Community Plans in Kansas

Plans developed by local government units are typically available on government websites and usually housed under the “Development” or “Planning” page.

Understanding the Local Environment

When planning for the health of a community, it is pivotal to understand the local environment. Each community has needs, opportunities, and objectives that are unique to its locality. The needs and aspirations of communities in rural areas can be significantly different from those of communities in urban areas. It is also important to take into consideration the “differences among rural areas.”⁶⁰ For example, rural areas with smaller and/or shrinking populations can have social and economic concerns that are different from other rural areas. Therefore, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to planning across Kansas.

Engaging Community Members

Engaging community members throughout the planning process allows them to have an opportunity to identify their needs, articulate the challenges they face, and help drive effective community solutions that will impact where they live, learn, work, and play. Public participation throughout the planning and implementation process is key to a successful local plan that represents and serves the interests and values of community members. It is important that community visioning is based on the needs, concerns, and aspirations of the community and that strategies and solutions come from the community. Community needs and interests, especially those of underrepresented communities and those experiencing health inequities, should be taken into account when envisioning a community's future development.

For example, one study on farmers and land use decisions in Kansas indicated that: "Given the ruralness of much of the state of Kansas, and the ongoing prominence of agriculture throughout it, farmers are a vital aspect of these small communities."⁶¹ This study recognized the importance of engaging farmers in the planning process to ensure that their perceptions and aspirations are reflected in planning goals and policy recommendations.

The Community Planning Process

The City of Gardner, Kansas, included a summary of their community planning process in the city's comprehensive plan. A few aspects of the city's planning process include:

*Project initiation and data collection; community outreach and issues identification; analysis of existing conditions; community visioning workshop; preparation of preliminary visions, goals, and objectives; development of city-wide plans; creation of draft plan document; and review and adoption.*⁶²

The city also organized a range of public outreach events with different community groups, conducted key stakeholder interviews, and distributed online questionnaires to obtain public input.⁶³

Integrating Health Priorities Into Local Community Plans

There are many approaches that local governments in Kansas have taken to include public health priorities in local plans. Some plans explicitly address public health related goals and strategies as part of the goals of specific chapters, while others include separate health-focused goals or chapters. Below are a few examples from Kansas that illustrate how goals and strategies for increasing access to healthy food and improving physical activity have been integrated into local plans.

Kansas Local Community Plans That Incorporate Health

Manhattan (population 52,281)⁶⁴

Chapter 8 of the **Manhattan Urban Area Comprehensive Plan (2015–2035)** includes the following guiding principles, goals, and policies to provide opportunities for physical activity and support healthy lifestyles.

“Guiding Principle HN-3: Expanded opportunities for residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles

Goal HN-3.1: Support community health and well-being

HN-3.1A Pedestrian and bicycle networks

HN-3.1B Indoor and outdoor recreation

HN-3.1C Local food systems

HN-3.1D Multi-modal accessibility

HN-3.1E Coordination with health and human service providers.”⁶⁵

Newton (population 19,132)⁶⁶

The **ReNewton Comprehensive Plan (2010–2030)** identifies “Healthy Living” as a shared community vision. This vision includes the following goals:

“Promote ease of access for citizens with disabilities or special needs;

Promote residents’ health through local land use, transportation, and recreation planning and development;

Create collaborative partnerships among city officials, public health professionals, and nonprofit organizations to promote community and individual well-being;

Foster a mindset within the community that encourages individual wellness, active lifestyles, and healthy living as part of our community identity and way of life; and

Preserve, protect, and enhance the viability and integrity of high-quality community hospital services, including emergency room services, for the benefit of all segments of the population, with special concern for the most vulnerable segments of the population.”⁶⁷

Additionally, Chapter 5 of the comprehensive plan, “Creating a Livable and Healthy Community,” discusses several goals, future strategies, and policies around increasing quality of life, community health and wellness, cultural diversity, and social cohesion.⁶⁸

Wichita (population 382,368)⁶⁹

The City of Wichita developed a community goal to provide safe and accessible parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities to help create healthy residents in the city’s **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (2016)**. The Plan’s vision statement highlights the city’s aspirations for creating a healthy parks and recreation system: “We envision an interconnected and accessible system of vibrant public spaces, friendly neighborhood parks, thriving natural areas and diverse recreation opportunities that make our city a healthy and active place in which to live, work and play.”⁷⁰ Wichita’s **Bicycle Master Plan** also includes several strategies to help create bicycle-friendly environments in schools and workplaces and promote bicycling as a mainstream activity to improve the health and physical fitness among residents.⁷¹



Action Steps for Implementing Local Community Plans

Implementation is key to the success of a local community in achieving a plan's stated goals. The healthy and systematic development of localities will depend on the effective implementation of the comprehensive plan. Key components of successful implementation of plans include:

- Public participation and community engagement;
- Coordination among business, regional, and state-wide partners;
- Clearly defined action steps and detailed timelines (for example, ongoing, short-term, mid-term, and long-term) for implementing specific goals and objectives of the plan;
- Prioritization of strategies and action steps;
- Clearly identified entities responsible for implementing the identified action steps (state agencies and departments, private sector groups, developers, residents, and other key stakeholders) and potential funding sources;
- Regular reporting of progress and challenges in implementation to the planning agency and local governing body to evaluate the implementation process;
- Regular opportunities to reassess and revise the plan based on changing circumstances and lessons learned from implementation efforts; and
- Dissemination of information and meaningful communication between the local governmental agencies and the general public.

The implementation of a plan is not the end of a community's planning efforts. A set of clearly defined action steps can provide a guide for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan. Monitoring and evaluating plans can help assess progress made towards achieving the identified goals and create a framework for future amendments and actions.

Implementing Public Health Goals

The City of Manhattan's comprehensive plan includes an Action Plan Matrix with required steps for implementing the comp plan's goal to create "healthy, livable neighborhoods" and expand opportunities for residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles. The matrix also identifies lead and partner agencies responsible for implementing the identified action steps and the priority of the actions.

Action: Review and revise Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, as may be necessary, to ensure that they do not create any unreasonable barriers to local food production.

Lead: City Community Development, Riley County Planning and Development, and Pottawatomie County Zoning.

Involve: City Commission, Pottawatomie and Riley County Board of County Commission.

Priority: 2 High priority — to be implemented within one or two years after Plan adoption.⁷²

The successful planning, adoption, and implementation of local plans can direct the growth of a healthy and sustainable community. Interlacing strategies and policies that address health inequities and also support healthy food access and physical activity with other elements of community planning can ensure that Kansas communities are positioned to improve health outcomes for all Kansans.

Endnotes

- 1 *Historical Perspective*, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES BY DESIGN, <http://www.healthycommunitiesbydesign.org/Content/10052/HistoricalPerspective.html> (last visited May 16, 2017).
- 2 Anna Ricklin & Nick Kushner, *Healthy Plan Making*, AM. PLANNING Ass'N 6 (n.d.), available at https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/research/publichealth/pdf/healthyplanningreport.pdf.
- 3 *Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook, Chapter 7: Local Planning*, AM. PLANNING Ass'N (2002), <https://www.planning.org/growingsmart/guidebook/seven01.htm#7101>.
- 4 KAN. STAT. §§ 12-744, 12-747(a) (2016).

- 5 Kimberley Hodgson, *Planning for Food Access and Community-Based Food Systems*, AM. PLANNING ASS'N (2012), available at https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/research/foodaccess/pdf/foodaccessreport.pdf.
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