How Health Happened—Envisioning Public Health in Comprehensive Plans
STORIES FROM LOVELAND, LONGMONT, ARVADA...AND BEYOND!
What we’ll cover...

• How to get health language and health outcomes into a comprehensive plan – strategies that were tried and tested.

• How to work with diverse stakeholders including public health professionals and health advocates.

• Implementation strategies and what potential future impacts/improvements might look like in these communities as a result of health in the comprehensive plan.
Why is it important?
1 in 2 Adults in the US has a chronic disease
1 in 4 Adults in the US has two or more

CHRONIC DISEASES
Leading Causes of Death, Disability, and Health Care Costs

- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Chronic Lung Diseases
- Stroke
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Type 2 Diabetes

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/infographic/nccdphp.htm
In 2016, Colorado has the lowest adult obesity rate (22.3%) and the lowest rate of physical inactivity (15.8%).

Source: http://stateofobesity.org/states/co/
In 2016, Colorado’s combined overweight and obesity rate for ages 10 to 17 year olds was 27.2%

Source: [http://stateofobesity.org/states/co/](http://stateofobesity.org/states/co/)
Rates vary significantly throughout the state.

Adult Obesity (Percentage of adults that report a BMI of 30 or more)

Source: http://www.countyhealthrankings.org
We can change unhealthy behaviors...
The way we plan our communities influences health risk behaviors...
What if all of our plans, policies and programs were developed with public health in mind?
Opportunities for Public Health in the Comprehensive Plan

• Active transportation
• Active and healthy living
• Healthy food access
• Access to health and wellness services
• Integrated land use pattern
Initiating the conversation can be challenging...

- Divide in health knowledge and awareness
- Planners, health professionals, and others not always coordinated on health and wellness issues
- Elected officials not always convinced that health considerations “belong” in a comprehensive plan
- Different perspectives on roles and responsibilities
Potential roles for local communities

Build a coalition of health partners

- Health care and social service providers
- Public health organizations
- Transportation providers
- Public safety providers
- Other planners
- Partner agencies
- Community at large
Potential roles for local communities

Adopt supportive policies and regulations

- Mixed-use and transit-oriented development
- Complete streets/multimodal connectivity
- Parks and recreation
- Access to health care and support services
- Age-in-place
- Safety
- Complete neighborhoods
- Food production, sales and processing
Potential roles for local communities

Establish a mechanism to track progress on key health indicators over time

- Are we moving toward our desired outcomes/targets?
- What’s working well?
- Where are potential adjustments needed?
The Power of the Plan

Opportunity to integrate health at all stages of the process:

- Initial Ground Work
- Community/Stakeholder Engagement
- Plan Development
- Implementation
Case Studies

- Arvada
- Loveland
- Longmont
Community Preparation & Ground Work

- **National Context:** Affordable Care Act beginning to be implemented; high level of suspicion and anxiety in community.

- **State Context:** One of the first major Colorado cities to make health an element in their comprehensive plan.

- **City Context:** Health not in City Council Goals, City Strategic Plan or 2008 Comprehensive Plan.
Community Preparation & Ground Work

- JeffCo County-Wide Community Health Assessment prepared in 2013, provided baseline and issues for Comprehensive Plan
- Kick-off with March 2013 ULI Panel: *Healthy Places, Designing a Healthy Arvada*.
- Initiated Comprehensive Planning process in July 2013. Staff led public health element.
- Received a 2013-2016, $1 million Community Health Foundation grant, focus on health disparities and infrastructure in southeast Arvada.
Community Engagement

• Vocabulary important!

• Nexus between health and land use not clear; approach stakeholders from their interests: “trails,” “agriculture,” etc.

• Do not underestimate the importance of goodwill and education

• Key Partners: Jefferson County Public Health, Arvada Parks Advisory Committee, Gold Line Advisory Committee, Arvada Sustainability Committee, Apex Park & Recreation District, Jefferson County Schools, Arvada Urban Renewal Authority, Bicycle Colorado
The Draft Plan and Adoption

- Standalone health element not supported by Planning Commission; policies redistributed throughout other elements.
- Codified health supportive vision, goals, and policies without emphasizing the word “health”.
- Grassroot and Coalition support critical!
- Established a new health policy framework for subsequent plans and programs.
Policy Implementation

2016 – Rose Chavez, Healthy Places Coordinator named a “Public Health Champion” and City was awarded LiveWell Colorado's highest recognition: Elite Status
Program Implementation

By the end of the Colorado Health Foundation Grant in 2016...

- 125 healthy programs, events and activities
- 6 Active Living Community Mini-Grants
- 150 Pedestrian Focused Way Finding Signs
- 75 Community-Led Bike Rides and Walks
Program Implementation

By the end of the Colorado Health Foundation Grant in 2016...

- 59 New Bike Racks, 2 Bike Corrals, and a Bike Training Facility
- $3M Leveraged to Further Improve the Community
- 2 Retrofitted and Activated Parks
- Gold Line Station Pedestrian connections improved
The Loveland Story—
The Value of Partnership and Patience

KATIE GUTHRIE & KARL BARTON
Foundation

- Do the groundwork / Spend the time
  - Create Loveland was the result of a nearly 10 year process and partnership
- Be prepared for: skepticism / false starts
- Hone your message / Know Your Audience
  - Safety
  - “Choice within a framework”
- Find community allies and seek technical assistance
Foundation

• Started in Loveland in 2006 with LiveWell Colorado support
• Focused on HEAL and making the connection between health and the built environment understandable and accessible
These efforts led to diverse partnerships and lasting relationships:
- 3 City departments
- Loveland Housing Authority
- 3 Boards/Commissions
- Aging in Place

Partnership with City’s Planning Dept was well developed, so when comprehensive plan update process was beginning, CanDo had a place at the table.
Format

• RFQ-RFP goal: to incorporate health language and health outcomes in the comp plan from the very beginning
• Support & compliment City’s public outreach and engagement efforts
Format

• Have a clear idea of “ends”
• Be agnostic on the “means”
  – Dedicated health chapter? Or integrated?
• Be flexible – ready to go where the public interest takes you
  – Recreation access, Food Access & Safety
Implementation

Although the LiveWell funding sunsetted, this work continues...

• A city planner in the Public Works Department
• With a permanent FTE, my task is to continue applying a health lens to public infrastructure projects and processes

• Larimer County Department of Health and Environment’s Built Environment Team
• With CCPD funding, their task is to build a county-wide coalition, provide TA, and support community engagement
Implementation

• Public Works will help put the comprehensive plan into action through:
  – Capital projects that consider all modes and all users
  – Policies and language opportunities when the 2035 Transportation Plan and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan are updated in 2018
Implementation

• Look to continue partnerships
  – City should not be in this alone

• Don’t forget the standard tools
  – Health should be integrated, not stand alone
  – Loveland: Unified Development Code, Capital Planning, County Data Working group
Implementation!

Goldfish Justice  Art in Public Places

Telephone Pedestal
The Longmont Story...
The Power of Engagement

ERIN FOSDICK
Building a Foundation

• The Journey
• Community Conversations
• Making Progress
Engaging the Community

• Partners
• Advocates
• Elected Officials
• Stories and Surprises
Building Support Through Engagement

Approx. 17,000 People Reached!
Creating the Plan

- Data + Community feedback
- Consensus around terms, approach, roles, etc.
- Systems Approach
- Frequent check-ins with decision makers
Plan Outcomes

• Guiding Principles, Goals, Policies
• Related Efforts Supporting Positive Health Outcomes
  – Envision Longmont Aging Well
  – Sustainability Plan
  – Affordable Housing Strategy
Implementation

- Action Plan & ELITe
- Enhanced Multiuse Corridor Plan
- Development Code
- Budget & CIP
Lessons Learned
Lessons Learned

• Prepare to be challenged...it may take time to build support for new ideas
• Find a way to make health relevant to potential sceptics in the context of your community
• Engage and build support among health advocates in the community
• Recognize the power of the Plan – but also be clear about limitations
• Be flexible
Discussion & Questions