

HEALTHY SUFFOLK

Plan of Work 2018-19

Strategic Focus One: Municipal Policy Gap Analysis

Healthy Suffolk will partner with the City of Suffolk to:

- identify a model healthy community policy framework
- to identify existing municipal policies
- to identify 'gaps' in existing policies
- to develop a set of policy priorities.

Actions: Apr -- Sep

1. HS will convene its Coalition and city leadership to review community health factors and model policies.
2. HS will provide model policy resources on its web-based portal.
3. HS will convene and interview key stakeholder groups and city department officials to identify specific areas where policy implementation could improve the health and wellbeing of the community and which health indicators can be improved through municipal policy implementation. Specific queries and data to be gathered during interviews and surveys:
 - a. Are there any existing or newly forming interagency or city led policy initiatives that have potential health implications?
 - b. What single agency (department) initiatives would benefit from health policy integration with additional agencies/departments?
 - c. Are any city departments going through a strategic plan process that have implications on the health of the community?
 - d. Is there a new or ongoing process where health metrics could be added?
 - e. Are there particular health issues of significant concern to community groups as evidenced by needs assessment data or other community input mechanisms where the application of municipal health policies would be beneficial?

Actions: Oct --Dec

1. HS and the City will analyze findings and develop draft recommendations.
2. Draft recommendations will be posted on the HS portal for review and comment.

Actions: Jan – Mar 2019

1. City leadership will review the draft recommendations and provide comment.
2. The final report will be prepared and presented to City leadership.

Year One Reportable Outcomes:

1. A baseline study of existing policies and identified indicators to be addressed at the municipal level to improve the health of the community.
2. A recommended policy framework to be implemented by the City of Suffolk with clearly identify policies and health indicators/metrics to be impacted.

Strategic Focus Two: Healthy Eating - Create a healthy food culture in the City of Suffolk

- Establish a Suffolk Food Council to address food policies in the City of Suffolk, engaging community groups, the business community, the religious community, civic/cultural organizations, economic development, and the schools.
- Expand awareness and education on how improved access to fresh, affordable food aids healthy lifestyles, contributes to the management and prevention of chronic diseases, and prevents obesity.

Deliverable: Adopt a comprehensive plan for the City to address food access and food insecurity.

Potential policy areas to be addressed:

- adopt vending policies in public and school buildings;
- promote healthy food policies in churches and civic organizations;
- identify opportunities to mitigate the effects of food deserts (this issue needs further study to understand the presence and impact in Suffolk);
- address food insecurity/hunger in targeted populations;
- expand acceptance of SNAP;
- expand community gardens, mobile markets, and food pantry programs;
- improve Farmer's Markets (accessibility, affordability, year-round/indoor options);
- incorporate nutritional education/cooking lessons and health screenings in appropriate settings;

Actions: Apr -- Sep

- The Suffolk Food Council is established as a subset or workgroup of the existing Healthy Suffolk Coalition;
- An environmental scan/study is conducted of the climate and opportunities for establishing healthy food institutional policies and a community-based healthy culture throughout Suffolk

Actions: Oct – Dec

- Specific policies and opportunities are identified with accountable entities and metrics tied to the community health indicators. Potential areas of study:
 - Healthy school food policies
 - Healthy church policies

- Food desert impact study with specific strategies and mitigation opportunities identified
- Tracking vending sales of healthy food/beverage items in community and institutional settings
- Number of citizens who report access to healthy, affordable foods
- Number of churches, businesses, and organizations participating and implementing healthy policies/feeding programs
- Inventory of community gardens and food pantries

Actions: Jan – Mar

- Report to the community and the City on Food Council Findings, including actions taken, opportunities for improvement, and sample policies and programs available for implementation and replication in Suffolk.
- Portal is updated with tools, resources, and information to improve Suffolk’s healthy food landscape.

Sample/benchmark: North Carolina has excellent examples of food councils that operate throughout the state. In addition, Healthy Alamance has adopted a food council format for its community collaborative. We continue to align with and support the regional food council that has been meeting over the last year in Hampton Roads. Its members include: Sentara Healthcare, EVMS, The Health Departments of Portsmouth, Newport News, Virginia Beach, Hampton, and Norfolk, Healthy Chesapeake, Virginia Cooperative Extension, The Food Bank of Greater Hampton Roads, and others.

Strategic Focus Three: Active Living Initiative

Implement a First Bike program designed to help vulnerable youth acquire their first bikes. The goals are to:

- Increase physical activity
- Reduce screen time
- Reduce youth obesity
- Promote a culture of wellness, physical activity, and community within our youth population

Actions: Apr – June

1. Convene a core planning group to include the school system, the sheriff’s department, the Boys & Girls Club, the Office of Youth, and interested community stakeholders to plan the program components.
2. Identify funding sources to support and sustain the effort.
3. Outline key programmatic components, responsible partner, and measurable outcomes:
 - a. Bike safety clinic & safety materials
 - b. Physical activity
 - c. Decrease in screen time

- d. Logging hours spent riding bikes
 - e. Demonstrate knowledge of cycling, safety, and how to repair/maintain the bike
 - f. Environmental & policy considerations: safe places to bike, need for bike amenities, and bike lanes/designated safe bike riding zones
4. Decide how kids will be screen and selected; develop an agreement between the kids and parents
 5. Secure funding

Actions: July – August

1. Develop program materials
2. Plan launch to coincide with the beginning of the school year

Actions: September -- October

1. Screen kids and announce first cohort
2. Orientation/Distribution of bikes
3. Host build-a-bike and bike safety clinic

Actions: Nov – Feb

1. Track biking data
2. Distribute monthly information to participants
3. Plan bike rodeo

Actions: Mar – Apri

1. Host bike rodeo

Reportable metrics:

1. Number of participants
2. Number of hours spent riding bikes
3. Number of hours of screen time reduction
4. Measure skill levels at bike rodeo

****This is a partnership opportunity with the city of Newport News.**