

Taking Another Look: Inclusive Healthy Design Workshop and Training

by: Karen Lane

SUMMARY

Plan4Health connects communities across the country, funding work at the intersection of planning and public health. Anchored by American Planning Association (APA) chapters and American Public Health Association (APHA) affiliates, Plan4Health supports creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions. The Healthy Communities Coalition seeks to develop an Inclusive Active Living Wayfinding System, directing people to healthy destinations to access physical activity and nutritious food in the Greater Helena Area of Montana.



CHALLENGE

In Lewis and Clark County, MT, approximately 80 percent of residents live in the greater Helena area. Nearly 13 percent of residents live in poverty and 26 per cent have access and functional needs. More than twice as many adults with disabilities as compared to those without disabilities (28.0% v. 12.3%) had no physical activity or exercise in the past month. (BRFSS, In 2011, 23 percent of adults in Helena reported being obese; 28 percent of high schoolers and 25

percent of middle schoolers reported being overweight as well. Data revealed that only 4.3 percent and 1.6 percent of workers in greater Helena walk or bike to work, respectively. If the infrastructure for biking were available, upwards of 60 percent of workers indicated they would bike to work. According to 2015 YRBS, percentage of MT high school students who are physically active was 54%.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

To learn more about Plan4Health check out the project website (www.plan4health.us) and join the national conversation by using and following #plan4health.

"Having people with disabilities on the team gave me a whole new insight beyond what I would have noticed during the usual walk audit. It was incredible!"

- Community member

SOLUTION

The Healthy Communities Coalition will increase health equity by establishing an Active Living Wayfinding System and Communications Plan that will guide people to increase physical activity opportunities and access to nutritious food regardless of income, ability or age. Coalition members wanted to build their capacity to be reflective practitioners attuned to inclusivity in their work so they can integrate it into the wayfinding system and broader policy and infrastructure decisions. So they hosted an Inclusive Healthy Community Design Workshop and an Inclusive Walk Audit Facilitator Team Training. Expert advisors for the NACDD “Reaching People with Disabilities Through Healthy Communities” grant provided expertise and resources to engage Mark Fenton to help design and conduct the workshop and an Inclusive Walk Audit Facilitator Team Training. In addition, Amy Rauworth from the National Center on Health Promotion for People with Disabilities presented. Forty-two Healthy Communities Coalition members and guests from state agencies and Montana communities participated in the workshop. The inclusive walk audit portion of the workshop was led by twenty-two people that had just participated in the Inclusive Walk Audit Facilitator Training. Each multidisciplinary facilitator team included one or more people with disabilities. This was the key to the workshop's success.

RESULTS

Several communities in the state have conducted inclusive walk audits since the training.

“I used to shovel a narrow path through the snow on the sidewalk; now I shovel the entire width with wheelchairs in mind.” Mark Fenton has revised his walk audit trainings based on the Helena experience.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

Inclusive walk audits will be incorporated into existing orientations for new business owners.

Contact

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