



# Healthy Communities

## THEORY OF CHANGE

### PURPOSE

Support equitable opportunities for healthy eating and active living through policies, systems, and environmental change.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Use an equity lens to make decisions that are deliberately inclusive and improve community health.
- Transparency, cultural humility, and engagement are integral for healthy communities.
- Efforts that are upstream — addressing prevention, sustained wellness, environmental context, and policy — are vital for long-term community health.
- Communities and residents have existing assets, strengths, resources, and resiliencies.
- Approaches to healthy communities rely on multi-sectoral collaborations that lift the voices and honor the assets of those communities.

### PARTNERS

- Residents, community leaders, and policymakers.
- Community-based organizations, government entities, and educational institutions serving those most in need.

### BARRIERS

- Communities are faced both with too many unhealthy messages and food choices, and not enough access to affordable, healthy foods.
- Lack of physical safety and adverse neighborhood conditions, such as violence and blight, are obstacles to active living.
- There is an opportunity to increase community awareness and knowledge around healthy choices.
- Communities lack resources for capacity building, such as leadership development and tools for mobilization, that support healthier environments.

### STRATEGIES

#### EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT

- Engage community members in the conversation and solutions for developing healthier communities, environments, and policies.
- Support inclusive efforts that promote community-based solutions.

#### MOBILIZATION FOR ACTION

- Strengthen core organizational operations and sustainability of systems that support healthy eating and active living.
- Increase awareness and skills of individuals and communities through culturally relevant education.
- Equip individuals and organizations with what they need to influence policies, systems, and environmental change in their communities.

### SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

#### FOR INDIVIDUALS

- Increased knowledge and awareness of issues affecting community health.
- Increased engagement in health-related efforts that promote healthy eating and active living in the community.
- Increased use of programs, services, and environments that contribute to overall improved health.

#### FOR POLICIES

- Organizational and local policies that support active, healthy, and safe living.
- Increased public resources and investment in infrastructure for healthy living.

#### FOR COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENTS

- Strengthened collaborations that increase awareness of, and support for, healthy communities.
- Increased community action based on public will and community input.
- Increased affordability and accessibility of healthy foods.
- Physical environments that support active, healthy, and safe living.

### LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- More individuals are engaged in healthy practices.
- Healthy environments are maintained and used by a mobilized community.
- Policies that support healthy communities are sustained through ongoing, collaborative, multi-sectoral efforts.

### ULTIMATE IMPACT

Policies, systems, and environments optimize choices that support improved health.