

Creating Active, Healthy Communities in Collaboration with Local Government Planning Agencies:

A Guide for Public Health Practitioners



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Communities Support Center

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planning behind a desk and
getting there by car won't create
active living communities...
look at what it did for urban
environments over the
past 50 years!
--James van Hemert



www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden

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Overview

1. History of Land Use Planning and Public Health
2. The 5 Points of Strategic Intervention
3. Designing for Active Living
4. Barriers to and opportunities for collaboration
5. The Healthy City
6. Colorado legal context

○○○ | History of Land Use Planning and Public Health

“Gardens & Sewers”

- The public health roots of planning 1850 - 1920s
 - Modern sanitary sewer treatment systems--Post WWII
 - Sir Ebenezer Howard's “Garden Cities of Tomorrow” -1898



○○○ | History of Land Use Planning and Public Health

“Public Health, Safety and Welfare”
1920-1930s



- Model Enabling Acts for Zoning and Planning --1920s
- U.S. Supreme Court: *Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty* --1926

○○○ | History of Land Use Planning and Public Health



“Ozzie and Harriet”
1945 – 1970s

Urban decentralization and suburbanization

- Single family home boom
- Federal highway funding
- Growing economy

○○○ | History of Land Use Planning and Public Health

“Embracing Mother Earth” 1960s to present



Crew of the Phyllis Cormack, first Greenpeace ship to Amchitka Island to protest nuclear weapons testing, September 1, 1971.
Source: Greenpeace (<http://www.greenpeace.org>)

Environmental movement

- Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring"
- Earth Day
- Clean air and water acts
- Greenpeace

State growth management movement

○○○ | History of Land Use Planning and Public Health



“Healthy Cities Movement”

1985–present

- Comprehensive, holistic approach
- Sustainable food systems
- Clean, safe physical environment
- Sustainable eco-system

○○○ | History of Land Use Planning and Public Health

“Putting People back into Planning”

1990s to present

- *“Beyond Highways”--Federal Transportation Policy Changes*
- *“Smart Growth” 1990 – present*
- *New Urbanism*



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Planning and Public Health get
back together

***Public health and planning
renew their marriage vows***

1996-Present

• Key issues:

- Chronic diseases
- Injuries
- Food systems



American Planning Association
Making great communities happen

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Public Health and the Planning
Process

Modern points of convergence

1. Built environment Systems
2. Parks and recreation
3. Public realms
4. Industrial land uses
5. Development patterns

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American Planning Association's
five points of strategic
intervention

- I. Visioning and goal setting
- II. Local Implementation tools
- III. Site Design and Development
- IV. Siting Public Facilities and Capital Spending
- v. Rethinking planning in all contexts

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I. Visioning and goal setting



Comprehensive and Functional Plans

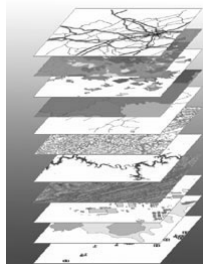
- Public Health Agency Role
 - EARLY INVOLVEMENT IS BETTER

APA's five points of strategic intervention

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I. Visioning and goal setting

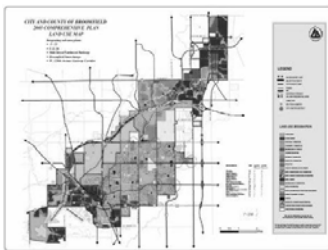
- Elements of a Comprehensive Plan
- Goals and Objectives for:
 1. **Land Use**
 2. Community Facilities
 3. Transportation
 4. Housing
 5. Parks and Recreation
 6. Historic Preservation
 7. Urban design
 8. Economic development
 9. Environment
 10. Natural hazards



APA's five points of strategic intervention

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I. Visioning and goal setting



A. Land Use Element

- *Purpose & principal role*
- *Contents*
 - Existing & Future land use maps
 - goals and policies
 - Narrative

APA's five points of strategic intervention

I. Visioning and goal setting

B. Process

Steps in Plan Preparation

1. Visioning

- “If you skip this step, go straight to jail, do not pass “GO”



Public Health Agency Role:

- *Attend, initiate, or facilitate visioning sessions*
- *Chair or participate in plan committees, work groups*

APA's five points of strategic intervention

I. Visioning and goal setting

2. Establish plan scope

*Public Health Agency
Role:*

- Recommend inclusion of a health element



APA's five points of strategic intervention

I. Visioning and goal setting

3. Data collection, needs assessment, analysis

Public Health Agency Role:

- Provide data and statistics
- Attend planning and zoning meetings
- Disseminate information to the public
- Initiate a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process, a walkability audit, etc.



APA's five points of strategic intervention

[illegible]

○ ○ ○ | I. Visioning and goal setting

4. Drafting the Plan

- Combining technical and community data
- Location oriented goals, policies, and guidelines
- Account for state and federal land use goals, policies, and guidelines
- Establish guideline densities and character



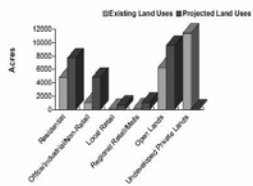
Public Health Agency Role:

Identify environmental, water, air regulations
Encourage active living neighborhoods

APA's five points of strategic intervention

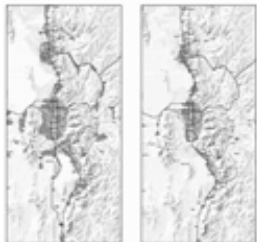
○ ○ ○ | I. Visioning and goal setting

5. Project land uses by category



APA's five points of strategic intervention

○ ○ ○ | I. Visioning and goal setting



- 6. Develop alternatives; allocate future land uses on map; account for constraints**

APA's five points of strategic intervention

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I. Visioning and goal setting



7. Select optimal alternative

8. Realistic implementation strategy

Public Health Agency Role:

- Submit the HIA for consideration
- Encourage citizens to use comment time to address health concerns

APA's five points of strategic intervention

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I. Visioning and goal setting

9. Plan Adoption

Public Health Agency Role:

- Attend meetings and hearings
- Elect or appoint public health officials to advisory and decision-making boards

10. Ongoing Plan Review and Amendments

Public Health Agency Role:

- Propose new plan elements that encourage and promote public health



APA's five points of strategic intervention

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II. Local implementation tools

"Where the rubber hits the road" or perhaps more aptly—"where the Nikes hit the trail"



APA's five points of strategic intervention

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II. Local implementation tools

Zoning Ordinance

- Land Uses
- Dimensional regulations
- Aesthetics
 - Landscaping
 - Signage
- Off-street parking and loading
- Growth management



APA's five points of strategic intervention

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II. Local implementation tools

Typical Review Process

- Pre-application meeting
- Application
- Referrals
- Development Review
- Public Hearings

Public Health Agency Role:

- Suggest model codes that relate to public health
- Support applications when appropriate



APA's five points of strategic intervention

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II. Local implementation tools



Subdivision Ordinance

Standards for:

- Streets
- Sidewalks
- Storm water
- Open space
- Lot sizes
- Erosion
- Utilities

APA's five points of strategic intervention

II. Local implementation tools



Subdivision Ordinance (cont.)

Design considerations

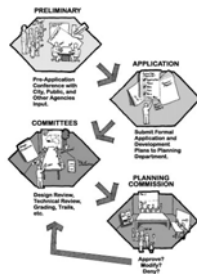
- Cluster approaches
- Connections
- Sidewalks
- Trails
- Active recreation amenities
- Parks
- Gathering places

APA's five points of strategic intervention

II. Local implementation tools

Subdivision review procedure

- Pre-application conference
- Development review committee
- Referral comments—required by state statute in CO
- Preliminary plan review
- Public hearings before the planning commission and elected governing body



APA's five points of strategic intervention

II. Local implementation tools

Subdivision review – additional considerations

- Public improvement guarantees
- Time limits
- Exactions and fees in lieu



APA's five points of strategic intervention

III. Site Design and Development

Process

- development review meetings
- referral
- administrative decision

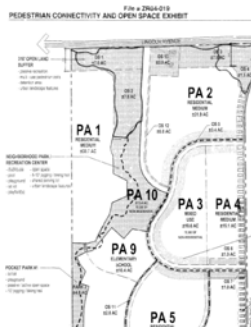


APA's five points of strategic intervention

III. Site Design and Development

Look for:

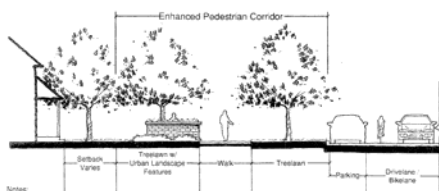
- Pedestrian environment
- Security, lighting
- Protection from traffic
- Access & connectivity
- Recreation amenities—passive and active



APA's five points of strategic intervention

III. Site Design and Development

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APA's five points of strategic intervention

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IV. Siting Public Facilities and Capital Spending

- *Capital improvements*
- *Public Health Role: ensure careful consideration of:*



- *Streetscape improvements*
- *Traffic Calming*
- *Parks*
- *Transportation enhancements*
- *Public buildings*

APA's five points of strategic intervention

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Summary of Points of Involvement

- *Advisory/ Working Groups for Plans*
- *Providing data and studies*
- *Pre-application Meetings*
- *Development Review Meetings*
- *Special Meetings with Developers*
- *Referral Period*
- *Study Sessions/Educational Forums*
- *Public Hearings*

APA's five points of strategic intervention

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V. Rethinking planning in all contexts

State

- Smart Growth office of the local affairs division

Regional

- *Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)*

Local

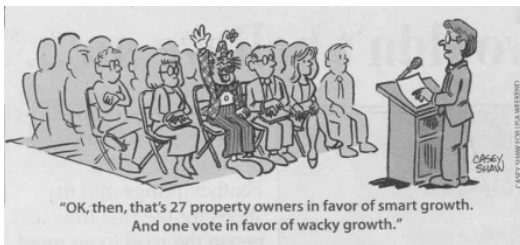
- Comprehensive plans
- Neighborhood plans
- Functional plans
- Redevelopment plans

○○○ | Designing for Active Communities

- Smart Growth Principles
- Integrating physical activity into neighborhoods
- Pedestrianism



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○○○ | Smart Growth

10 Principles: (Green=Healthy Choice!)

1. **mix land uses**
2. **compact (higher densities)**
3. range of housing choices
4. **walkable neighborhoods (connectivity)**
5. distinctive sense of place

Designing for Active Communities

○○○ | Smart Growth

10 Principles: (Green=Healthy Choice!)

- 6. open space (natural amenities)
- 7. direct development to existing communities
- 8. transportation choices (includes street design)
- 9. predictable, fair, and cost effective development decisions
- 10. stakeholder collaboration

Designing for Active Communities

○○○ | Integrating physical activity in neighborhoods Site Design

1. Mix uses



Designing for Active Communities

○○○ | Integrating physical activity in neighborhoods Site Design



2. *Create many destinations*

Designing for Active Communities

○○○ | Integrating physical activity in neighborhoods Site Design

3. Higher densities



Designing for Active Communities

○○○ | Integrating physical activity in neighborhoods Site Design



4. Walkable neighborhoods

- Create comfortable pedestrian realms
- Provide numerous connections within and between neighborhoods

Designing for Active Communities

○○○ | Integrating physical activity in neighborhoods Site Design



Civic Center Park, Highlands Ranch, Colorado

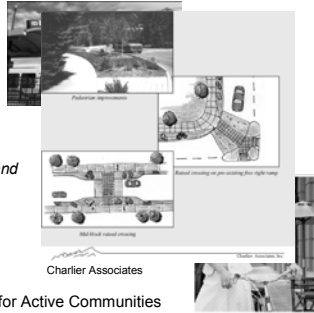
5. Natural open space and active living amenities

Designing for Active Communities

○○○ Integrating physical activity in neighborhoods Site Design

6. Transportation choices

1. Design safe streets and crossings for pedestrians
2. Cycling
3. Public transportation



○○○ Pedestrianism



- "walking isn't an alternative mode: it is human"
- Reorient transportation dollars to access and circulation, rather than travel
- Mobility choices = freedom for people

Designing for Active Communities

○○○ Barriers to Planning and Public Health Collaboration

- Health not seen as a planning issue
- "Silo effect"
- Lack of capacity
- Resistance to input on matters other than sewer and water
- Fragmented decision-making
- Public health dept. limited by mandate

○○○ | “Opportunities and Ideas for Collaboration”
Maximizing your influence

- Find allies
- Face time with staff
- Understand process
- Know city hall
- offer your expertise



○○○ | “Opportunities and Ideas for Collaboration”
Maximizing your influence

- Find out what is on the horizon
- Leverage the credibility of federal, state policy directives on health promotion
- Use case studies from comparable, successful communities

○○○ | The Healthy City



Recommend inclusion of a health element in the plan

- A. Structure
- Integrated throughout plan
 - Separate element
 - Free-standing multi-agency document

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The Healthy City

B. Elements

- Healthy Environment
 - *Reducing harmful emissions*
 - *Conserving energy*
 - *Storm water management*



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The Healthy City

2. Healthy Lifestyles

- *Active and passive recreation*
- *Open space, parks*
- *Bikeways, walkways, safe streets & well connected neighborhoods*
- *Food systems*



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The Healthy City

- Food Systems
- *Healthy Foods*
 - *Locally grown*
 - *Food Security*



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The Healthy City

3. Healthy Community

- *Mental illness*
- *Special needs*
- *Environmental justice*



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Colorado legal context

- Health Statute: C.R.S. 25-1-506(h)
- County and district health department powers:
 - To initiate and carry out health programs...deemed necessary or desirable for the protection of public health and the control of disease..."

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Colorado legal context

- Land Use Statute: C.R.S. 30-28-136 (l)*
- *Addresses county subdivision process*
 - *Local health to review subdivision plans for sewage and water supply quality*
 - *Silent on land use planning (e.g. active living)*

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Closing slide

○ In Summary

- Pursue APA's 5 strategic points of intervention
- Learn land use fundamentals
- Build consensus to include planning for active living and healthy cities
- Develop effective partnership with local planning agency
- Provide community leadership

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Contact Information

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