

HEALTHY Comp Plans

HOUSING



November 2016

This document represents best practices, not Dakota County policies.

VISION

We support healthy, safe, affordable, accessible housing for all.

We support connecting residential areas to all modes of transportation.

HOUSING AND HEALTH

Homes provide more than shelter; they provide a sense of safety, comfort, and community. Healthy, safe, stable, and affordable housing contributes to individual and family health and a desirable, attractive community. Housing options should reflect the needs of the local workforce and community, so that people can remain living in and contributing to their communities. Affordable housing can improve health outcomes by freeing up family resources for nutritious food, transportation, and health care expenditures. With limited, quality affordable housing, residents often end up living in substandard conditions, affecting their health. The neighborhood environment also influences health. Local bike paths, sidewalks, and mass transit all increase opportunities for active living and access to employment, schools, grocery stores, and other amenities. Smoke free housing protects people from the health risks related to secondhand smoke exposure and

supports cessation efforts. Housing goals in comprehensive plans can support health by offering a broad range of housing options to address different needs across income levels and life stages.

HOUSING AND EQUITY

Housing is the highest household expenditure. High housing costs limit options and negatively impact low income households by reducing money that can be spent on other essential needs such as food, healthcare, and transportation. A history of discriminatory practices in lending has prevented families of color from attaining the wealth and security homeownership provides; in Minnesota 25% of African Americans own homes while 75% of Whites own homes. Renters experience more cost burden overall (often paying over 30% of their income for rent) than homeowners. People with lower incomes tend to live in poorer quality housing in less safe neighborhoods. They have higher smoking rates and increased exposure to secondhand smoke, which raises their risk for many chronic diseases. In apartment buildings, people cannot avoid drift from smoke, putting them at higher risk for health problems. People with lower incomes cannot afford to move, or have few options, if secondhand smoke, other environmental pollutants, or higher crime are impacting them. The lack of affordable rental housing contributes to homelessness, which disproportionately affects families of color in Dakota County.

Community engagement affords people an opportunity to identify their needs, contribute to solutions and influence their environment. Authentically engaging community members, especially those most impacted by housing and related problems, in the decision-making process can contribute to improved conditions, health, and well-being.

SUPPORTING DATA

Demographics – Dakota County residents are getting older and more diverse. Affordable housing choices are especially important for these groups.

- In Dakota County, the fastest growing age group is 65 and older, which is projected to increase by 252% from 2010 to 2040. Dakota County's older population is expected to grow twice as fast as the statewide rate.
- In 2012, people of color made up an estimated 18% of the Dakota County population. Hispanics, Blacks and Asian/Pacific Islanders are the largest racial and ethnic groups in the county.
- Populations of color in Dakota County will increase by 74% from 2010 to 2030. The White population is projected to grow by 10% in the same period.

Housing – Not all Dakota County residents have the same access to affordable housing.

- A Minnesotan who earns minimum wage would need to work 91 hours/week to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent.
- To contain the work week to 40 hours, a \$16.46/hour wage is needed to afford a 2-bedroom apartment at fair market rent.
- 51% of renter households and 22.5% of homeowners spent 30% or more of their monthly household income on housing.
- While 75% of the White population in Minnesota owns their own home, only 21% of African Americans, 45% of Latinos, 47% of American Indians, and 54% of Asian Pacific Islanders own their own homes.
- There were 568 children and youth identified as homeless in the 2013-2014 school year in Dakota County, an increase of 49% in four years.

Smoke-free housing has health and economic benefits.

- In a recent study from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention it was estimated that more than 1 in 3 non-smokers (37%) who live in rental housing are exposed to secondhand smoke at home compared to 1 in 5 (19%) for home owners. Smoke-free housing policies protect residents, guests, and staff from the harms of secondhand smoke exposure, reduce health-related inequities, and encourage and support cessation efforts
- Smoke-free housing reduces turnover costs and the risk of smoking-material related fires, eliminates the need for sealing and ventilation treatments, and addresses market demand for smoke-free living options.
- 75% of survey respondents in MN indicated they prefer smoke-free housing.
- A 2009 Wilder Research survey found that 78% of individuals living in market-rate housing and 69% of individuals living in subsidized housing support smoke-free policies.

POLICIES TO CONSIDER

Active Living

Goal: We encourage housing that supports active living.

- Encourage single-family subdivisions and multi-family development models that incorporate parks, trails, and sidewalks.
- Encourage multi-family development in mixed-use areas to encourage walkability to services.
- Support Transit-Oriented Development: housing with walkable streets, transit options, and easy access to goods and services.
- Support housing models that combine ground floor retail space with housing above for walkable communities.
- Support the development of housing that links work, transit, healthy food, and recreational opportunities.
- Encourage the development of market rate housing for residents age 55 and older, and strive to locate it in close proximity to health care facilities, grocery stores, and other services.

Healthy food access

Goal: We will increase food production and access to healthy food and meals in residential settings.

- Support practices that integrate healthy food in residential settings.
- Partner with others to foster gardening practices (including soil testing for contamination) and a local gardening culture.
- Revise local regulations as needed to maintain flexibility for garden locations and support backyard composting.
- Encourage single-family subdivisions and multi-family development models that incorporate community gardens.
- Integrate community gardens into public housing development and create incentives for

community gardens in affordable housing developments that receive public assistance.

- Encourage edible and pollinator-friendly landscapes on residential properties.
- Support a diversity of efforts to make fresh food and healthy meals available at multi-family properties.
- Expand options for keeping animals such as bees, chickens, and goats, as appropriate for the size and location of the property, along with accessory structures they require.
- Build and encourage partnerships that work to expand residential access to healthy food.
- Explore the development potential for market rate multi-unit buildings containing mini-units that are designed to draw upon larger common areas and kitchen spaces to accommodate individual needs.

Healthy Environment: Smoke-free

Goal: We will establish healthy, safe, communities by supporting the development, preservation and rehabilitation of housing that protects residents from exposure to harmful substances and environments, including secondhand tobacco smoke. Smoke-free housing policies prohibit the smoking of tobacco, including the use of electronic delivery devices (like electronic cigarettes), within multi-unit housing facilities such as apartments and condominiums.

- Include educational information and resources on smoke-free housing for renters and property owners/managers on city websites, social media, and other communication channels. Include smoke-free housing information with licensing paperwork for owners.
- Provide incentives, such as reduced licensing fees or reduced fines for violations, for smoke-free buildings.

- Amend city ordinances to include secondhand smoke intrusion into multi-unit residences as a nuisance.
- Require property owners to disclose to potential renters or prospective buyers the smoking policy for the building, complex, and unit, whether smoking is permitted or prohibited.
- Adopt an ordinance to require that newly developed or all multi-unit residential buildings have a smoke-free policy.
- Increase the smoke-free housing benefit on Dakota County's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Allocation Plan.

Equity

Goal: We will offer affordable housing options for all residents at all stages of life.

- Develop rental assistance programs and incentives for integrated development and mixed income communities to mitigate concentrations of poverty and consequent poor health.
- Support projects funded through HUD Section 202 housing.

- Work with Heading Home Dakota initiative to ensure adequate supply of housing options in order to prevent and end homelessness in Dakota County.
- Offer tax incentives for new affordable housing for mixed ages or older adults.
- Institute home modification and repair programs and loan funds.
- Update zoning codes to encourage the development of a full range of housing options including rental apartments, condominiums, single level units, independent and assisted living, and accessory dwelling units.
- Encourage and incentivize universal design, "visit-ability" in new housing.
- Create partnerships with housing and service providers.
- Integrate mixed land use (housing, commercial and retail uses, and public services) to create more housing options, walkability, and shorten distances.



RESOURCES

Dakota County:

- Lil Leatham, Planner: Lil.Leatham@co.dakota.mn.us
- Mary Montagne, Public Health: Mary.Montagne@co.dakota.mn.us
- Jess Luce, Communities for a Lifetime: Jess.Luce@co.dakota.mn.us
- www.co.dakota.mn.us/Government/publiccommittees/CFL/Pages/default.aspx

Blue Cross Blue Shield Center for Prevention:

- Nadja Berneche, Healthy Comp Plan Consultant: nadja@terrasoma.com
- Eric Weiss, AICP: Eric.Weiss@bluecrossmn.com

Smoke Free:

- Live Smoke Free: Association for Non-Smokers MN (ANSR):
<http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org/>

General:

- Homegrown South: <http://homegrowsouth.org/>
- Food Access Planning Guide (pp. 20-21): <http://mnfoodcharter.com/planningguide/>
- Design for Health: <http://designforhealth.net>
- APA Policy Guide on Planning: https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/research/publichealth/pdf/healthyplanningreport.pdf
- Minnesota Department of Health:
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/topics/places/plans.html>
- ChangeLab Solutions: <http://www.changelabsolutions.org/healthy-planning>
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/>

Housing:

- Linking Public Health & Affordable Housing:
http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/QAP-Primer_Public-Health_Affordable-Housing_FINAL_20150305.pdf

Dakota County Public Health Department

1 Mendota Road West
West St. Paul MN 55118
Phone: 651.554.6100
www.dakotacounty.us

November 2016



This document is supported by the Statewide Health Improvement Program, Minnesota Department of Health, and Dakota County Public Health Department.