

CHAPTER 9

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Health Goal:

Work to promote physical health and well-being for all Allouez residents.

Objectives

1. Partner with community groups, organizations, businesses, educational institutions, and other local governments to work towards improving physical and mental health in Allouez.
2. Continue to provide recreational opportunities and facilities through the village's parks department.
3. Provide increased opportunities for physical activity by incorporating pedestrian and bicycle facilities into street projects.

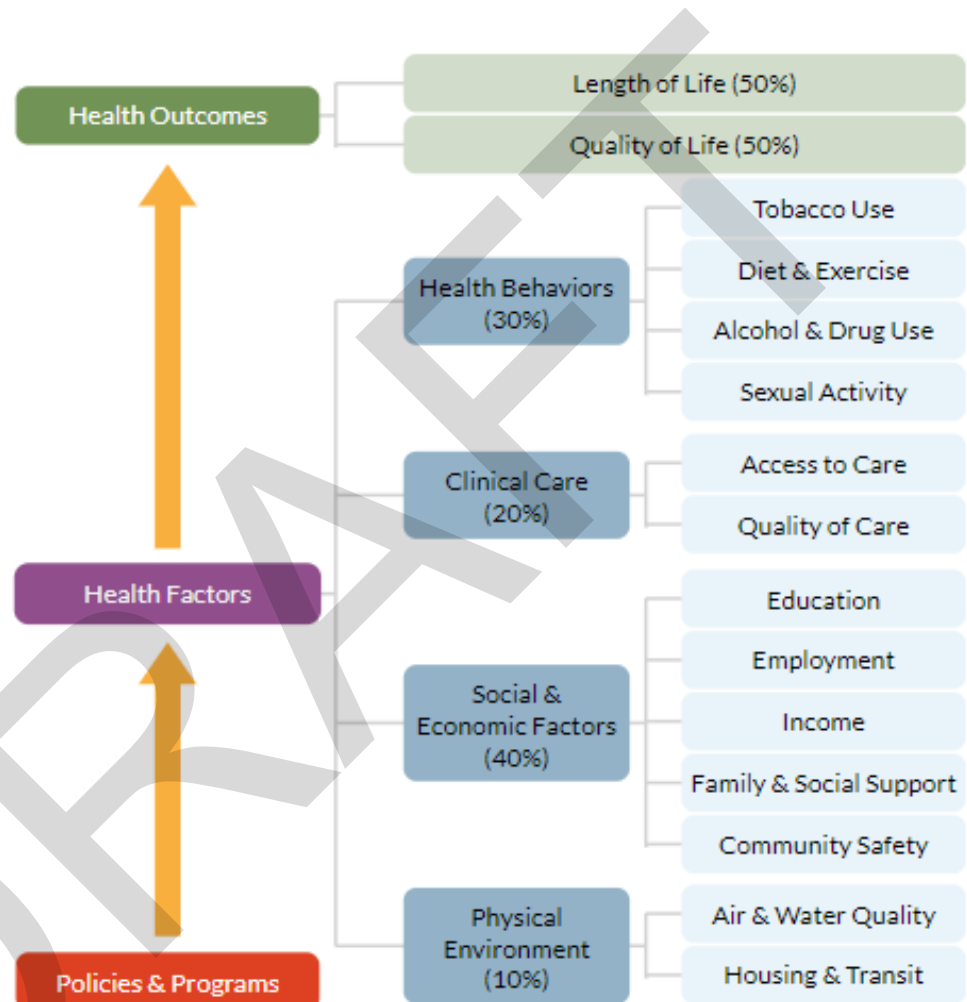


INTRODUCTION

Through the latter half of the 20th century and into the 21st, the role of city planning has largely been regarded to manage transportation networks and to plan future growth. While this true, city planning in the U.S. initially developed with a public health purpose. Around the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, rapid city growth and population migration created overcrowded housing conditions (which were also often poorly constructed), smoky factories, increased human and animal waste, and intensified infectious disease outbreaks.

The federal government created policies relating to zoning, housing, and transportation that U.S. cities began implementing to improve public health, sub-standard housing, and insufficient sanitation systems. The planning and public health professions were joined by a shared focus on urban reform and a common goal to prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases. With time, the professions diverged with planners focusing more on land use and transportation, and public health professionals addressing health and safety concerns¹.

Through the 20th century, cities and communities have employed comprehensive long-range planning to guide their way. In this plan, as in those plans, all the elements relate in some way to public health, whether it is land use, water quality, or parks and open space availability. Because of all these connections, the planning profession is connecting planning back to its public health roots. As communities recognize more of these connections, planners have shifted more focus towards public health concerns and outcomes.



The above diagram is an example of how different factors can impact an individual's health outcomes. Some of those factors will be influenced by external factors, specifically the physical environment. The diagram is from the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute's County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program.

Please note, the percentages shown here are just examples of different factors and not specific levels for each item. Factors will impact individuals differently, and will also vary by where someone lives, the type of support network they have, among other things.

1. Ricklin, Anna and Nick Kushner. 2013. *Healthy Plan Making: Integrating Health Into the Comprehensive Planning Process*. Chicago, IL: American Planning Association.

This chapter briefly pulls health-related topics together and presents a more holistic view of the built and natural environments, and how related activities contribute to public and community health. This chapter should help connect the dots between different plan elements and how by implementing them they should help increase opportunities for healthy living in Allouez.

PLANNING AND HEALTH EFFORTS IN BROWN COUNTY

Community Health Assessment (CHA)

To better understand current community health, every three years Brown County completes an assessment of overall health and chooses three top health priorities to address. Many groups, organizations, and individuals have collaborated to compile and analyze this health information, and it is summarized in the Brown County Community Health Assessment & Improvement Plan 2020-2021², with a 2022 Addendum. Through this effort, the Beyond Health Steering Committee, including the Brown County Health Department, and representation from local public health agencies, area health systems, and community agencies, have developed strategic plans to address each priority. In order to track progress, each priority has goals with specific activities designed to make measurable progress in improving health.

The document contains the following:

- » A community health assessment, which examines health data, identifies priorities, summarizes key findings.
- » A review of social determinants, which also impact health factors for individuals and the broader community.
- » Health priorities that the community should focus on to improve, creating more positive health outcomes.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

The CHIP³ is a guiding document and intended to be a framework for measurable change focusing on improving health in Brown County. The document is updated on a three-year cycle and required by state statutes, but is also a commitment by leaders within the public health system to improve the health of Brown County by advocating for and directing resources towards health priorities and advancing strategies which support the chosen priorities. The priorities for 2022 to 2024 are equitable access, social cohesion, and unified planning and policy. Each of the three-year goals include objectives to complete during the three-year time frame.

HEALTH TOPICS COVERED IN THIS PLAN

The health topics in Table 9-1 come from the American Planning Association's *Healthy Plan Making* to serve as a starting point for including a health element in this plan, and to connect how the different topics relate to this plan. This list of health topics was created from a national survey and review of comprehensive plans and how they addressed different health topics. The topics most frequently cited through that review are the ones on this list. These topics should cover the most important health-related issues as they relate to the built environment, but these could change over time. The

2. Brown County Community Health Assessment & Improvement Plan 2020-2021. Brown County Public Health. <https://www.browncountywi.gov/departments/public-health/general-information/community-health-assessments-cha/>.

3. Brown County Community Health Improvement Plan. Brown County Public Health. <https://www.browncountywi.gov/departments/public-health/general-information/community-health-assessments-cha/>.

important takeaway is the fundamental relationship between the built environment - the street network and layout, housing, commercial development, utilities and infrastructure, to name a few - and how those elements can impact both individual and community health. Keeping this relationship in mind for any planning effort will at least include health as a consideration.

Other relevant organizations and local resources are identified to demonstrate how and where these topics are being covered if they aren't specifically covered in this plan. While there may be multiple organizations in Brown County working on these different topics, this list isn't all-inclusive, but should just be considered a starting point. With that, the village should recognize that this work is being done on a larger scale, and it is not up to any one community to come up with all the solutions. Supporting data for all these topics are available on a county level through Brown County's CHA.

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING DECISIONS

Table 9-1: Summary of Health Topics

Topic	Plan Chapter, Plan, or Local Organization Covering Topic*
1. Active Living	
Active Transport	Transportation Chapter
Recreation	Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter, Allouez CORP
Injury	Green Bay MPO
2. Emergency Preparedness	
Climate Change	All Hazards Mitigation Plan, Brown County Emergency Management
Natural and Human-caused Disasters	All Hazards Mitigation Plan, Brown County Emergency Management
Infectious Disease	Brown County Public Health
3. Environmental Health	
Air Quality	Wisconsin DNR
Water Quality	Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter
Brownfields	Wisconsin DNR
4. Food & Nutrition	
Access to Food and Healthy Food Options	UW Extension - Brown County - NEW Food Access Map
Water	Natural and Cultural Resources, Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter
Land Use	Land Use Chapter
5. Health & Human Services	
Accessibility to Health & Human Services	Transportation Chapter
Aging	Housing Chapter, Transportation Chapter
6. Social Cohesion & Mental Health	
Housing Quality	Housing Chapter
Green & Open Space	Natural and Cultural Resources Chapter
Noise	Brown County Public Health
Public Safety/Security	Utilities and Community Facilities Chapter, Intergovernmental Cooperation

*The Brown County CHA (Community Health Assessment) covers all these topics, but is not referenced in this list for brevity.

The previous section identified key health topics that are addressed either in this plan or in other plans and/or organizations locally. However, there are additional priorities and strategies that the village could consider when looking at planning issues to help achieve broader Brown County health goals. These priorities and strategies come from Brown County's 2020-2021 CHA and the 2022-2024 CHIP. The more that different governments and organizations can consider and implement these, the better the outcomes for all Brown County residents. This also ties into the Economic Development chapter, where improving conditions in Allouez can lead to a stronger region, and vice versa.

Brown County Community Health Assessment & Improvement Plan Priority Suggestions

Allouez should support and follow the priorities and potential strategies outlined in the 2020-2021 Brown County CHA and the 2022-2024 CHIP to improve health outcomes in both the village and Brown County. Since so many different issues impact health outcomes, Allouez should also consider public health in policy decisions.

The three priority suggestions in the CHA and CHIP plan are:

- 1. Equitable Access** – Amplify marginalized community voices and improve access to resources in order to reduce health inequities. Focus on building trust in the health system. Allocate resources in a way that is responsive, supportive, and effective in order to minimize differences between individuals and groups in the community.
- 2. Social Cohesion** – Build connections between community members, both with each other and their environments. Improve on formal and informal social supports, and demonstrate improved cultural attitudes towards healthy habits which will reduce health inequities and improve identified health outcomes.
- 3. Unified Planning and Policy** – Social, political, and structural institutions in our community develop and align practices and policies in a way that is equitable, effective, responsive, and transparent. Build well-being in our community by including health considerations in all policies in an intentional and coordinated way.

Other General Health Planning Recommendations

Other general planning factors to consider when planning for health come from the American Planning Association's *Healthy Plan Making* and *Healthy Communities Policy Guide*⁴ documents. These items were important elements in incorporating and implementing public health goals and objectives in other comprehensive plans from varied communities around the U.S. Since this chapter is a new element for Allouez's comprehensive plan, the following recommendations are as much about future planning efforts and how to incorporate health in those efforts.

- » **Champions** – Harnessing enthusiastic individuals, community members, governmental departments, and/or organizations can help mobilize and energize efforts to implement public health goals and objectives. These champions can help a plan's health element be more fully realized.
- » **Context and Timing** – A community should take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves and use plan updates to create partnerships and steer the focus toward health.

4. American Planning Association Legislative and Policy Committee. 2017. "Healthy Communities Policy Guide". Chicago: American Planning Association.

Also, when funding opportunities come up for something like an infrastructure or public project (like a park or a public building), these are opportunities to include health-related objectives as part of that larger project.

- » **Outreach** – Educate organizations and entities about the connections between planning and public health and educate the general public about the benefits of addressing public health through planning.
- » **Health Priorities** – Public health is impacted by many different factors (as shown in the diagram at the beginning of the chapter and in Table 9-1). Because of this, health should be highlighted when there is the opportunity to do so to keep the focus on that importance. Subsequent plans, reports, and studies should emphasize this relationship to continue to link health with those impacts. As the relationship continues to be strengthened and those projects are implemented, this can also help demonstrate that there is a broader popular desire to see these health goals achieved.
- » **Data** – Collecting generalized data (not individualized data) is important because it can point to trends, spur action, and provide a way to track measures over time. Data gathering as part of an initiative can also provide education and outreach opportunities around health. For this strategy, while Allouez can certainly gather its own data for different projects, other local organizations and governmental units are already doing this work. Accessing and utilizing that data through partnerships with those entities can also fulfill this strategy. This leads directly to the next item below.
- » **Collaboration** – Since health is impacted by so many different factors which are covered by different governmental functions, creating a strong atmosphere of



The village can build opportunities for healthy living into public places, like the fitness equipment installed in Green Isle Park.



The Fox River Trail is an example of vision, opportunity, and collaboration. Taken together, these can yield places that combine recreation, access to nature, active transportation, and preserve natural resources that also contribute to positive health outcomes. Ultimately this leads to places that are community assets and places that people want to be.

collaboration between different staff, departments, and agencies will strengthen the planning process.

- » **Funding** – Often a lack of funding is the primary challenge to implementing health initiatives. When highlighting improving public health as an objective across different areas, this strengthens things like grant funding applications. Including health as a plan component also further solidifies it as a governmental and community priority, which helps with policy direction and decision making.
- » **Implementation** – Outlining priorities in a plan helps sets policy direction, but through implementing the plan is the healthy choice becomes easier (like walking on a sidewalk that's there). Implementation can happen through things like regulatory changes (zoning codes), capital projects (pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure), and programming (like including health goals in work plans).
- » **Monitoring and Evaluation** – Reviewing and evaluating plan goals and objectives help ensure that they are being met. Likewise, if these aren't being met, that may signal policy changes are needed, or that goals need to be adjusted to meet emerging trends.
- » **Health in All Policies (HiAP)** – This is a collaborative approach to improving the health of all people by ensuring all decision-makers are informed about the health, equity, and sustainability impacts of various policy options during the policy development process and incorporating health considerations across different policy areas.
- » **Design for Healthy Communities** – The built environment can impact people's health, both positively and negatively. Planning efforts should help support the health, safety, and welfare of all residents through comprehensive plans, development ordinances, and supporting investments that enable and encourage active lifestyles and other healthful practices. These efforts should provide access to things like services, facilities, and programs that positively impact health.



Considering infrastructure as something that can have a positive health impact will be important for the village in future planning efforts.



In northeastern Wisconsin, four distinct seasons make it important to have different recreational opportunities throughout the year. Those opportunities can be as important for mental health as they can for physical health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The village should collaborate with other organizations in the Green Bay area and Brown County that are focused on health issues to stay informed on current trends, practices, and opportunities that could be implemented in Allouez.
2. For capital improvement projects, such as streets and parks, the village should also consider the possible health impacts and benefits when planning new facilities and improvements to existing facilities.
3. Continue to participate in the process and adopt Brown County's *All Hazards Mitigation Plan* when it is updated (next update slated for 2025).
4. Use the priorities identified in Brown County's CHA and CHIP (equitable access, social cohesion, and unified planning and policy) as a framework to view and evaluate decisions that can lead to improved community health outcomes.