

Assessment Tools for Healthy Community Design

A number of tools offer an in-depth assessment of the policies and infrastructure in place for active living and healthy eating. Use these tools to collect data and engage community members in planning and action.

The Smart Growth Scorecard to assess the physical and policy supports in place to: preserve traditional settlement patterns, with a higher-density community center (or centers) surrounded by mostly open space; encourage mixed uses and a diversity of businesses in compact centers; offer a range of choices for housing and transportation; preserve working land and important natural, and historic, resources; involve citizens and interest groups in deciding the community's future.

<http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/fileadmin/files/publications/SPRAWLscorecard.pdf>

Inventory of Resources related to Health in Vermont Towns and Cities created in 2005, by the Center for Rural Studies at UVM, in partnership with the Vermont Department of Health, provides results of a survey that was conducted of every city and town in Vermont documenting availability (or not) of things such as miles of sidewalks and bike paths, town recreational facilities, nutrition related information as well as town policies related to physical activity and healthy eating. The results can serve as a baseline; the questions can be useful in updating the inventory.

<http://crs.uvm.edu/townhealthresources/>

Community Healthy Living Index, created by the YMCA USA, helps communities assess support for healthy living in six community settings: afterschool child care, early childhood program, neighborhood, school, work site, and community-at-large

http://www.ymca.net/communityhealthylivingindex/community_healthy_living_index.html

The **Community Health Assessment aNd Group Evaluation (CHANGE)** tool, developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, helps community teams develop a community action plan for improving community health through policy changes that support healthy living strategies (e.g., increased physical activity, improved nutrition, reduced tobacco use and exposure, and chronic disease management). The section most relevant to healthy Community design is the **Community-At-Large Sector** includes communitywide efforts that impact the social and built environments, such as improving food access, walkability or bikeability, tobacco use and exposure, or personal safety. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/change.htm>

Walkability Checklist This tool was developed by The Partnership for a Walkable America (PWA) is a national coalition working to improve the conditions for walking in America and to increase the number of Americans who walk regularly.

<http://www.walkableamerica.org/checklist-walkability.pdf>

Walk Friendly Communities assessment tool:

http://www.walkfriendly.org/WFCAssessmentTool_Nov2011.pdf

Create the Good: Sidewalks and Street Survey This straight forward how-to guide was created by the AARP to help small groups take simple “walkability” surveys and to take recommended actions for community improvements.

<http://www.createthegood.org/sites/default/files/how-to/SidewalksStreets.pdf>

Bikeability Checklist maintained by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center

<http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/pdf/bikabilitychecklist.pdf>

The Rural Active Living Assessment (RALA) Tools assess the physical environment features and amenities, town characteristics, community programs, and policies that could potentially influence levels of physical activity among residents in rural communities. <http://www.activelivingresearch.org/node/11947>

Community Food Audit – USDA Community Food Security Assessment Toolkit; USDA, July 2002 This toolkit provides standardized measurement tools for assessing various aspects of community food security. It includes a general guide to community assessment and focused materials for examining six basic assessment components related to community food security. These include guides for profiling general community characteristics and community food resources as well as materials for assessing household food security, food resource accessibility, food availability and affordability, and community food production resources.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EFAN02013/>

Health Impact Assessments

Planning for Healthy Places with Health Impact Assessments an online course, developed by the [American Planning Association](#) and the [National Association of County & City Health Officials](#), explains the value of conducting health impact assessments and the steps involved. <http://professional.captus.com/planning/hia2/resources.aspx>

UCLA Health Impact Assessment Clearinghouse administered by the University of California, Los Angeles includes links to dozens of HIAs conducted in the United States, as well as HIA guides, news, and academic research. <http://www.hiaguide.org/>

Human Impact Partners, a nonprofit project of the Tides Center, provide materials that are easy to understand and use for health impact assessment.

<http://www.humanimpact.org/>

Human Impact Partners HIA Guidebook:

<http://www.hiaguide.org/training/training-guides/human-impact-partners-hia-toolkit-handbook-conducting-hia-2nd-edition>