

Policy Plan Amendment 2022-CW-2CP Community Health in the Policy Plan

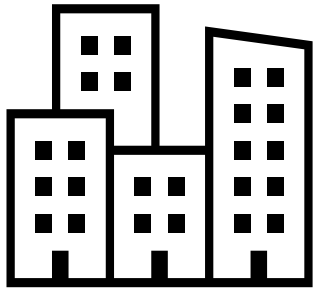
Board of Supervisors Land Use Policy Committee

January 28, 2025

FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
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PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Effective land use planning can strengthen public health



Public health and urban planning have a shared history

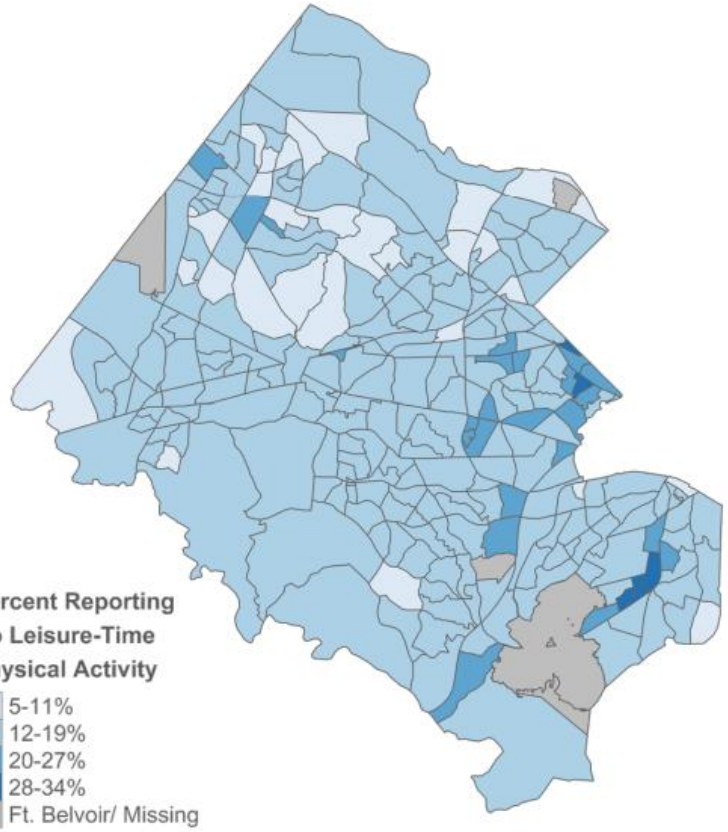
- Tenement Act of 1901 - a land use law aimed at healthy living conditions
- Zoning developed to as a legal structure to separate land uses for public health reasons

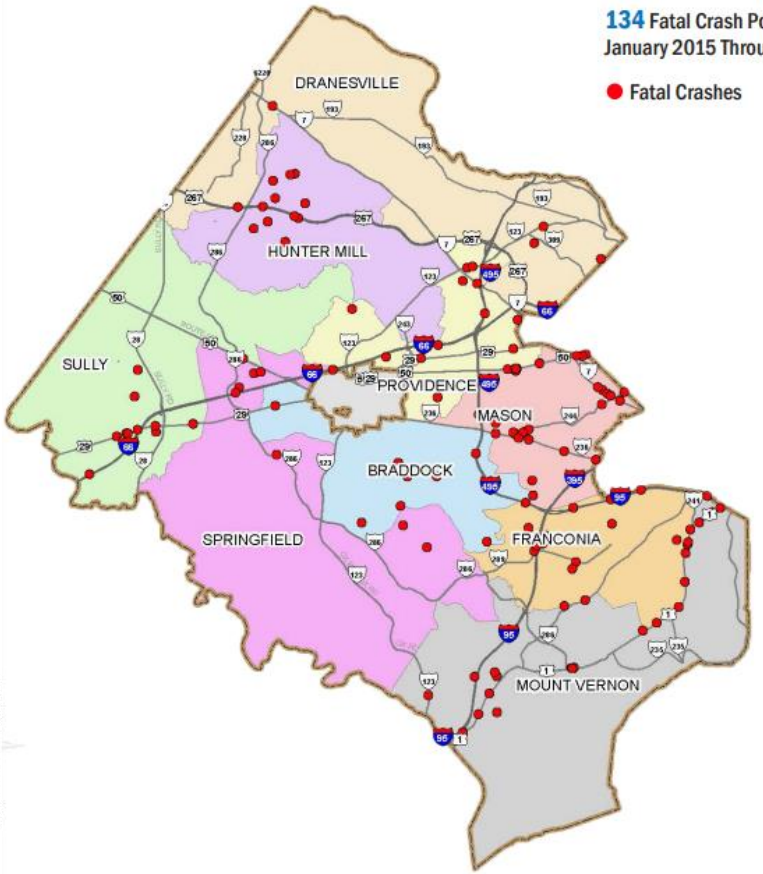
Today, evidence shows that planning and urban design can determine health behaviors and long term health

- Exercise and physical activity
- Food choices
- Air and water quality
- Community connections

Land use can influence health behaviors and outcomes

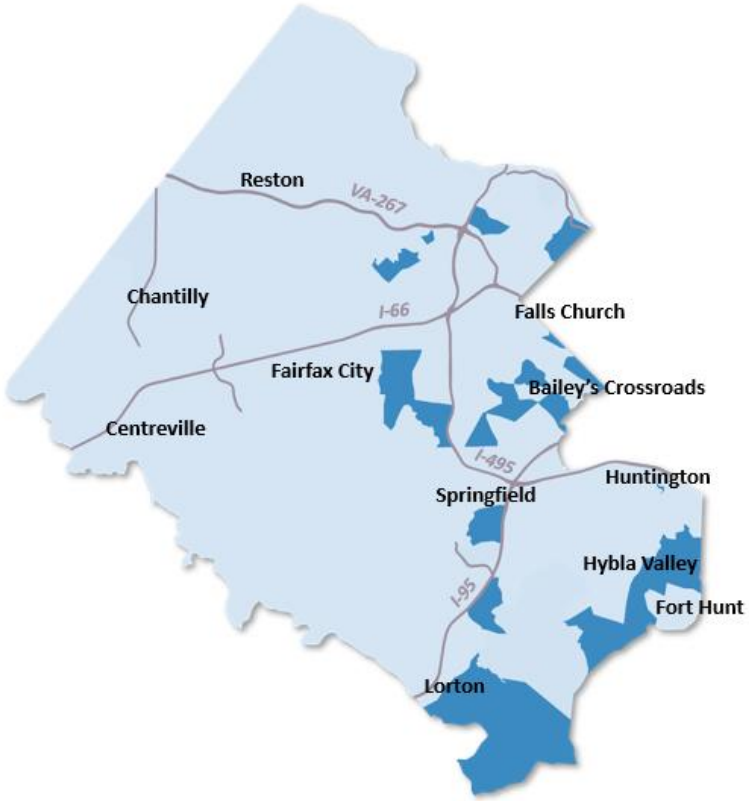
Percent of Adults 18 and Older that Reported no Leisure-Time Physical Activity by Census Tract, Fairfax County (2021 BRFSS)





134 Fatal Crash Points from January 2015 Through June 2023

● Fatal Crashes



The 5 neighborhoods with the largest percent of people with heart disease:

Neighborhood(s)	Percent
Montebello - Huntington	8%
Fair Vernon - Springfield	8%
Skyline Plaza - Bailey's Crossroads	6%
Gum Springs – Hybla Valley/Fort Hunt	6%
Pohick - Lorton	6%

Policy Alignment for community health



The Countywide Strategic Plan provides clear direction:

HC1. Integrate considerations of health, well-being and equity into the development, implementation and evaluation of land use, transportation and housing policies and ordinances.

HNL23. Link the county's public health and equity agenda to a public space agenda by updating the Comprehensive Plan to create healthier environments where access to basic needs, transit, affordable housing and healthy food is available.

Objectives promoting Healthy Communities also included in:

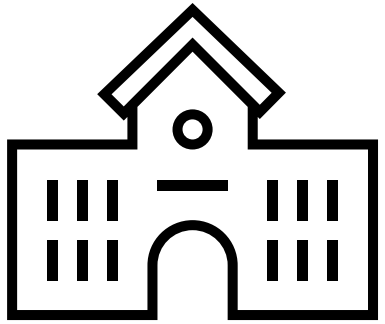
- Resilient Fairfax plan
- Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP)
- Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

A brief history of health and human services in the Policy Plan

The initial Policy Plan published in 1990 included a Human Services element.

- The element drew heavily from the Principles of Human Service developed by the Human Services Council in 1989 with the goal that all residents "may sustain a secure and productive lifestyle."

- Text focuses on programs and facilities and is organized by county agencies, which have changed. As a result, this policy element has not been used by Health and Human Services agencies for many years.



National and local guidance on healthy communities

American Planning Association (APA) Healthy Communities Policy Guide

Healthy communities are "*places where all individuals have access to healthy built, social, economic, and natural environments …opportunity to live their fullest potential regardless of [their demographics] or socially defined circumstance.*"

Reston Comprehensive Plan

Represents the first time that health was explicitly included in an Area Plan in Fairfax County. Includes a set of principles on healthy communities.

City of Fairfax

Policy framework includes Health in *Environment and Sustainability* chapter

- *Sustainability Goal 2*: *Support Healthy Lifestyles and regionally-grown food.*
- *Outcome SI2.1*: *Access to healthy, affordable, regionally-grown foods.*

Regional examples of healthy communities planning

Prince George's County

Comprehensive Plan includes Healthy Communities Element: Policy 1: *Integrate community health into the master plan and development review processes.*

City of Charlotte

Comprehensive Plan includes Policy framework with specific health goal.

Goal 6: *Healthy, Safe, and Active Communities: All Charlotteans will live and work in safe and resilient neighborhoods that enable healthy and active lifestyles*

- *the quality of tree canopy cover*
- *invest in walking, cycling, and recreation facilities*
- *access to healthy food options and health care services*

A Unique Opportunity to Foster Community Health

Establish a stand-alone Healthy Communities Element with five interrelated categories:



Healthcare & Human Services



Active Living



Green Infrastructure & Climate Health



Food Systems



Social Connection

We can build upon existing structures in the Policy Plan and One Fairfax

- Some features of Healthy Communities (sidewalks, trees) fall under the umbrella of other subjects
  - They should be primarily addressed in their traditional section but referenced and supplemented in the Healthy Communities element
- Integrate key parts of the Human Services element into Healthy Communities
  - Explore integrating others into the Public Facilities element
- The Plan will aim to identify the root causes of poor health
  - Plan objectives will prioritize addressing these health inequities

Policy Plan Amendment
Contact Information

- To learn more about the project, visit our project webpage: Plan Amendment 2022-CW-2CP | Planning Development (fairfaxcounty.gov)
- To review the current Policy Plan, please visit: Policy Plan (encodeplus.com)
- To take the Plan Forward Survey, please visit: Plan Forward: The Countywide Policy Plan Update - PublicInput (fairfaxcounty.gov)
- To provide comments or potential policy considerations please contact: PlanForwardFFX@PublicInput.com
- For general questions, please contact: Corinne.Bebek@fairfaxcounty.gov

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