



Board Workshop / Discussion Agenda

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

July 28, 2026 - 1:30 p.m.

Courthouse Room 220

WORKSHOP

1. **Community Health Improvement Plan and Community Health Assessment** [2026-272](#)

Sponsors: Public Health



Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

Item Number: 2026-272

Meeting Date: 7/28/2026

Sponsor: Public Health

Title

Community Health Improvement Plan and Community Health Assessment

Attachment

1. Presentation
2. Community Health Improvement Plan 2026-2031



Community Health Improvement Plan and Community Health Assessment

July 28, 2026 - PM Workshop

Purpose

Share the **community health improvement process** findings and next steps.

Fall – Winter 2025
Community Health
Priorities

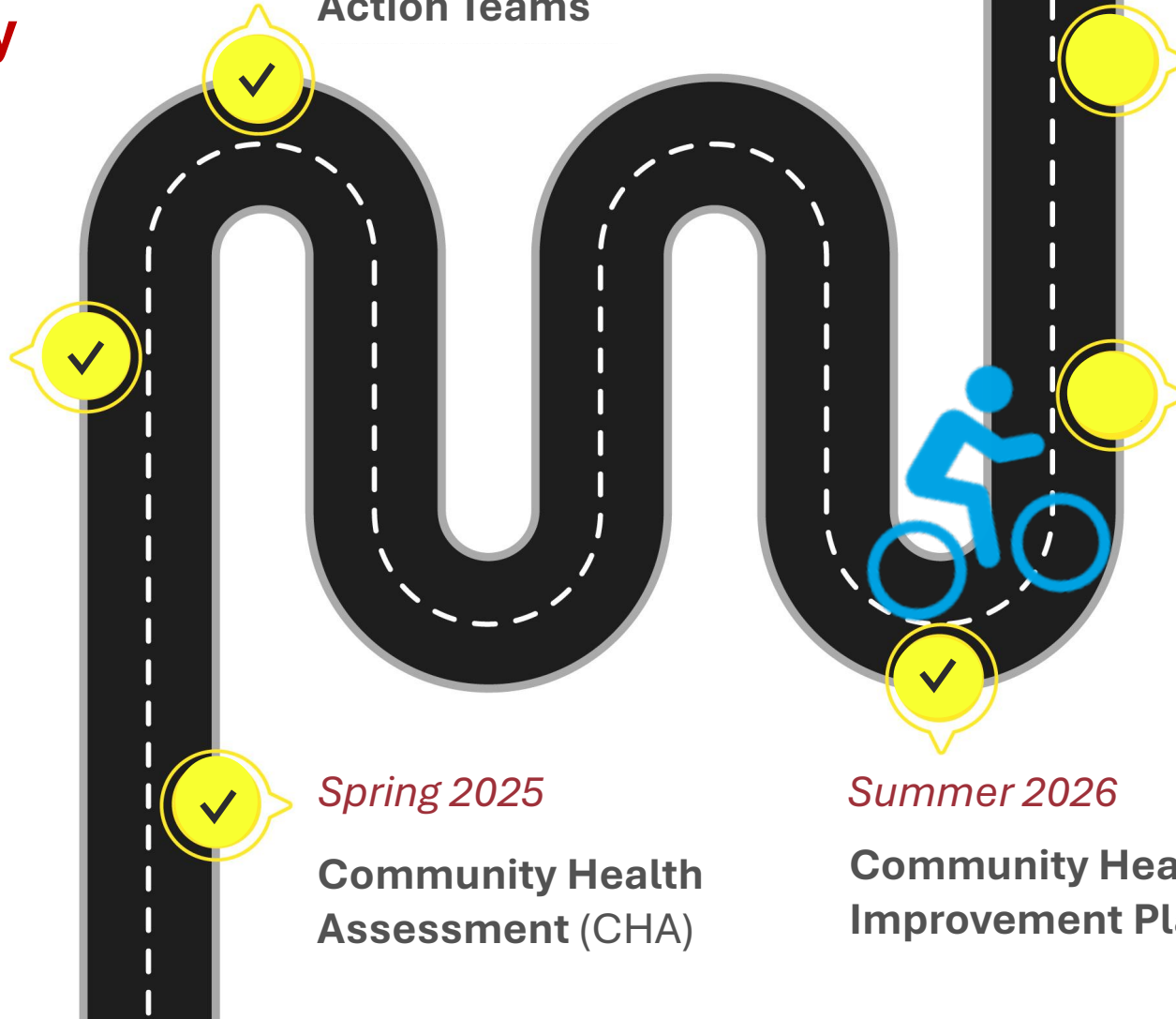
Spring 2026
Action Teams

2026 - 2031
Monitoring
and Reporting

2026 - 2031
Implementation

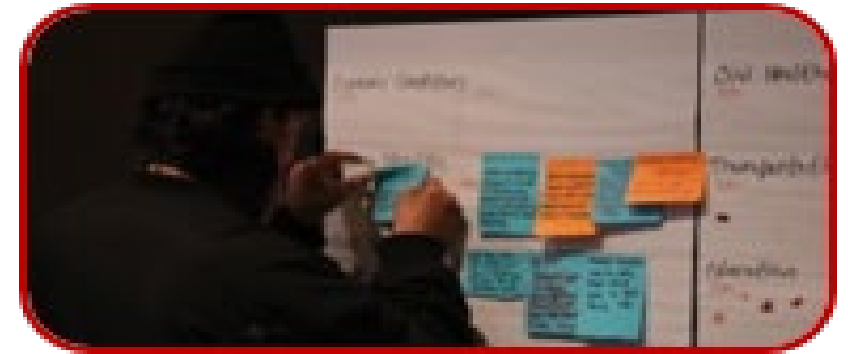
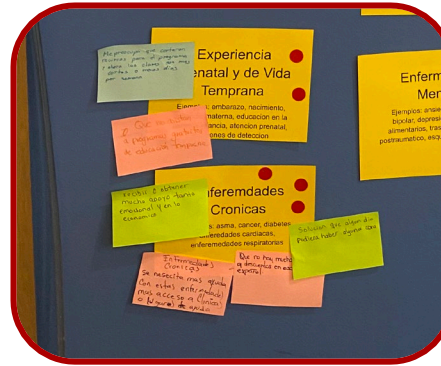
Spring 2025
Community Health
Assessment (CHA)

Summer 2026
Community Health
Improvement Plan (CHIP)



Objectives:

- Provide an overview of Public Health's planning initiatives
- Outline the community health improvement process
- Summarize methods and findings from community engagement
- Share goals, objectives and strategies for addressing community health priorities



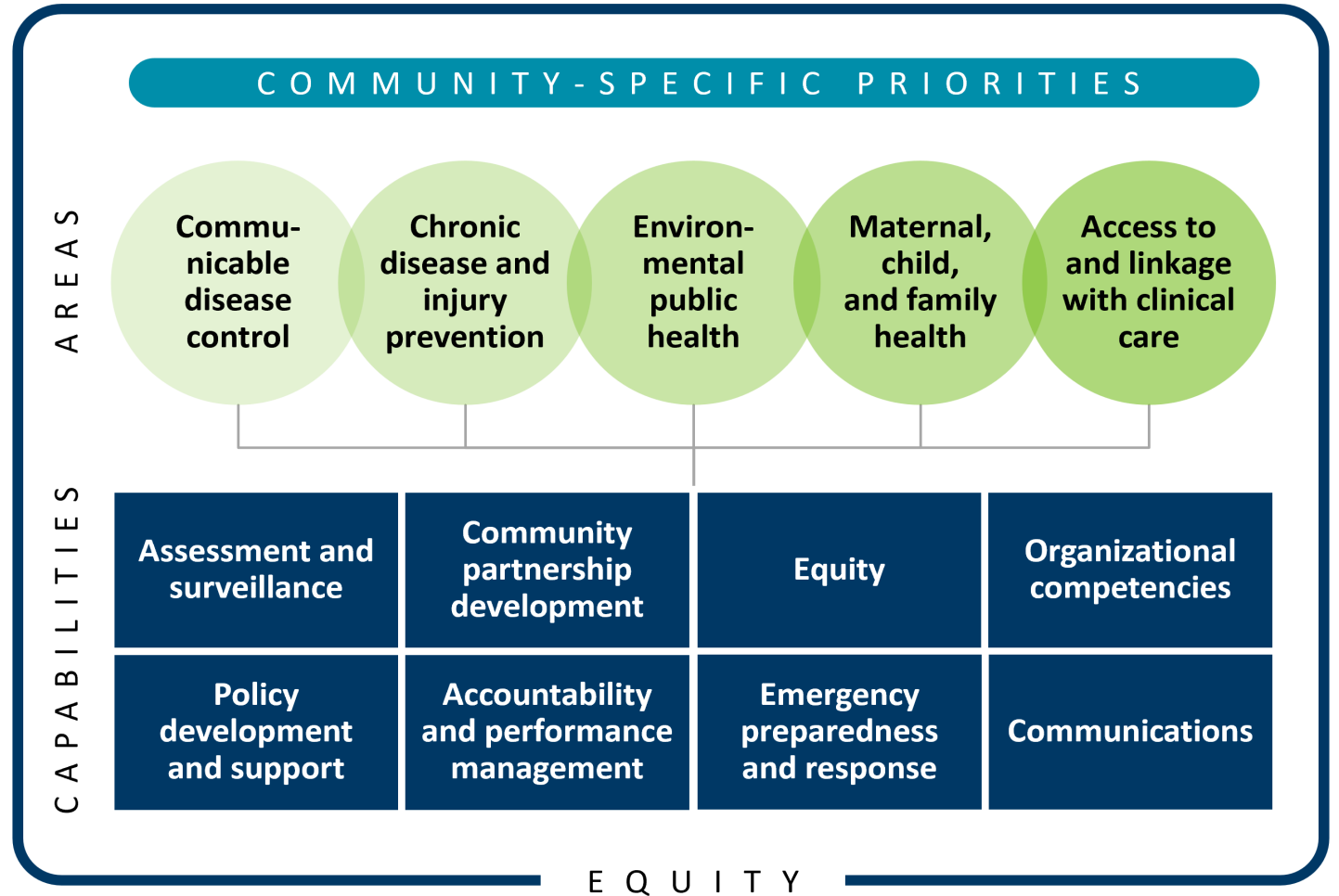
Presenters

- **Nadir Abdi**, Deputy County Manager
- **Amy Caron**, Director of Public Health
- **Isabella Green**, Planning Specialist
- **Hiatia Gregory-Small**, Planning Manager

Divisions



Foundational Public Health Responsibilities



Public Health Planning Flowchart



The CHA: What is it?

- Study of local population health
- Identifies key health conditions and needs among residents
- Includes data and trend analysis from a variety of sources – both qualitative and quantitative



The CHIP: What is it?

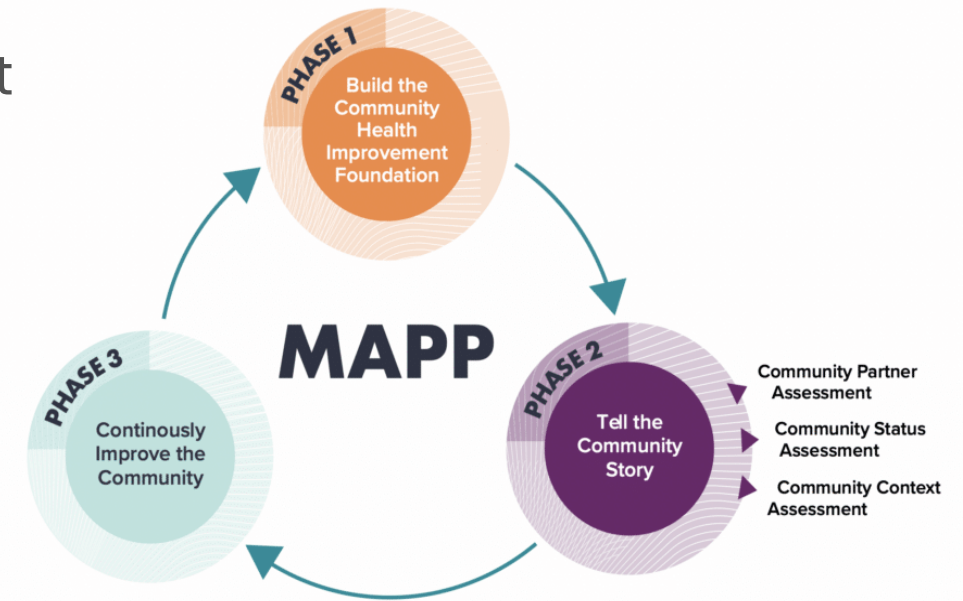
- A plan that indicates community priorities and the initiatives, projects, and policies that will be implemented to improve health
- Developed, implemented, and monitored collaboratively with community

Timeframe: What is the cycle of the plan?

- Every five years

Framework: What is the plan's structure?

- National MAPP 2.0 framework
- Meet accreditation and state statute requirements
- Alignment with internal department plans



NACCHO MAPP 2.0

*Mobilizing for Action through
Planning and Partnerships*

Data Collection Methods



September – October 2025: Public Health collected input from community about the health topics most important to them.



Survey

656 respondents, and in-person surveying at 10 locations.



Community Conversations

341 attendees across the community conversations.

- Rondo Library
- Face to Face at SafeZone
- Raices Latinas
- Haven International
- Osceola Senior Place
- Oromo Community of Minnesota
- The Sanneh Foundation at the Elder's Lodge
- 825 Arts
- Cultural Wellness Center

Population Groups:

- Seniors (65+)
- Youth (under 18)
- Latino/a families
- Black/African Americans
- North African immigrants
- Hmong individuals
- Indigenous elders
- Housing unstable individuals

Community Health Priorities

What health topics are most concerning to community?

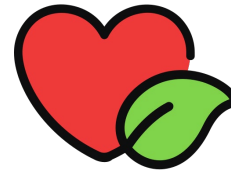


Mental Health, Well-being & Belonging

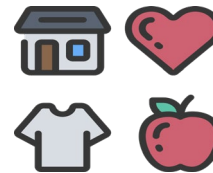


Access to Healthcare

Collaborate with partners and community to develop strategies that address needs.



Healthy Living & Chronic Illness

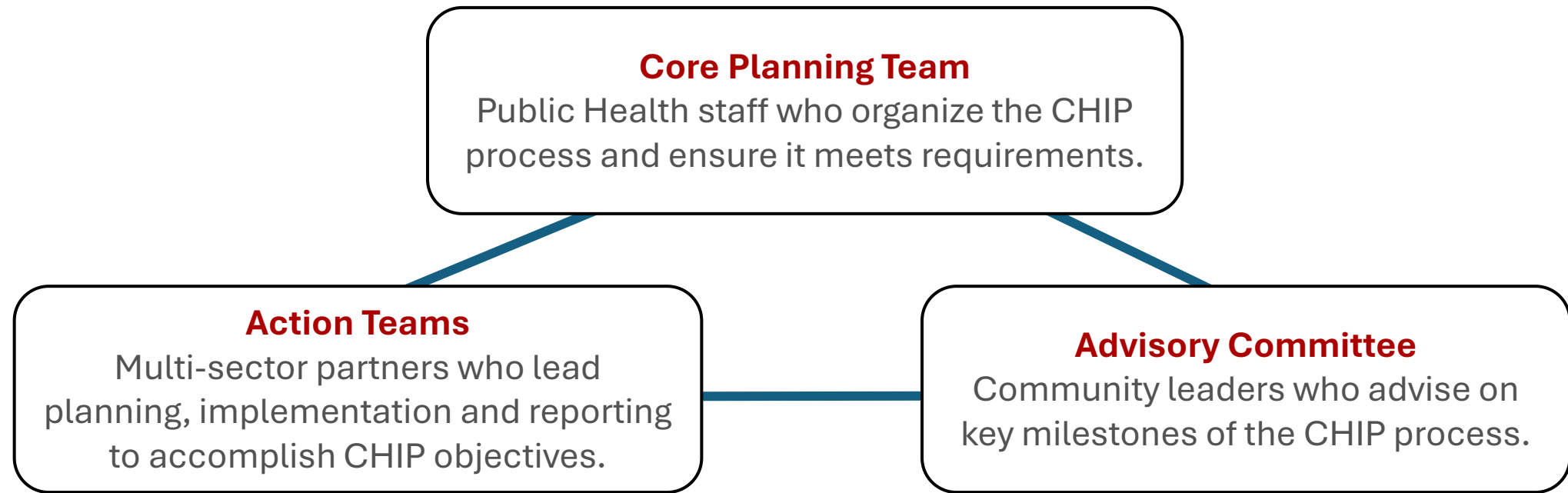


Basic Needs

(Housing stability, economic conditions, and food access)

Uplift community concerns and provide recommendations to established initiatives.

Community Health Improvement Teams



The CHIP is the community's plan for public health, not public health's plan for the community.

MDH Community Health Assessment and Planning Cycle: Handbook for Local public Health

Action Team Organizations

Access to Healthcare

- Hospitals
- Health clinics/centers
- Non-profits/CBOs

Public Health programs

WIC, Family Health
and Healthy Communities

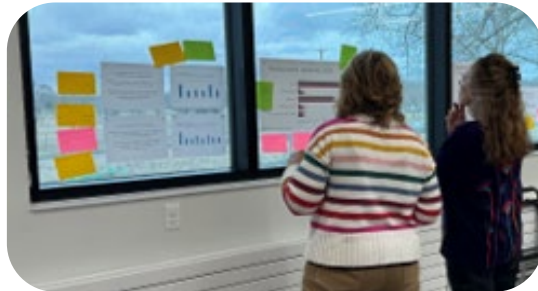
Mental Health & Wellbeing

- County agencies
- Mental health providers
- Collaboratives
- Non-profits/CBOs



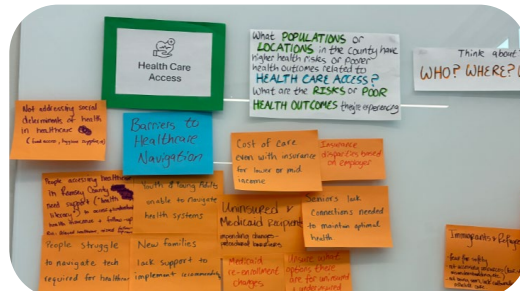
Action Team Meetings

March 2026



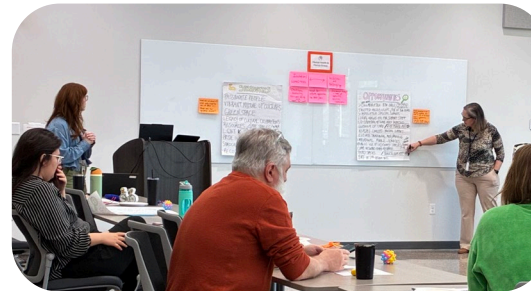
Session #1
Data Walk

April 2026



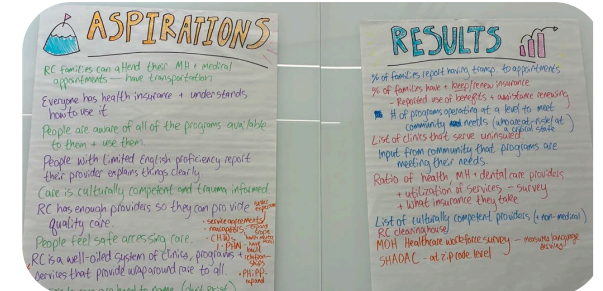
Session #2
Consensus
Building

May 2026



Session #3
Strengths &
Opportunities

June 2026



Session #4
Aspirations &
Results

Goals, objectives and strategies



Mental Health, Well-being and Belonging

GOAL #1

Promote evidence-based mental well-being approaches that nourish mental health and reduce risks for mental health challenges.

OBJECTIVES

By June 2031:

- 1.1: Cultural partners will collaborate to promote cultural approaches for well-being and community-initiated care.
- 1.2: Partners across sectors will create and foster community belonging.
- 1.3: Partners across sectors will coordinate efforts to increase positive identity in youth.

Mental Health, Well-being and Belonging

GOAL #2

Increase access to high quality, culturally affirming mental health services.

OBJECTIVES

By June 2031:

2.1: Cultural partners will collaborate to inform and promote culturally responsive mental health services.

2.2: Partners across sectors will coordinate and amplify efforts to support communities most impacted by anxiety, depression, and suicidality.

Solutions from community:

**Social
connectedness**

Community spaces that foster
belonging and community
empowerment

Opportunities for youth to
experience belonging and
positive identity

**Increased outreach
and promotion of
mental health care
options**

Collaborative of multi-sector
mental health and well-
being organizations

Engage cultural
communities to understand
their approaches to well-
being and mental health

**Culturally
based and compass
ionate services**

Directory of culturally
appropriate resources
and services

Promote cultural models of
mental health and community-
based mental health care

Recommended strategies from partners and subject matter experts:

Access to Healthcare

GOAL #1

Expand service delivery and system navigation to improve connections to care.

OBJECTIVES

By June 2031:

- 1.1: Partners across sectors will collaborate to understand and reduce barriers to accessing healthcare for communities most impacted.
- 1.2: Healthcare partners will promote culturally appropriate care, support, and services.
- 1.3: Partners across sectors will increase transportation accessibility to healthcare services.

Solutions from community:

Awareness of available resources

Directory of healthcare resources and services

Expand the scope of navigators to better serve and direct community to health services

Sustain and expand healthcare coverage options

Conduct a healthcare assessment

Engage community to understand healthcare needs

Support healthcare workforce

Strong leadership

Collaborative of cross-sector healthcare providers and organizations

Place-based health services

Expand and promote community-based healthcare services

Recommended strategies from partners and subject matter experts:

Putting this Plan into Action

Collaborative of organization and community leaders interested in learning from one another and coordinating knowledge and resources to advance community health solutions.

Kick off:
August 17th
(hybrid)



RSVP Here



Monitoring and reporting of progress on CHIP objectives, current needs, and shifting health priorities.

Ongoing engagement with community members and partners.

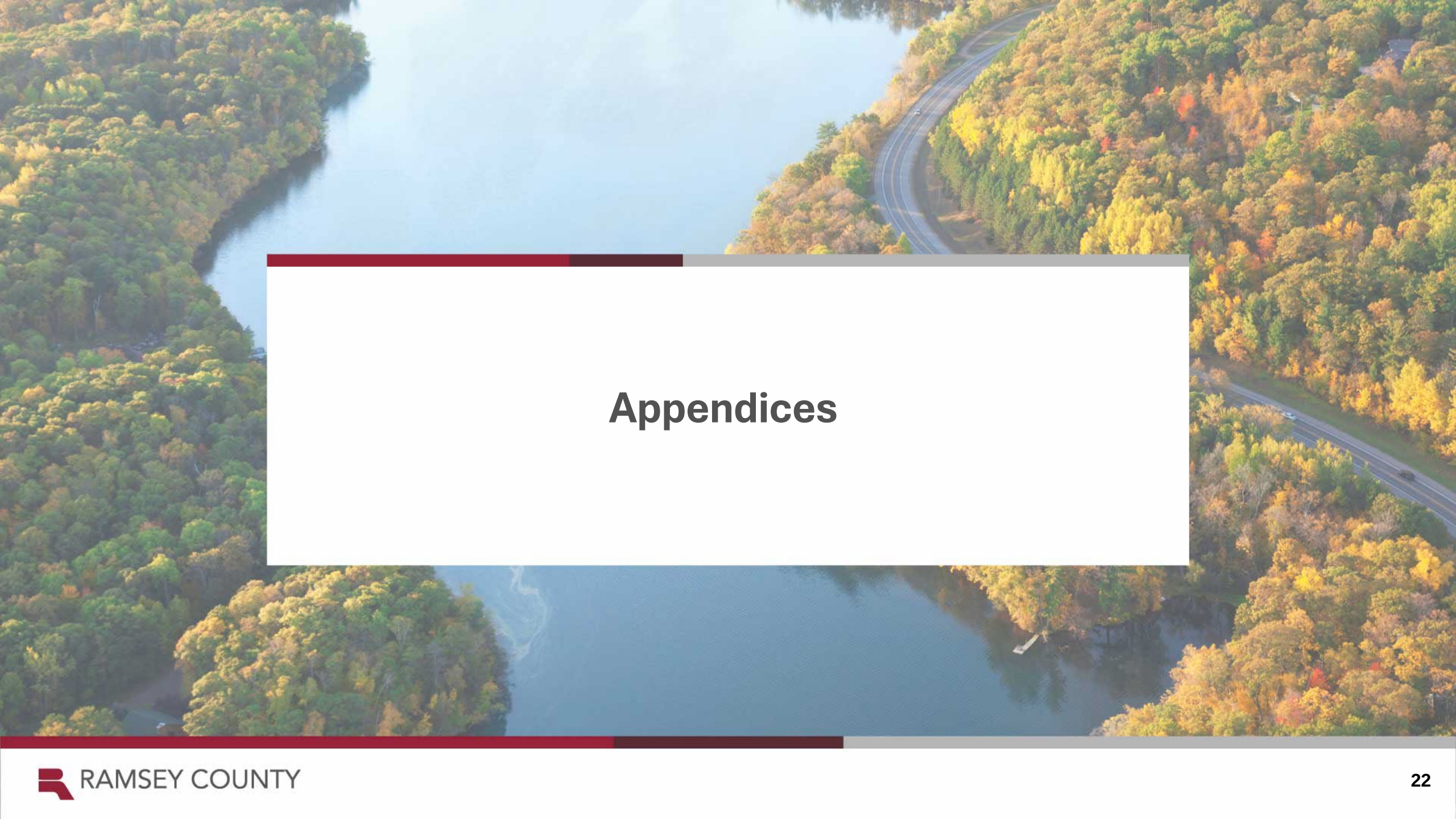
Key Takeaways

- ✓ Public Health is coordinating a health improvement process to develop and implement strategies for community health priorities
- ✓ The CHA is data book available for understanding public health needs in Ramsey County
- ✓ Partners, subject matter experts, and people with lived experience are invited to join a collaborative for improving community health



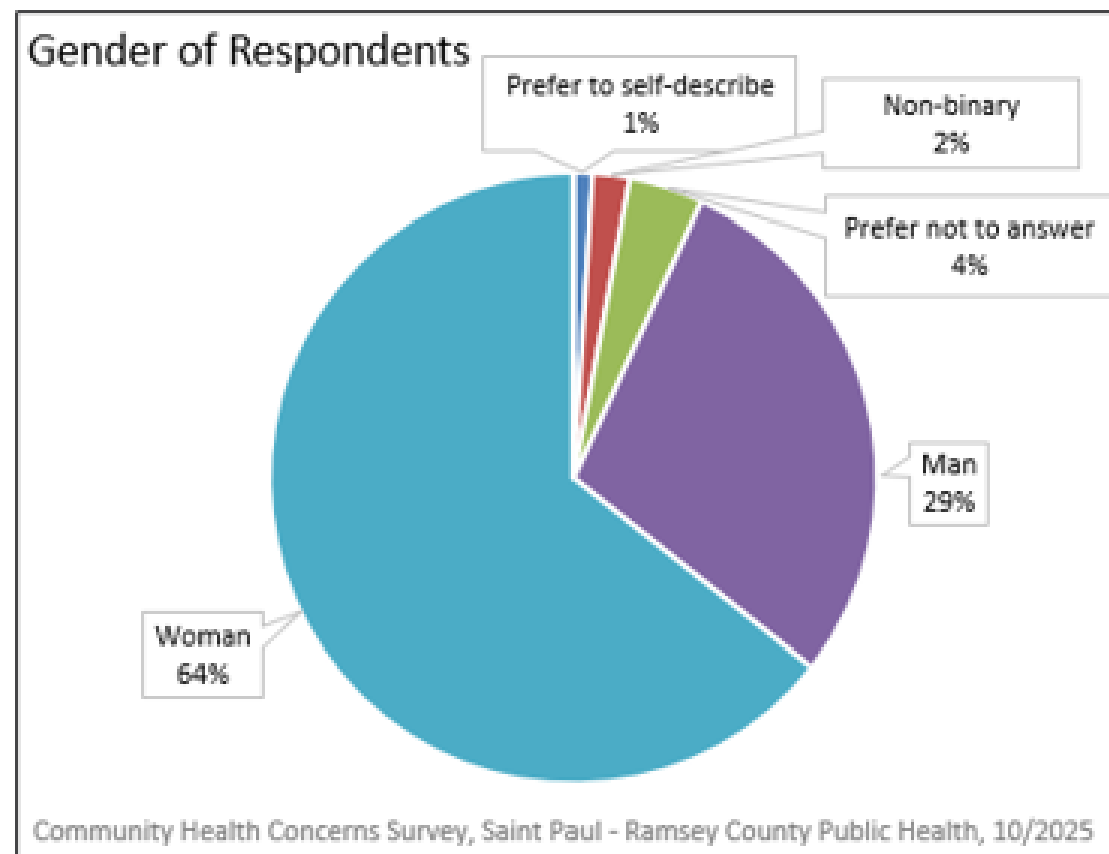
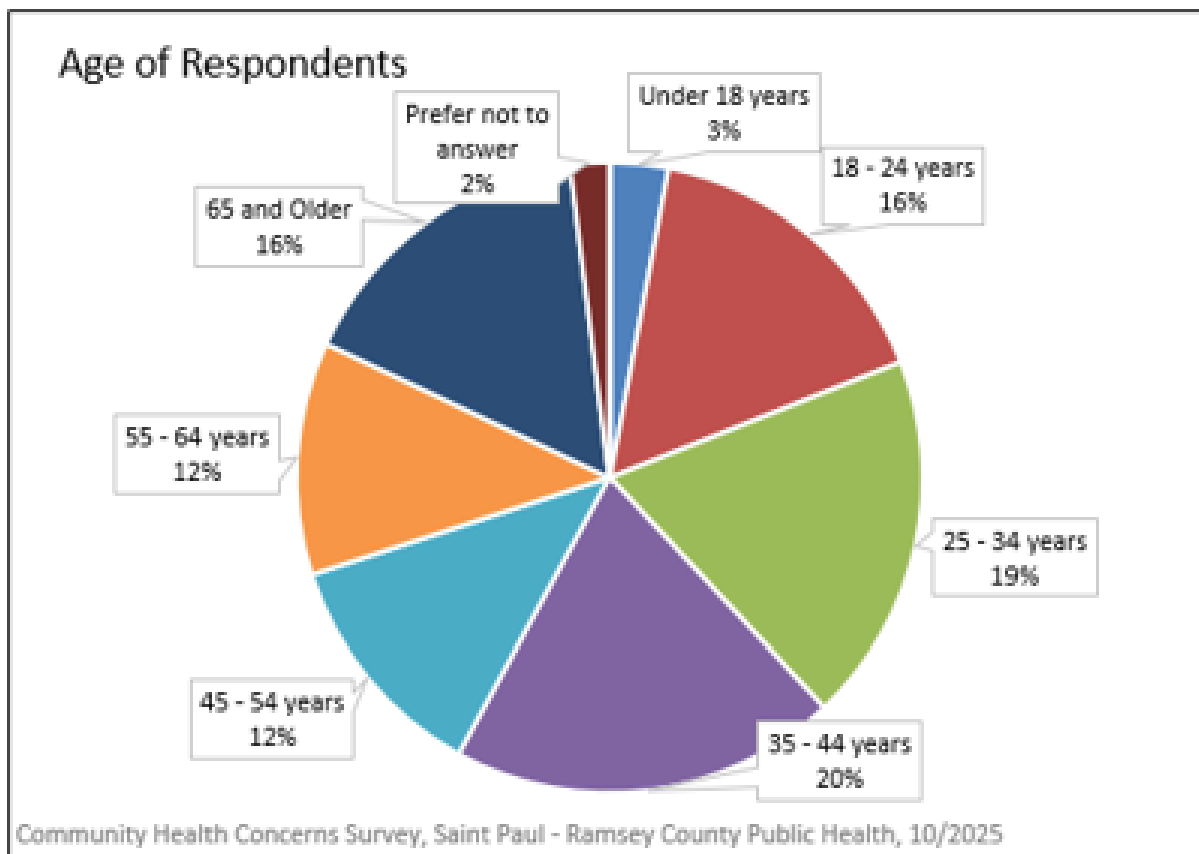
How to Use the CHA and CHIP

- Understand community health trends and priorities
- Support community health planning, action and funding
- Promote accountability in Ramsey County

An aerial photograph of a serene landscape. A calm lake occupies the upper left and center of the frame. The shoreline is lined with a dense forest of trees displaying vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and green. A paved road with a white center line curves along the right side of the lake, with a few vehicles visible. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

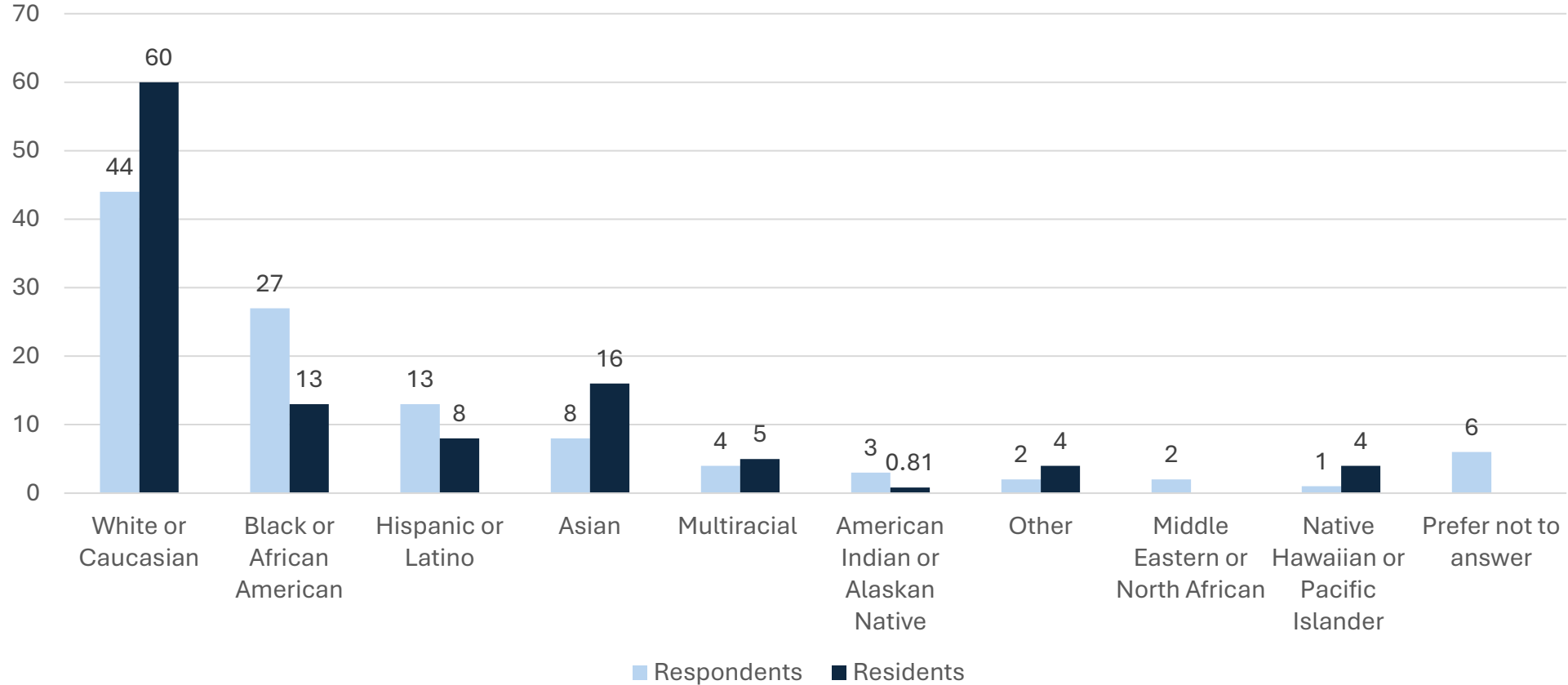
Appendices

Survey Respondent Age & Gender



Survey Respondent Race & Ethnicity

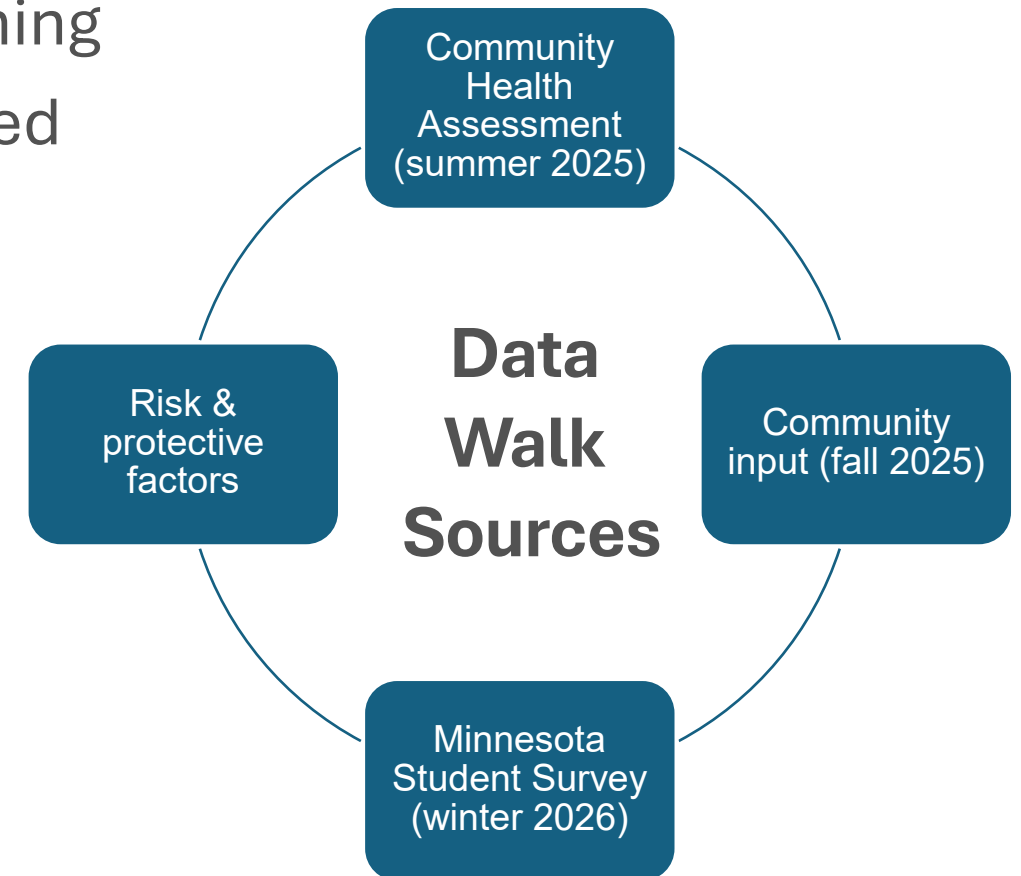
**Race/Ethnicity of Ramsey County Residents in 2020 Census
Compared to Survey Respondents**



March Action Team Meeting: Data Walk

Spend some time looking at the data posters, then discuss:

- Data points that are surprising or alarming
- Questions or further clarification needed
- Connections to work you do

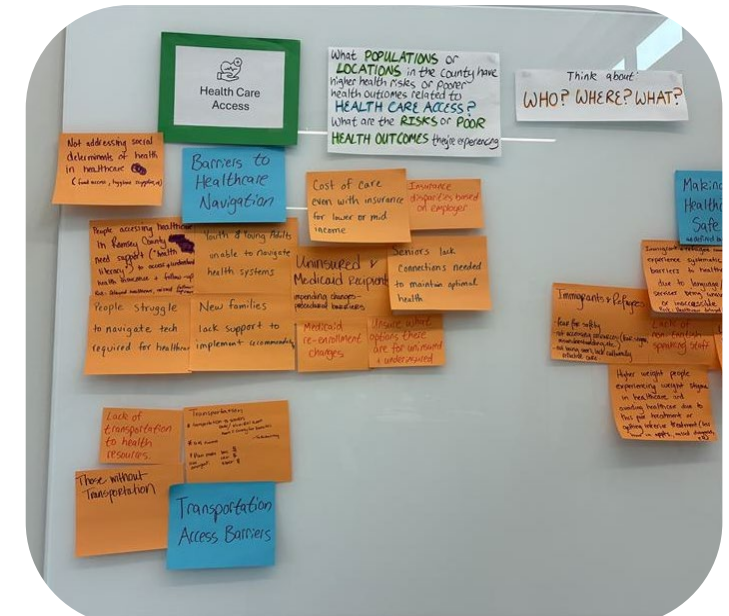


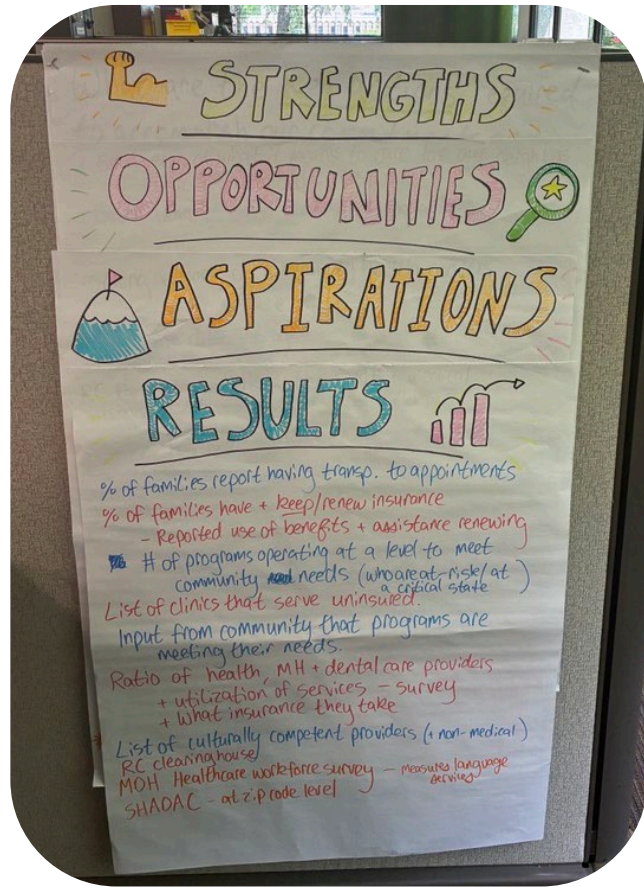
April Action Team Meeting: Consensus Building

Brainstorm and cluster ideas that answer these prompts:

- What populations or locations in our community have higher health risks or poorer health outcomes?
- What are the risks or poor health outcomes they're experiencing?

For **Mental Health, Well-being & Belonging** and **Access to Care**





May & June Meeting: SOAR Analysis

Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results

Group Aspirations:

- County healthcare is a well-oiled system of clinics, programs and services providing wraparound care to all
- Individuals and families understand and use the services that are available to them
- Pathways to care are reliable and clear, including to traditional and cultural wellness services
- Care is culturally competent and trauma informed
- Staff are cared for, educated, and able to meet goals

Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health

Community Health Improvement Plan

July 2026 - June 2031



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Acronyms

CHA: Community Health Assessment
CHIP: Community Health Improvement Plan
CHSAC: Community Health Service Advisory Committee
MAPP: Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnership
SPRCPH: Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health

Introduction

Letter from Health Director

Greetings,

It is my pleasure to present the 2026–2031 Community Health Improvement Plan for Ramsey County. This is our community’s plan, shaped by extensive input from residents across the county who shared their perspectives on the health issues that matter most to them. With the support of Saint Paul–Ramsey County Public Health, this plan will serve as a roadmap for addressing the barriers that prevent residents from achieving their best possible health. It also reflects our commitment to reducing health disparities and advancing equity throughout Ramsey County.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our core planning team, the many staff members who contributed their expertise, and, most importantly, the community members who dedicated their time, knowledge, and lived experiences to this effort. Together, we have created a plan that is not intended to sit on a shelf, but rather to serve as a living document that guides partnerships, actions, and investments aimed at improving health outcomes for all residents that drive us toward a healthier Ramsey County.

As you read through this plan, you will see that a rigorous and community-informed process was used to identify our top health priorities. While we recognize that many important health issues require attention, this plan is not intended to address every challenge. Instead, it focuses on the areas that emerged as the most pressing concerns for our residents and where collective action can make a meaningful difference.



Amy Caron, Director of Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health

Over the next five years, Saint Paul–Ramsey County Public Health is committed to working in partnership with community organizations and residents to implement this plan and advance our shared vision of a healthier, more equitable Ramsey County.

Thank you for joining us in this important work!

Yours in health,

Amy Caron

Amy Caron
Public Health Director
Saint Paul–Ramsey County Public Health

About Us

Ramsey County Vision, Mission & Values

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners establishes the vision, mission and goals that guide Ramsey County.

Vision

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

Mission

A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.

Goals

- Strengthen individual, family and community health, safety and well-being.
- Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty.
- Enhance access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses.
- Model fiscal accountability, transparency and strategic investments.



Well-Being



Prosperity



Opportunity

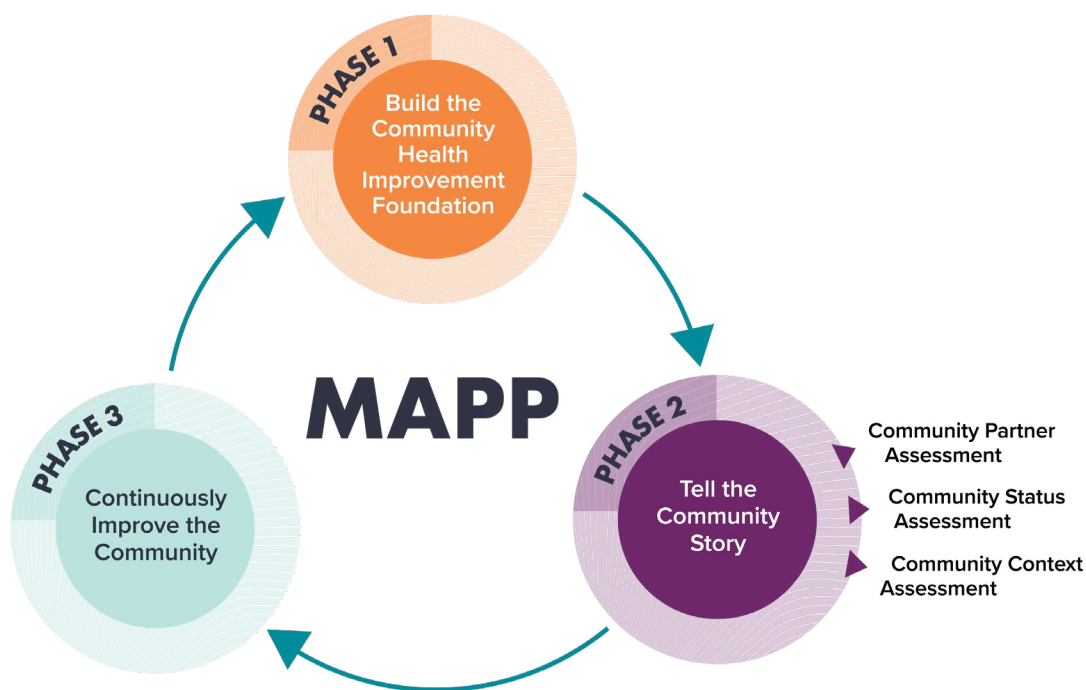


Accountability

MAPP 2.0 Framework

Public Health crafted this plan using the national Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) 2.0 framework for community health improvement. MAPP is a strategic framework that emphasizes health equity and collaborative action. The framework was developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Health Department used MAPP 2.0 to assess public health needs, prioritize issues, and develop an actionable improvement plan.

The visual below summarizes the three phases of the MAPP process. Phase one is to build the community health improvement foundation and activities in this phase included developing a community vision, establishing community health improvement teams, and creating a project plan. Phase two is to tell the community story. This was done through quantitative data collection and analysis, or a community status assessment, through qualitative insights from community, or a community context assessment, and through input from county organizations and leaders, or a community partner assessment. The third and final phase is to continuously improve the community which will be accomplished through the publication and implementation of this plan.



Acknowledgements

CHIP Core Planning Team

- Isabella Green, Planning Specialist
- Hiatia Gregory-Small, Planning Manager
- Morgen Sedlacek, Planning Manager

Community Health Services Advisory Committee

The Community Health Services Advisory Committee (CHSAC) provides oversight to the CHIP process and offers guidance at key milestones. CHSAC members participated in health prioritization activities from October 2025 to March 2026. CHSAC will continue to advise on CHIP implementation, monitoring and reporting.

CHSAC is made up of Ramsey County citizens who work in a healthcare field or have an interest in public health. The Committee strives to have broad representation from a network of community partners who contribute to the health of our community. Members are individuals with personal and professional ties to Ramsey County, knowledge of community health, and skills to support the planning process.

Community Health Improvement Action Team

The Community Health Improvement Action Team provided subject matter expertise on the needs of Ramsey County communities related to mental health and healthcare access. Team members participated in planning sessions from March to June 2026 to guide the community health planning process and provide recommendations.

A full list of partners and contributors to the planning process is available in the Appendix.



A planning meeting with community partners on the Action Team.

Hearing From Community

During this planning cycle, Public Health staff strived to include concerns and ideas from all communities in Ramsey County. However, some voices are missing in this process. This was in part due to local and national events that impacted the community health planning process, caused stress and fear in communities, and strained partner resources and capacity.

In fall of 2025, federal government funding lapsed and resulted in a government shutdown from October 1 to November 12, 2025. This shutdown affected the community health improvement process as it occurred while Public Health was facilitating community engagement and health priority selection. Community members shared rising concerns about urgent food access and economic needs. Public health leaders and community advisors considered these urgent community needs as they decided on health priorities that reflected both short and long-term needs in the county.

Starting in December of 2025 and ongoing: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in the Twin Cities experienced racism at the hands of Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Operation Metro Surge targeted Latino(a), Somali, and Asian communities among others solely by race or ethnicity which has magnified racism as a public health crisis in Ramsey County. The operation fueled fear in communities and severely disrupted normal functioning of the county. County organizations and government agencies, including Public Health, pivoted priorities and postponed planning efforts to support communities. The operation ended in February but has had a lasting impact on immigrant and minority business operations, sense of safety, and trust in institutions.

Executive Summary

Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health (SPRCPH) developed this report as a framework for communities and organizations to work together to improve the health of Ramsey County residents. The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a collaborative roadmap for improving the health and well-being of individuals in Ramsey County with a focus on the health priorities most important to community members.

After many months of data collection, discussions with community members and partners, and guidance from subject matter experts, four priorities were selected for this CHIP cycle.

2026-2031 Health Priorities



**Mental Health,
Well-being and
Belonging**



**Access to
Healthcare**



**Healthy Living
and Chronic
Conditions**



Basic Needs
(Housing stability,
economic conditions
and food access)

This plan is a snapshot of current health needs; moving forward, it will be as a living document to guide future partnerships and efforts to address health disparities. SPRCPH will collaborate with partners, facilitate shared work, guide implementation, and conduct ongoing monitoring of progress for these priority areas over the next five years.

What is a CHIP?

CHIP is a summary of the community's priorities and the initiatives and projects that will be implemented to improve health. The plan is the result of an extensive community health improvement planning process and details long-term, systematic efforts to address public health problems. A CHIP is community-owned; this is not a plan for just one agency but represents the entire local public health system. It will be used by health and other government agencies, in collaboration with community partners, to set priorities and target resources.



Strategic Values

Community Engagement

A CHIP is a systematic effort that's driven by community engagement to address health issues. The plan will be developed, implemented and monitored collaboratively with community. Public Health engaged community members and leaders during the planning process. This included community surveying and conversations in the fall, community advisors deciding on health priority areas, and partner convenings to provide expertise on needs and solutions, and framing out goals and objectives. Upon publication of this plan, community partners will join implementation efforts to execute strategies, monitor progress, and report results.



Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health staff member sharing community engagement results.

Racial Equity

In response to George Floyd's murder in the summer of 2020, an accumulation of wrongs to Black and Brown communities, and local community organizing, Ramsey County Board of Commissioners declared "Racism is a Public Health Crisis." Ramsey County's declaration energizes the internal movement to build and organize partnership between SPRCPH and Ramsey County communities. This plan outlines strategies for addressing community health needs informed by health equity principles, leading the way to community-centered response to the crisis of racism and acknowledging that racism continues to result in significant health harms.

Alignment

Public Health is responsible for departmental and county-level health planning, including the Community Health Assessment, Community Health Improvement Plan, internal strategic planning, and performance management and quality improvement. For the most current version of these plans, the processes, strategies, and evaluation methods were coordinated together. By aligning these plans, Public Health seeks to use resources more efficiently, maintain mutually beneficial relationships with partners, and improve the county's responsiveness to community needs.

Accreditation

The CHIP was prepared as a record of SPRCPH's 2025-2026 community health improvement plan process, completed every five years. This document fulfills in part requirements listed in Minnesota's Local Public Health Act statute (Minn. Stat. § 145A) and the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Domain 5: Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.

Community Vision

Community Vision Workshop Activity

Important characteristics of a healthy community:

- Access to nature.
- Food security.
- Transportation.
- Shelter.
- Trauma-informed conflict resolution.

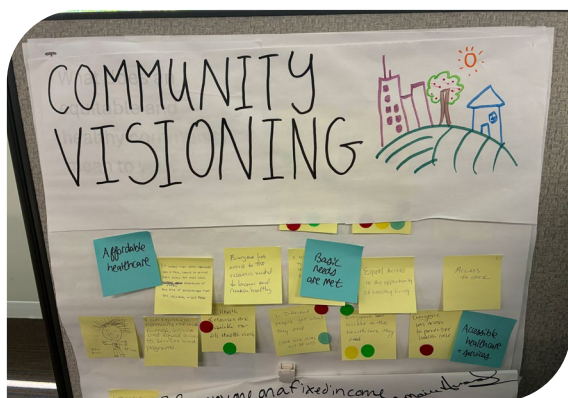


The meaning of an equitable and healthy community:

- Ability to thrive individually and communally.
- Everyone has resources to be healthy.
- Equal opportunity for healthy living and healthcare.

In fall of 2025, CHSAC participated in an exercise to envision a healthy future for Ramsey County and explore the characteristics of healthy communities framed around equity. Looking ahead at the next five years, the group shared indicators that our community is successfully working towards achieving health equity through increased unity, thriving communities, and indicators improving and disparities decreasing in areas like chronic illness, maternal health, community safety, transportation and housing access, and impacts of climate change.

CHSAC advises the county Board of Commissioners, city mayor and city council on issues related to public health. Additionally, the group serves as an advisory committee for the CHIP. In this capacity, committee members bring perspective from throughout the community and local public health system and is responsible for monitoring and assessing major steps in the CHIP process.



Poster covered with post-it notes showing the results of a community visioning activity.



Poster covered with post-it notes showing the results of an asset mapping activity.

How to Use This Plan

This CHIP is a guidebook for understanding and enhancing work in the county to improve community health outcomes. Here are a few ways we invite community members, partners, and county leadership to engage with this plan and use it to support your own work:

Understand community health priorities

This plan can be a starting point for conversations about local health priorities. It provides a data snapshot, input from community members, and insights from partners and subject matter experts that summarize community health needs and indicators. Use the information in this report to understand the opportunities available to improve health in Ramsey County and advocate for prioritized health issues identified by community and partners.

Support community health planning and action

This document shares information to support organizations developing their own plans or proposals for improving health. Learn more about what community members are experiencing as it relates to their health and well-being, plus recommendations from county partners and subject matter experts on collaborative strategies for change. Use this report and the recommended strategies as a tool for building collective action.

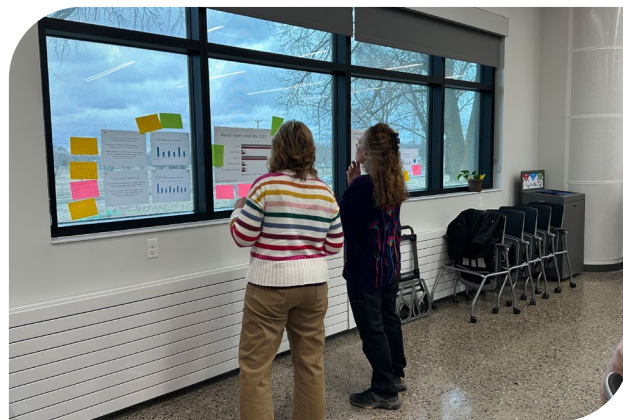
Promote accountability

This document serves as a roadmap for county residents, policy makers, and leadership to coordinate and allocate resources to improve health in Ramsey County. The CHIP uplifts community perspectives to hold the local health department, community-based organizations, and county leadership accountable by ensuring they act on the objectives of this plan. Organizational and county leadership can use this plan to understand priority health issues, advocate for policy changes, and advance solutions for community health priorities.

Get Involved!

Think about ways you can be a part of the solution! Join efforts to improve community health by volunteering to be part of an initiative or program targeting one of the health priorities. If the health priority issues interest you, reach out to get involved.

For more information about the CHIP or to join the implementation collaborative, email AskPH@ramseycountymn.gov.

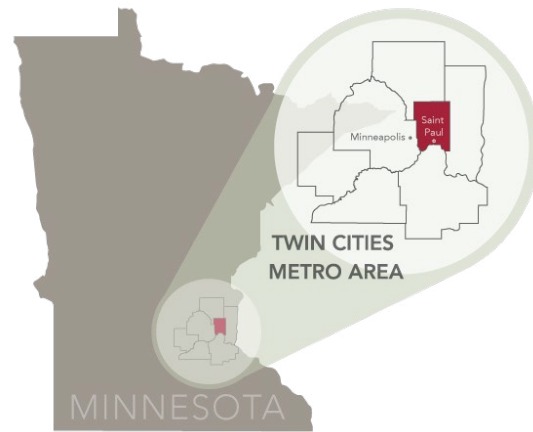


Two women looking at data posters.

Snapshot of People and Places

Established in 1849, Ramsey County is home to 552,352 residents and is the most densely populated and racially diverse urban county in Minnesota. The city of Saint Paul, the county seat and capital of Minnesota, is one of 19 cities located within the county.

SPRCPH is one of the largest local health departments in the state. The department provides a range of services as it works to protect and improve the health of people and the environment in Ramsey County.



Overview of Public Health in Public Places staff providing information to a resident.

Population

552,352

Estimated population of Ramsey County

Gender

51% Female **49%** Male

Age



● Under 18 ● 18-64 ● 65 and older

Race and Ethnicity



● White ● Asian or Pacific Islander ● Black or African American
● Two or more races ● American Indian or Alaska Native

8% of people are Hispanic or Latino

16% of people are foreign born

12% of people have a disability

Language

77%

Households that only speak English

10%

Speak limited English

Top languages spoken in non-English speaking households:

- Miao language, including Hmong
- Spanish
- Karen
- Amharic or Ethiopian
- Cushite, Beja or Somali

Income

\$81,568

Median household income

- People living in poverty: 12%
- Children in poverty: 15%
- Older adults in poverty: 10%

Housing

59%

of residents own their home

34%

of households are cost-burdened

48%

of unhoused individuals are Black, African American or African

Education

45%

Bachelor's degree or higher

26%

Some college or associate's degree

20%

High school diploma or GED

9%

Less than high school diploma or GED

Transportation

5%

Take public transportation to work

4%

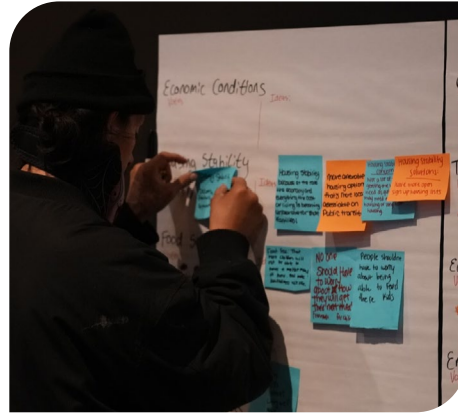
Bicycle or walk to work

Planning Process

Phase 1: Community Health Assessment

Spring 2025

In May of 2025, SPRCPH with Wilder Research published the Community Health Assessment (CHA), a data book that studies local population health and provides an overview of key health conditions and needs. The CHA is a snapshot in time of different factors that are impacting the health of those who live, work, and play in Ramsey County. The report covers over 100 health topics organized into thirteen major chapter areas that include data and trend analysis from multiple sources.



Man adding a post-it note onto a poster.

Phase 2: Community Engagement

Fall 2025

To understand the health topics most important to community members, Public Health coordinated community conversations and administered a community concerns survey in September and October of 2025. Public Health partnered with county organizations to host eight focus groups that 341 community members attended. The community concerns survey had 656 respondents who either took the survey on their own or who completed the survey with Public Health staff at one of ten in-person surveying locations. Community were asked to choose the health topics most important to them and express their concerns and desired solutions for those health topics. The results of that engagement were shared back out with the communities who participated through a data infographic.

Several organizations supported these community engagement efforts by facilitating conversations, promoting events, and offering space for surveying:

Community Conversations

- Cultural Wellness Center
- Elder's Lodge
- Face to Face
- Haven International
- Oromo Community of Minnesota
- Osceola Senior Place
- Raices Latinas
- Rondo Public Library
- The Sanneh Foundation
- 825 Arts

In-Person Surveying

- Environmental Center
- Frogtown Community Center
- Maplewood Library
- Public Health Center (formerly at 555 Cedar St)
- Ramsey County Government Center
- Rice Street Library
- Rondo Library
- WIC clinics

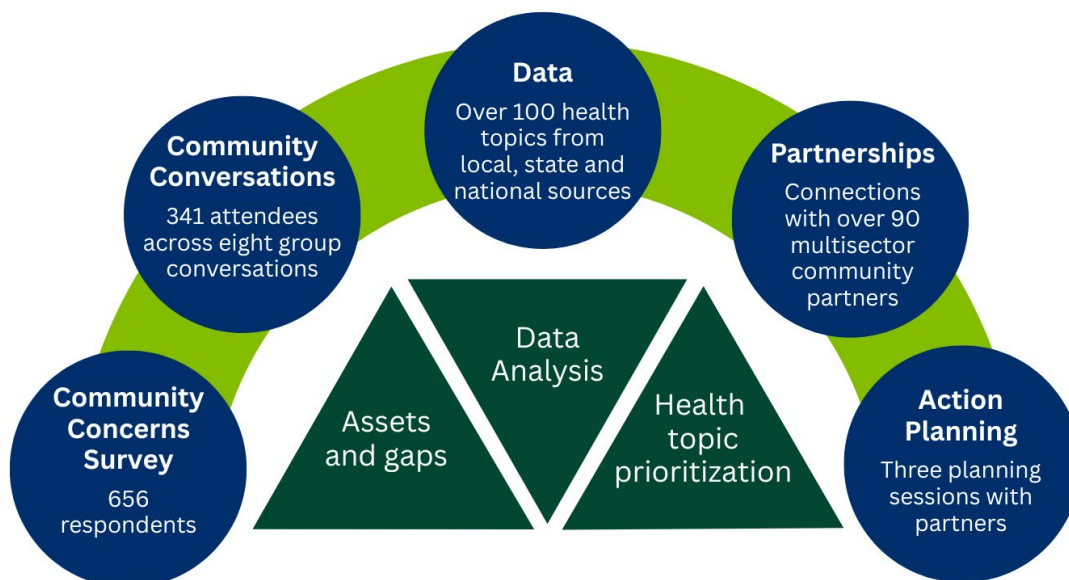
Phase 3: Community Health Priorities

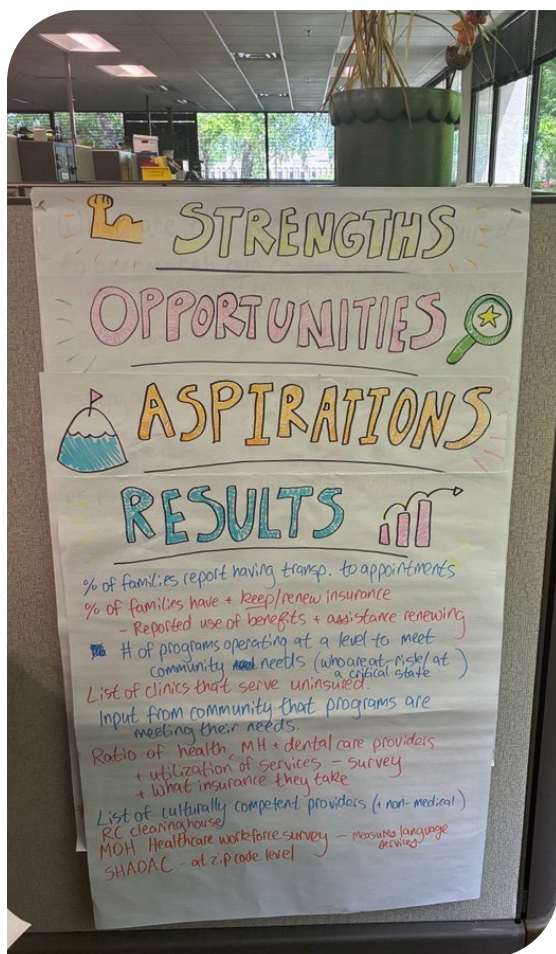
Fall 2025 – Winter 2026

Using the community engagement results, SPRCPH facilitated prioritization activities to determine the health topics for the CHIP to focus on. This started with the top ten health topics based on the combined quantitative data of the survey and the qualitative insights from community conversations.

Public Health's Department Leadership Team (DLT) reviewed this list of health topics and offered considerations about the suitability, resource needs, legal impacts, and acceptability for each. Community leaders on the county's Community Health Services Advisory Committee (CHSAC) then mapped each of the health topics on a matrix based on perceived feasibility and potential impact. The committee rated six of the health topics high on these measures. The four health priorities of the CHIP include three of these topics, plus a combined fourth category of basic needs that includes housing stability, economic conditions, and food access.

SPRCPH staff, DLT members and CHSAC participated in additional conversations to provide context for the health priority areas. Activities included asset mapping of available and needed resources, development of a community vision, Forces of Change analysis of internal and external pressures on the public health system, and an inventory of organizations whose work aligned with the health priorities.





Posters with the titles strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results.

Phase 4: Community Health Improvement Planning

Spring 2026

In March through June of 2026, SPRCPH convened an Action Team of community partners to frame out needs and solutions for the top two CHIP priority areas: Access to Healthcare and Mental Health, Well-being and Belonging. At a series of monthly planning meetings, the Action Team developed goals and objective statements that address data trends on health disparities, incorporate emergent community concerns, and offer recommendations for improving health outcomes.

The Action Team included 37 individuals from 26 organizations representing healthcare including hospitals and health centers, non-profits, community-based organizations, mental health promoters, and culturally congruent service providers. Partners attended four planning sessions and participated in breakout group activities that focused on the top two CHIP priority areas.

Planning Session #1

At the first session, partners participated in a data walk to understand county health trends and discuss connections to their work. Attendees reviewed data posters that showcased the Community Health Assessment, Minnesota Student Survey, community concerns survey and community conversation results, as well as risk and protective factors.

Planning Session #2

The second session focused on a consensus building workshop using Technology of Participation (ToP) facilitation methods. Action Team members answered question prompts to identify priority populations and to specify the poor health outcomes those populations were experiencing. The responses from the consensus building activity were used to develop issue statements. These statements are a planning strategy from the MAPP 2.0 framework that summarizes why and how a health issue occurs, how serious it is, and its outcomes and impacts.

Planning Session #3

At the third session, partners finished the consensus building workshop by sorting and naming their idea clusters. Each breakout group came up with four idea clusters that describe current health needs in Ramsey County affecting multiple population groups:

Access to healthcare

- Healthcare navigation barriers.
- Challenges accessing services due to transportation.
- Health services at risk of losing funding or limiting coverage.
- Need for healthcare that individuals feel safe accessing

Mental health, well-being and belonging

- Challenges accessing mental health care.
- Need for culturally relevant staff and programs.
- Isolation and loneliness.
- Certain populations experience higher rates and risks for mental health conditions.

Additionally, Action Team members participated in a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) analysis by brainstorming the strengths of partners in the room and opportunities to address the issue areas identified through the consensus building activity.

Attendees participated in a dot voting activity to select the opportunities they felt were most feasible. The top opportunities included improving how available services are marketed to individuals and families, coordinating systems to break down siloes and foster cross-sector collaboration, co-creating solutions with communities most impacted, better communication about impending and emergent healthcare changes, and promoting and creating third spaces for improved community connectedness.

Planning Session #4

At the final planning meeting, Action Team members finished the SOAR analysis by brainstorming aspirations and results. The two breakout groups were aligned in their aspirations for individuals and families to understand and use services available to them, pathways to care to be reliable and clear, healthcare to be culturally appropriate and trauma informed, and organizational staff to be supported in order to provide the quality of care that community needs.

Attendees also participated in a “line-of-sight” activity to map out how their professional activities contributed to broader population health outcomes and to identify linkages between their work and the objectives of the CHIP.

Mental Health, Well-being and Belonging



Why is this health priority important?

Mental health is essential and complex component of overall health, equally as important as physical health and experienced differently from one person to the next. A person's mental health can be affected by many different factors that can be both helpful and harmful to them coping with stresses of life, relating to others, making healthy decisions, and contributing to their communities. Ramsey County is home to many diverse communities and, to meet their varied needs, mental health services have to be responsive, adaptive, and guided by cultural humility. Addressing mental health moves beyond helping individuals to live without a mental health condition and includes supporting well-being and one's ability to thrive. Mental health care therefore requires individual, family, community and structural supports that overcome stigma, create a sense of belonging, and build resilience.

Ramsey County Adults



1 of 3

experience **social isolation** (36%)



1 of 6

experience **frequent mental distress** (17%)



1 of 5

experience **anxiety** (21%)

Higher percentage for **American Indians** (23.7%)



1 of 6

experience **depression** (16%)

Higher percentage for **seniors** (18.3%)

These percentages are higher in Ramsey County than in surrounding metro area counties.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022 and Minnesota Electronic Health Records Consortium, 2023.

Ramsey County Youth



12%

felt **Low Mental Well-being**

Higher percentage for **American Indians** (22%), **LGBTQIA2S+** (21%) and **transgender** (21%)

In the last 30 days...



42% of 5th grade students agreed **they worried alot.**



45% of 5th grade students agreed **they sometimes felt sad without knowing why.**

Source: Minnesota Student Survey, 2025.

Community Feedback

"People are lonely and sad. There is chronic stress in the community and a need for social connectedness.

There's a lack of access to effective mental health services because of availability and cost. It's difficult navigating services.

I am seeing increasing numbers of teens and young children with anxiety and depression in the schools I work in, as well as in children of friends and relatives."

Strategic Response:

Goal 1: Promote evidence-based mental well-being approaches that nourish mental health and reduce risks for mental health challenges.

- **Objective 1.1:** By June 2031, cultural partners will collaborate to promote culturally specific approaches for well-being and community-initiated care.
- **Objective 1.2:** By June 2031, partners across sectors will create and foster community belonging.
- **Objective 1.3:** By June 2031, partners across sectors will coordinate efforts to increase positive identity in youth.

Goal 2: Increase access to high quality, culturally affirming mental health services.

- **Objective 2.1:** By June 2031, cultural partners will collaborate to inform and promote culturally responsive mental health services.
- **Objective 2.2:** By June 2031, partners across sectors will coordinate and amplify efforts to support communities most impacted by anxiety, depression and suicidality.

Recommended Strategies:

- Engage cultural communities to understand their approaches to well-being and mental health.
- Identify, establish and maintain relationships with cross-sector groups.
- Promote cultural models of mental health care and community mental health clinics.
- Create online mobile directories or portals of culturally appropriate resources and services.
- Increase community spaces that foster belonging and community empowerment.
- Increase opportunities for youth to experience belonging, positive identity and job skills.

Access to Healthcare



Why is this health priority important?

Healthcare is essential and timely use of healthcare services is necessary to promote well-being, manage conditions, prevent disease, and prevent premature death. While critical to improving quality of life, healthcare services are not accessible to many in Ramsey County. Cost, coverage, transportation, mistrust, and lack of awareness of care options are all barriers that prevent or cause individuals to delay needed care. When communities can easily access health services, they are more likely to seek preventative care that minimizes harm or illness longer term. Improving access to care involves removing barriers for individuals and families to attend routine care visits as well as protecting and expanding care options and empowering individuals with the means to make healthy decisions.



A child listening with a stethoscope.

Ramsey County Adults



5%

of people **are**
uninsured.



31%

did **not** receive a
routine check-up
in the last year.



37%

did **not** visit a
dentist or dental
clinic in the last year.

These percentages are higher in Ramsey County than in surrounding metro area counties.

Source: Centers for Disease Control, 2022 (age adjusted) and US Census Bureau, 2023.

Community Feedback

"Not having access to healthcare or education can worsen existing disparities between groups. It's fundamental to the community's health and wellness.

Going without healthcare causes problems to build up which impacts if an individual can work or contribute to their community and support themselves or their family.

I want my daughter to be able to continue to have healthcare so she can grow up and be healthy without having to worry about taking her to the doctor if we don't have healthcare."

Strategic Response

Goal 1: Expand service delivery and system navigation to improve connections to care.

- **Objective 1.1:** By June 2031, partners across sectors will collaborate to understand and reduce barriers to accessing healthcare for communities most impacted.
- **Objective 1.2:** By June 2031, healthcare partners will promote culturally appropriate care, support, and services.
- **Objective 1.3:** By June 2031, partners across sectors will increase transportation accessibility to healthcare services.

Recommended Strategies:

- Conduct a healthcare assessment.
- Engage the community to understand healthcare needs.
- Identify, establish and maintain relationships with cross-sector groups.
- Support the healthcare workforce.
- Better promote healthcare services.
- Create a directory or portal of healthcare resources and services.
- Expand the scope of navigators to better serve and direct community to services.

Healthy Living and Chronic Conditions



Why is this health priority important?

Healthy living involves small habits and choices that add up to important health benefits, including chronic disease prevention, mental resilience, and increased longevity. Ramsey County supports healthy living by offering opportunities for physical activity, wellness, and local, healthy foods. However, individuals can struggle to maintain a healthy lifestyle due to lack of time, affordability, or availability of resources. Building healthier communities and preventing and managing chronic disease requires that individuals and families have access to the resources and services that contribute to living healthy.

Among Adults in Ramsey County



12%

Feel frequent
physical distress

Defined as 14+ days of poor
physical health in the last 30 days.

30%

Short sleep duration
Less than 7 hours a night.

23%

No leisure time for
physical activity.

37%

Living with type 2
Diabetes.

These percentages are higher in Ramsey County than in surrounding metro area counties.

Source: Centers for Disease Control, 2022 (age adjusted) and US Census Bureau, 2023.

Strategic Response

Public Health will build partnerships and uplift existing initiatives that increase opportunities for healthy living and prevent and address chronic conditions. This includes promoting the work of the Active Living Ramsey County, a coalition of departments, community leaders, health organizations, schools, and residents working to create opportunities for individuals to be physically active. The Ramsey County Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) is a Public Health program that supports partners and provides funding for initiatives to increase physical activity, improve access to healthy foods, and reduce the use of and exposure to commercial tobacco.

Basic Needs



Why is this health priority important?

Basic needs are interrelated with health because they are necessary conditions for well-being. Without secure housing, access to food, and economic stability, individuals and families can not adequately take care of their physical and mental health. These conditions are referred to as social determinants of health, or the non-medical factors that influence quality of life and life expectancy. When groups of individuals lack these basic needs, it can negatively impact population health overall. Improving community health therefore requires that individuals' essential, basic needs are also met.

Data Snapshot



1 of 3

households are cost-burdened (34%)

Higher percentage for **American Indians** (66%) and **Black** individuals (52%).



1 of 10

experience food insecurity (11% across all ages)

Higher percentage for **Black** individuals (31%), **Hispanic and Latino/a** individuals (25%), and for **children** (19%).

Among SNAP recipients

31%

of adults received food stamps in the last 12 months.

38%

of all SNAP recipients are children.

These percentages are higher in Ramsey County than in surrounding metro area counties.

Source: Centers for Disease Control, 2022 (age adjusted) and US Census Bureau, 2023.

Strategic Response

Public health will build partnerships and share data findings with existing county efforts to address basic needs around economic conditions, housing stability, and food access.

Ramsey County Community and Economic Development (CED) sustains and expands housing and economic growth through affordable housing, business support, and economic development initiatives. The Ramsey County Government Center and other service centers around the county help residents navigate Financial Assistance Services (FAS), including emergency, food, cash, childcare, and healthcare assistance.

Additionally, navigators at county service centers assist with finding and affording food. Food access is also a priority for funding and projects coordinated by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP).

Ramsey County Housing Stability provides emergency supportive services for individuals experiencing housing instability or homelessness. The county also facilitates Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care, a coalition of organizations coordinating and funding initiatives to end homelessness. Public Health oversees Housecalls, a program that provides financial assistance to prevent families from becoming homeless, and Healthy Homes, a program that provides resources for lead and radon mitigation in homes.



A woman organizing canned goods.

Putting this Plan into Action

No single individual or organization can improve health in Ramsey County alone. Collective action provides a means of building a healthcare system that works better together and connects community members to service that promotes their health and wellbeing.

SPRCPH will guide implementation of this plan and will monitor progress on healthy priority strategies. By the end of 2026, Public Health will establish an implementation collaborative to develop more detailed and specific action plan for the top two priority areas. This implementation collaborative will delegate and track progress on activities, review and update goals, objectives and strategies as appropriate and contribute to annual progress reports.

The department will work to foster partnerships with other county agencies, organizational partners, healthcare providers, and community leaders across all four health priorities. Implementation of this plan will be a collaborative effort that aligns with other strategic initiatives including, but not limited to, the Ramsey County Strategic Plan, regional community health assessments, and Foundational Public Health Responsibilities.

Partners involved in implementation will follow a Plan-Do-Study-Act approach to plan strategies to implement, do work around the planned strategies, study the results of that work, and act by changing strategy implementation methods to better meet CHIP objectives. Public Health will use its performance management system to monitor and evaluate progress on community health improvement activities. This will include quality improvement processes to improve inefficiencies in services and achieve broader health indicators.

This CHIP was created to be reflective of and responsive to health topics most important to community. It provides a snapshot at a given point in time of community health needs, but will continue on as a living, iterative document. SPRCPH will document efforts to implement the health priority strategies and make updates as new data is available or community needs change.



Two women reviewing data about social isolation and connection.

Appendix A

Partners and Contributors

Community Health Services Advisory Committee

Aisha Ellis	Jess Marsalla	Ogden Rogers
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Community Health Improvement Action Team

Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health Staff

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Ka’Rynn Cummings	Public Health in Public Places (PHiPP)
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Valeesha Halmon	Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

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Sonja Batalden
Tanya Beck

Minnesota Department of Health
Adult Mental Health / Social Services
American Indian Family Center
Crisis Services
Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Community Care
HAVEN, Int'l
HealthPartners
Global Health Alliance
Cultural Wellness Center
Nurses are the Answer
Riverland Community Health
Fort Road Federation

