

PlanET Healthy Communities Working Group Meeting #2

Wednesday, June 13, 2012

Cansler YMCA, Community Room, 10 am-12 pm

KEY FINDINGS

The meeting of 22 participants was called to order by Chairperson Jim Dickson, YMCA of East Tennessee, followed by self-introductions. The group was briefed by Mark Donaldson, Metropolitan Planning Commission, on PlanET progress to date, including public and stakeholder input, the Livability Report Card, and leadership dialogue priorities.

Regional Drivers

Facilitator Ann Coulter presented a summary of the eight broad drivers of regional trends and change as described in the Livability Report Card. The drivers affect all types of regional dynamics but depending on the topic area of each working group, some drivers have more impact than others. Working group attendees discussed how various drivers impact healthy communities across the region. They indicated that three additional factors, the economic downturn, institutional inequalities, and lack of resource/effort alignment, are important drivers of health in the region. Attendees then rated each driver based on its level of impact on the health of regional residents. The higher the point value, the more important the driver is to healthy communities. Drivers as rated are listed below from most to least important.

Low educational attainment, low wages, and limited job advancement opportunities (42)

Food, activity, and lifestyle (40)

Economic downturn (34)

Few transportation options (34)

Dispersed development patterns (33)

Institutional inequalities (31)

Demographic shifts (29)

Loss of agricultural land (23)

Lack of alignment of resources/efforts (22)

Rising energy costs (20)

Location decisions (18)

Vision Themes Summary

Attendees considered comments collected at recent Forum 2 public meetings about a regional vision for the future. For healthy communities, these vision themes are categorized as:

- Good access to health care
- More recreational facilities and opportunities to exercise
- More healthy food options
- Lower rates of drug use

Attendee input included the following points:

- The vision should be for an overall healthy population, including social and mental/emotional health as integral to physical health.

- Health care should operate from a wellness rather than illness model
- Active living and active living habits will be the norm, not just for times of recreation
- A healthy region will have a strong local and regional food system and more non-traditional food sources

Attendees were encouraged to continue to seek public input over the summer about the long range vision for the region.