



**Report to Partnership for Healthy Delaware County:
Community themes and Strengths Assessment**

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Overview and Method

As part of the Mobilizing for Action through Partnership and Planning (MAPP) process, the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment calls for opportunities for any citizen in Delaware County to:

- Voice his or her opinion regarding health and health care issues in the county;
- Identify strengths that should be preserved; and
- Express concerns and suggest priorities for action.

These citizen opinions are to be added to the information collected from the other phases of the MAPP process.

To accomplish this, the Delaware General Health District (DGHD) and The Strategy Team, Ltd. held two town hall meetings in the county, open to all citizens. The meetings were well publicized by various methods and the locations were chosen for their accessibility to residents. The dates, times and locations of the meetings were as follows:

- September 25, 2007, Genoa Baptist Church; and
- September 27, 2007, Delaware Area Career Center.

Both meetings were scheduled from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Nine residents attended the first session, ten attended the second, for a total of 19. The attendees were predominantly female, but there were three male attendees between the two groups¹.

During each meeting, a representative from the DGHD provided a brief overview of the purpose and process of MAPP as well as the goals for the evening's session. Professionals from The Strategy Team then facilitated each session for discussion of two central questions:

- What about Delaware County makes it a healthy place for you and your family to live? Personal health, environmental health, safety, etc. are included in this category – i.e., all aspects of health.
- What about Delaware County needs to be changed to make it a healthier place for you and your family to live? In other words, what are your concerns about health issues including environmental health, personal health, safety, etc.?

To ensure continuity between the groups, each session followed a discussion guide, which is included at the end of this report.

During the facilitation, participants voiced their opinions which were written on cards, posted, and then prioritized using the "dot" method of voting. Brief discussions followed the prioritization process to verify that the dots reflected participants' wishes. Because the results were very similar across both groups, they are reported in the aggregate this report. Each meeting ended with an evaluation of the session. These comments are included at the end of this report.

¹ An online survey covering the same topics was also created and publicized for those who could not attend the Town Hall meetings. Only one response was received.

Results of the Town Hall Meetings

Positive aspects of Delaware County

The facilitation began with a discussion of those aspects of Delaware County that encourage healthier living among its residents. Generally, the participants saw as strengths the social services available, particularly for senior citizens; the parks and recreational programs and facilities (mostly outdoors), including biking and walking trails; the cleanliness of the county; and many aspects of its safety, including its disaster preparedness.

Individual comments and their priority ranking (from highest to lowest) regarding these positive aspects are presented next. These are the aspects of Delaware County that citizens find very desirable from a health perspective and want to preserve.

Positive aspects regarding the health of Delaware County (prioritized)

- Excellent services exist for senior citizens through the Council for Older Adults – COA – including senior health fairs and events like the summer festival. (5 dots)
- County-wide system for preservation parks – sixth park just opened. Well funded. (5 dots)
- Good recreational programs, sports and facilities for kids by both the city and the county. Orange Park, Mingo Park, etc. (5 dots)
- It's a safe community in which to walk or hike. Parks and walking paths are also safe. (4 dots)
- There are many social service agencies to serve many different families' needs, including the Mental Health & Recovery Services Board. (3 dots)
- Bike and walking trails. (2 dots)
- It's a clean community – Keep Delaware County Beautiful. (2 dots)
- There are many opportunities to educate the public – through the schools (K to 12), through agencies, governmental entities, etc. Example: there are excellent middle and high school health programs, especially in Delaware City schools. (2 dots)
- The health district's involvement in a smoke-free work place/banning tobacco smoke. (2 dots)
- There is a farmers' market with fresh fruits and vegetables (1 dot)
- Low-cost flu inoculations and vaccines by the health district; immunizations for children (1 dot)
- Good monitoring of food safety (1 dot)
- There is a good disaster preparedness plan within the county. (1 dot)
- Health Department does a good job with car seat installation checks, helmet use and giveaways. (1 dot)
- Strong prevention programs for tobacco, suicide, violence, drug and alcohol use. (1 dot)
- Lack of turf issues – collaboration is great among agencies and jurisdictions (1 dot)
- Abundance of concerned residents, agencies & organizations. Good participation. (1 dot)

Other positive aspects, not dotted:

- Urgent care facility in Sunbury, other local places.
- Good drinking water.
- Not much worry about crime. Safe community. Fire and police are good.
- Lots of community events – contribute to social health.
- Not a lot of concrete – lots of trees – makes it healthy.

- Testing goes on for rabies, etc. (bats).
- Good access to health care – many options for doctors and dentists.
- Bike paths through the college, etc.
- Low-impact industries, therefore minimal amount of manufacturing – therefore less pollution.
- Good resources for substance abuse problems – i.e., good provider agencies.
- County-wide mosquito spraying is very effective.
- Genoa township officials are concerned and take action to keep residents safe. Example: email communications
- (There are) worksite wellness programs for some businesses and schools by the city and county government.
- Grady Hospital offers good educational services – exercise programs, child birth classes, support groups, etc.
- Appreciate communication from the health district with the community via newsletters, newspapers, website and TV coverage.

Areas of concern regarding Delaware County

Next, town hall participants were asked to voice their areas of concern regarding health issues in Delaware County. In other words, what issues are viewed as priority areas for the County's attention? Again, these were posted and prioritized using the same process as before.

Overall, the highest priority health issues perceived by Delaware County residents included the following:

- *Not enough community centers (e.g., affordable recreational and health facilities) available to county residents / Lack of widespread public support for community centers;*
- *Traffic and transportation problems / Lack of bike paths / Need for connecting rights-of-way to access bike paths / Lack of sufficient public transportation;*
- *Need for more education to promote healthier behaviors.*

Possible actions for addressing these priority areas were then discussed. The full output from this guided discussion is presented below.

- **Not enough community centers. Affordable recreational and health facilities are not available to county residents (Powell has one); also, lack of public support for them (13 dots)**

Possible actions that could be taken on this issue

- Work with existing facilities, perhaps partnering with World Gym – public/private partnerships between private entities and the health district; work with National Guard.
- Look at creative funding options for buildings and operations.
- COA Senior Center may be able to provide more opportunities for seniors.
- Marketing of new ideas.
- Fund with property tax.
- Must ask: Do people know what a *community center* entails? Do they see it as a workout place or a place for seniors?
- Must market center(s) appropriately.
- More sharing of “toys” with Westerville facility.
- Find private money – many “Ys” are funded privately.
- Grass roots efforts may be needed. Example: Skate park.

- **Commuting – there is no public transit. Need increased public transit that connects with COTA (7 dots)**
Possible actions that could be taken on this issue
 - Create a Park 'N Ride.
 - COTA Link
 - Expand DATA.

- **Traffic is dangerous when you want to exercise by walking or biking as paths do not connect but users must drive or face traffic. (7 dots)**
Possible actions that could be taken on this issue
 - Widen routes to accommodate lanes for bikes and walking.
 - Use traffic-calming measures.
 - Designate which jurisdiction this problem belongs to – it is city, county or state? Which officials do you go to?
 - Look at successful models – do a best-practice study, including reviews of Westerville.
 - More planned development.

- **Need education to promote healthier behaviors – exercising, eating right, etc. (4 dots)**
Possible actions that could be taken on this issue
 - Make more education available.
 - Figure out incentives to motivate these behaviors. (Cost is a problem for lower income people) Relatedly, find out what motivates people to continue bad behaviors. Learn how to break the cycle.
 - Use the state smoking ban as an opportunity.
 - Link education to existing venues and the way they are promoted (parks, etc.).
 - Identify target audiences, then look at ways to reach them in their lifestyles.

- **Must drive to do anything. This isolates some groups such as seniors, junior high students who need to get to and from activities. (4 dots)**
Possible actions that could be taken on this issue
 - Have more bike racks available.
 - Must have more access to public transportation.
 - Lack of knowledge – people don't know if there is public transportation (some for seniors is available).
 - Study being done regarding transportation in Delaware (ODOT grant to DATA).
 - Add bike lanes when roads are expanded.
 - Creative planning for bike routes.

- **We need more bike paths. (3 dots)**
Possible actions that could be taken on this issue
 - Publicize ones that exist.
 - Powell is a local "best practice."
 - Need for legislation to require sidewalks and bike paths.
 - Fit buses with bike racks.

- There is political gridlock at the highest levels of government. (4 dots)
- Bad organization/logistics for Super Flu Saturday. Might need to move the location or use a different system for people to register. (3 dots)
- Worries about air quality (pollution from traffic, allergies, asthma, etc.). (3 dots)
- There are a lot of downtown bars in Delaware, which increases alcohol use and younger people getting hooked up with the bar scene and a bad crowd. (3 dots)

- Communicable diseases and antibiotics may not be as effective as before. (2 dots)
- Need improvements in school lunch programs. (2 dots)
- Odor from wastewater treatment facilities. (2 dots)
- Tobacco use is high compared to state rates. (2 dots)
- People go to Franklin County for specialty health care. (2 dots)
- Many empty store fronts in towns – local communities may not be thriving. (1 dot)
- Need more tolerance for ethnic diversity. Not welcoming now. (1 dot)
- Geographical disparities among school district resources and services. (1 dot)
- Alcohol consumption is higher than it should be, Need education to discourage it. (1 dot)
- Diabetes (1 dot)
- Obesity and overweight (2 dots)
- Not enough productive activities for kids. (1 dot)
- Child/baby abuse (1 dot)
- There are many unhealthy aspects about commuting to work, including the time lost and pollution. (1 dot)
- New subdivisions isolate residential areas from commercial areas – not mixed land use. (1 dot)
- Development on Route 23 has led to fast, unsafe traffic plus many curb cuts. (1 dot)

Other areas of concern, not dotted:

- Much self medication – both over the counter and prescription drugs.
- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Need tolerance of political and religious diversity, too.
- Must drive to access basic needs.
- Law enforcement is inconsistent among various jurisdictions. More collaboration is needed.
- Lack of women's health services for the under- and uninsured and the working poor.
- Urban sprawl and unplanned development.
- Need more linkages between Ohio Wesleyan University and Delaware County.
- Lack of continual updates about pandemics and emergency preparedness. Where are we and what progress has been made?
- Vector-borne diseases (rabies, West Nile, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever).
- Lack of healthy eating establishments.

Session evaluations

Each session concluded with a brief two-part evaluation. During the first part, participants were asked to voice “what worked” about the session; in the second part, they were asked “what would you change if we were to do the session over?”

What worked

- We felt comfortable sharing
- Fed off of each other
- Very visual process
- Liked starting with the positives
- Small group – got our voices heard
- (Session was) kept on time
- Had an agenda
- Good ideas and next steps
- Time of day

- Very interactive
- Food

Things participants would have changed

- Start earlier – 6 to 7:30
- More specific directions to get to the room
- Get more people to attend
- Take this meeting to existing groups
- Busy facility

DGHD/PHDC Community Themes & Strengths Assessment:**Outline of Town Hall Meetings****September 25, 2007, 7-8:30pm, Genoa Baptist Church****September 27, 2007, 7-8:30pm, Delaware Area Career Center****Goal of Town Hall Meetings: To explore community priorities regarding health issues, health care issues, and other quality of life issues in Delaware County.****Preparation assignments:****DGHD**

- Logistics: signage, people to point the way
- Refreshments: water, muffins, fruit, napkins
- Door prizes
- Projector, computer for Tues. p.m.
- List of acknowledgements

TST

- Jump drive with Qs, etc.
- Box for door prizes
- Cards for registration
- Facilitation materials: storyboards, post-it easels, card, marking pens, dots, 3x5 cards
- Digital recorder

Agenda

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) Welcome, brief overview of MAPP | DGHD / PHDC (Nancy or Lux) |
| 2) Orientation to today's sessions | Orie Kristel, TST |
| 3) Logistics of session | Orie Kristel, TST |
| 4) Conduct of session(s) | Orie Kristel / Karen Snyder, TST |
| 5) Next steps | DGHD / PHDC (Nancy or Luix) |

Participants take a bathroom break when needed. There are no official breaks.

Expanded Agenda for Facilitator Use and DGHD / PHDC Review**Set up:**

Participants will be seated at tables in a "U" shape so they can see each other. Brief agenda and discussion questions will be projected on screen as appropriate. Microphones will assure everyone can hear each other.

Agenda Expanded**1) Welcome****DGHD**

- DGHD / PHDC rep provides brief overview of purpose of MAPP, where we are in the process, what we need to get from the group tonight (i.e., the goal of the session).
- Talks of importance of public input
- Introduces Orie Kristel & Karen Snyder

7:05

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------|
| 2) Orientation to today’s sessions | Orie Kristel, TST | 7:10 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bathroom locations and bathroom breaks – rolling breaks at any time ▪ Cell phones and pagers off, please ▪ Reviews purpose of today’s session ▪ Introduces facilitators | | |
| 3) Explains use of storyboard, cards, etc. | Orie Kristel, TST | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ground rules ▪ Explains storyboard process ▪ Will address two major questions tonight regarding the health of Delaware County | | |
| 4) Addressing the questions | | |
| Q. 1: What about Delaware County makes it a <u>healthy place</u> for your and you family to live? We include personal health, environmental health, safety, etc. in this category – all aspects of health. (“Currently healthy” – green cards) | | 7:15 |
| Q. 2: What about Delaware County needs to be changed to make it a <u>healthier place for you and your family to live</u>? In other words, what are your concerns about health issues, including environmental health, personal health, safety, etc.? (“Currently unhealthy” – yellow cards) | | 7:35 |
| 5) Dot-voting to create priorities. | | 7:55 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 1 dot for every 5-10 cards. • One dot per person to a card. • Facilitators stand by boards to help interpret writing, ideas. | | |
| 6) Drawing for door prizes while TST groups, re-arranges cards | | 8:10 |
| 7) Discussion of priorities | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with group at this point – is this what you meant to do? Anyone want to make a case for an additional issue? Anyone want to make a case for removal of an issue? | | |
| 8) Identify action steps, based on prioritized health issues | | 8:15 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For “currently healthy” issues: What can be done to preserve or strengthen these healthy attributes? [Answers go up on flip pad.] • For “currently unhealthy” issues: What can be done to change or eliminate these unhealthy attributes? [Answers go up on flip pad.] | | |
| 9) Closing the session | | 8:30 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TST reviews proceedings, priorities – turns session over to DGHD • DGHD thanks participants, gives next steps, asks them to tell others to attend next session (Tues. night group only). Dismissal. | | |

If time allows or need arises, probe on following questions...

1. When you think of the Delaware County community, what makes you or your family feel most proud? (o/e)
2. When you think of the Delaware County community, what makes you or your family feel most concerned? (o/e)
3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of life in the Delaware County community? (1-5 Likert, with probe)
4. To what extent do you think the Delaware County community is a good place to raise children? (1-5 Likert, with probe)
5. To what extent do you think the Delaware County community is a good place to grow older? (1-5 Likert, with probe)
6. What do you think are the two or three most important things that can help a community like ours be as healthy as possible? (o/e)
7. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the health care system in the Delaware County community? (1-5 Likert, with probe) Can you tell us more about your answer?
8. What suggestions do you have for improving Delaware County, especially the health of its residents? (o/e)
9. What would have to happen for you, your family or your friends to become even more involved in working to improve our community? (o/e)