

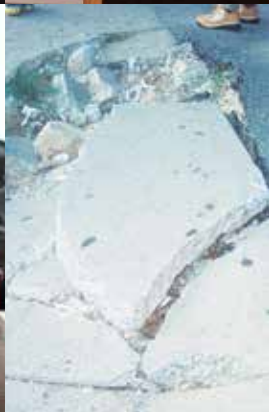



*Highlights from the*  
Community Transformation Grant  
for Prince George's County, Maryland

*October 2012 - September 2014*

In October 2012, the Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI) received a two-year Community Transformation Grant (CTG) Small Communities Program grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to reduce chronic disease rates and improve health in Prince George's County.

Seven diverse strategies focused on the communities of **Langley Park**, **Suitland/Coral Hills**, and **Bladensburg/East Riverdale**, which were selected to build upon the County Executive's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI). These strategies supported cross-sector collaboration within county government, increased access to affordable healthy foods, strengthened the network of Community Health Workers (CHWs) that serve county residents, and improved walkability and connectivity in neighborhoods surrounding community centers. Three additional mini-grants were awarded to address smoking policies in County housing, wellness policies in public schools, and pedestrian safety throughout the county.





***“The value of CTG is that it has brought people together. The county has always addressed things in silos. The grant has shown the need for connectedness [among] silos in the way of having healthy communities.... Having police officers [work] with recreation people and health people has shaped thinking in the county around advancing social change.”***

**~Leadership Team Member**

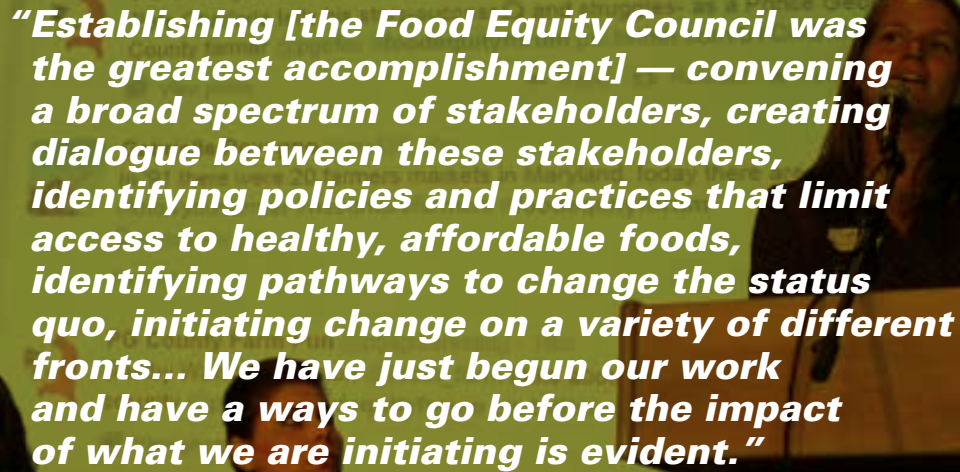
## Planting Seeds for County Collaboration: Leadership Team

IPHI launched and convened a Leadership Team that included high-level representatives from the County Executive’s Office, County Council, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Health Department, Police Department, Public Schools, Department of Housing and Community Development, TNI, and a federally qualified health center. The Leadership Team supported the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the collective CTG effort.

**During quarterly meetings, the team identified strategies to support several existing county action plans, including:**

- *Plan Prince George’s County 2035*
- *M-NCPPC Formula 2040 Plan*
- *Parks and Recreation: 2010 and Beyond*

Over the two year period, seeds were planted within the county to continue to foster collaborative relationships.



***“Establishing [the Food Equity Council was the greatest accomplishment] — convening a broad spectrum of stakeholders, creating dialogue between these stakeholders, identifying policies and practices that limit access to healthy, affordable foods, identifying pathways to change the status quo, initiating change on a variety of different fronts... We have just begun our work and have a ways to go before the impact of what we are initiating is evident.”***

~FEC Member

## Advancing Equity through Food Policy

The Prince George's County Food Equity Council (FEC) is made up of 22 local leaders representing anti-hunger direct service and advocacy groups, grocery stores, government agencies, community-based organizations, civic associations, urban farms, universities, and health care providers.

**Since its inception in October 2013, the Food Equity Council has:**

- Been recognized by a County Council resolution and granted an annual hearing
- Created a Directory of Nutrition Education Resources and Food Assistance Programs in the County
- Conducted a listening session on barriers and challenges for local small food businesses
- Partnered to host community events to increase awareness of the importance of healthy eating and sustainable farming including Hear the MD Crunch, Food Day, and TEDxManhattan “Changing the Way We Eat” viewing party
- Convened a Food Equity Forum where over 80 local food and public health experts discussed strategies to improve county health and access to healthy foods for all incomes
- Advocated at the state and federal level for expanded and improved federal food and nutrition assistance programs



***“The success of MMM at Riverdale Park Farmers Market was exhibited by its strong redemption numbers, which program staff indicated, “far exceeded [Eat Fresh Maryland’s] typically accurate projections.”***

***~ MDFMA Staff Member***

## Increasing Access to Healthy Produce at Local Farmers Market

IPHI funded the Maryland Farmers Markets Association (MDFMA) to implement a Double Value Coupon Program (DVCP) to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables. This program works by enabling county residents, particularly those using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infant and Children program (WIC) benefits, to increase their access to healthy food by doubling the value of their benefits. For example, for every \$10 of SNAP spent on fresh fruit and produce at participating markets, customers received a \$10 Maryland Money Market (MMM) coupon to purchase additional farmers' market produce.

### **Accomplishments included:**

- Trained four local farmers markets to accept SNAP benefits, a service that will be continued after the grant period
- Redeemed over \$7,500 in matching benefits to SNAP customers in locally grown fruits and vegetables



***“By extending the reach of our CSA, we are making good, wholesome produce available to working class folks who want to eat good food. They come by bicycle, on foot, in work trucks and cars. Almost everyone remarks that they are so glad to see us there. The need and desire is there, without a doubt. We look forward to continue our efforts to meet those needs.”***

**~Margaret Morgan-Hubbard  
Founder and CEO of ECO City Farms**

## New Healthy Food Options Welcomed by County Residents

ECO City Farms launched a modified community-supported agriculture (CSA) in 2014. Unlike a traditional CSA, or farm share, this modified CSA gives customers more flexibility with the option to pay for their shares in weekly or monthly installments rather than upfront. As one of the first modified CSAs in the country, ECO City Farms is overcoming stereotypes about what foods low-income families want and can afford.

### **Accomplishments included:**

- Accepted SNAP/WIC benefits and payments on weekly, monthly, and seasonal intervals
- Served 22 households from two pick-up locations, with 87% (13 out of 15) of customers surveyed planning to purchase a share from the CSA next year as well
- Increased its customer base by 200% during the 2014 pilot season
- Supported three local farmers in supplying the CSA produce



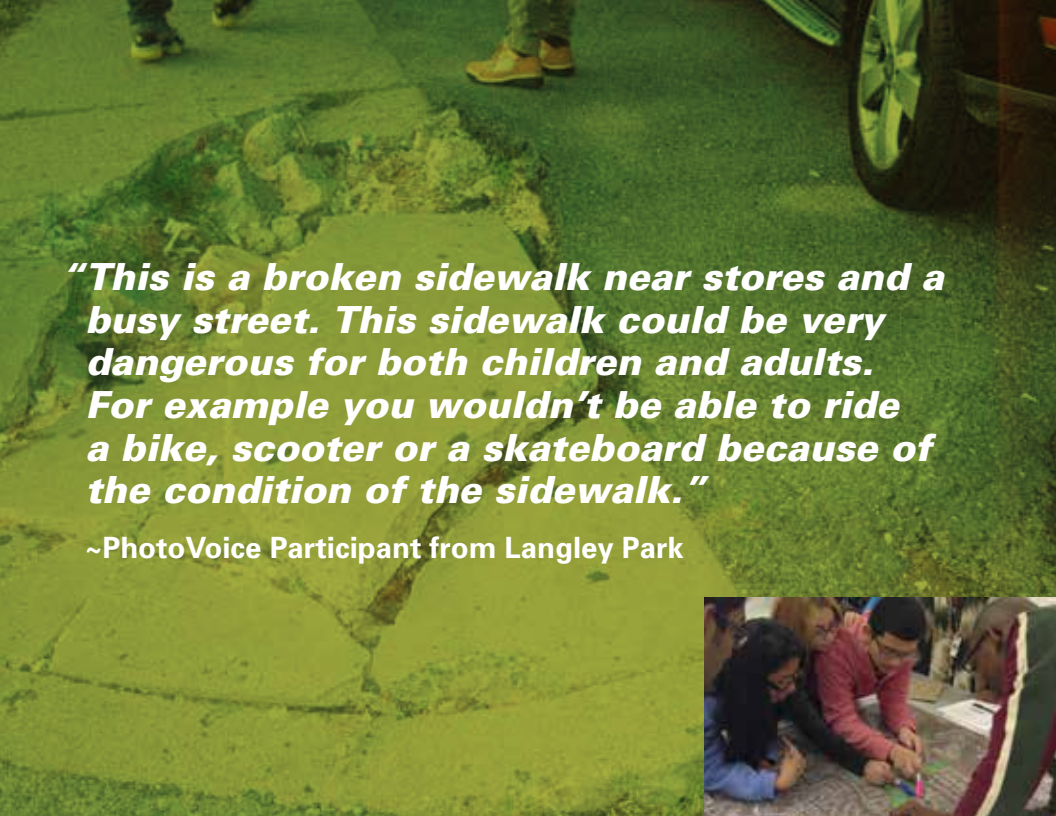
***“[It’s] good to have [the] perspective of another organization — just since they are experts in the CHWs in the region. Helpful for understanding sustainability, what CHWs are going to be in the future, and how that should fit into strategic planning.”***

**~Clinic Staff Member**

## Capacity Building Among Community Clinics Through Community Health Workers

IPHI worked closely with Community Clinic, Inc. (CCI) and Greater Baden Medical Services (GBMS) to provide training and technical assistance to effectively implement systems to improve delivery of clinical preventive services. Specifically, IPHI provided training to the clinics on how to incorporate Community Health Workers (CHWs) into their models of care to help engage and retain individuals in medical care for chronic diseases. Assessments were conducted at both of the county’s federally qualified health centers to determine strengths or gaps in existing CHW models as well as what skills are needed to incorporate new CHWs into the clinics. In strengthening the ability of CCI and GBMS to support well-trained CHWs into communities facing chronic disease, IPHI hopes to improve their long-term health outcomes and quality of life.

**IPHI brought knowledge of CHWs and a perspective that was particularly useful to clinics in framing discussions about CHWs in their organizations.**



***“This is a broken sidewalk near stores and a busy street. This sidewalk could be very dangerous for both children and adults. For example you wouldn’t be able to ride a bike, scooter or a skateboard because of the condition of the sidewalk.”***

~PhotoVoice Participant from Langley Park



## Improving Walkability and Connectivity

This strategy increased the number of people with access to healthy and safe physical environments by creating safe opportunities for recreation. This included addressing barriers to active transportation (walking and biking) and the policies that affect safe active transportation.

### Accomplishments included:

- Engaged over 50 local youth in photojournalism and mapping exercises to identify barriers and solutions to accessing safe physical environments
- Trained 49 County staff, police, and community members and leaders in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles
- Trained 15 trainers to perpetuate local knowledge of CPTED
- Both *Plan Prince George’s County 2035* and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission’s *Formula 2040* have been approved with language supporting the importance of CPTED strategies and represents the first time that either plan includes the connection of health and safety as a county-wide growth objective





## IPHI was able to offer mini-grants to address chronic disease and disparities in Prince George's County.

IPHI and consultants worked with the Prince George's County Board of Education Instructional Supervisors in Health Education and Physical Education as well as school nurses to conduct a health and wellness policy scan to identify gaps in current school health and wellness policies.

The Housing Authority of Prince George's County and IPHI conducted formative research on a no-smoking policy for all of the County's public housing units and residences. The results of the surveys and community forums were used to inform the implementation of the smoke-free policy and to enhance the overall health of the residents.

IPHI also worked with the Street Wise Foundation, a local community-based organization, to implement the first-ever pedestrian safety training using safety messages developed by the Prince George's Healthcare Action Coalition's Pedestrian Safety Work Group. Street Wise trained a cadre of outreach teams on the messages and incorporated them into their existing bicycle safety training which is regularly presented to local youth and their parents.



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### **The Institute for Public Health Innovation**

(IPHI) is a unique non-profit resource that builds partnerships across sectors and cultivates innovative solutions to improve health and well-being for all people and communities throughout the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia, particularly those most affected by health inequities.

Our work enhances the environments and conditions in which people live, age, work, learn and play; strengthens health service systems and public policy; and builds organizational and community capacity to sustain progress.