

## OVERVIEW

The Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI) is a partnership between the Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI), Trinity Health member Holy Cross Health, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee, and the Eat Well Be Active Partnership. Healthy Montgomery is the County's Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) process through which obesity and chronic disease prevention emerged among priority areas of focus.

The Healthy Montgomery TCI seeks to promote healthy behaviors and prevent chronic disease by influencing policy, systems and environmental change (PSE) strategies that influence those behaviors. The Healthy Montgomery TCI focuses on PSE strategies related to school wellness, tobacco prevention, community food access, safe routes to schools, and early childcare nutrition standards in the TCI priority areas of Gaithersburg, Germantown, Long Branch and Takoma Park.

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

### PROJECT SNAPSHOT

What are we doing?	Transforming our community
How are we doing this?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through community partnerships.</li> <li>2. By providing funding, technical assistance, facilitation and backbone support.</li> <li>3. By enhancing community assets, including schools, early child care providers, health care clinics, &amp; food and nutrition services.</li> <li>4. Through policy and systems change.</li> <li>5. Through education and building awareness.</li> </ol>
Where is this happening?	Montgomery County, MD, particularly Gaithersburg, Germantown, Long Branch and Takoma Park
Who benefits?	All Montgomery County residents
What are we trying to impact?	Child obesity and tobacco use
Impact level	1,043,863 Community Members



#### School Wellness

Montgomery County Public Schools are:

- Improving school health by training Wellness Champions to establish Local School Wellness Councils to assess the school environment and enhance policies in target elementary schools.



#### Tobacco Prevention

Maryland Tobacco Control Advocates are supporting a Tobacco 21 campaign by working on:

- Increasing the smoking age to 21
- Utilizing social media and mobilizing youth to support Tobacco 21



#### Food Access

The Primary Care Coalition and the Montgomery County Food Council are working on:

- Piloting the "Food is Medicine" approach to screen and refer health clinic patients to food access resources
- Implement the County's Food Security Plan



#### Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)

Montgomery County Department of Transportation is working on:

- Assessing SRTS areas and creating maps to identify needs
- Promote SRTS through outreach and media



#### Early Childcare Nutrition

School Readiness, Inc. is:

- Conducting an assessment among family childcare providers, County leaders, and nonprofits to identify needs and strategies to improve childcare nutrition



## COMMUNITY LANDSCAPE

Montgomery County is a large county of over 500 square miles and over one million residents. Bordered by Washington, DC, suburban Virginia, and other Maryland counties, the county ranks well above national average for median income, and overall poverty is less than half of the state’s rate of 15.4%. However, Montgomery County is characterized by profound health and wealth inequities, and areas of poverty are interspersed throughout the county.

At the city or ZIP code level, pockets of poverty are often missed. This is especially true in Montgomery County, where people earning high incomes mask significant poverty, and where the median income is in decline. Of the seven census tracts with poverty rates greater than 20%, four are located in the TCI focus communities of Germantown, Gaithersburg, Long Branch and Takoma Park, and the remaining two are adjacent.

Persistent health disparities exist among people of color in the county, particularly African Americans and Latinos, a large percentage of which live in the focus communities. These include significant disparities related to obesity, chronic disease, smoking, eating fruits and vegetables, engaging in physical activity, consuming soda. Healthy Montgomery has created partnerships to work within these communities to effectively implement policy, systems, and environmental change strategies to reduce health inequalities.

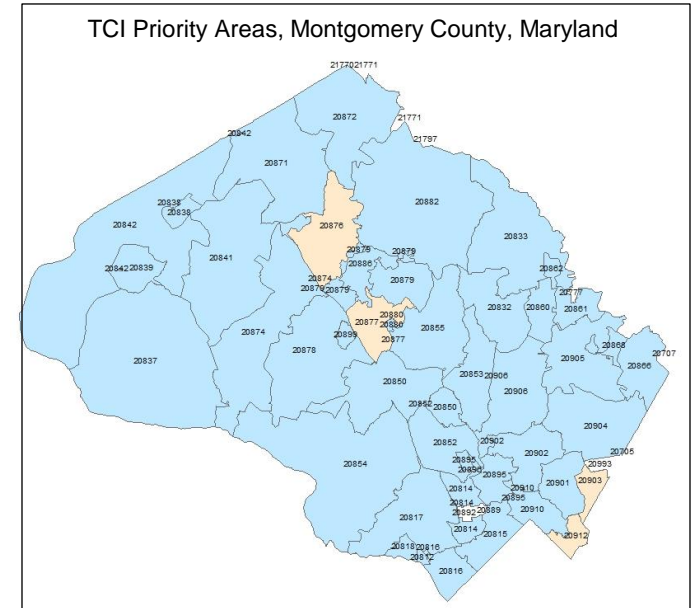


Figure: TCI Priority area ZIP codes 20912 (Long Branch), 20903 (Takoma Park), 20876 (Germantown), and 20877 (Gaithersburg).

## INTERESTED IN WORKING WITH US?

For additional information or to discuss how to get involved and support efforts to transform Montgomery County, please contact Program Director Evelyn Kelly, 202-407-7086, [ekelly@institutephi.org](mailto:ekelly@institutephi.org).

## ABOUT TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (TCI)

TCI was launched to advance community partnerships that focus on improving the health and well-being in communities served by the Ministries of Trinity Health. Serving diverse communities that include more than 30 million people across 22 states, Trinity Health is one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation and believes efforts to eradicate the root causes of poor health must expand beyond the walls of their facilities and they must transform the communities they serve into healthier places. TCI is a flexible capital grant and technical assistance initiative that supports innovative solutions to reduce tobacco use and childhood obesity, as well as address social determinants of health.