

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The following is a compilation of the conclusions and key recommendations that were revealed during the Baseline Assessment process. Participants expressed the conclusions and recommendations during the review of the regional planning documents, within the Key Informant Interview meetings and during the Core Area Team Meetings and Synthesis Workshops. Table 2 summarizes the recommendations and is followed by a detailed description in the text that follows.

TABLE 2: PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Plans and Planning Documents	
A.1	Discern, clarify and adjust the relationship and hierarchy of the region's plans.
A.2	Provide a central location to access regional plans.
A.3	Continue to create and update plan summaries.
B. Agencies and Staff	
B.1	Establish targeted networking, information exchanges, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities for staff, particularly across traditional issues areas.
B.2	Establish interdisciplinary working groups around topics that cut across departmental and agency boundaries.
C. Data	
C.1	Conduct a baseline assessment of data with an inventory and assessment of needs.
C.2	Encourage the sharing of data and data analyses.
C.3	Create regional data sharing working groups.
C.4	Establish a set of resources to help regional data sharing and interpretation.
D. Public Engagement	
D.1	Establish a peer-to-peer working group for information sharing between agency staff.
D.2	Develop resources that can assist with outreach to targeted populations.
D.3	Develop public engagement strategies that inform multiple plans and planning processes.
E. Public Health	
E.1	Create formalized connections and communication between public health and other core areas.
E.2	Establish a long-range, multi-jurisdictional, multi-objective community health plan.

Source: CPW. Informed by core area team participants.

5.1 Plans and Planning Documents

CONCLUSIONS

There is a large range and diversity of plans that exist. The plans and documents that are used in the region vary widely. Some are very detailed, some are related to funding sources, some plans are regulatory and some are only visionary. The structures of plans are also guided by federal or state requirements. These requirements vary between agencies and core areas, creating a collection of plans with various elements. This lack of consistency and uniformity is reflected in the lack of an existing and accessible method to understand and compare plans.

Of the 74 identified plans, laws, policies and strategies (Appendix E) CPW documented the 34 most relevant regional plans (top-tier plans, see Table 1 and Appendix B for a list of the plans and plan summaries). These plans touch on many planning areas, including economic development, energy, housing, land use, parks and recreation, community health, stormwater, transportation and water.

Plans and related documentation are difficult to locate. There is no consolidated list of regional planning documents. Some plans are readily available via agency websites; however, knowing which plans are available and where to locate them is challenging. As a result, these plans are not readily available for reference or use by agency leaders and staff nor are they organized in a way that can be accessed easily by the public. It is desired to have the plans accessible in order for agency staff to readily access them when creating, or performing updates, to other plans and policies.

Plans follow the function they serve. Most plans contain information and data specific to their core area. Plans are often created to satisfy criteria of funding sources or regulatory requirements (government agencies, etc.). Given the lack of familiarity with the overall body of existing plans, it is unknown how the content of these plans could be leveraged or utilized across the plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A.1 Discern, clarify and adjust the relationship and hierarchy of the region's plans. Crosswalk plans (perform a content comparison) to determine mutual elements and possible areas of integration. In this process investigate and define the relationship amongst regional plans and select "lead plans," where opportunities exist, to serve as policy umbrellas to other plans.

A.2 Provide a central location to access regional plans. Work with regional agencies to determine a standardized method to organize and provide access (website, etc.) to regional plans and plan summaries. A workgroup should be formed and convened to develop this concept in more detail.

A.3 Continue to create and update plan summaries. Update the plan summaries as plans are updated. In addition, updated plans should include an introductory summary of the plans contents, why it is created, what it will achieve and how the plan relates to other plans in the region and local jurisdiction (include

references). Creating a consistent introductory summary and method of publishing the plans will provide a tool to more completely understand plans and plan connections. When updating plans staff should be encouraged to actively utilize existing plans and to consider how to integrate the plan into the existing framework of plans.

5.2 Agencies and Staff

CONCLUSIONS

Mid-level agency staff could benefit from more networking opportunities across agencies and disciplines. Mid-level staff are not as engaged in meetings and other processes across agencies and disciplines. As such, they lack opportunities to network and discuss issues of regional importance. Some staff lacked connections with others within their own agency. This lack of peer relationships creates missed opportunities and limits the sharing of knowledge across core areas.

Forums for interagency collaboration have remained largely the same over time. The forums for interagency collaboration have remained mostly the same over time and are typically organized by issue area. However, the issues the community faces are continually evolving.

Networking opportunities for core area team meeting participants are limited by financial and human resources. Many meeting participants appreciated networking opportunities and the peer-to-peer interaction and dialogue. Unfortunately, most expressed concerns that they and their agencies do not have time or staff for such networking opportunities. Additionally, for many, it is often unclear if a particular networking opportunity would be a good use of their time.

Staff tend to specialize. Most agency staff know about their own discipline, but know less about how other disciplines organize their work. This focus and specialization means most people are unaware of how other agencies and planning fields operate and where there are synergies, data, or other resources they could utilize for their own work.

Mid-level staff members create plans. Most plans are created, organized, and put together by mid-level staff. Upper-level staff understand plans, but may not work with them day-to-day; however, they are the people who tend to have more interaction with staff from other agencies. Mid-level staff could benefit from increased opportunities to share with mid-level staff in other agencies.

Balance of independence and collaboration. Municipalities want to maintain autonomy and a comfortable level of independence, but they want to leverage regional resources and opportunities with other agencies wisely.

RECOMMENDATIONS

B.1 Establish targeted networking, information exchanges, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities for staff, particularly across traditional issues areas. The synthesis workshops revealed a significant interest in learning what is in existing plans from other government and non-governmental agencies and people with expertise across issue areas. Targeted opportunities to share would provide

additional opportunities to learn about other core areas and to strengthen connections between their own work and the work of other agencies.

B.2 Establish interdisciplinary working groups around topics that cut across departmental and agency boundaries. The synthesis workshop revealed a significant interest in establishing interdisciplinary working groups that are topic specific. The interdisciplinary groups are a method to guide future planning activities across the region, involving government and non-governmental agencies, while increasing communication on specific topics that affect multiple core areas and a variety of goals and objectives.

5.3 Data

CONCLUSIONS

Lack great connections between data and data analyses. Raw data is often available, although it is not always meaningful and connected to the needed analysis (value added data). Information is desired on what raw data is available and how to best connect it to the needed analysis. The collection of data also needs to be able to support new decision-making tools, such as triple bottom line tools, and for tracking performance.

Agencies and their staffs desire data that go beyond their own core area expertise. Staff members are well versed in accessing data from their own planning field that they use every day. However, additional data from different disciplines is often desired to complement their planning activities. Unfortunately, access to data is not always easy. This has led to core area team meeting participants expressing interest in a system where they can share and access data as well as analyses of data.

Agencies have mechanisms for sharing geo-spatial data, but only some agency staff know how to access it. There are good mechanisms for sharing geo-spatial data. However, some agency staff are uncertain about where the data is stored or who they should speak with to get that data.

There is not a good way for staff to share data and findings with other staff within their own agency or with other agencies. Data, and data analysis, is held by many organizations and by many people. In addition, data sources are continually under development and used by various agencies and departments. However, a specific framework structure for organizing, sharing, updating or displaying does not currently exist.

Consistency and efficiency is lacking. The existing method of performing data analysis lacks consistency and efficiency. Sometimes similar analysis is needed, for example when looking at equity issues across the fields of community health, economic development, housing and transportation. Coordinating the review, and utilizing the same baseline analysis, would increase efficiency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

C.1 Conduct a baseline assessment of data with an inventory and assessment of needs. A survey should be developed in order to assess what data agencies

(governmental and non-governmental) are collecting. This should include an analysis of how they are using data, and what additional data they desire.

C.2 Encourage the sharing of data and data analyses. A system should be developed to allow for data to be shared between agencies, between core areas, and between various departments within individual agencies.

C.3 Create regional data sharing working groups. Working groups should meet periodically to address the needs for regional data sharing, interpretation, analysis and access. Some workgroups currently exist around the data analyzers; however, it is also necessary for the data consumers to coordinate. In addition, cross-communication is needed between the various working groups.

C.4 Establish a set of resources to help regional data sharing and interpretation. An established resource list is needed to assist agencies with accessing, organizing and understanding what data is available and what data is needed.

5.4 Public Engagement

CONCLUSIONS

Agencies find it hard to get the appropriate level of public engagement.

Agencies and staff want to include the public at a level that is commensurate to what they want to get out of public engagement. But it is very difficult for these agencies to reach beyond the groups and individuals who usually participate in such efforts, without creating a very intensive effort which can be time consuming and resource-heavy.

It is easier for public agencies to discuss community needs. Many people are not familiar with and do not have the time to understand planning documents and processes. As such, it is often a challenge to engage a full spectrum of the public in the planning process. Shifting outreach and engagement strategies to one that focuses on community needs, and not specific planning actions, may allow the public to express their needs and more effectively contribute to the planning process. This strategy may also allow public engagement to inform more than one plan or planning process. The efforts of Dr. Gerardo Sandoval as part of the Lane Livability project are an example of how to engage different populations of the regional community (please review his report for more information).

Lack a complete understanding of community values. Agencies need to relate the policy choices back to core personal values in order to solicit interest and participation. To achieve this we need to better understand the communication landscape of the region and understand which values most resonate to diverse groups.

Better coordination is needed to conduct effective public engagement in a time of limited resources. The public does not have the time to participate in multiple planning processes. Additionally, agency staff desire to go beyond traditional outreach methods, but in a time of limited resources, they might not have the resources to reach certain populations. There may be opportunities to leverage the results of a public engagement processes for more than one plan or purpose which will also result in easier and more efficient ways of soliciting public input.

RECOMMENDATIONS

D.1 Establish a peer-to-peer working group for information sharing between agency staff. Peer-to-peer working groups provide a mechanism to share information learned from various public engagement processes. In addition, these working groups provide opportunities to discuss possible coordinated outreach opportunities and to share effective public engagement strategies.

D.2 Develop resources that can assist with outreach to targeted populations. Agencies should have access to resources that assist with outreach to particular populations. This assistance should include not only suggestions for outreach methods but also identification of boards, advisory bodies, organizations, and specific contacts that can offer feedback and guidance.

D.3 Develop public engagement strategies that inform multiple plans and planning processes. Public engagement processes demand intensive staff time and resources and are often difficult for a full spectrum of the public to attend and fully engage. Strategies are needed to more efficiently use staff time and resources while increasing the ability for the public to have meaningful engagement around issues that are of concern to them and may inform multiple plans and planning processes. These strategies may be appropriate earlier in the planning process and with thematic engagement based upon core values. A working group should be developed to investigate methods and opportunities applicable to regional planning needs.

5.5 Community health

CONCLUSIONS

Public health professionals operate outside the typical planning paradigm. The public health field has typically operated outside of the traditional planning paradigm. Additionally, the region recently shifted to a state mandated CCO model of care that focuses attention on an outcome-based approach. The approach also stresses the importance of developing innovative means for enhancing prevention based health outcomes. This new approach creates more need to formalize connections with other disciplines in order to achieve successful community health outcomes.

All core area disciplines incorporate public health principles into their work. All core areas are working to support public health outcomes, but these efforts are not always well known or understood. Creating formal connections and opportunities for communication will assist in transferring public health knowledge into planning actions across core areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

E.1 Create formalized connections and communication between public health and other core areas. Dialogue between core areas can keep everyone on the same page and informed about the work being completed for community health outcomes.

E.2 Establish a long-range, multi-jurisdictional, multi-objective community health plan. Regional agencies should go through the process of creating a

community health comprehensive plan to outline the priorities and activities desired within the region. This process can create two-way communication to inform core areas about public health issues. A community health comprehensive plan will also be beneficial for other disciplines that seek a source for information on public health efforts. The effort should embody a multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency, and multi-objective effort to enhance positive community health outcomes.