When communities enter into a planning effort, they create a vision for their future. This vision is accompanied and expressed through goals and objectives based on the community’s values, and what they hope for themselves and the surrounding community for the future. One such goal heard frequently today is the desire to be a healthy community.

How do planners translate these goals for a healthy community into actionable plans and projects? Most communities identify a myriad of goals they want addressed in order to realize their vision of becoming a healthy community. Similarly, there are a variety of different approaches for achieving these goals. Some of the more common ideas relate to:

- Individual health and well-being through support for a healthy, active lifestyle
- Design of safe and accessible infrastructure to encourage walking and biking, and transportation options for all different population types
- Accessibility and maintenance of affordable housing
- A quality education for the community’s children

According to The Colorado Health Foundation, approximately 25% of Coloradans live in food deserts, where access to healthy food is limited. Food access is an important aspect of healthy communities in which cities and planners can play a role. Plans can establish policies for walkable grocery access in neighborhoods, and implement it through zoning that allows or requires neighborhood retail centers. Policies can also direct economic development resources to support grocery retail development in underserved areas. Grocery stores stabilize surrounding property values, create jobs for hard-to-employ populations, and anchor other retail.

The Food Trust, a nationally renowned nonprofit dedicated to improving food access, recently released a report, Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters, which cites a number of studies showing that living closer to healthy food retail is associated with better eating habits and decreased risk for obesity and diet-related diseases. The Food Trust in partnership with PolicyLink and The Reinvestment Fund, launched a Healthy Food Access Portal in 2013 to provide data for communities seeking policies and projects that improve access to healthy foods. Although access is a critical component for making healthy choices, it is not the sole solution. Quality, price, education and cultural appropriateness of healthy foods also play an important role.
Welcome to the Spring Edition of Planning Matters. This issue focuses on the renewed awareness that good planning has a strong relation to personal well-being and healthy communities. It’s a concept that goes back to the 19th Century, with the establishment of Central Park and other similar spaces as the “lungs” of a dense urban setting. Where did we lose sight of this idea? Hard to say, but the 20th Century emphasized vehicles over walkability, and sprawl development locked in patterns of movement that do not support healthy communities. Most of you are aware of the Centers for Disease Control grant to APA that will foster healthy community pilot projects in many areas of the country. While our Chapter’s grant applications were not among those that were accepted, we will continue to develop partnerships between community planning and health-related organizations to foster walkability, local food development, and compact development initiatives. The articles in this issue of the newsletter reflect some of these activities.

In other matters, the APA National Conference in Seattle attracted over 6,500 participants, who came to share ideas on a great range of topics. It was an exciting conference, and Seattle was uncharacteristically sunny and warm. If you missed this event, consider being a part of our equally exciting State Conference to be held in Steamboat Springs on September 30th through October 2nd. Also, the Chapter has just let a contract for the development of PlanFinder, a project funded by a grant from APA National that will be an adjunct to our website. PlanFinder will allow access to information on the range of planning projects throughout the state. This will support greater interaction among our many planning organizations and easy sharing of emerging concepts. Look for the unveiling of this project at the State Conference.

Best regards,

Stan Clauson, Colorado Chapter President
Foundations in Colorado are proactively addressing the challenge of food deserts through a loan and grant fund, called the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F). Market dynamics create specific challenges for food retailers and many find it difficult to attain financing through traditional lending sources. CO4F provides attainable financing to spur development of healthy food retail in the areas in need throughout the state.

CO4F is involved in a diverse array of projects:

- A new store build.
- Expansion of a neighborhood market to sell a greater selection of healthy foods.
- Transfer of store ownership and remodeling.
- Innovative methods to make healthy foods affordable and accessible in both urban and rural contexts.

CO4F is working with City departments:

- The closure of a full service grocery store in Downtown Greeley, left residents with limited access to fresh and healthy food. The Downtown Development Authority’s (DDA) adopted strategic plan identifies grocery retail as a critical use to retain within Downtown. The City has been working with the DDA to proactively attract a new grocery operator, using CO4F’s favorable rates and terms as an incentive.
- Pueblo’s Urban Renewal Authority (PURA) is keen on attracting a grocer Downtown. PURA staff convened a meeting with several local developers and invited CO4F staff to participate and share information about the Fund. PURA sees CO4F as a complementary to its other financing tools because it can be used for tenant improvements, which PURA cannot finance.

*If your community is interested in learning more about CO4F, please contact Erica Heller at co4f@pumaworldhq.com or 303-628-5592 or visit the website: http://www.chfainfo.com/co4f*
How do we know if these goals and overall vision are met through our planning efforts? Traditional plan development and project implementation typically does not explicitly measure how different development paths can help achieve community goals. As a result, these qualitative principles sometimes get lost in the process as short-term financial considerations win favor. What is necessary to ensure communities also achieve the non-financial and non-political goals is a planning approach that includes both the qualitative and quantitative measures.

Revolution Advisors has developed a unique methodology that addresses this challenge by integrating community values into a performance based planning model that measures the achievement of those goals and values against different plan development options in a quantifiable way before actions are taken. This tool enables communities to see how goals can be achieved and if different project implementation paths are financially feasible. The result is a complete picture of benefits and tradeoffs for use by decision makers.

The methodology has a four phase process to ensure that community goals are integrated into plan development and project implementation:

1. **Discovery**: The community comes together to determine its goals, values and constraints in addition to the measures that will be used to evaluate any proposed projects against the investment. Community voices are heard through stakeholder interviews, public workshops, needs assessment, and a host of other approaches, including leveraging social media-based interaction.

2. **Ranking and Scoring of Development Alternatives**: In short, this is the determination of the community’s wish list. As not all projects on the wish list can be realistically advanced, they must be weighed against the goals and values in an objective manner. Things to take into consideration include:
   - Short and long term costs and benefits
   - Resources needed
   - Probability of success
   - Quantity and quality of results achieved
   - Project interdependencies / exclusivities / constraints
   - Time
   - External factors

3. **Scenario Modelling**: Revolution Advisors has developed a sophisticated statistical analysis tool that leverages simulations capable of running through hundreds of alternative plan development scenarios based on given parameters. The tool combines desired projects on the wish list in various combinations and percentages that best meet the community’s goals.

4. **Portfolio Selection**: After running the variety of plan development scenarios, the result is a set of project portfolios with measures of how well the specified community goals can be met. This allows for a side-by-side evaluation of the portfolio of projects and/or plan development options and serves as a guide for decision-makers to clearly see the trade-offs between different projects or plan development options.

Revolution Advisors has utilized this tool for a variety of projects that vary in scope and size. They have worked with communities to develop an overall strategic plan for the entire community, and have also utilized the tool...
to conduct individual site planning that helps to determine which types of projects would make the best use of a land parcel. Communities that are diverse in resources, size and location have taken advantage of this tool to determine if, or how different projects can be incorporated into developments being planned. Examples include:

- Inclusion of parks and open space for a 90+ acre metropolitan land parcel: Not only was the accessibility to the immediate area evaluated, but also its connectivity to local bike paths and its use as a space for use by local recreational sports teams.
- Expansion of a small medical clinic into an underserved community: Locals travelled 12 miles or more to the nearest medical care and the community wanted to determine whether expanding urgent care into their community was necessary.
- Access to healthy food: Food deserts are a complication for many communities, rural as well as urban. One portfolio evaluated whether the establishment of a food cooperative that would sell fresh fruits and vegetables as well as other whole, healthy foods was feasible in a redevelopment area.

These are only examples. What is most important to remember is that healthy communities thrive when they embrace and achieve the community's desired vision for the future. Revolution Advisor's unique planning model enables communities to integrate community values and vision into the process in a quantifiable way that ensures plan development options and projects truly meet the desires of the community.

For more information about Revolution Advisors, and our unique planning methodology, please contact Melissa Antol at 720-409-5306.
The ULI Building Healthy Places Toolkit outlines 21 recommendations for promoting health at the building or project scale. These “gold star” recommendations are organized according to three categories:

• Physical Activity
• Healthy Food and Drinking Water
• Healthy Environment and Social Well-Being

At the heart of the report lies a rigorous review of existing health literature. The recommendations all have strong supporting evidence. A list of practical implementation strategies and best practices, grouped according to their available evidence base, supports each of the 21 overarching recommendations.

Below are link to articles in the Health Elevation re: Built issue:

**Arvada Serves Up Change**

**Driving Away from Car Culture**
Small towns like Lamar can feel wedded to the road instead of a healthier lifestyle. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6692](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6692)

**Construction Update - March 2015**
The Urban Land Institute (ULI) sent a team leader back to the three Healthy Places communities to report on their remarkable progress and share how recommendations are coming to life. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=7273](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=7273)

**Cartoon Corner**
Cartoonist Mike Keefe uses his pen to illustrate the theme of this issue of Health Elevations. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6707](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6707)

**Visual Guide**
The main principle of creating healthier cities, towns and schools will guide planners for decades to come. Join our guides for a visual tour of what’s working in Colorado - and what could work better - to design movement back into daily life. [http://youtu.be/yVuCAZHplj0](http://youtu.be/yVuCAZHplj0)

**Walking the Talk**
Colorado's future is now when it comes to building for health, Foundation CEO Anne Warhover says. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6695](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6695)

**The Expert View - Proof to the Movement**
How much evidence is there that better buildings and neighborhoods can actually improve public health? [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6724](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6724)

**Observations - Thrown for a Loop**
In a candid Q&A, Denver officials describe how an innovative park plan went off the rails, and how it might be revived. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6699](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6699)

**B-cycle from A to Z**
A city bike program keeps growing, and experiences some growing pains on how to serve neighborhoods equitably. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6697](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6697)

**True Story - Put Down Those Car Keys**
A Colorado writer and fitness enthusiast experiments with giving up her car and seeking healthier alternatives. [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6694](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6694)
Over the past decade, I have been exploring the intersection of planning, community health and environmental quality. I’ve attended workshops and conferences, participated in local healthy design projects, and attempted to include innovative practices into my work. Last August, I embarked on the 15-month Leadership for Healthy Community Design (LHCD) program with the intent to strengthen my skills and capacity to lead, plan and execute healthy community design projects. I was drawn to the program for several reasons. It provides an opportunity for me to build and strengthen collaborative relationships with colleagues and community partners. The program also offers training and development in both advanced leadership concepts and healthy community design principles. Finally, the program provides a unique forum to network, learn, and engage with professionals from around the state who represent a wide array of disciplines, all having a connection to healthy community design.

Everyone in the program participates as a member of a community team. I am a member of a team representing Boulder County. My 32 other classmates make up five other teams representing Mesa County, Eagle County, Adams County, the cities of Fort Collins and Loveland, and the neighborhoods of Northeast Denver. They are a diverse group that contributes not only different regional perspectives, but also professional and cultural insights and wisdom. As a group we challenge each other to engage, while thinking critically and strategically.

In May, I will attend the fourth of five program training retreats. Although the program does not end until September, my experience has already been extremely rewarding and worthwhile. As a result of our participation in the program, my Boulder County team has begun working on a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to determine the health benefits and impacts of a community-wide Eco Pass in Boulder County. In addition to gaining experience working on this HIA, being part of the LHCD program has helped me develop leadership skills that I feel will make me a more effective community planner and leader.

Through the program we are using what we learn to push ourselves to improve our communities. As one of my classmates put it, “The most important thing that I learned from this session is that leadership is ongoing, it doesn’t end. I push myself to apply the concepts learned every day!”

The faculty are knowledgeable and very engaging; they represent a tremendous asset to the program. I’ve come away from each session with intentional actions and practical skills that I’ve begun using almost immediately. I’ve also learned a tremendous amount about some of the great work going on in Colorado around community planning, health and environmental quality. The networking portion of the program has provided a wonderful opportunity to build and strengthen relationships with community leaders from around the state.

I am honored to be a participant in the inaugural class of the Leadership for Healthy Community Design Program offered by the Regional Institute for Health and Environmental Leadership. Community planning projects, programs and initiatives that foster health, environmental quality and community vibrancy will continue to be critically important in our communities. Our success hinges on our ability to collaborate with multiple disciplines, engage with communities, and implement effective community design strategies. The Leadership for Healthy Community Design program provides a powerful and effective means to build our professional competencies in these areas. I highly recommend the program to planning professionals and community leaders across the state.

The Leadership for Healthy Community Design Program is offered by the Regional Institute for Health and Environmental Leadership (RIHEL). Plans to run a second cohort of the program are already underway. For more information about the LHCD program, visit www.rihel.org, or contact the Program Director, Leanne Jeffers, at leanne.jeffers@du.edu.
Urban food environments are often characterized by a limited range of healthy food outlets and may be further challenged with an excess of unhealthy choices, aggressive marketing of junk foods and fast foods, price disparities for healthy foods, and/or an eroding or inadequate built environment.

Adding to the idea of the “food desert,” which often focuses on geographic distance from full service grocery stores, mapping areas of food insecurity started with creating layers showing areas greater than 0.25 miles from a supermarket with lower than average vehicle ownership and low/moderate income. This expanded to include other elements of the built environment and food system such as distributors, food banks, and urban agriculture to portray the complexity of barriers and contributors to healthy food access.

One element of the food environment that can be impacted in a relatively short period of time is the corner convenience store which is often found in areas of food insecurity. As existing resources with an interested and willing owner/operator these stores can exponentially increase the presence of fresh and healthier food choices in a neighborhood. In an effort to impact population health outcomes, the Denver Healthy Corner Store Initiative (DHCSI) is developing a network of healthier corner stores based on the input of community leaders, feedback from store owners and selected elements of other national programs. By adding qualified inventory items (e.g., fruits and vegetables, low fat dairy, lean meats, low sodium beans), store operators can increase and diversify the economic vitality of their business by becoming part of the network. As members, they receive tailored technical assistance, community-wide exposure through marketing and branding campaigns, and assistance with food distribution and sourcing challenges. Community partners help to create awareness of and demand for healthier items, as well as providing feedback to store operators about desired products.

The DHCSI conducted a one-year pilot program to determine feasibility and found that through a coordinated and tailored approach, corner stores can achieve measurable results. In as little of two months stores have markedly increased their healthy food inventory.

Next steps include increasing the supply of healthier products via currently existing neighborhood-based organizations and increasing demand for healthier products by partnering with local schools and health clinics within neighborhoods where corner stores are located.

Try It Yourself: Building Healthy Places Toolkit
Continued from page 7

Walsenburg Want List
Can a tiny pocket park in southern Colorado help solve economic development and human health puzzles at the same time? [http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6687](http://www.coloradohealth.org/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=6687)
APA Colorado is a healthy community of planners. This year, the Board has been active in keeping our budget healthy, our outreach to allied professional groups thriving and our goals to provide quality educational and networking opportunities available to our members. Please feel free to contact me or any of our Board members with comments or suggestions on how we can continue to strive for a healthy relationship with you, our elected and appointed officials and our partners in community health.

The 3-Corners reception in Seattle was a success. All three chapter – APA Colorado, APA New Mexico and APA Utah – showed up with numbers. The best part was watching everyone mix and mingle with each other. We hope to include Arizona in 2016 since we’ll be on their turf in Phoenix for the 2016 APA National Conference.

Conference planning is in full swing. We’ve selected our sessions, booking our keynotes and getting our preliminary program ready to go online in June. This year we will introduce a new registration rate structure. A true Early Bird price will be offered for the first few weeks, followed by a regular rate up until September. After online registration closes, a late registration fee will be imposed. So, make plans to register early this year and save money. The 2015 APA State Conference will be held in Steamboat Springs from September 30th through October 2nd. As we did last year, the conference will kick off around lunch on Wednesday and end with a closing reception on Friday evening.

Don’t forget to vote on the proposed Bylaws changes to the area definitions. The changes have been under a lot of scrutiny over the past few years so the Board would really like to get your feedback. If approved, the new area boundaries would take effect 2016. So, those who will be running for office this August will be running based on the new boundaries.

Speaking of running…consider running for an office this year. We have several open Board positions, including: President Elect, Vice President External Affairs, Secretary/Treasurer, Denver Metro Representative, Central Mountain Representative, Northwest Representative and North Central Representative. Give a little of your time to the organization and get a whole lot more out of it.

Enjoy the warm weather by getting out on your bike, going for a hike or just walking around and experiencing your community on foot. Live the talk. Be healthy and strive for a healthy community.
APA-CO’s Emerging Planning Professionals (EPP) has had a busy last few months! In February, EPP-ers met up at the Mercury Café to watch an engaging documentary called “Slums: Cities of Tomorrow” and had a riveting discussion afterwards about the planning ramifications of homelessness. Several members also participated in the first of our Firm Tour Series by visiting Walk Denver’s office and listening to an exciting presentation about their work to make Denver the most walkable city in the US. In March, EPP hosted its first professional development workshop “Sketchup for Planners” where participants were introduced to Trimble Sketchup, learning different methods using Sketchup in the planning profession. Events like these are what EPP is all about, so stay tuned for more in the coming months!

APA-CO’s EPP group is quickly becoming the support many new planners need when exploring their expansive profession. The EPP leadership team takes pride in programming monthly events that develop its member’s resumes, knowledge, and creativity. EPP is not just a happy hour group; we are a planning support group! Several members have made vital connections that led to job offers and new opportunities within our field. It is these kinds of connections and stories that keep the dedicated leadership team planning the next great event! If you have been looking to get more involved in the planning field, value the feeling that comes with helping others meet their goals and make connections with planners throughout Colorado, get ready to throw your hat in the ring as leadership positions open up in July!

Here is a look at the EPP events coming up in the next few months: Cards Against Urbanity trivia and networking night, Clarion and P.U.M.A. Firm Tours, RFQ Workshop, and a Graduation Happy Hour for our senior planning classes. Check the APA-CO website for more information!

Also, don't forget to like us on Facebook! https://www.facebook.com/EP-PColorado Facebook is the best way to stay in touch with APA-CO EPP! We post upcoming events, photos & summaries from events, planning related jobs, articles and much more!

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Emerging Planning Professionals (EPP), part of APA-Colorado, cultivates an engaging community of entry- to mid-level planning professionals by offering and promoting opportunities for professional development, service, and meaningful, innovative contributions to an evolving, diverse profession.

Dedicated to serving planning professionals across Colorado with eight or fewer years of experience in the field, EPP inspires and supports emerging planners to become community leaders today and tomorrow.
Revolution Advisors was proud to be an elite sponsor of the 2014 APA Colorado State Conference.

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• A webinar on Zoning Tools and Accessory Dwelling Units was presented by Elizabeth Garvin at the April meeting of the Sustainability Committee and presents a quick (30 minutes) overview of ADUs with some very insightful comments and questions from committee members and attendees following the presentation. To listen to the recorded webinar, visit the website: http://www.apacolorado.org/content/webinar-zoning-tools-and-accessory-dwelling-units-adus.

• Congratulations to Jonathan Wachtel, and the City of Lakewood on a successful facilitated discussion on the Sustainable Neighborhoods program at the APA national conference in Seattle last month. Thanks for representing the APA CO Sustainability Committee and the APA Sustainable Communities Division!

• Seeking a Co-Chair: If you’re passionate about promoting sustainable communities and want to expand your leadership skills, please contact Conor Merrigan at cmerrigan@brendlegroup.com about this opportunity to help lead this dynamic committee.

• Please join us for our next meeting: June 16 from 8:30-9:30 am at a new location, the Alliance Center at 1536 Wynkoop St, Colfax Room on the 5th floor.
APA Colorado State Conference
Community & Character in Colorado:
FROM METRO TO RESORT
Steamboat Springs
Sept 30th - Oct 2nd
2015

Conference Hotel:
Sheraton Steamboat
Springs Resort & Spa
Online booking will be available in June.

SAVE THE DATE

Registration will be online middle to end of June. This year take advantage of true Early Bird Pricing!
Please look forward to the next edition of Planning Matters, which will be released in the third quarter of 2015!

Let us know if you have ideas, stories, events, or achievements to share with your fellow members!