

Action Step 8. Build the Community Action Plan

The final action step for completing *CHANGE* is to build the Community Action Plan. Careful execution of the previous seven action steps makes this task fairly straightforward. A quality plan contains sufficient details to map a clear course of action. Table 5 shows an example of a Community Action Plan. As you complete the Community Action Plan and craft the objectives, be sure they are SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-phased. The definition of a SMART objective is explored in more detail in Figure 17. Of particular importance in this example is the presence of two objectives: project period objective and annual objective. The project period objective allows your team to look at the big picture of what can be accomplished over a multi-year period. For example, in Table 5, the project period objective is *by Year 3 increase the percent of total miles of physical infrastructure for walking by 30%*. Always provide a description of the project period objective to give context for what your team hopes to achieve (e.g., the establishment of sidewalks, trails, or walking paths across the community). As you think about your work, narrow the focus to certain chronic diseases and conditions and their related risk factors, such as obesity and physical inactivity. Concentrating on these priority areas rather than a broader view will enable your team to craft very specific, actionable objectives with real impact.

Annual objectives cover a 12-month timeframe and show incremental progress toward completion of the project period objective. As with the project period objective, it is important to provide a description of the annual objective. In Table 5, only one annual objective, *at the end of 12 months, increase percent of developments (e.g., housings, schools, and commercial) with paved sidewalks to 100%*, is listed for the project period objective. However, your team could write two additional annual objectives that address trails and walking paths to fully achieve the project period objective. Similar to the Community Health Improvement Planning Template in Action Step 7, it is important to associate each annual objective with a particular sector. You may develop multiple annual objectives that cut across more than one sector for a project period objective. While, in this example, the sector impacted is Community-At-Large Sector, a second objective could be developing trails around senior centers, which would impact the Community Institution/Organization Sector. For each annual objective, indicate the number of people reached through its successful completion. Reach is the extent to which a policy affects the intended audience. Think about how many people will be affected by a sidewalk ordinance requiring paved sidewalks for all developments.

The final section of the Community Action Plan template is where you list the activities that support the accomplishment of an annual objective. When listing activities, be sure to provide a title and clear descriptions of key milestones. Avoid listing tactical tasks in this section. For example, the town hall meeting is more significant than the telephone calls your team makes to secure the time, date, and location of the meeting. The activities listed in Table 5 serve as examples; for each annual objective the recommendation is to list no more than ten activities, which may limit these activities to key actions for completing the annual objective.

Table 5. Example of a Community Action Plan

Project Period Objective	Description of the Objective	Priority Area
By Year 3, increase the percent of total miles of physical infrastructure for walking by 30%.	Very few neighborhoods and community common areas have sidewalks, trails, or walking paths that can support residents' need for active transportation to school and work and the ability to be physically active within the majority of the community.	Obesity and Physical Inactivity
Annual Objective	Description of the Objective	Sector
At the end of 12 months, increase percent of developments (e.g., housing, schools and commercial) with paved sidewalks to 100%.	Current sidewalk ordinance does not require sidewalks to be paved for new housing developments with less than 120 homes; schools and commercial developments can receive a waiver if building in rural areas (designated by certain zip codes). Ordinance must be evaluated, revised, and approved to exclude such exceptions and begin developing stronger sidewalk networks.	Community-At-Large
		Number of People Reached 167,000
Activities	Activity Title	Description
	Gap analysis on existing ordinance	Review sidewalk ordinance for policy language and language gaps
	Meeting with county architecture board	Meet with county architecture board about sidewalk development and share draft of revised ordinance language for new developments
	City Council meeting	Attend city council meeting to inquire about stance on sidewalks for future developments and current budget for developing sidewalk network
	Town hall meetings	Hold town hall meetings with neighborhood home owners associations to build local support for revised ordinance

Figure 17. Definitions of Objectives in Community Action Plan

SMART Objectives are :

1. **Specific:** Objectives should provide the “who” and “what.” Use only one action verb, because objectives with more than one verb imply that more than one activity or behavior is being measured. Remember, the greater the specificity, the greater the measurability.
2. **Measurable:** The focus is on “how much” change is expected. Objectives should quantify the amount of change expected. The objective provides a reference point from which a change in the target population can clearly be measured (e.g., over the next 12 months).
3. **Achievable:** Objectives should be attainable within a given time frame and with available community resources.
4. **Realistic:** Objectives are most useful when they accurately address the scope of the problem and action steps that can be implemented within a specific time frame. Also, make sure the objective addresses the scope of the health issue and proposes reasonable next steps.
5. **Time-phased:** Objectives should provide a time frame indicating when the objective will be measured or a time by which the objective will be met. Including a time frame in the objectives helps to plan and evaluate the strategy.

Project Period Objectives are SMART, span the lifecycle of a project period (e.g., 3 years or 5 years), and identify the long-term objective for the selected priority area(s).

Annual Objectives are SMART objectives that quantify the results achieved within a 12-month period and identify policy, systems or environmental strategies promoting healthy practices and increased exposure to healthy environments.

Activities are milestones or actions that a community team implements in order to achieve an objective. Activities support the accomplishment of annual objectives. Milestones are the most significant activities that a community team will conduct and not the day-to-day tasks, such as conference calls.