**Why this Issue?**

Food insecurity and access to healthy food influence health and well-being. Barriers to food access such as transportation and cost persist for low-income populations, and some areas within Lawrence and Douglas County have been formally recognized as food deserts. Additionally, notable disparities for fruit and vegetable consumption divide along gender, age, ethnicity, disability and insurance status. And, lacking consistent access to healthy food has dire outcomes -- hunger, weight gain, and premature death.

Adequate physical activity is also critical to health, and a healthy built environment is foundational for supporting physical activity. Physical attributes of a neighborhood, like the presence of well-maintained sidewalks, has an impact on rates of physical activity in the area. In Kansas, there are gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, and income disparities for participating in the recommended amount of physical activity (aerobic and strength training). In addition, those with a disability and with no insurance are less likely to get the recommended amount of physical activity.

**Process**

The community has been actively engaged in how to best address food security and access to healthy food and the healthy built environment in our community health plan. LiveWell Douglas County served as the supporting organization for developing this area of the community health improvement plan. LiveWell is a 10-year-old collaborative community coalition “leading a movement to build communities that support the health and well-being of all.” Community input has been essential to development of this plan. LiveWell hosted an evening public forum for community members, providing dinner and childcare to reduce barriers to participation. During this public forum, best practices and promising approaches were shared with community stakeholders and prioritized. With this community feedback, a survey was developed to gather additional feedback from community members on potential strategies. Additionally, a series of focus groups were held to learn more about barriers experienced by local community members. Focus groups were held with the Just Food client advisory board, other groups of Just Food clients, Spanish-speaking clients of Centro Hispano, residents of the Pine Ridge senior apartment complex (70% of residents are homebound), and residents of Edgewood Homes low-income housing complex. 312 surveys were distributed at Just Food, with reading and writing support from KU social work interns as needed.

A series of open meetings was held (at various times and locations to encourage community participation) to validate priority strategies, review potential objectives, and plan next steps.

**Community partners** involved in the planning process include**:**

* At-large community members
* Ballard Community Services
* Department of Children and Families
* Douglas County Food Policy Council
* Friends of Lawrence Area Trails
* Harvesters
* Just Food
* Kansas Senator Marci Francisco
* K-State Research and Extension, K-State Research and Extension SNAP
* KU Center for Community Health and Development
* KU Health, Sport, and Exercise Sciences
* KU Medical Center Dietetic Internship Program
* Lawrence-Douglas County Sustainability
* Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department WIC
* Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority Full Circle Youth Program
* LMH Health
* Lawrence Pedestrian Coalition
* Lecompton United Methodist Church God’s Food Pantry
* LiveWell Douglas County
* Salvation Army
* Senior Resource Center for Douglas County
* Success by 6 Coalition of Douglas County
* Sustainability Action Network
* University of Kansas Center for Community Health and Development
* University of Kansas Research and Training Center on Independent Living
* USD 497 Lawrence Public Schools

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| Overall Content | |
| Overall goal statement or Issue statement: | Increase food security and access to healthy food |
| Overall objective (s):  Note: Must follow SMART+C formatting; Include data source (currently available or to be developed); Include frequency of data reporting | - By 2023, increase the percentage of (low-income, low-vehicular access) residents who are able to reach a healthy food access point by foot, bike, or transit. (*pending)*  - By 2023, increase the number of schools that make policy changes to allow fruits and vegetable consumption throughout the school day (*pending)*  - By 2023, reduce food insecurity from 16.5% to 15.5%. (Source: Feeding America)  - By 2023, increase the percent of adults that consumed fruit at least once per day from 60.6 percent to 63.5 percent. (Source: BRFSS)  - By 2023, increase the percent of adults that consumed vegetables at least once per day from 81.3 percent to 85 percent. (Source: BRFSS)  - By 2023, increase the proportion of adults who are at a healthy weight from 41.1 percent to 43.0 percent. (Source: BRFSS)  - By 2023, reduce the percent of children who are obese from 24.0 percent to 22.8 percent. (Source: Fitness Gram via USD 497) |
| To reduce disparities and optimize equity… | |
| What populations will be the focus of some efforts due to the presence of known disparities? | Low-income residents, those experiencing homelessness, those experiencing food insecurity, seniors, black, native, and Hispanic populations, single-parent households |
| What strategies or approaches will be used to engage this population in influencing or shaping the plan? | Obtaining feedback from low-income populations via focus groups (e.g., at Prairie Ridge, Just Food, Centro Hispano, Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority) and interviews (e.g., Bert Nash Homeless Outreach Team), as well as an open planning process offering meals and free childcare at meetings. A community survey was created as an additional way for community members to provide input. |
| Priority focus areas (a focus on a personal or environmental factor known to contribute to the issue) | Improving healthy food access among low-income populations |

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| Focus Area Content | | | |
| Priority Focus Area: Healthy Food for All | | | |
| Planned Strategy 1: Ensure enhanced food access for populations facing transportation barriers through establishing a mobile food pantry, enhanced transit routes to grocery stores, food pantries, and farmers’ markets, and via pantry delivery for special populations. EQ | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 1 | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Research successful mobile food pantry models (e.g., NourishKC KCK Mobile Market, Wichita Common Ground) | Just Food, Juliann DaVee, [jmorlanddavee@ku.edu](mailto:jmorlanddavee@ku.edu) | ongoing |  |
| Seek funding for mobile food pantry | Just Food | completed | Community funding or grant opportunities |
| Determine annual maintenance cost for vehicle to ensure sustainable funding for program | Just Food | completed | Community funding or grant opportunities |
| Determine routes for mobile food pantry (e.g., food deserts, outlying communities, senior low-income housing units, Clinton lake to reach camping homeless population, old Hobby Lobby parking lot on 23rd, medical services locations). | Just Food and Douglas County food pantries | ongoing | Collaborative client mapping to identify high density of clients needing access to food pantries |
| Implement mobile food pantry | Just Food | completed | Ensure adequate food supply for increase food pantry participation  Maintain growth in food recovery effort to aid in stoking the mobile pantry |
| Advertise/ outreach for mobile food pantry | Just Food, Harvesters | ongoing |  |
| Offer SNAP and WIC outreach at mobile pantry sites | Just Food, Harvesters, KState Research & Extension, Lawrence Douglas County Public Health | ongoing |  |
| Research pantry delivery services | Just Food, Harvesters | ongoing |  |
| Reach out to faith communities re: volunteers and use of vans for delivery service for special populations | Just Food and Partners | ongoing |  |
| Conduct a network analysis based upon food resource maps and MPO to explore ways to improve transit access to existing pantry locations | Douglas County Sustainability Office, MPO, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Transportation Commission |  |  |
| Support analysis and operation of transit routes to include access to grocery stores, food pantries, and established farmers markets. | Douglas County Sustainability Office, Lawrence Transit, MPO |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 2: Implement food recovery practices and policies to supply safe, nourishing food to those in need | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 2 | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Partners:** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Support organizations, institutions, and businesses to conduct food waste audits | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Just Food, Harvesters |  | Staff time and education to business on the importance of food waste audits |
| Implement best practices to minimize food waste | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Just Food | Ongoing – Started Purposeful Plate for restaurant waste | Creation of a food waste guide (Foodkeeper dates and donation guidelines) |
| Develop an outreach strategy, including education on the Good Samaritan Law, to promote food donation and recovery with local businesses and food service operations | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Just Food | ongoing |  |
| Identify and contact potential institutions for partnership (e.g., restaurants, grocery stores, hospital, universities), utilizing MealConnect as a potential tool | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Lawrence-Douglas County Health, Just Food, Harvesters | ongoing |  |
| Explore implementation of regional laws to reduce food waste | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Just Food |  |  |
| Support/ coordinate endeavors of the Douglas County Food Policy Council to reduce food waste | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Lawrence-Douglas County Health, Just Food, Harvesters |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 3: Strengthen the FuelGood Healthy Pantries Initiative to promote adoption of health-promoting policies and practices, including distribution of healthy foods and fresh food items, within Douglas County food pantries. EQ | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 3 | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Recruit and support additional FuelGood pantries | K-State Research and Extension | Completed – ongoing, continuing to add | Human resources |
| Hold joint meeting of food pantries | K-State Research and Extension would host and facilitate with the food pantries throughout Douglas County, including Just Food and Harvesters |  |  |
| Update Healthy Pantry menu of options, including incorporation of health care support services | K-State Research and Extension, Harvesters | ongoing |  |
| Integrate breastfeeding education and support into Healthy Pantry menu of options | Elena – Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department | ongoing |  |
| Help pantries obtain needed equipment (freezers, refrigerators, grocery carts, wheeled carts, etc.) | LiveWell intern – Kelly Hall. Focus on food pantries in the schools. | Ongoing – School pantry grant completed 2020 | Community funding or grant opportunities specific to building food pantry capacity |
| Provide assistance to Lecompton food pantry to increase capacity for storing and distributing fresh food items   * Kelly will call Mary Jane to learn about their needs – Sept 2019 | Just Food, Harvesters, K-State Research and Extension | 2020 - completed | Commercial style refrigerators and freezers  Food safety education |
| Provide assistance to rural food pantries to increase capacity for storing and distributing fresh food items | Just Food, Harvesters, K-State Research and Extension | 2020 - ongoing | Commercial style refrigerators and freezers  Food safety education |
| Grow school-based food assistance programming (e.g., pantry sites, Back Snack)   * Seek DCCF funding * Kelly reach out to Jessica Kejr from Harvesters and Just Food to see what opportunities there are for expansion, also see if Kennedy after-school meal is still happening * Boys & Girls Club * Find out more about what is happening with Farm-to-School and school gardening efforts * Reach out to Baldwin * Reach out to Eudora | K-State Research and Extension, Just Food, Harvesters, Trinity Episcopal Church, Stull Food Pantry, Douglas County School Districts | Completed - ongoing |  |
| Planned Strategy 4: Remove barriers to and strengthen utilization of public food assistance programs for families with children and seniors, including:   * School breakfast, dinner, and summer meal programs * SNAP enrollment * WIC enrollment * Double Up Food Bucks * CHAMPPS * Meals on Wheels * Commodity Supplemental Food Program for seniors   EQ | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 4: | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Increase participation in school breakfast, dinner, and summer meal programs for children in Douglas County | Summer Food Planning Committee, Boys & Girls Club, Lawrence Public Schools | ongoing |  |
| Establish a summer meal program in Baldwin City | Michelle Heller, Kansas Appleseed, KState Research & Extension | Completed – Summer 2019 |  |
| Increase participation in CHAMPPS senior meals | Senior Resource Center, Just Food |  |  |
| Reduce barriers to WIC and SNAP enrollment and participation | Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Douglas County WIC, Harvesters, KState Research & Extension | Ongoing – reducing the number of pages on SNAP app |  |
| Increase communication between partners around WIC and SNAP | Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Douglas County WIC, Harvesters, KState Research & Extension |  |  |
| Increase support within school districts to support expansion of school breakfast and dinner programs within qualifying Douglas County schools | Harvesters, Just Food, K-State Research and Extension, Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Kansas Appleseed |  |  |
| Increase education and promotion about CHAMPPS, Meals on Wheels, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program for seniors | Senior Resource Center, Harvesters, Just Food, Project Lively, Ballard Community Services, Area Douglas County social service agencies |  |  |
| Reduce barriers to accessing CHAMPPS, Meals on Wheels, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program for seniors | Senior Resource Center, Harvesters |  |  |
| Recruit and train more SNAP enrollment volunteers | K-State Research and Extension, Harvesters, Just Food, LMH Health, Ballard Community Services, Area Douglas County social service agencies |  |  |
| Educate the community and SNAP and WIC outreach educators on myths and facts around eligibility (e.g., special populations, separate households within one house, citizenship status) | Harvesters, Department of Children and Families, Douglas County WIC |  |  |
| Increase promotion of Double Up Food Bucks | Douglas County Food Policy Council, K-State Research and Extension, WIC, Ballard Community Services, Area Douglas County social service agencies | ongoing |  |
| Utilize food access points such as local pantries for SNAP and WIC enrollment |  |  |  |
| Examine SNAP usage in Douglas County, including among the population above 55 years of age | Norm White |  |  |
| Develop factual materials to help change misconceptions about SNAP users (see North Carolina model) | Susan Johnson, Kansas Appleseed | Ongoing |  |
| Adjust Ballard Community Services intake form to ask about food programs and educate about SNAP, WIC, Double Up Food Bucks, CHAMPPS, Meals on Wheels, Commodity Supplemental Food Program | Ballard Community Services |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 5: Support advocacy efforts related to contexts supportive of breastfeeding, reduction of food insecurity, and improving access to healthy food | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 5: | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Partners:** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Monitor local, state, and federal legislation that could affect poverty, food security, and healthy food access | Douglas County Food Policy Council, Kansas Appleseed, KC Healthy Kids | Ongoing |  |
| Educate policymakers around issues affecting poverty, food security, and healthy food access (e.g., reducing barriers to SNAP enrollment, sales tax on groceries, expansion of Double Up Food Bucks program) | Douglas County Food Policy Council, LiveWell Douglas County | Ongoing |  |
| Collect stories from recipients of SNAP, WIC and food pantry users to help tell the story of those struggling with food insecurity | Just Food, Harvesters, Appleseed, Douglas County Food Pantries |  |  |
| Educate the general public and decisionmakers about First Food Deserts, racial disparities in breastfeeding, and creating more breastfeeding-friendly community contexts | Douglas County WIC, Breastfeeding Coalition of Douglas County, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 6: Extend food pantry evening/ weekend availability | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 6 | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Grow agency infrastructure, including staff and volunteer availability, to support evening and weekend availability | Just Food, Ballard Community Services, other pantries |  |  |
| Extend food pantry evening availability | Just Food, other pantries | 2019 | Increase staffing capacity/ volunteer participation for food pantries  Increase food availability at food pantries |
| Extend food pantry weekend availability | Just Food, Ballard Community Services, other pantries |  | Increase staffing capacity/ volunteer participation for food pantries  Increase food availability at food pantries |
| Planned Strategy 7: Grow “Hunger and Health” efforts to enhance integration of social services and health care | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 7 | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | **By when will it be complete?** | What resources or supports are needed? |
| Work to secure grant funding to pilot programs pertaining to integration of the medical, community health, and social service sectors. | Kelsey Fortin, Allison Koonce of LMH Health | Ongoing – compete hospital bags/health screenings/prescription pad program |  |
| Provide healthcare support services and chronic disease management at local food bank (for example, diabetes management) | Jessica Kejr of Harvesters, Just Food, Allison Koonce of LMH Health, | Ongoing – Health screenings |  |
| Work to integrate food intervention and emergency food assistance services into healthcare facilities (e.g., Lawrence Memorial Health, Community Health Building). | Jessica Kejr of Harvesters, Heartland, Area service providers, Allison Koonce of LMH Health | Completed – ongoing meal bags in emergency room & social work departments |  |
| Explore doing food distribution at well child visits | Jessica Kejr of Harvesters, Allison Koonce of LMH Health |  |  |
| Explore adding food insecurity screening and implementation of food prescription program | Jessica Kejr of Harvesters, Area service providers, Allison Koonce of LMH Health | Completed – ongoing implementation of prescription pads |  |
| Understand more about where food insecure clients are seeking medical services. | KU Community Health, Area service providers, Allison Koonce of LMH Health | Ongoing |  |
| Establish a list of student groups that might be interested in volunteering time for health promotion/ services in pantries | Kelsey Fortin | Completed |  |
| Planned Strategy 8: Increase the number of workplaces that are actively engaged with Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) initiatives, supported by the development of a work site HEAL policy and guideline toolkit. (\*\*Note this is a duplication of Strategy 6 in the Healthy Built Environment section of the plan. Work will require collaboration with the Healthy Built Environment and WorkWell workgroups) | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 8 | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible** | **By when will it be complete** | What resources or supports are needed? |
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| Overall Content | |
| Overall goal statement or Issue statement: | Increase opportunities for physical activity |
| Overall objective (s):  Note: Must follow SMART+C formatting; Include data source (currently available or to be developed); Include frequency of data reporting | - By 2023, increase the proportion of adults who are at a healthy weight from 41.1 percent to 43 percent. (Source: BRFSS)  - By 2023, reduce the percent of children who are obese from 24.9% to 22.8% (Source: Fitness Gram via USD 497)  - By 2023, increase the percentage of adults participating in the recommended level of physical activity from 22.2% to 25.0%  *-*By 2023, increase the percentage of residents living within one-quarter mile of a bikeway network by 5%.  *(MPO)*  *-* By 2023, decrease the average number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads from 7.4 to 6.0. *(MPO)*  - By 2023 increase the percentage of public streets with sidewalks on at least one side by 5% in each municipality. *(MPO)*  *-*By 2023, increase the percent of children who walk or bike to school from 18.4 to 20.0 percent. (Source: Safe Routes to School Tally) |
| Priority populations | Residents in neighborhoods with incomplete sidewalk/bikeway networks and/or residents who use these routes for access to schools and other community destinations. |
| Priority populations engagement strategy | Obtaining feedback from low-income populations via focus groups (e.g., at Prairie Ridge, Just Food, Centro Hispano, Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority) and interviews (e.g., Bert Nash Homeless Outreach Team), as well as an open planning process offering meals and free childcare at meetings. A community survey was created as an additional way for community members to provide input. |
| Priority focus areas (a focus on a personal or environmental factor known to contribute to the issue) | Improving infrastructure for multi-modal transportation. |

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| Focus Area Content | | | | |
| Priority Focus Area: | | Physical Activity | | |
| Planned Strategy 1: Work with municipalities to advance a safe and robust pedestrian and bicycle network consistent with Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regional pedestrian and bikeway plans. | | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 1: | | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | | **By when will it be complete?** | **What resources or supports are needed?** |
| Gain buy-in across all municipalities regarding the need for action | MPO | | January, 2020 | Review of existing plans |
| Enhance awareness of the plan | MPO, LiveWell | |  |  |
| Identify 5-year goals within framework of existing T2040 | Municipalities | |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 2: Work with school districts and municipalities to assure completion, adoption, and implementation of regional or school district Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plans. | | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 2: | | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | | **By when will it be complete?** | **What resources or supports are needed?** |
| Work with each municipality to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan |  | |  |  |
| Work with each school district to pass a SRTS resolution |  | |  |  |
| Report regularly on progress |  | |  |  |
| Review sufficiency of SRTS destinations annually (New commercial construction, new highway improvements, new school facilities, storm damage, residential property changes and related enrollment trends all dictate the possibility of changes in the set of sidewalks and street crossings that impact SRTS.) |  | |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 3: Support school districts’ efforts to adopt at least one evidence-based policy that integrates opportunities for youth to be physically active before, during and/or after school | | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 3: | | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | | **By when will it be complete?** | **What resources or supports are needed?** |
| Develop guidelines for programs that encourage biking and walking to/from schools and before/after school programs |  | |  |  |
| Develop and promote standards for bike parking at schools and after school program facilities |  | |  |  |
| Develop and promote standards for facilities that prioritize biking and walking over driving to drop off students |  | |  |  |
| Encourage adoption of policies that support sufficient physical activity during the school day |  | |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 4: Support ongoing development of public transit, with pedestrian access for people of all abilities, that provides timely access to priority destinations. | | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 4: | | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | | **By when will it be complete?** | **What resources or supports are needed?** |
| Expand service to weekends and evenings | Public Transit | | 2021 |  |
| Improve accessibility and sidewalk connectivity to bus stops | municipalities | |  | Use ped/bike dedicated funds |
| Planned Strategy 5: Promote community initiatives that support well maintained, equitably funded sidewalk networks. | | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 5: | | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | | **By when will it be complete?** | **What resources or supports are needed?** |
| Incorporate sidewalk review into rental property inspection |  | |  |  |
| Engage neighborhood associations and groups in planning for sidewalk improvements |  | |  |  |
| Increase awareness of low-income sidewalk repair options | LiveWell, Health Dept. | | 2021 |  |
| Implement inspection-based repair throughout the county | municipalities | |  |  |
| Planned Strategy 6: Increase the number of workplaces that are actively engaged with Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) initiatives, supported by the development of a work site HEAL policy and guideline toolkit. | | | | |
| Action Steps for Strategy 6: | | | | |
| What is the action to be taken? | **Who is responsible?** | | **By when will it be complete?** | **What resources or supports are needed?** |
| Develop and promote guidelines that ensure sufficient opportunities for physical activity during the workday |  | |  |  |
| Develop and promote standard for facilities that support commuting by bicycle (e.g. covered or secure bike parking, showers, lockers, etc.) |  | |  |  |
| Develop and promote guidelines for policies that promote physical activity throughout the workday (e.g. breaks for physical activity, indoor and outdoor physical fitness facilities) |  | |  |  |
| Research commuter trip patterns to determine |  | |  |  |

**EQ= equity-related strategy**