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Assessing Your HEAL Policy Needs:

The Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHi) is leading an initiative called the Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities & Towns Campaign in strategic partnership with the Virginia Municipal League and Maryland Municipal League. The HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign for the Mid-Atlantic is funded by Kaiser Permanente and is part of a growing national campaign that is currently taking place in California, Oregon, and Colorado. The HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign supports cities and towns in Virginia and Maryland in creating healthier communities by adopting policies that foster active living and healthy eating.

The purpose of this assessment tool is to identify what policies are already in place in your community to determine opportunities and prioritize policies that meet your needs. There is no need to feel overwhelmed if your community does not have many of these policies. This assessment is the first step in working towards becoming a healthier community.

This assessment tool is comprehensive and includes three sections: Physical Activity, Active Transportation, and Land Use; Healthy Food Access; and Municipal Workplace Wellness. For each statement, please mark the answer choice that best describes your city or town's policy status. We understand that elected officials and appointed staff are busy. If you do not have the time to complete the assessment in one session, we recommend that you print the assessment and complete it on paper before entering your answers online. You may also want to divide the assessment into sections, have one or more staff members complete each section, and then have one person enter the results. Whatever approach you take, we commend you for taking this first step in making your community a healthier one.

Once we receive your completed assessment form, we will review your answers and identify opportunities to support you in reaching your community's goals. We look forward to working with you in the future, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any assistance.

Physical Activity, Active Transportation, and Land Use

Policy	Where to Look	Policy in Place	No Policy in Place, but Happens in Practice	No Policy in Place, and Does Not Happen in Practice	Not Applicable or Not Interested
Update Comprehensive Plan					
1. Include provisions in your comprehensive plan that promote bikeability and walkability	-Comprehensive Plan				
2. Include strategies that promote public safety/crime prevention through environmental design	-Comprehensive Plan				
3. Prioritize Mixed-Use Development & Transit-Oriented Development	-Comprehensive Plan				
Street/Road Design					
4. Adopt a Complete Streets policy	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
5. Promote slower vehicle traffic through traffic calming measures	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Public Works Department -Town/City Clerk				
6. Adopt a policy to paint bike lanes/shared use lanes ("Sharrows") when re-paving/painting roads	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Public Works Department -Town/City Clerk				
7. Adopt a policy to stripe crosswalks when re-paving/painting roads	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Public Works Department -Town/City Clerk				
Joint Use Agreements					
8. Establish Joint Use Agreements for facilities, such as: school playgrounds, pools, etc.	-Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk -School Board				
Use Development Tools to Create a Safe Environment for Residents to be Physically Active					
9. Adopt Form Based Code Zoning ordinance	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
10. Require developers to include usable space for physical activity and recreation or pay fee	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				

11. Institute a Complete Streets requirement for new development	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
Community Involvement					
12. Create an Active Living Community Policy Council or Task Force tasked with identifying recommendations for the City/Town to follow	-Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk -Active Living Community Policy Council or Task Force				
13. Adopt/Implement at least 1 recommendation from the Active Living Community Policy Council or Task Force	-Active Living Community Policy Council or Task Force				
Innovation					
14. For any policies, beyond those identified above that are proven to increase physical activity among residents.	-Active Living Community Policy Council or Task Force -Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk -Comprehensive Plan -Public Works Department				

Healthy Food Access

Policy	Where to Look	Policy in Place	No Policy in Place, but Happens in Practice	No Policy in Place, and Does Not Happen in Practice	Not Applicable or Not Interested
Update Comprehensive Plan					
1. Include provisions in your Comprehensive Plan that address access to affordable, nutritious foods	-Comprehensive Plan				
Attract/Promote Healthy Food Retail – Corner and Grocery Stores					
2. Expedite permitting for new stores that offer healthy food	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk - Health Department				
3. Provide density bonuses or economic incentives for new grocery store development, especially in under-resourced communities	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
4. Provide density bonuses or economic incentives for improved healthy food offerings in existing corner or convenience stores	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
5. Establish standards as a licensing requirement for new food retailers	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
Attract/Promote Healthy Food Retail – Restaurants					
6. Encourage menu labeling with nutrition facts	-Health Department -Town/City Clerk				
7. Economic Incentives for restaurants that offer healthy foods	-Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Town/City Clerk				
Create/Promote Farmers’ Markets					
8. Establish a Memorandum of Understanding or Joint Use Agreement formalizing use of land for Farmers’ Market	-Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk - Community Services - Farmers Market Staff				
9. Encourage SNAP/EBT to be accepted at your city or town's farmers market	-Planning Department -Town/City Clerk - Farmers Market Staff - Community Services				
10. Institute guidelines and/or zoning controls that allow Farmers’ Markets	-Planning Department -Town/City Clerk - Farmers Market Staff - Community Services				

Develop/Promote Community Gardens, Urban Agriculture, and Urban Farming					
11. Develop a process by which vacant land becomes available for community gardens/urban agriculture	-Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk - Community Services				
12. Adopt a Community Garden/Urban Agriculture Ordinance to promote and protect community gardens and urban agriculture.	-Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk - Community Services				
13. Adopt zoning ordinances that allow backyard poultry/animal husbandry	-Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk - Community Services -Health Department				
Community Involvement					
14. Create a Food Policy Council or Task Force tasked with identifying recommendations for the City/Town to follow	-Planning Department -Town/City Clerk -Food Policy Council or Task Force				
15. Adopt/Implement at least 1 recommendation from the Food Policy Council or Task Force	-Food Policy Council or Task Force				
16. Conduct a community food assessment	-Food Policy Council or Task Force				
17. Adopt a Food Charter	-Food Policy Council or Task Force				
18. Create a Community Food System Plan	-Food Policy Council or Task Force				
Innovation					
19. For any policies, beyond those identified above that are proven to increase access and availability of affordable, nutritious	-Food Policy Council or Task Force -Comprehensive Plan -Planning Department -Parks & Recreation -Town/City Clerk - Community Services -Health Department				

Municipal Workplace Wellness

Policy	Where to Look	Policy in Place	No Policy in Place, but Happens in Practice	No Policy in Place, and Does Not Happen in Practice	Not Applicable or Not Interested
Make healthy foods available in the municipal workplace					
1. Adopt nutrition standards aligned with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in all municipally- or county-owned or operated venues that serve food, including special events	-Human Resources -Parks & Recreation - Town/City Clerk - Health Department - Community Services - Facilities Department				
2. Ensure that water is readily available in municipally owned buildings	-Human Resources -Parks & Recreation -Facilities Department - Town/City Clerk				
3. Establish a healthy vending policy	-Human Resources -Parks & Recreation - Town/City Clerk - Health Department - Community Services - Facilities Department				
Encourage physical activity in the municipal workplace					
4. Encourage stairwell usage through an open, unlocked stairwell policy	-Human Resources -Parks & Recreation -Facilities Department - Town/City Clerk				
5. Encourage physical activity breaks for meetings over 2 hours in length	-Human Resources - Town/City Clerk				
6. Allow/encourage walking meetings	-Human Resources - Town/City Clerk				
Improve breastfeeding accommodations for employees					
7. Designate lactation space within each municipally owned/operated building for breastfeeding mothers	-Human Resources - Town/City Clerk				
Employee Involvement					
8. Convene a Workplace Wellness Committee	-Human Resources - Town/City Clerk				
9. Adopt/Implement at least one recommendation from the Workplace Wellness Committee	-Workplace Wellness Committee				
Innovation					
10. For any policies, beyond those identified above that are proven to increase physical activity and access to nutritious foods for municipal employees	-Human Resources - Town/City Clerk -Parks & Recreation -Facilities Department - Health Department - Community Services				

