

Health Advisory Committee

Summer 2015

Village of Menomonee Falls 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update



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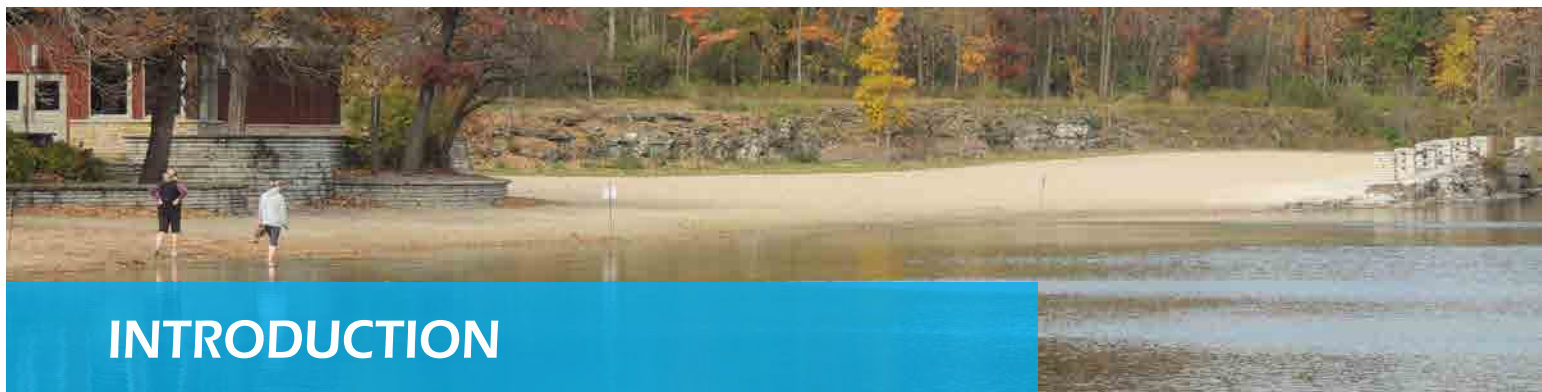
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cover photo courtesy of Nancy Greifenhagen



INTRODUCTION

In addition to the nine comprehensive plan elements required by the State, the Village developed a Health Element for Menomonee Falls' *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. The Village established a temporary Health Advisory Committee to draft goals and recommendations for this new element. The Health Advisory Committee included Village staff, public health officials, healthcare professionals, local food providers and community recreation and education professionals. This document summarizes the Health Advisory Committee process and includes the draft health goals and recommendations which were created and reviewed by the committee.

WHY PLAN FOR HEALTH?

In recent years, evidence has grown regarding the connection between the built environment (streets, buildings, sidewalks, etc.) and population health outcomes. Studies show that levels of physical activity, quality of diet and even mental health status are impacted by local environments. Places with quality housing, healthcare access, transportation and recreation choices, access to natural spaces, healthy food options, safe neighborhoods, and clean water, air and soil have been shown to promote health. By incorporating health recommendations into the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*, the Village affirmed its commitment to strive for a local environment that supports healthy choices and improves health outcomes for the community.

HEALTH ADVISORY PROCESS SUMMARY

Village staff recruited professionals from a wide variety of organizations to volunteer their time and expertise for the development a health element for Menomonee Falls' *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. The Health Advisory Committee met four times during the Summer of 2015, ultimately preparing health goals and recommendations to be considered by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. These goals and recommendations were presented by staff to the Steering Committee in October 2015. Following a careful review and some revisions, many of the Health Advisory Committee's recommendations were incorporated into the Health and Public Safety element in Chapter 2 of the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*.

Health Advisory Committee Meetings

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Meeting #1: Connections Between Health & The Built Environment | June 17th, 2015 |
| • Meeting #2: Identifying Key Issues & Drafting Goals | July 15th, 2015 |
| • Meeting #3: Developing Policies & Actions to Promote Health | August 12th, 2015 |
| • Meeting #4: Reviewing the Draft Health Element | September 30th, 2015 |

Steering Committee Review

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Initial review of Health Advisory Committee Recommendations | October 29th, 2015 |
| • Review of revised Health Advisory Committee Recommendations | November 12th, 2015 |

MEETING #1: HEALTH & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

At the first meeting in June, Village staff welcomed committee members and explained the role of the Health Advisory Committee within the context of the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. Stephanie Johnson, a Community Coach with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings and Roadmaps initiative, shared a presentation that explained the relationship between health and the built environment. The presentation identified significant public health concerns and costs and how they could be mitigated through planning and community design.

The Health Advisory Committee then offered their first impressions of which health issues should be addressed in the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. Members of the committee identified physical activity, environmental health, aging and mental health as important issues to address in 2015.

For “homework” the committee was asked to complete a Neighborhood Health Screening Tool to consider factors impacting health in the Menomonee Falls neighborhoods where they live or work. 18 people completed the Neighborhood Health Screening Tool. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that it is challenging for residents and their children safely walk or ride bicycles in their neighborhood, and over half of respondents reported that speeding and/or dangerous intersections are a problem. Half of respondents with kids also reported that their child's school is located where fast food restaurants and gas-station convenience stores abound.

Neighborhood Health Screening Tool Village of Menomonee Falls 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update



Directions: Use this questionnaire checklist to help evaluate **the neighborhood you live in or work in** for any concerns or strengths related to health. Feel free to add comments on the back side of the table. ** Please submit this document by **July 10th** to the Village Menomonee Falls Department of Community Development, W156 N8480 Pilgrim Road, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin 53051-3140 or by email to twagerman@menomonee-falls.org

Key Questions	Yes	Don't Know	No	NA
Physical Activity/Active Living				
Are you able to conveniently (within 5 minutes) access bike trails from your home?	15	1	2	
Are you able to conveniently access parks from your home? (may include a school yard)	17		1	
Based on where you live are you able to walk or bike to do errands or commute to work?	10		8	
Are Village Parks in your neighborhood adequately developed (playgrounds, trails, benches, ball fields, etc.) to encourage usage?	13	2	3	
Are your children safely able to walk or ride their bicycles in your neighborhood?	8		6	4
Food/Nutrition				
Do you have convenient access to local farmer's markets or community gardens?	12	1	5	
Do you have the ability to create a garden at home? If you rent, does your landlord allow you to install a garden for food?	9		6	2
If you have children, is your child's school located where fast food restaurants and gas station convenience stores abound?	4		4	10
Housing/Land Use/Transportation				
Is there a problem with neglected public infrastructure in your neighborhood?	2	3	13	
Do you find transportation access to medical facilities to be a problem?	1	1	14	2
Are streets in your neighborhood able to accommodate a variety of users (vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles)?	13	1	4	
Are alternative transportation options (bus, taxis, senior transportation) available in your neighborhood?	6	5	7	
Crime/Safety				
Are there places in your neighborhood that feel unsafe and or lend themselves to crime?	3	2	13	
Is speeding a common problem on your street?	10	1	7	
Are there intersections you know are very dangerous and lack important safety measures (pedestrian crossing signals, crosswalks, rest islands etc.)?	9	1	7	
Are the sidewalks/trails/streets in your neighborhood designed for use by people with disabilities (ramps, textured surfaces, audible sounds etc.)	9	2	7	
Is the concentration of alcohol selling-establishments in your neighborhood causing health problems/crime?	2	3	11	

MEETING #2: IDENTIFYING KEY ISSUES & DRAFTING GOALS

For the July meeting, the Health Advisory Committee focused on determining priority health issues and goals which could be incorporated into the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. Andrew Dresang, Director of Community Engagement with Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin, presented the results of the *2015 Waukesha County Community Health Survey* in order to provide an overview of health issues and risk factors across the county. The top health issues reported in the survey were chronic diseases, alcohol or drug use and mental health or depression.

After reviewing the survey results and a 2014 Waukesha County health priorities report, Health Advisory Committee members worked in small groups to discuss which health issues should and could be addressed via Menomonee Falls' Comprehensive Plan. Committee members were asked to consider both the significance of issues for Village health and the practicality of addressing the issues through changes in the built environment. Discussion findings were shared with the entire committee prior to a vote on which health issues should be included in the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. Physical activity, healthy choices for all ages, mental health, social interaction, drug abuse and environmental health were ranked as the priority issues to include in the plan.

Committee members were also asked to assist staff in the development of a health goal statements for Menomonee Falls. These health goals were meant to provide a framework for the Health Advisory Committee's additional recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan. With input from the committee, Village staff initially drafted the following health goals.

- **Increase opportunities for physical activity**
- **Promote healthy choices for people of all ages through community design**
- **Promote environmental health (air, water, soil) to minimize exposure to adverse conditions**
- **Partner with other organizations to combat substance abuse and increase access to quality health care services for all members of the community**

These goals were shared with the public at two *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update* Community Workshops which were held at Village Hall in July and August of 2015. The Workshop participants indicated strong support for the content of the goals ([Appendix A-9](#)). The Health Advisory Committee made minor revisions to these goals at their August meeting. The goals were presented to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee in October 2015 and provided the basis for the plan's health and public safety goals (see [Chapter 1](#), [page 10](#)).



MEETING #3: DEVELOPING POLICIES & ACTIONS

The August Health Advisory Committee meeting began with committee members reviewing and revising the health goals and objectives which had been drafted by Village staff. Minor changes were made to the health goal statements and more significant changes were made to supporting objectives. The Health Advisory Committee generally favored draft objectives that were concise and action-oriented. The revised goals and objectives are included as part of the **Meeting #4** section.

The main purpose of the third meeting was to draft policy recommendations to promote health in Menomonee Falls. To this end, committee members formed four sub-groups to discuss potential policies and actions which would support one of the four health goals. While brainstorming potential recommendations, sub groups were encouraged to consider a broad range of potential policies including: regulations, education/encouragement efforts, plans, programs, partnerships, new projects and expansions. Staff shared recommendations from the 2013 Eau Claire, WI Comprehensive Plan Health Element to offer additional ideas for how Menomonee Falls could promote health. All policy recommendations supported within the subgroups were recorded and then shared and discussed with the entire committee.

A total of 37 specific policy recommendations were presented by the committee. These recommendations gave Village staff important direction in the development of a draft health element for the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*.



photo courtesy of Nancy Greifenhagen

MEETING #4: REVIEWING THE DRAFT HEALTH ELEMENT

The final Health Advisory Committee meeting was held in September to provide an opportunity for the committee to review a draft Health Element (chapter) that Village staff had prepared for the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*. Committee members were given time to read the draft Health Element to consider both the content and the quality of the document. As a group, the committee then reviewed each of the draft policy recommendations together to discuss whether they were clear, on-point, and actionable. The committee ultimately agreed upon 44 policy recommendations. While most of the health element recommendations were originally shared during **Meeting #3**, some had been drafted by Village staff and members of the committee outside of the meeting sessions.

The **draft Health Element** is included below as presented to the Health Advisory Committee on September 30, 2015. This draft also includes ***comments** made by the Health Advisory Committee during **Meeting#4**.

DRAFT GOAL 1: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITHIN THE VILLAGE

Physical activity has long been identified as a crucial determinant of health. Individuals who exercise regularly are more likely than inactive people to live longer and healthier lives. Active people have reduced risks for type II diabetes, heart disease, stroke and other chronic conditions. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that only 21 percent of adults across the United States meet the recommended guidelines for physical activity. The CDC recommends at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity and at least two full body muscle strengthening activities for adults each week. For children, the CDC found that less than 3 in 10 high school students exercised the recommended 60 minutes a day. In 2011, 17 percent of Waukesha County adults reported no physical activity.

While routine exercise is a personal choice, community design and local recreation resources have been shown to either help or hinder levels of physical activity. Parks, trails, playgrounds and mixed use neighborhoods (areas where places to shop or work are found in close proximity to homes) have been shown to promote physical activity. Automobile-dependent neighborhoods which lack sidewalks and opportunities for recreation have been shown to discourage physical activity.

The Village of Menomonee Falls supports physical activity through a commitment to the following objectives and supporting strategies.

- **Desired health outcomes:** Increased physical activity, decreased incidence of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity and related chronic conditions
- **Recommended strategies:** Quality parks with year-round activities, neighborhood destinations, a complete trail network, active transportation facilities, safety education, community culture

Objective 1.1 Develop existing and future parks to promote year-round use of a wide variety of activity areas

Joint-Use of Facilities: Partner with other public and non-profit recreation service providers to cost-effectively offer joint-use of public facilities for year-round physical fitness.

The Village, the School District of Menomonee Falls, Hamilton School District, Tri-County YMCA, and other non-profits maintain numerous indoor and outdoor spaces for physical activity. Coordination between these and other organizations has potential to increase public awareness and use of local facilities. New joint-use partnerships could activate local recreational spaces and increase physical activity during off-peak seasons, after hours, or on weekends. Opportunities for joint-use partnerships include community open-gym sessions, public use of school running tracks/athletic fields, shared access to fitness equipment, winter indoor walking programs, and expanded recreational programs in Village parks.

**Need to do more research on what joint-use opportunities exist now. Reach out to Community Education & Recreation staff.*

Park & Trail Lighting: Improve lighting to increase year-round use of Village parks and trails.

Apart from the summer season, available daylight for exercise is limited in Wisconsin. Lighting in parks and along trails encourages their use in the morning and evenings, especially during the winter months. Lighting has been shown to decrease injuries from falls and vehicle collisions, and to promote personal security and perceptions of safety. Well-lit areas have been found to be especially important for increasing physical activity among females, and older adults. The Village could start by identifying priority locations for additional lighting with consideration for safety concerns and potential demand for use. Priority areas could be identified along overpasses/underpasses and at intersections, where lighting has been found to decrease risk for crashes more than anywhere else.

**Impact on safety and perceived safety is significant for use during dark hours. Lighting may also deter crime/vandalism in parks and other public spaces. The Village should consider solar lighting/sustainable approaches and be sensitive to impacts of lighting in residential areas. Could this recommendation be fulfilled as part of the COR plan?*

Nature-Based Recreation: Develop year-round nature-based recreation opportunities in the Village to increase use of natural areas including the Tamarack Preserve, the Menomonee River, and the Fox River.

Nature-based recreation activities provide a number of important health benefits for the Menomonee Falls community. Hiking, paddling, birding, fishing, and other nature-based activities increase participants' levels of physical activity and their amount of contact with the natural environment. Regular contact with nature has been linked to mental health benefits including reduced stress, restored attention, and even decreased depression. Development of nature-based recreation opportunities would help the Village activate its inventory of public lands and the local natural

resource areas like the Tamarack Preserve and river corridors. Opportunities for nature-based recreation should be identified in the 2016-2020 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

**Important to activate spaces, but new activities need to be organized and promoted through partnerships and relationships with local individuals and organizations. New activities and approaches need to be owned for implementation to be successful.*

Parks Maintenance Plan: Develop a parks maintenance plan for all Village-owned and operated parks, trails, and greenways.

Parks and trails that are well-maintained attract more users and, ultimately, increase rates of physical activity. Creation of a maintenance plan for all Village-owned and operated parks, trails, plazas, and landscapes would help the Village prioritize for seasonal maintenance and life-cycle facilities replacements. A parks maintenance plan could be drafted as part of the next update to the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

**A plan would be especially important for long-term maintenance needs. Planning staff should partner with public works/parks division on this. Figure out what public works does on this front already.*

Health in the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation (COR) Plan: Prioritize project recommendations that support health in the next update to the Village Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Rapid health impact assessments use data and expert opinions to anticipate the effect of proposed projects on health determinants like physical activity, injury risk, social interaction, and stress. The Village should consider partnering with local public health officers or healthcare providers to conduct rapid health impact assessments for significant park and recreation improvement proposals. Proposed improvements to parks, athletic facilities, or trails could be candidates for a health impact assessment. Once health impacts have been evaluated, the Village could fast-track project proposals within the COR Plan that have the most significant benefits for community health.

**Follow up with Waukesha County Public Health. Are there County employees that have conducted Health Impact Analyses (HIA) or would be interested in piloting an HIA for parks projects in the next COR Plan update? The proposed updates to Village Park is one, but what other proposed projects could be evaluated with a rapid HIA?*

Objective 1.2 Facilitate development of neighborhoods with a mix of residential and commercial uses to increase opportunities to use active transportation (i.e. walking and biking) to reach destinations

Evaluate Neighborhood Walkability: Study the relationship between Village residential neighborhoods and their proximity to important destinations like parks, schools, businesses, and services.

Neighborhood walkability has a major impact on how frequently people walk for exercise or to reach destinations. In walkable neighborhoods, residents are able to reach shops, restaurants, parks, schools and places of work on foot. Walk Score®, a popular walkability website calculates how easy it is to travel to destinations on foot. Walk Score® should be utilized along with Village inventories of sidewalks and trails to determine whether neighborhoods in the Village are walkable, auto-dependent, or somewhere in between. Walkable areas in the Village could be highlighted and auto-centric areas could be targeted for improvements to increase safety and livability.

**Evaluating neighborhood walkability would be a planning staff project. This approach makes sense as part of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. As a study it should support project/policy recommendations in order to be actionable.*

Mixed-use Redevelopment Corridors: Develop revitalization plans for commercial corridors in the Village that prioritize mixed uses and active transportation modes.

Older retail strips in the Village present an opportunity to attract investment and create places that support physically active lifestyles. Toward this end, Village staff should identify areas in Menomonee Falls with high proportions of vacant or deteriorating retail spaces, and enlist stakeholder input to draft strategic plans for targeted redevelopment corridors. Strategic plans could include identification of opportunity sites, economic development strategies, evaluation of land uses, design guidelines, and streetscape improvements. The older commercial corridors near the Village Centre are potential candidates for this type of revitalization strategy. A long-term commitment to these targeted areas would provide an attractive mixed-use alternative for future businesses and residents.

**Keep. Strive for revitalized and walk/bike accessible commercial corridors.*

Objective 1.3 Connect existing multi-use trails in Menomonee Falls to provide a continuous route for exercise and transportation

A Complete Bicycle Network: Where feasible construct or mark bicycle paths/lanes along existing collector and arterial streets

A complete network of bicycle trails, lanes, or shoulders would increase opportunities for all residents to ride bicycles for transportation or recreation. Bicycle facilities improvements should be completed in conjunction with road construction, resurfacing, or rehabilitation projects. The Village should study existing trail gaps along major streets to better understand demand, safety issues, design considerations, and estimated costs associated with potential projects. Potential corridors for bicycle route improvements include Main Street, Shady Lane, Menomonee Avenue, Tamarack Trail, Town Hall Road, and Mill Road.

**Keep. This is a basic and essential goal for creating more opportunities for physical activity*

Multi-use Trail Development Standards: Formalize standards for trail extension and improvements in new development and redevelopment projects.

A continuous network of trails and pathways with off-site links would ensure connectivity between neighborhoods and would link residents to parks, open spaces and existing multi-use trails. The Village should require development of sidewalks/multi-use pathways along collector roads in new developments. The Village should also consider adopting a formal commitment to extend paths along arterial roadways to link new residential neighborhoods to existing development.

**A portion of impact fees collected with new development should be used for trail connections.*

Trail Easements or Acquisitions: Identify parcels for potential future trail easements or acquisitions.

The 2016-2020 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan should recommend parcels that could be targeted for easement or acquisition to close gaps in the existing Village trail network. Strategic trail property acquisitions could connect the Menomonee River Parkway and Waukesha County's Bug Line Trail, complete links between existing Village parks, or create a continuous trail loop around the Tamarack Preserve. Access to trails has been proven to increase physical activity for residents and right-of-way acquisition is an essential first step.

**This is needed. Potential parcels should be identified in a formal way to provide long-range direction to Village staff and leadership for trail development. There needs to be a person that is committed to this vision long-term. The lack of a trained parks/trails staff person is a concern. Some progress is being made in trail expansion with the White Stone Station development area.*

Public Partnerships and Creative Approaches to Fund Trails: Partner with overlapping and adjacent local governments to close trail network gaps within the Village and the region, and utilize a variety of funding opportunities for trail construction and maintenance.

Strong trail networks are viewed as quality of life assets across the County and region. Most Village residents regularly cross municipal lines to work or play, so it makes sense to improve regional trail networks through multi-jurisdictional planning and funding. Intergovernmental cost-sharing has the potential to make trail projects more economically feasible.

The Village is eligible to apply for a number of grants that could be used for trail projects. Village staff should research and identify grant opportunities and then commit staff time, monies (for a consultant), or enlist volunteer support to write grant proposals. The Village could also use crowd-funding campaigns to raise money for specific trail projects. Crowd-funding approaches enlist the financial support of potential users for civic improvements such as parks, trails and community gardens. This approach is typically most effective for smaller projects (under \$10k) and could be used to support trail construction, way-finding signage, or trail amenities such as benches and bike racks.

**This is practical. The partnership piece here is extremely important. The Village should look for ways to partner with the County and other communities on trails.*

Objective 1.4 Create and maintain a complete and safe sidewalk network along major streets within the Village to encourage walking and other active transportation modes during all seasons.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan: Draft a Village Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to identify priority projects and policies that will improve safety and access for all bicyclists and pedestrians.

The plan should evaluate existing bicycle and pedestrian networks in the Village and develop a prioritized list of projects that would increase connectivity to key destinations (schools, shopping, parks, and centers of employment, etc.). Projects in high-use areas and those with significant public safety benefits should be prioritized over others and the effectiveness of local bicycle/pedestrian policies and programs should be evaluated. A Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for the Village should include recommendations for recreation (trails and parks) as well as active transportation. A plan would provide direction for future Village projects and a policy vision for long-term improvements in non-motorized safety and mobility.

**Keep. This is a basic and essential goal for creating more opportunities for physical activity. This will address transportation needs and recreation opportunities.*

Complete Streets: Consider adoption of a “complete streets” policy to support all forms of transportation.

A complete street is designed for all users, such as motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians; including people with mobility restrictions. Many streets in the Village lack features that accommodate the safe travel of individuals who are not driving. A Complete Streets policy would formally acknowledge that new streets and reconstructed streets in the Village should include improvements to safely accommodate the movement of all users where feasible. While it is not feasible to recommend construction of sidewalks and bike lanes for all streets in the Village, a Complete Streets policy that targets collector and arterial streets has potential to significantly improve routes of active transportation in the Village as the Public Works Department reconstructs streets in the years to come.

**Could this be supported through grant funding? Yes, both for planning and for improvements. Especially along state/county roads where Wisconsin DOT/Federal funds could be used for improvements. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a good place to start.*

Benches: Improve and install additional benches in Village parks, and along roads and trails.

By 2030, the population over the age of 65 in Menomonee Falls is expected to account for over a quarter of all residents. As the portion of older adults in the Village increases, seating along sidewalks and trails will continue to become more important. Benches provide important places to rest for pedestrians and other active transportation users (bicycles, transit-riders, or alternative modes like skateboards, scooters etc.). Benches also support social interaction and make public spaces more inviting. The Village could develop an inventory of existing benches and a plan for bench improvements and installations as part of the 2016-2020 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

*Should this be a stand-alone goal? Benches are essential to support the physical activity of users that are older, disabled, or walk with mobility aides. Keep this. Skateboards or scooters might be a stretch with this language.

Pathway Snow Removal: Revise existing snow removal policies to require clearance from public sidewalks and asphalt multi-use trails.

In recent years, the Public Works Department has required removal of snow from concrete sidewalks but not from asphalt recreational trails. This has created a significant burden for winter trail users, especially along arterial streets like Pilgrim Road where asphalt trails act as important transportation routes. The existing Village Code requires removal of snow from sidewalks within 24 hours. This requirement is enforced on a complaint-driven basis. The Village should adopt a more robust enforcement approach and require removal of snow from asphalt pathways that function as sidewalks as well as other concrete sidewalks. Clear paths will improve the walking and biking experience and promote physical activity in Menomonee Falls during the winter months. The Village should also consider support for a community-wide snow shoveling program to assist seniors and residents with disabilities (See objective 2.1).

*Keep. This is a basic and essential goal for creating more opportunities for physical activity.

Walking and Bicycling Audits: Conduct walking and bicycle audits when evaluating bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Work with residents to use checklists to identify the strengths and weaknesses of walking and bicycling networks in neighborhoods that are slated for transportation improvements. Information from walking and bicycling audits would help Village staff prioritize improvements that are considered most important to regular users of sidewalks, trails, and crossings. Audits could be done in conjunction with specific road projects or as part of a bicycle and pedestrian master plan.

*This has been done in other communities like Madison, WI and Champaign, IL. It could be even more effective if members of the Village board or other community leaders participated. The walk/bicycle experience reveals so much more about safety/comfort than a Google Maps overview.

Traffic Calming: Implement traffic-calming measures on roads with high levels of pedestrian and bicycle activity.

The spaces that are the most comfortable for walking and biking also typically have slower moving motor-vehicle traffic. In Village neighborhoods that have the highest volumes of walkers and bicycle riders (e.g. Village Centre, the blocks nearest to schools), traffic calming design features like narrowed roads, speed humps, roundabouts, and additional warning signage could be used to slow traffic down. Areas that have reduced traffic speeds are safer and more pleasant for strolling, shopping, or lingering. The Village should identify a list of traffic calming candidate areas and make recommendations for specific improvements. Village staff could partner with local school districts to pursue Wisconsin DOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funding for traffic calming and crossing

projects to improve walking routes for school children. SRTS planning and projects can be accomplished at the community-wide level or through targeted plans for individual schools.

*Roll out of traffic calming improvements needs to come with a public involvement and education component. Creation of roundabouts and bump outs has been met with a lot of animosity and confusion in neighboring communities. If traffic calming approaches are applied, the Village needs to be strategic and considerate of public opinions.

Objective 1.5 Promote the safe use of all modes of transportation through education, encouragement, and enforcement.

Bicycle Riding Basics and Safety Classes: Organize bicycle safety classes for residents of all ages.

The Village of Menomonee Falls Police Department offers public information about bicycle safety on the Village website and members of the Police force offer safety seminars and bicycle rodeos at local public schools. The Village should consider expanding programming to teach bicycle use and safety for the general public in order to increase local riders' confidence and compliance with the rules of the road. The Village could also enlist outside support to promote bicycle safety. The Wisconsin Bike Federation offers free education programming through its "Share and Be Aware" program. Wisconsin Bike Fed safety ambassadors are available to attend local events to emphasize local bicycle and pedestrian priorities.

*Keep: bicycle education could increase safety and increase confidence for riders to share the roads with motorists.

Awareness and Encouragement Events: Increase local publicity and momentum for biking and walking through community events and campaigns.

Communities across the U.S. have established a variety of events and programs to build support for active transportation. Village staff should consider taking a leadership role in promoting walking and bicycling in Menomonee Falls. Events create opportunities for people to socialize, develop healthy habits, and build momentum for future investments in walking and biking. Local events like Falls Fest, Cheery Cherry Art Festival, and the Pet Fair already cater to the walking and biking public. With Village leadership, new events like a Bike to Work/School Day, Walk with the Village Board/President, Winter Walks, or an Open Streets day (closing streets to automobile traffic for shared use and activities) could be added to the calendar.

*Keep, but consider what approaches would be most likely to capture interest. We know from workplace wellness approaches that day long or week long events are not likely to change habits. Historic walking tours or ghost walks are a great way to get people walking while they learn more about their community.

DRAFT GOAL 2: PROMOTE HEALTHY CHOICES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES THROUGH COMMUNITY DESIGN

The World Health Organization has defined health as “a state of physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. With this definition in mind, the creation of safe spaces for physical activity is only part of what Menomonee Falls can do to promote health. Communities that are designed for health meet the needs of community members of all ages and abilities, promote social interaction and mental health, and increase access to nutritious foods and health care.

This section includes design-oriented approaches that the Village can take to make it easier for community members to make healthy choices and stay well for years to come. The types of public spaces (parks, pathways, roads, natural areas) that are established in the Village have the potential to either increase or decrease the ease by which people will engage positively with one another and their community at large. The distance between places where people live, recreate, and shop for healthy foods is also important, especially for residents who cannot or choose not to drive. The design recommendations in this section are supported by policy and program recommendations that the Village could adopt in order to activate public spaces with healthy events and programs.

- **Desired health outcomes:** Increased social interaction, more active public places, improved nutrition and mental health
- **Recommended strategies:** Spaces and activities for all age groups, place-making, streetscaping, support for local food providers

Objective 2.1 Develop and promote public recreational spaces and programs that cater to older residents.

ADA Accessibility and Universal Design: Apply ADA accessibility and universal design principles to public parks, plazas, and pathways to increase accessibility for users of all ages and abilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act has mandated access accommodations for users of all abilities at businesses and public spaces in the U.S. since the 1990s. The principles of Universal Design are guidelines for inclusive public spaces that are inviting, safe, and easy to access. Older members of the Menomonee Falls community, those with disabilities, and families with infants and young children will especially benefit from more easily accessible public spaces. As the Village develops or redevelops parks, streets, trails and other public spaces, universal design principles should be applied to ensure that these spaces are inclusive for all residents. Maintenance of universal design principles should be prioritized during the winter months when snow and ice can hinder mobility and access for many people. The Village should consider the development of an ADA transition plan to target needed improvements to public spaces and Village properties.

**Keep. This is a basic and essential goal for creating inclusive public spaces. Be aware of the difference between ADA compliant and ADA accessible. Facilities that are ADA accessible are typically held to higher standards for ease of use and maneuverability. Staff are unaware of any existing Village-wide ADA/accessibility plans.*

Outdoor Activities for Seniors: Partner with Community Education and Recreation to offer fitness and enrichment activities for seniors in Village Parks and other public spaces to increase visibility and contact with nature.

Community Education and Recreation already offers a wide variety of older adult (55 years and older) programming that ranges from skill enrichment, to games and physical fitness. Village staff could work with Community Education and Recreation to schedule outdoor programming in Village parks, neighborhoods, and natural areas. Existing offerings like art classes, tai chi, zumba, yoga, or walking for exercise could be held at parks. New offerings (e.g. hiking, birding, walking tours) that focus on local nature or history could promote physical activity and social interaction for seniors in Village neighborhoods and natural areas. Village staff could also partner with Community Education and Recreation to identify park improvements needed to increase safety and convenience for older adults.

**The group is not aware of many outdoor offerings by Community Education and Recreation. The Village should reach out to CE&Rec as a next step here. More senior activities in parks and public areas could increase support for parks and recreation among older residents.*

Snow and Leaf Volunteer Corps: Connect older and disabled adults to teens and other volunteers for tasks like yard maintenance and snow shoveling.

Many people around the Village look out for the needs of older neighbors that may need help with a variety of household tasks. Unfortunately, some residents are unable to find the help that they need to complete leaf or snow removal. This may increase anxiety and decrease mobility in Village neighborhoods. Around the U.S., some communities have organized programs to link older and disabled community members with volunteers to ensure code compliance and support mobility during the fall and winter seasons. The Village could help coordinate a local volunteer program to ensure that individuals get the seasonal assistance they need. A volunteer program has potential to improve health for seniors and to strengthen social connections between generations in the Village. A Snow and Leaf Corps would provide a great opportunity for Village youth to build character, connect with seniors, and support their community.

**Consider changing the narrative here. Interfaith Senior Programs of Waukesha County and the Optimist Club of Menomonee Falls already link local seniors in need with volunteers to assist with leaf raking and snow shoveling. Maybe the recommendation wording should be “promote” and the narrative should include these other groups.*

Objective 2.2 Support the development of public spaces and programs that encourage healthy behaviors for children, adolescents, and young people

Activated Spaces: Activate existing public spaces with events that cater to residents of all ages (e.g. music, movies, and street markets).

Menomonee Falls is home to a large network of well-maintained public parks, streets, and pathways. Many community members use Village parks and trails for passive recreation, for individual physical

activity, or for organized sports. Some members of the community, however, are not regular park or trail users and may not even be aware of all of the outdoor spaces that are open to the public. Community and neighborhood scaled events that are tailored to all age groups could increase awareness of public spaces and promote intergenerational interaction. Events like concerts/movies in the park, nature hikes, weekend festivals, and temporary street markets draw community members of all ages to public spaces in Menomonee Falls. In order to activate spaces across the community, the Village should look for opportunities to organize or support events in all corners of the community. Neighborhood-oriented event series should target lesser known areas like Wildwood Park, the Tamarack Preserve, or the Menomonee River Parkway along with the more typical venues near the Village Centre.

**Keep. This could contribute to more awareness and use of existing public places. This recommendation could be moved under the social/mental health objective (2.3) since it does not only target youth. This recommendation is similar to place-making.*

Youth Activity Areas: Prioritize development of public youth-oriented activity areas like skate parks, basketball courts, and sand volleyball courts.

Older children and adolescents are often under-served in the design of public spaces. The Village should make an effort to accommodate these young residents by providing public spaces for a variety of healthy activities with accompanying areas to sit and socialize. Activities like court sports (especially basketball), wheel sports, and disc sports draw higher interest from adolescents compared to other age groups. In winter, outdoor ice skating rinks are also more likely to be used by adolescents and families compared to other groups. As part of the 2016-2021 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Village staff could identify existing youth oriented activity areas and opportunities to provide more of these throughout the Village. An emphasis on activity areas for this age group would supplement the existing facilities and activities used by the many older children and adolescents who are involved in organized sports teams.

**Keep. This area represents an unmet need in the Village.*

Natural Play Areas: Incorporate natural elements in public play areas.

Studies show that natural environments and natural playscapes have a number of positive impacts on the development of children. When elements found in nature are incorporated into playgrounds, kids use their imagination more, are more active, and utilize more motor skills. Families with children in the Village would benefit from the development of natural playscapes in local parks and greenways. The addition of elements like logs and trees, sand, and water to play areas would create unique play areas for families and support the health of children across the Village.

**Keep. The evidence is strong for health and development benefits for kids. There is a lot of interest in splash pads. Do they fall under this category? Somewhat, but natural playscapes have more of an emphasis on rocks, logs, and sand. They either simulate nature or incorporate natural elements into the playgrounds.*

Youth Park Maintenance: Develop a volunteer or employment program for youth to maintain parks, plazas, and public spaces throughout the Village.

Several communities across the U.S. have developed programs that support youth development by offering paid or volunteer positions to high school students to maintain public properties like parks, trails, and greenways. A Village youth program could provide meaningful work experience to local young people and improve the community through the enhancement of parks and public spaces. Employing young people in the parks would give participants the added benefits of increased contact with nature and increased exposure to the Village park network.

**This is a good idea, but it will need ownership/commitment from either a Village staff person or an outside organization to work. A youth parks program could target “at risk” youth or be incorporated into required community service hours in sentences for minors that have committed crimes locally.*

Objective 2.3 Create public spaces that encourage social interaction and increase opportunities for contact with nature in order to promote mental health.

Way-finding Signage: Incorporate way-finding signage to reduce disorientation in urban settings.

A system of Way-finding signs could direct community members and visitors to parks, shopping areas, athletic facilities and cultural attractions. Way-finding signage in Menomonee Falls could also distinguish neighborhoods and highlight historical buildings and schools. The signs should be scaled for easy visibility for automobiles and for pedestrians. Bicyclists and pedestrians in the Village currently lack directional cues to help them navigate to destinations. Way-finding signs would highlight existing connections and encourage residents and visitors to walk to destinations in the community. A less confusing walking/biking network has potential to increase time spent outside, exposure to nature, and the chances of community members bumping into one another in public spaces and shopping areas. Identification of key destinations and signage locations should be completed prior to installation.

**A lot of residents and visitors in Menomonee Falls do not even know about the many assets and destinations within the Village. Way-finding signage makes sense as a way to increase visibility and promote use/gathering at public spaces.*

Streetscaping: Increase the appeal and functionality of Village streets by investing in street trees, design features, and amenities.

The appearance of streets and sidewalks has important impacts on everyday behaviors. Street corridors that are tree-lined, well-lit, well-maintained, and lined with attractive amenities and uses encourage physical activity and social interaction. Some important street corridors in Menomonee Falls are less inviting due to a lack of elements that make visitors feel safe and welcome. The Village could promote healthy activity by identifying corridors to plant additional trees, improve lighting, and add elements like benches, trash cans, bike racks, trees, and planters that add functionality and appeal for visitors. Streets in the Village Centre are likely candidates for improvements, but streetscaping approaches could also be applied to add comfort and interest for visitors to other business districts or well-traveled corridors.

*This is okay, but is probably only feasible in a few higher use corridors like Main Street in the Village Centre after the Village gains roadway jurisdiction.

Placemaking: Provide public interesting places for people to gather, play, and interact.

Menomonee Falls' networks of parks, streets, and paths add value to the community. The design of these public spaces could be improved to promote more social interaction between community members. The concept of placemaking is centered on people coming together to re-imagine and revitalize public spaces. Village staff should take a place-making approach in collaborating with the public to develop visions for more welcoming and useful public spaces. Parks, plazas, and streets in Menomonee Falls are well-maintained, but could become more active and interesting.

Placemaking emphasizes the need to activate spaces with a variety of things for people to do. Many activities could be happening in Village parks and plazas like walking, eating, drinking, reading, playing chess/checkers, relaxing, shopping, catching up with others, taking pictures, appreciating history, storytelling, or engaging with public art. Improvements to existing public spaces could add areas for more of these activities to occur. If the Village invests in features that allow people to relax, participate and engage, public spaces are more likely to become destinations within the community. Destinations attract users and increase the likelihood that community members of all ages will bump into one another and interact on a regular basis.

Placemaking approaches can be affordable and temporary. Many communities have adopted "lighter, quicker, cheaper" strategies to create interesting social spaces. Open-air markets, interactive public art installations, and performance venues have been created from vacant lots, public streets, and under-used parks. Some communities have even utilized parking spaces (parklets) for outdoor restaurant seating, or plazas for giant chess boards. Temporary placemaking approaches are affordable and effective means to gauge the local appetite for new ideas.

*Good concept. Similar to activated spaces.

Objective 2.4 Increase access to nutritious food for healthy eating across all age groups

Farmers Market: Consider increased investment and additional hours for the Village Centre Farmer's market. The Village Centre Farmers Market offers a wide variety of locally grown and locally prepared foods from May through November on Wednesdays from 8:00am to 3:00pm and Sundays from 9:00am to 2:00pm. The market gives community members a chance to purchase farm-fresh produce and to support local farmers and merchants. The 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update Survey revealed that many people were interested in additional support and expanded hours for the market. Many survey respondents indicated support for evening market hours that would allow people who work during the day (and may be out of the community on the weekend) an opportunity to shop at the Farmers Market.

*Extended or shifted hours are practical for those that cannot shop at the farmers market now. The farmers market in Waukesha is awesome. There are so many vendors and services being offered for

four hours every Saturday morning. People prioritize for it their schedules. Change of the market times in the Village will be challenging due to the many demands of vendors. Concerns were also raised about farmers markets around the county are increasingly not accepting payment via food stamps or subsidized food programs.

Local Food Systems: Support local food systems including community supported agriculture (CSA), community gardens, food pantries, food assistance programs, and healthy food retailers. While healthy foods are accessible to many community members through local grocers and supermarkets, the Village could play a greater role in support of local food systems. The Village should consider providing the public with informational materials about community supported agriculture, healthy food retailers, community gardens, and food assistance opportunities. The Village could collaborate with the Waukesha County Department of Public Health and University of Wisconsin Extension Waukesha County and assist local food pantries and churches in helping to meet the continued nutrition needs of the community.

The Village should also consider allowing the development of community gardens in parks. Involvement in community gardens has been shown to increase physical activity and provide mental health benefits along with improved nutrition. Village staff could develop a garden permit process for interested parties and a start-up guide to assist first time gardeners.

**Keep as an information-based recommendation. The Village can provide information about local food systems and community gardens on its webpage and distribute materials from organizations that are striving to promote nutrition in the community.*

DRAFT GOAL 3: MINIMIZE EXPOSURE TO ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS WITHIN THE VILLAGE'S ABILITY TO CONTROL

The health of community members in Menomonee Falls is impacted by long-term environmental exposures and natural disasters. Human health can be compromised by contaminated water and land, traffic exhaust, industrial emissions, and extreme weather events. The consequences of exposure to detrimental environmental conditions can be serious. Rates of asthma are higher for people who live in areas with poor air quality and long-term exposure to contaminated soils and water supplies can result in health problems that range from headaches to cancer and reproductive health concerns. The consequences of extreme weather and other disasters are also significant and wide-spread. Most Americans live in counties that were hit by at least one federally declared disaster in the last five years, and the human and economic costs associated with these events is staggering.

In addition to being vital for human health, clean environments add stability and value to the Village. Natural resource areas, trees, and plantings offer beauty, improve ecological diversity, and serve essential functions by reducing run-off and filtering pollutants. Rivers and lakes that are free from contaminants draw recreational users and raise property values, while natural areas that are contaminated often become viewed as dangerous liabilities.

This section identifies actions that the Village can take to protect community health by preventing and minimizing exposure to common environmental risks. These approaches may be supported by a broader

partnership between the Village, the Wisconsin DNR, local businesses, and local residents. The actions recommended in this section build upon the Village's existing agricultural, natural and cultural resources comprehensive plan goals which focus on preservation of natural resources.

- **Desired health outcomes:** Decrease exposure to air, soil, and water contamination, increase community stewardship, increase community resilience to disasters
- **Recommended strategies:** Green infrastructure, a Village energy audit, brownfield redevelopment, civic beautification, disaster response and recovery planning

Objective 3.1 Protect and improve existing water and air quality to reduce long-term exposures to contaminants

Green Space Guidelines for Public Rights-of-Way: Adopt design guidelines that prioritize green space and trees between motor vehicle traffic lanes and sidewalks along Village streets.

Public right-of-way areas in Menomonee Falls include existing streets and (often) adjacent areas on either side of the street that may be used for other transportation facilities like sidewalks or bike trails. Also, many right-of-way areas in the Village include grass, trees and other plantings. These green spaces along streets have several environmental benefits including: reduction of storm water runoff, capture/filtration of air pollutants, erosion control, provision of wildlife habitat, and improved energy efficiency. Adoption of design guidelines for different street types in the Village would ensure that when new streets are created or existing streets are reconstructed, green zones will be incorporated along roadways. The guidelines could also provide recommendations for the use of natural plantings, rain gardens, or bioswales to increase the effectiveness of these areas in mitigating air and water pollution.

**Village staff will review general right of way design guidelines apart from standard landscaping requirements and subdivision standards. Lack of investment in street trees is a concern. In recent years, when street trees are removed, they are not being replaced.*

Village Energy Audit: Conduct a Village energy audit to consider the use and consumption of Village facilities, vehicles and street lights.

The Village operates a fleet of vehicles and maintains buildings on several properties throughout the community. Completion of an energy audit would help the Village assess the efficiency of its existing energy use and identify measures that will save the Village money while decreasing energy consumption and emissions. While the Village organization is just one of many energy users in the community, an energy audit and efficiency plan could set an example of sustainability and cost savings for other local organizations and businesses. The potential benefits to air quality could be significant if emissions reductions were replicated across the community.

**This is practical from a cost stand point and potentially impactful for community health.*

Stormwater Management: Continue to promote stormwater management best practices to reduce rates of non-point source pollution entering local lakes and streams.

The Village plays an important role in maintaining and managing a stormwater system that receives run-off from public streets and local development. The Village regularly inspects stormwater detention facilities around the community to ensure that municipal stormwater sewers are functional and clear of obstructions. In addition to the operations work, however, the Village also promotes on-site improvement programs that can decrease run-off during storm events. As most run-off originates from private properties, on-site mitigation has the potential to significantly reduce pollution in local lakes and streams. The Village website offers links to a variety of projects and programs to mitigate stormwater run-off such as those for rain barrels, rain gardens, and river stabilization. Village staff also partner with the School District of Menomonee Falls to hold an annual Stormwater Expo to help educate local middle schoolers on how they can reduce run off and water pollution in their communities.

In the future, the Village could identify opportunities to incorporate stormwater management best practices into local parks, village properties, and street corridor improvements. The application of green infrastructure approaches (natural plantings, bioswales, rain gardens, etc.) should be considered as well as conventional stormwater management approaches.

**Stormwater management has been included because the Village has done an excellent job in this are providing information and resources that contribute to the long-term health of the community. Use of the Village website, local TV, and print materials could be replicated to inform the public about other health resources like nutrition and local healthcare services.*

Objective 3.2 Remediate and redevelop parcels that have been contaminated by prior uses

Brownfields Redevelopment Inventory: Create an inventory of potentially contaminated sites in the Village that are ideal for redevelopment.

Many properties around the Village contain (or may contain) contaminated soils and materials that pose risks to health. The Wisconsin DNR maintains a map of sites that have been identified for contamination because of historic uses like automobile servicing, manufacturing, and dry cleaning. The Village should promote remediation of these and other sites with historic pollution risks by creating an inventory of potential brownfield sites that are ideal for redevelopment. A brownfields redevelopment inventory could be one part of a larger strategy to revitalize aging commercial and industrial corridors in the Village. The inventory should identify property locations, historic uses, potential contaminants and photos of each site. Vacant or underutilized brownfields sites that are located near residential areas and water sources should be prioritized.

**Keep, but consider combining the two brownfields recommendations into one strategy. These are separate pieces of the same approach.*

Brownfield Remediation Grants and Loans: Support use of state and federal funds to move public or private brownfield lands back into productive use.

A wide variety of public funds are available for clean-up and redevelopment of contaminated properties. The Village should continue to support local brownfield remediation by guiding interested parties to state programs and federal resources that are available to fund contamination clean-up. Site remediation typically starts with an environmental review that is eligible for state funding through Wisconsin's Site Assessment Grant (SAG) program. After the initial environmental review, brownfield properties are eligible for a variety of federal and state grants that assist with site clean-up and redevelopment. Village staff should be educated about available financial resources, including program eligibility requirements and funding processes.

Objective 3.3 Promote community clean-up and beautification efforts

Environmental Stewardship: Support environmental stewardship events like the Menomonee River Clean-up.

Every spring, Village staff and volunteers from around the community come together for the Menomonee Falls River Clean-Up Day. In 2014, 297 people volunteered for the event with groups fanning out to dozens of locations along local streams like the Menomonee River and Fox River along with inland lakes and ponds. This event elevates environmental stewardship in the public conversation and makes an important annual contribution toward keeping local streams clean. The Village should continue to promote events like this through its website and local media outlets in order to bolster participation and recognize organizers and participants. Additional clean-up events could target Village parks or public lands like the Tamarack Preserve. Resources to support volunteer clean ups could be procured from local businesses or advocacy organizations like Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful (KGMB). KGMB sponsors groups interested in single day or season-long clean-up efforts.

**Again, the idea is to build upon existing approaches to engage members of the public in environmental stewardship. The Menomonee Falls River Clean-Up already does work apart from the rivers in local parks. This effort could be expanded into other public lands like the Tamarack Preserve.*

Neighborhood Pride: Work with neighborhood groups to foster civic pride and promote neighborhoods that are clean, healthy, and safe.

Menomonee Falls is home to wide variety of residential areas and a large number of community watch groups and home owners associations. The Village should consider developing a program to support neighborhood beautification efforts (tree planting, gardening/landscaping) and clean-up. Volunteer groups could assist Village staff in identifying code compliance concerns and picking up litter in sometimes overlooked public spaces like the right-of-way areas between sidewalks and roadways. The Village could also consider a recognition component to acknowledge neighborhood organizations on an annual basis for their contributions to the community.

**This could work, but how would we make it actionable? Is there room to acknowledge individual efforts to care for the community along with neighborhoods/organizations?*

Disaster Response Preparedness: Continue to coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies to ensure procedures are in place to respond to any natural or human-caused disaster that the Village may face.

Responses within the first minutes, hours, days, and weeks of emergencies are crucial for protecting personal safety and community health. While threats are typically dealt with by local agencies and protective services, some instances require involvement of multiple agencies to ensure public safety and protect public and private property. The Village should continue to coordinate with appropriate levels of jurisdiction in accordance with the provisions of the National Incident Management System.

**This is a continuation goal because the Village is already engaged in this crucial effort. The level of coordination on emergency response planning could be emulated in other approaches to planning for a healthier future like infrastructure for physical activity and environmental health.*

Resilience and Recovery: Adopt strategies to reduce property damage and improve recovery from natural and human-caused disasters.

Communities that are aware of threats posed by disasters can plan and implement measures that reduce disaster risks and foster resilience. The 2011 Waukesha County Hazard Mitigation Plan evaluates threats posed by a variety of potential disasters including droughts, earthquakes, floods, wildfires, severe temperatures, storms, tornadoes, and utility failures. Implementing recommendations of the Hazard Mitigation Plan will greatly benefit the Village with regard to immediate impacts and recovery from disasters. Specific recommendations include: identification and mitigation of flood-prone properties, investment in disaster resistant buildings/infrastructure, public information campaigns, resource conservation strategies and contingency plans to ensure public safety and protect property.

The Village could also consider development of a recovery plan to address the short-term needs that follow disasters such as food, shelter, psychological support, debris, and healthcare, as well as long-term needs like housing, infrastructure, business recovery and quality of life issues. A post-disaster recovery plan would help insure that the long-range health needs of the community are met in the event of a natural or human-made disaster.

**This recommendation is worth keeping in place. The idea is to think about what comes next after the initial disaster response. What are the Village strategies to reinvest in infrastructure, housing, and economic recovery after a major flood, storm, or other disaster event?*

DRAFT GOAL 4: PARTNER WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO COMBAT SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Access to healthcare is another essential contributor to health outcomes in Menomonee Falls. Healthcare providers play an indispensable role in the prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, and recovery from disease and injury. While not a healthcare provider, the Village has an important role to play in promoting public safety and making sure that all members of the community can connect to the healthcare services they need. A Village commitment to connect community members to

healthcare services would support efforts to address each of the top three health priority areas identified in the 2010-2015 Waukesha County Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan:

- access to care
- alcohol and other drug abuse
- mental health.

These three health priority areas are interrelated. Individuals and families struggling with substance abuse in Menomonee Falls and the surrounding area are often in need of treatment interventions, including mental health care. Lack of access to quality healthcare may exacerbate the already pervasive substance abuse problem in the area. Results from the Waukesha County Community Health Survey indicate that 29% of adults in the county engaged in binge drinking in 2015 which compares to 16% who reported binge drinking in 2006. Local and national rates of addiction to painkillers and opioids like heroin have also spiked in recent years. The health and economic costs associated with substance abuse are high, which is why community support for those struggling with alcohol and other drug abuse is crucial.

Village support for access to healthcare should also provide information services for the general population. Many community members, even those with access to quality medical care, are not aware of the healthcare programs and services that are available to them. The Village could partner with the Waukesha County Public Health Department and local healthcare providers in developing strategies to promote key programs and services.

- **Desired health outcomes:** Increased awareness and proper utilization of healthcare services, decreased rates of substance abuse, improved mental health
- **Recommended strategies:** Information sharing, support for local law enforcement, community-wide coalitions, targeted support for youth and families

Objective 4.1 Support and participate in efforts to stem alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) and inform the public about health care services offered to people with substance use issues and their families.

**There is a need for a higher level of involvement for Menomonee Falls and other municipalities in county-wide efforts to identify and address health priorities, especially as part of the next CHIPP process.*

Ongoing Efforts to Address Substance Abuse: Support law enforcement and healthcare providers in AODA related efforts in Waukesha County.

Many local departments and organizations are working to stem abuse and addiction and curb the rise in opiate related overdoses. The National Alliance on Mental Illness, Addiction Resource Council, Waukesha County Mental Health Division, the AODA Volunteers of Waukesha County, and local healthcare systems provide a number of programs and supports for individuals struggling with addiction and substance abuse. The Village should provide public information about these resources

and support ongoing efforts by the Menomonee Falls Police Department to prevent illegal substance abuse like the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program and the Police Department's participation in the Waukesha County Metropolitan Drug Enforcement Unit.

No single approach has been shown to both effectively reduce drug abuse rates and provide necessary supports for effected individuals and families. The Village could foster awareness of the wide variety of resources and efforts to stem and treat substance abuse, such as home-based outreach strategies, drug courts, municipal ordinances, Crisis Intervention Training for police officers, and heroin task forces.

**Keep. This issue is getting bigger and bigger. In 2010 people were surprised that drug abuse and mental health were topping the list of public health priorities. Today the general public, the local and Wisconsin Attorney General, are taking major steps to address substance abuse threats. There remains a need to better connect residents to mental health supports and the Village can play a role in helping to inform the public about available services.*

Drug Free Communities: Participate in Waukesha County's Drug Free Communities coalition to combat use of tobacco and related products by area youth.

Drug Free Communities is a federally funded program that works to reduce the supply of drugs in Waukesha County communities and to educate young people, families, teachers and others about the consequences and realities of substance abuse. Participation in the coalition is diverse and open to any stakeholders in Waukesha County that want to collaborate to reduce youth substance abuse. Representatives from the Village and local schools could work with Drug Free Communities to develop and promote substance abuse education, drug disposal, and enforcement approaches in the Village.

**Keep. This has been an important and inclusive coalition for partnering to address substance abuse issues. Federal funding and local leadership of Drug Free Communities may be changing in the months and years ahead. To some degree the local future of the Drug Free Communities coalition is up in the air.*

Objective 4.2 Support local health care organizations in providing health care access for vulnerable populations like the uninsured and under-insured.

Healthcare Services Information: Promote understanding of healthcare resources in the State, County, Village, and surrounding communities.

Navigating healthcare resources is a challenging task for all community members. Many people may be unaware of local services and programs provided by local health care providers or the Waukesha County public health department. Healthcare services information may be even more important for vulnerable populations like the elderly, uninsured, or those living with severe mental illness. The Village should partner with local healthcare providers to inform the public about both the treatment services and preventive healthcare programs available locally. Basic information and links could be provided on the Village web page, government access television, or through information materials at Village

buildings. The Village could also provide information about transportation (including para-transit) options to help residents that do not drive find access to local and regional healthcare providers.

**Keep. This recommendation explains how the Village can take steps to play a meaningful role in providing the public with crucial healthcare information. Specific mention of Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin makes sense given Froedtert's substantial presence in the community and willingness to partner with the Village.*

Coalitions for health: Increase Village involvement in and communication with community health coalitions and boards.

Collaboration between Village staff, healthcare providers, public health officials, residents, and other stakeholders is crucial for understanding and addressing complex community health problems. Village participation in area health coalitions will keep the Village aware of evolving health challenges and provide a municipal perspective to ongoing efforts to improve health outcomes in the region. The Village should consider involvement in the Waukesha County Community Health Improvement Plan and Process (CHIPP) to help determine and address the priority health needs of Waukesha County residents. Involvement in issue-specific groups like the Waukesha County Nutrition Coalition or Safe Kids Southeast Wisconsin could be considered as well as ways to support Village health and keep health issues at the forefront for Village leaders and policy makers.

**Coalition participation is crucial for the Village and other municipalities. Because we know health is significantly impacted by built-environments, entities that shape these environments need to be at the table as priorities and next steps are determined. The 2010-2015 Community Health Improvement Plan and Process was led by the Waukesha County Public Health Department and included 33 members on the steering committee and many others on sub-committees. Through a data-driven process, the CHIPP identified forces of change, priority areas, and activities to be implemented and evaluated (outcomes). Menomonee Falls staff will be invited to participate in the next CHIPP.*



photo courtesy of Nancy Greifenhagen

APPLICATION

Village staff presented the draft Health Element to the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update* Steering Committee in October of 2015. After some consideration, the Steering Committee determined that the specific recommendations and descriptive narrative in the draft Health Element was more detailed than necessary to provide direction for the future of development of Menomonee Falls. As directed by the Steering Committee, Village staff reduced the number of health goals and recommendations to ensure that the health portion of the document mirrored other element recommendations with regard to length and level of detail.

Members of the Steering Committee also determined that the strong link between health and public safety warranted the combination of these topics into a single new element. Steering committee members agreed that a safe and secure environment was prerequisite for attaining important health outcomes like increased physical activity, increased amounts of social interaction, and clean/inviting environments. Community Development Department staff partnered with staff from the Protective Services Department to draft public safety goals and recommendations that would support health and contribute to an ideal Vision for the future of Menomonee Falls. In November of 2015 the Steering Committee affirmed three draft health and public safety goals and 14 supporting recommendations. In early 2016, these goals and recommendations were shared with the Plan Commission, regional and state planning agencies, adjacent communities, and the general public. Upon approval by the Village Board, the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update* will be one of the first comprehensive plans in the Milwaukee area to include a health element.

REVISED HEALTH & PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS

- A community that encourages physical activity and healthy interactions for all ages
- Healthy environmental conditions within the Village's ability to control
- A safe and resilient community

Recommendations supporting these goals include:

- Support for year-round activity areas
- Support for walking and bicycling
- Development of healthy spaces for all ages
- Support for public safety education and prevention initiatives
- Partnerships to address substance abuse
- Continued support for effective emergency and disaster preparedness

For a complete list of health and public safety recommendations see Chapter 2 (page 34) of the *2015 Comprehensive Plan Update*.