

# Building A Healthier Missoula: Promoting Health Equity For All

Missoula Invest Health

*Many of us would like to make healthier choices, but that can be hard if sidewalks, parks, healthy foods, and other resources aren't available where we live.*

The goal of Missoula Invest Health is to improve the health of our neighborhoods through changes to the built environment, including housing, nutritious food, transportation, trails, sidewalks, trees, and parks. Our focus is on improvements that will improve health outcomes related to obesity and mental health, particularly in our city's low-income neighborhoods, which face the biggest barriers to better health. The Missoula Invest Health team brings a multidisciplinary approach to developing proposals and priorities, including by enlisting the participation of those most affected by their neighborhood environments. People who experience issues or barriers in their neighborhoods have a keen sense not only of the underlying causes of the problems, but also how to contribute to a solution. Our goal is to work together to improve the quality of life for the community as a whole.

## Three Neighborhoods at a Glance

Missoula's three lowest-income neighborhoods: are Franklin to the Fort, North/Westside and River Road. These areas face some of the biggest barriers to better mental and physical health, and the neighborhood data illustrate the health relationship between income and well-being – a major focus area in public health.

*Health Equity means that every person experiences the same opportunities to stay healthy and to effectively cope with disease or health-related emergencies, regardless of race, gender, age, economic conditions, social status, environment, and other socially determined factors (1).*

1. Promoting health equity: A resource to help communities address social determinants of Health. DHHS, CDC 2008

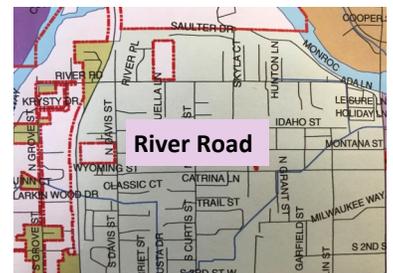
### North/Westside:

- 30% poverty rate
- Less than 10% of surveyed residents regularly walk or bike
- 25% adult obesity



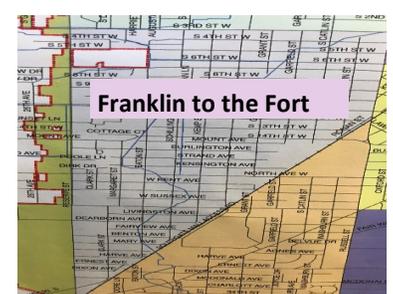
### River Road:

- 25% poverty rate
- Less than 1% of surveyed residents regularly walk or bike
- 26% adults with depression



### Franklin to the Fort:

- 23% poverty rate
- 37% of surveyed residents regularly use neighborhood sidewalks
- 16% childhood obesity



# Invest. Partner. Learn More.

## INVEST HEALTH Strategies for Healthier Cities

A Project of the *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*  
and *Reinvestment Fund*

### What is Invest Health?

Missoula was one of 50 mid-size cities in 31 states that received a planning grant in 2016 from Invest Health, an initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Reinvestment Fund. The goal of this groundbreaking initiative is to transform how city leaders work together to help low-income communities thrive, with specific attention to community features that drive health such as access to safe and affordable housing, places to play and exercise, and quality jobs.

### Our Plan :

- Collect data and use information to address the Social Determinants of Health throughout the community
- Engage residents and gather community support
- Increase awareness of the relationship between health and the built environment
- Seek partnerships
- Support existing policy and plans
- Identify projects that raise health equity
- Seek innovative ways to fund projects
- Follow through with measuring health impacts of projects

### All Three Neighborhoods Need:

- Better sidewalks
- Improved street lighting
- More parks, gardens, and open spaces for physical activity
- Greater access to affordable quality housing
- Traffic calming measures
- Community gathering places

### OUR PARTNERS



### Accomplishments so far:

- Raised awareness of health and wellness within current city policies—growth policy and transportation plan especially
- Developed Community Health Map
- Support for a healthy built environment integrated into the Community Health Assessment
- Successfully garnered CDBG funding for 1 mile of neighborhood sidewalk projects
- Support for the Pedestrian Facilities Plan
- Support for installation of trees within neighborhoods

### Together, We Can Make a Positive Impact

Missoula, like other cities, faces some of the nation's deepest challenges, including entrenched poverty, poor health and a lack of investment. But it also offers fertile ground for the development and implementation of strategies that improve health and have the potential to boost local economies.

Invest Health has the potential to fundamentally transform the way Missoula improves opportunities for its citizens to lead healthy lives, including effectively changing the built environment to support positive health outcomes.



Photo: Neighborhood walkabout revealed housing inequities and missing sidewalks.

### NEXT STEPS

- Support for Active Transportation, Nutritious Foods, Recreation, Quality Housing, and Urban Forest
- Identify and support projects, plans, and programs that have health equity elements
- Seek funding for future projects
- Secure funding for over 300 miles of sidewalks still needed

### CONTACT US

For more information go to:  
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