

# CREATING A COMMUNITY HEALTH HUB WITH SALUD FAMILY HEALTH CENTERS

## SUMMARY OF THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS AND DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

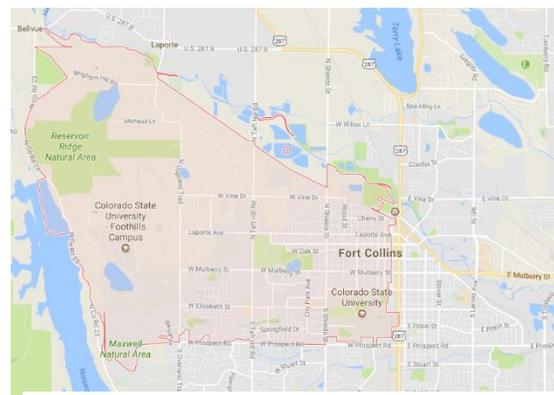
Thanks to a planning grant from the Colorado Health Foundation and cooperation from Salud Family Health Centers, eight local health and social service organizations (The Collaborative) worked throughout 2017 to engage the northwest Fort Collins community to envision and plan a Community Health Hub. The Institute for the Built Environment (IBE) at Colorado State University coordinated the grant work and the collaboration.

### VISION

The Community Health Hub campus is envisioned as an inclusive site that embodies and promotes preventative health and wellness. Health prevention seeks to address upstream, root causes of poor health. However, a standardized, best-practices prevention model that would better coordinate health and social service systems is not currently established in the United States. The foundation of the planning, design, operations, and governance of the Health Hub must include respect, dignity, and care for all people of all abilities.

### THE PROJECT

The grounding vision for the project has been the creation of a model for a community space that addresses "upstream" health factors such as: food security, physically active infrastructure, neighborhood social connections, wellness education, and connected health service delivery. The concept has its genesis in a community need for health and social services in northwest Fort Collins (80521) and The Collaborative's desire to *make healthcare more about community wellness*. Salud Family Health Centers has offered their 20+ acres on West Laporte to explore potential for health hub development.



80521 zip code boundary, Fort Collins, CO

## The Focus Community

The Collaborative and community have envisioned a supportive, age-friendly, and inclusive space that meets the needs of the nearest surrounding zip code, 80521. Some demographic highlights of 80521 include:

- Age: 25% 19 or younger, 41% are 20 – 29, 11% are 30 – 39, 6% are 40 – 49, 7% are 50 – 59, 10% are over 60 years old
- Race: 89% White, 10% Hispanic/Latino, 2% Black or African American, 3% Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 5% “other”
- Language: 9% of individuals speak a non-English language, 24% of those people indicate they speak English less than “very well”
- Food Assistance: 8% of households are receiving SNAP benefits, 21% of those households have at least one person over age 60
- Disability Status: nearly 7% of 80521 residents identify as having a disability

## A PROCESS AND A PLACE

The Collaborative is a multi-organization project steering committee whose members represent all 3 spectrums of health - disease prevention, disease treatment, and health generation.



The Collaborative worked throughout 2017 to leverage networks and bring voice, visibility, important data, resources and opportunities to the focus community. The Collaborative gathered existing community data and resources to gain a baseline understanding of the focus population and conducted further community outreach. Approximately 188 community members total were engaged in the project in community focus group sessions, walking and transit audits, and community design



Preliminary site design – Salud West expansion

workshops. These methods have informed recommendations for a Community Health campus at Salud. The Collaborative synthesized this data, and have enlisted community feedback to inform the ‘Creating a Community Health Hub with Salud Family Health Centers’ report, which represents the current collective understanding of the challenges and potentials of the Community Health Hub Model.

Two significant discoveries occurred during The Collaborative’s Health Hub planning work – 1) That a place of wellness is needed, desired, and entirely possible in northwest Fort Collins and, 2) That a concerted community engagement process is vital in order to compile and determine true community needs. Specifically, The Collaborative and over 100 community members focused attention to, and derived recommendations for, youth and families, primary care, mental health, active living, transportation, affordable housing, and other subtopics. Within the full report, each topical area includes key findings along with recommendations for Health Hub development. The priority topic areas include:

- Access to Healthy Foods
- Active Living and Physical Activity
- Primary Care and Healthcare
  - Quality of Healthcare for Spanish-speakers
- Built Environment and Transportation
- Childcare and Family Resources
- Education and Language Learning
- Housing and Cost of Living
- Mental Health

The Collaborative reviewed recommendations for all priority topic areas and created a list of synthesized, higher-level recommendations that can be found below.

### *Synthesized Recommendations*

- Build a teaching kitchen at the health hub that operates on a sliding scale or free of charge when possible to offer a range of cooking and nutrition classes to the public and school systems. Consult with young adults (High School to College-aged students) to develop specific cooking and nutrition classes that teach them the skills they need when living independently, pursuing a career in culinary arts, and/or caring for others.
- Install learning and community gardens that provide summer programming for youth focused on healthy living, accessed by biking from their neighborhoods to the Health Hub. The gardens would also be a site for job training skills for those transitioning to the workforce, intergenerational programs, and healthy cooking demonstrations and classes.
- Build a multicultural early care and education family resource center that includes a teaching garden, nature inspired indoor and outdoor play space, food pantry and commercial kitchen for food preparation and on-site cooking classes and programming. Provide a full array of bilingual and culturally responsive adult education and family development programming, including mental health and trauma support, and establish a pipeline training program for a diverse workforce of early childhood educators and behavioral health specialists.

- The Community Health Hub site should include a “pocket neighborhood-style” housing development that integrates housing with other uses and features. The pocket neighborhood concept could incorporate gardens, play areas, indoor and outdoor common spaces large enough to accommodate childcare, and educational and cultural gathering spaces for residents and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Implement co-located services at the Community Health Hub that includes La Cocina (a program that provides "kitchen-table" mental health and wellness services that promotes community resilience and family wellbeing), and other Health Hub service providers. Co-location of La Cocina at the Health Hub will ensure mental health care services is made available for vulnerable communities and is integrated into all campus services provisions. For example, incorporate aspects of mental health therapeutic activities into building learning gardens as a way to optimize community -family-child interactions.
- To provide greater efficiency in people’s transportation schedules and an opportunity to engage in physical activity, TransFort should integrate bike share with stations located at high-use bus stops to provide users with first mile/last mile connections to locations of interest. However, improvements must be made to pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit infrastructure around the Health Hub location before or concurrent with bike share station integration to: 1) improve user safety, and 2) to advance the City’s goal through The Big Jump project to ‘create a safe, connected, comfortable and vibrant environment for bicycling’ in District 6 (includes 80521).

## HEALTH EQUITY

Health equity became a major guiding principle for the Community Health Hub after learning of the diverse experiences shared with us by community members during the outreach events. Health equity, touches on a full spectrum of health and wellness - from emergency care to health generation. To advance health equity, we must look at the complex combinations of various social determinants of health: the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. Because the northwest Fort Collins community is so diverse, the community shares varying degrees of needs linked to these issues. Based on the first-hand community member stories shared with us and synthesized population data, we are certain that health inequity exists in the 80521 and in the larger city of Fort Collins.

The Collaborative has worked together to develop recommendations that address the many health needs of the northwest Fort Collins community. A focus on developmental health serves as an example of the opportunities embedded in this important work that can advance health equity. The critical development of healthy minds, bodies, and habits illustrates the concept of preventative health. The project leadership has the potential to consider youth health and developmental needs in every decision made during the creation of the Community Health Hub.

The Collaborative understands that health and wellbeing are impacted by multiple social determinants and sees the potential for meaningful alignment with community priorities. To develop solutions to these complex problems in our community, The Collaborative encourages the many sectors serving community members throughout Fort Collins to partner and collaborate as we bring a healthy future vision to Fort Collins neighborhoods. The Collaborative learned the importance and impact of our collaborative work has had on all levels of influence in the community from individual community

members to leadership and decision-making bodies. As a collective group, the Collaborative has shared our resources, data, and knowledge with one another to identify gaps in services, recognize vulnerable populations in need of further services, and develop programs to better meet community needs. Health equity is a core tenet that drove the development of new or revised programs, events and services offered by Collaborative members. Importantly, we have created a model for a Community Health Hub that can serve as an example of community-driven planning processes to create a place for all to pursue healthy and happy lives.

We are inspired and determined to look for partners and developers who can help us bring the northwest Fort Collins' vision to life. We would also like to share our processes and strategies used in this project to help guide other teams in Fort Collins who are currently working or looking to work on similar community-development projects. The greater effort we make to authentically engage community members, coordinate and activate our health and social service networks in Fort Collins, and elevate community voices and involvement in decision-making processes, the better we can develop direct and innovative ways to serve their needs and advance health equity throughout the city.

The full report can be accessed at: [Creating a Health Hub with Salud Family Health Centers](#)