DENVER’S DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

2018-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

EMPOWERING DENVER’S COMMUNITIES TO LIVE BETTER • LONGER

JANUARY 2018
It’s an exciting time for public health in Denver.

Over the past few years, we have made great strides in expanding our work, partnerships and collaborative efforts, and in ensuring public health considerations are integrated into City projects and plans. Using evidence-based practices and research to link the built environment and health outcomes is key to ensuring health equity for Denver residents now and in the future.

As part of our efforts to diversify and share information, we have expanded our work and collaboration with other Colorado counties. We are also sharing best practices and are incorporating more diverse perspectives into how we address local issues.

We believe this work, combined with the goals in our strategic plan and the strength of our workforce, support our mission and vision for the future.

We encourage community partners to join us in supporting our work to protect our quality of life in Denver.

Sincerely,

Bob McDonald
Executive Director
Denver Department of Public Health & Environment
Empowering Denver’s Communities to Live Better, Longer

DENVER
PUBLIC HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

ACCREDITED HEALTH DEPARTMENT
PHAB
Advancing public health performance

DDPHE 2018-2020 Strategic Plan | 4
As Denver’s nationally-accredited local public health agency, the Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE) is dedicated to advancing Denver’s public health and environmental goals. DDPHE works collaboratively with City, state and community partners to conduct education, community engagement, and enforcement to ensure healthy people, healthy pets and a sustainable environment. Denver Public Health (DPH), a division of Denver Health and Hospital Authority, is a key partner in our efforts to protect and preserve public health. Together, DDPHE and DPH provide comprehensive, high-quality public health services to the City and County of Denver. Our departments have unique areas of expertise in public and environmental health, and we use that expertise to work collaboratively to serve our community. The high-quality services we provide results in the City and County of Denver receiving national public health accreditation in 2017.

In December 2016, DDPHE and DPH participated in an annual planning session to identify a joint strategic effort that both agencies can support and align with for the upcoming year. Thanks to this process, our two agencies decided to focus on building cross-agency knowledge and relationships for the upcoming year. A joint workgroup formed in the first quarter of 2017 and continued to meet monthly throughout the year to draft and execute a joint action plan.

A second annual joint planning session was held in October 2017 to review progress on the 2017 action plan and look forward to 2018 to further identify what efforts of alignment could be used to move the needle on critical public health issues for Denver.
In January 2017, DDPHE staff set out to create a new vision statement; one that employees could remember easily and that would unify diverse divisions under a common purpose. A SWOT analysis identified positive and negative trends.

During the strategic planning process, staff identified increased awareness of public health and integrative, cross-disciplinary partnership as changes that will positively affect DDPHE, including:

- The opioid epidemic
- Expansion of the marijuana industry
- Changes in the body art industry presenting opportunities for innovation, regulation and leadership
- Animal companionship as an entrenched Denver value
- Opportunities to promote animal welfare and regulate public spaces where animals accompany their owners
- Air and water quality are important to residents, which presents opportunities for Denver to continue redevelopment of Brownfields sites
- Continue to make important inroads in sustainability, conservation and climate change.

Staff identified uncertainty in federal funding and the federal administration’s reprioritization of environmental and public health programs as the primary trend that could negatively impact Denver. Many survey respondents identified population growth and the resulting congestion on highways and pressure on other regulatory services as externalities with potentially negative impacts. Finally, the growing opioid epidemic is a negative external trend that many felt DDPHE should help address.

The SWOT analysis also identified the department’s core strengths and capabilities and areas for improvement. Staff identified four main strengths and core capabilities. One staff member commented: “Great staff, great mission, good at compliance and collaboration.” Operational areas for improvement include personnel management and engagement, strategic planning, continued process improvement, improved internal and external communication to enhance collaboration, and enhanced public awareness about public and environmental health, and our role in protecting both as the local public health agency.

Following the SWOT analysis, the department’s Strategic Planning Committee attended a half-day retreat during which five strategic goals were identified. The strategic goals build upon the department’s core strengths, address areas for improvement, and leverage external trends to promote public and environmental health. Objectives and metrics were proposed and later refined. All DDPHE employees were given opportunities to provide feedback and fine tune the strategic plan, culminating in the finalization of the plan.
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Strategy:
Elevate the customer experience by fostering community engagement and being uniquely responsive to our residents and to all we serve.

Description:
DDPHE serves residents at all stages of life, from childcare facility inspections to death investigations. We are where Denver eats, lives, works and plays regardless of gender, ethnicity or economic status. We know the customer’s experience is best when customers are engaged in giving input and feel their voice is valued.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP, SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH EQUITY PRACTICES

Strategy: Promote environmental stewardship, sustainability, and health equity through innovation, evidence-based practices and strong partnerships.

Description: DDPHE responds to local and national public health priorities by forming strong partnerships with the community and other interdisciplinary agencies. Establishing a health equity framework is a major priority for this strategic plan. DDPHE is also committed to maintaining its status as a leader in climate change and sustainability.

OBJECTIVE 1
Implement a “Health in All Policies” Executive Order for all City agencies.

OBJECTIVE 2
One hundred percent of DDPHE budget requests are reviewed with consideration to promoting health equity.

OBJECTIVE 3
Ensure Denver’s Greenhouse Gas Inventory remains Global Protocol Compliant and conduct third party verification annually.

OBJECTIVE 4
Achieve a five-percentage-point increase annually in positive ratings for the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) survey.

OBJECTIVE 5
Achieve a five-percentage-point increase annually in positive ratings for the overall natural environment domain in Denver on the National Citizen Survey.
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Strategy:** Execute the DDPHE workforce development plan and strategies to recruit and retain the highest quality public health team in the country.

**Description:** DDPHE believes a happy and productive workforce is foundational to achieving excellence in public and environmental health. DDPHE’s workforce development plan prioritizes training, core competency development, and diversifying the workforce by changing how and where we recruit.

**OBJECTIVE 1**
Implement and update annually the Workforce Development Plan.

**OBJECTIVE 2**
Eighty percent of all DDPHE employees who agree, “My department adequately invests in training and developing our employees.”

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

**Strategy:** Achieve operational excellence through lean process improvement; performance management; and responsible, transparent, and sustainable fiscal management.

**Description:** DDPHE is committed to efficient customer-centric operations. An average of $500,000 in soft savings has been achieved through lean process improvement each year for the past three years. DDPHE continues to maintain existing accreditations and pursue new accreditation to hold ourselves to the highest industry standards.

**OBJECTIVE 1**
Achieve $1.5M in soft savings through process improvement by December 31, 2020.

**OBJECTIVE 2**
Maintain accreditation with:
- ISO 14001 EMS standard
- Public Health Accreditation Board
- National Association of Medical Examiners
- Food and Drug Standards
- American Animal Hospital Association

**OBJECTIVE 3**
Ninety percent of all attendees of DDPHE employee development sessions will agree or strongly agree that the sessions were valuable.

**OBJECTIVE 4**
Eighty-five percent of DDPHE employees agree, “My department has taken meaningful action on results from the last employee engagement survey.”

**OBJECTIVE 5**
DDPHE workforce turnover rates will meet or be lower than the citywide average.

ISO 14001 EMS standard

One hundred percent of all DDPHE management staff involved in budget or procurement processes will complete City training.
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

**Strategy:** Create a workplace that prioritizes building internal relationships based on trust, shared commitment and solution-seeking through cultural diversity.

**Description:** DDPHE is committed to not only hiring a diverse workforce, but also to making the workplace inclusive. We envision a workplace where employees feel their voice matters and where they understand how they contribute to the bigger picture.

**OBJECTIVE 1**
Achieve a five-percentage-point increase annually in ethnic diversity within the DDPHE workforce to meet or exceed the demographics of Denver and the makeup of the City workforce.

**OBJECTIVE 2**
DDPHE will continue to meet or exceed the Citywide Employee Engagement index.

**OBJECTIVE 3**
Eighty percent of DDPHE employees agree, “I am appropriately involved in the decisions that affect my work.”

WE ENVISION A WORKPLACE where employees feel THEIR VOICE MATTERS & WHERE THEY UNDERSTAND how they contribute TO THE BIGGER PICTURE
Performance metrics are both foundational and evolutionary in performance management and quality improvement. Once the target for each metric is reached the department will evaluate whether to adjust the target, or to choose a new metric to better measure success and drive innovation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Lead Team</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customer Experience</strong></td>
<td>Percent of DDPHE Customer Satisfaction Survey respondents indicating “satisfied” or “strongly satisfied” with the services provided by the Department</td>
<td>PMQI</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent of public health concerns and service requests responded to within 3 business days</td>
<td>PMQI</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Stewardship, Sustainability and Health Equity Practices</strong></td>
<td>Implement a Health In All Policies Executive Order for all city agencies</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>12/31/2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent of DDPHE budget requests reviewed with consideration to promoting health equity</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure Denver’s Greenhouse Gas Inventory remains Global Protocol Compliant and conduct third party verification annually</td>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>12.16 mmT-CO$_2$e</td>
<td>11.27 mmT-CO$_2$e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual increase in positive ratings in the DDPHE internal Bar High Survey</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annual increase in positive ratings for the overall natural environment domain in Denver on the National Citizen Survey</td>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Workforce Development</strong></td>
<td>Implement and annually update the Workforce Development Plan</td>
<td>WDT</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>12/31/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of DDPHE employees agree, “My department adequately invests in training and developing our employees.”</td>
<td>Division Directors</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DDPHE workforce turnover rates will meet or be lower than the citywide average</td>
<td>WDT</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of DDPHE employees agree, “My department has taken meaningful action on results from the last employee engagement survey”</td>
<td>Division Directors</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent of attendees of DDPHE employee development sessions will agree or strongly agree that the sessions were valuable</td>
<td>EDO</td>
<td>97.4%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operational Excellence</strong></td>
<td>Achieve $1.5M in soft savings through process improvement by 12/31/2020</td>
<td>PMQI</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain accreditation with ISO 14001 EMS standard, PHAB, NAME, Food and Drug standards and AAHA</td>
<td>EDO</td>
<td>✔️</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of DDPHE management staff involved in budget or procurement processes that will complete City training</td>
<td>EDO</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity and Inclusion</strong></td>
<td>Ethnic diversity within DDPHE workforce will meet or exceed the demographics of Denver and the makeup of the city workforce, as measured by the percentage of non-caucasian employees</td>
<td>WDT</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DDPHE will continue to meet or exceed the Citywide Employee Engagement index</td>
<td>EET</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of DDPHE employees agree, “I am appropriately involved in the decisions that affect my work”</td>
<td>EET</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AAHA - American Animal Hospital Association  
CH - Community Health Division  
EDO - Executive Director’s Office  
EET - Employee Engagement Team  
ISO 14001 EMS standard - Environmental Management System  
EQ - Environmental Quality Division  
mmT-CO$_2$e - Million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents  
NAME - National Association of Medical Examiners  
PHAB - Public Health Accreditation Board  
PMQI - Performance Management and Quality Improvement Committee  
WDT - Workforce Development Team
Each of the six divisions has its own mission statement, which begins with DDPHE’s vision statement and articulates how each division operationally contributes to the department’s strategic plan.

In addition, each division creates an annual action plan to support the department’s strategic plan as well as its own strategic goals. Annual action plans are completed by January of each fiscal year.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH**

The mission of the Community Health Division is to empower Denver’s communities to live better, longer by providing safe, accessible, sustainable, and healthy environments for Denver residents and advancing equity at all levels of planning and policy.

**DENVER ANIMAL PROTECTION**

The mission of the Denver Animal Protection Division is to empower Denver’s communities to live better, longer by protecting the safety and welfare of Denver’s animals and residents by fostering the human-animal bond.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

The mission of the Environmental Quality Division is to empower Denver’s communities to live better, longer by ensuring regulatory compliance and by providing technical assistance, scientific analyses, environmental education, and stewardship initiatives for both private sector and City operations. Program areas include: air quality, water quality, site assessment and cleanup, solid/hazardous waste management, climate change, energy conservation, neighborhood sustainability, and emergency preparedness and response.

**PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS**

The mission of the Public Health Inspections Division is to empower Denver’s communities to live better, longer by ensuring that regulated industries and settings are in compliance with respective laws while providing public education to consumers and technical assistance to businesses. This division is committed to resolving situations posing the greatest risk to public health. The division seeks to render a high level of customer responsiveness and to engage in industry partnerships and training efforts through regular inspections and assessments.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S OFFICE**

The mission of the Executive Director’s Office is to empower Denver’s communities to live better, longer by providing leadership, support and resources to all Divisions as they develop creative solutions to challenges, use teamwork to achieve shared goals, serve our customers and engage our partners, and deliver quality outcomes through learning and continuous performance improvement.

**MEDICAL EXAMINER**

The mission of the Office of the Medical Examiner is to empower Denver’s communities to live better, longer by conducting independent investigations using advanced forensic science in the service of families, communities and the criminal justice system. This division also provides answers to those affected by sudden and traumatic loss and helps protect public health by contributing to education and research. It further increases the public’s understanding of the forensic sciences and encourages and trains the next generation of leaders in the field. The division identifies risks to the public through advanced mortality surveillance and maintains readiness to respond to all types of public health emergencies.
All DDPHE staff will continue to be given the opportunity to weigh-in on the Strategic Plan.