

RESOLUTION SETTING FORTH ST. MARY'S COUNTY'S COMMITMENT TO OBESITY PREVENTION

Preamble

WHEREAS, in June 2015, the Healthy Eating & Active Living (HEAL) action team of the Healthy St. Mary's Partnership; pledged to work collaboratively on the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign as part of the local health improvement process; and

WHEREAS, St. Mary's County has the ability to affect the health of its residents; and

WHEREAS, planning and constructing a built environment that encourages walking, biking, and other forms of physical activity can promote health; and

WHEREAS, high rates of costly chronic disease among both children and adults are correlated to environments with few or no options for healthy eating and active living; and

WHEREAS, more than half of Maryland's adults are overweight or obese and therefore at risk for many chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, stroke, and, hypertension; and

WHEREAS, only 32 percent of adults in St. Mary's County are at a healthy weight which can prevent nearly half of these chronic conditions; and

WHEREAS, one in three youth in Maryland, including St. Mary's is overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS, more children are being diagnosed with diseases linked to overweight and obesity previously seen only in adults, such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease; and

WHEREAS, the current generation of children are expected to have shorter lives than their parents due to the consequences of obesity; and

WHEREAS, obesity takes a tremendous toll on the health and productivity of all residents;

WHEREAS, the annual cost to Maryland—in medical bills, workers compensation and lost productivity—for overweight, obesity, and physical inactivity exceeds \$3 billion;

WHEREAS, supporting the health of residents and the local workforce would decrease chronic disease and health care costs and increase productivity; and

WHEREAS the HEAL action team of the Healthy St. Mary's Partnership has committed to decreasing the St. Mary's County obesity rate by 2020 through the implementation of strategies outlined in the local health improvement plan (Healthy St. Mary's 2020) to increase the number of youth and adults in St. Mary's County at a healthy weight;

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Commissioners of St. Mary's County hereby recognized that obesity is a serious public health threat to the health and wellbeing of adults, children and families in St. Mary's County and a commitment is needed to put healthy choices within reach of all residents. While individual lifestyle changes are necessary, individual effort alone is insufficient to combat obesity's rising tide. Significant societal and environmental changes are needed to support individual efforts to make healthier choices. To that end, St. Mary's County adopts this Healthy Eating Active Living resolution:

Physical Activity, Active Transportation, and Land Use

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that St. Mary's County planners, engineers, parks and recreation department, community economic and redevelopment personnel responsible for the design and construction of parks, neighborhoods, streets, and business areas should make every effort to:

- Update the Comprehensive Plan to:
 - Include provisions that promote bike ability and walkability
 - Include strategies that promote public safety and crime prevention through environmental design
 - Prioritize transit-oriented and mixed-use development
 - Align with the local health improvement plan, Healthy St. Mary's 2020
- Design Streets/Roads to be safe for all users (motorists, bicycles, pedestrians, handicapped) using the following strategies:
 - Adopt a Complete Streets Policy
 - Promote slower vehicular traffic through traffic calming measures
 - Adopt a policy to paint bike lanes/shared use ("sharrows") when re-paving/painting roads
 - Adopt a policy to stripe crosswalks when re-paving/painting roads
- Increase access to facilities using the following strategy:
 - Establish Joint Use Agreements for existing facilities, such as: school playgrounds and pools
- Use development tools to:
 - Adopt a Form Based Code Zoning Ordinance
 - Require developers to include usable space for physical activity and recreation or pay a fee
 - Institute a Complete Streets requirement for new development
- Involve the Community in determining policy needs around physical activity, transportation, and land use by expanding the capacity and engagement of the HEAL action team.

Access to Affordable Nutritious Foods

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that St. Mary's County planners, community economic personnel responsible for the design of parks, neighborhoods, streets, and business areas, should make every effort to:

- Promote Farmers' Markets using the following strategies:
 - Encourage SNAP/EBT to be accepted at farmers markets
 - Expand access to Farmers' Markets through HEAL team efforts
- Promote the development and use of Community Gardens

Municipal Workplace Wellness

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in order to promote wellness within St. Mary's County, and to set an example for other businesses, St. Mary's County pledges to adopt and implement a workplace wellness policy that will:

- Involve the staff in determining your city/towns' policy needs around workplace wellness using the following strategies:
 - Encourage local business to convene a Workplace Wellness Committee
 - Encourage local businesses to become a "Healthiest Maryland Business" so they can have easy access to workplace wellness strategies, information and ideas

Implementation

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HEAL team of the Healthy St. Mary's Partnership should report back to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County annually regarding steps taken to implement the Resolution, additional steps planned, and any desired actions that would need to be taken.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HEAL team shall work with the HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign to explore HEAL policies and to identify those policies that are suitable for the St. Mary's County's unique local circumstances.