



## Health Department



## Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019

Approved by the Park County Board  
of Health on April 14, 2015.

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Under the direction of the County Commission and Park County Board of Health, it is the County's intent that the adopted Health Department Strategic Plan focus on how the department can function better to serve its population through the four priority areas of: 1) Disease Prevention and Healthy Behavior Promotion; 2) Environmental Quality; 3) Collaborative Connectivity; and, 4) Organizational Excellence. The strategic plan serves as a tool to help the department promote a healthier Park County by setting the foundation to drive organizational improvement. This strategic planning document serves as a road map for the Health Department for the next five years, and is supplemented by relative regional work plans.

It is now incumbent on the Park County Health Department to utilize information contained within this Plan in annual and long-range planning and budgeting efforts so that improvements can be realized. It is also critical to review and update the Strategic Plan annually or as necessary and reviewed at one Board of Health meeting per year in order to keep the Plan current and practical, while maintaining proper focus on local government and community needs.

Reviewed and approved 4-14, 2015.

  
Peggy O'Neill  
Chairperson

**Park County Board of Health**

Reviewed and adopted April 21, 2015.

  
Steve Caldwell  
Member

  
Marty Malone  
Member

  
Clint Tinsley  
Chairman

**Park County Commission**



## Introduction

The objective of formalizing a Strategic Plan for the Park County Health Department (PCHD) was to create thoughtful interrelationships with the department's priorities and opportunities as well as to maximize resources. This document serves as an effort to focus on how the department can function better to serve its population through four priority areas. Each priority is a broad statement of intent, which serves as a central focus for associated goals and objectives.

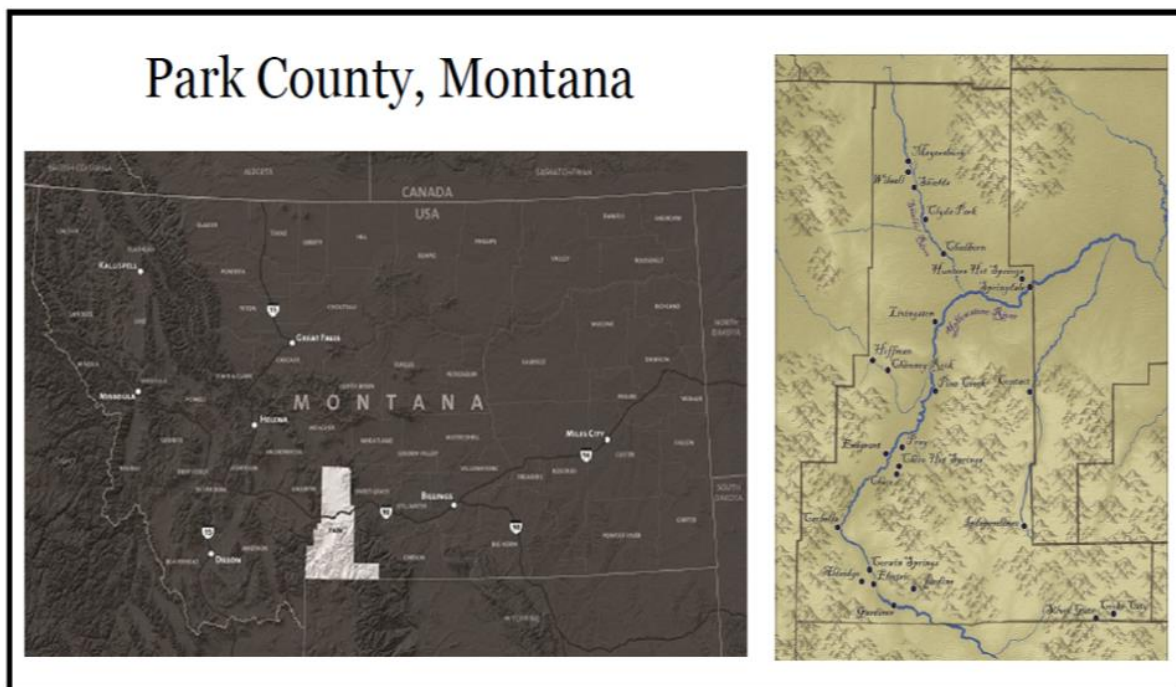
The four strategic priorities include:

- Disease Prevention and Healthy Behavior Promotion
- Environmental Quality
- Collaborative Connectivity
- Organizational Excellence

The strategic plan serves as a tool to help the department promote a healthier Park County by setting the foundation to drive organizational improvement. This strategic planning document serves as a road map for the Health Department for the next five years, and is supplemented by relative regional work plans.

## County Demographics and Background

Park County is located in south central Montana and is surrounded by the Absaroka/Beartooth Range, the Crazy Mountains and the Gallatin Range.



Comprised of 2,814 square miles of dramatic mountains and scenic valleys, Park County includes the highest point in Montana (Granite Peak) and the original and only year-round access to the nation's first national park – Yellowstone National Park. The world-famous and longest undammed river in the lower 48 states – the Yellowstone River – runs through Paradise Valley. Park County has a rich history of agriculture; cattle and sheep ranching and farming has long been central to the County's history and economy. Farming activities were further encouraged by railroad activities that emerged in the area in 1883.



The original residents of the area were Crow Indians who roamed the entire Yellowstone River basin. The first non-natives to enter the local area were Lewis and Clark along with their expedition party, accompanied by Lehmi Shoshone Indian, Sacagawea. Jim Bridger - a famous scout and mountain man – wintered with the Crow Indians near present day Emigrant in the 1844 – 1845. Gold was discovered in Emigrant Gulch in 1863 and by the fall of 1864, several hundred men were working claims in the area. That same year, John Bozeman opened a new road to shorten the route between Fort Laramie and the gold

localities of western Montana. The road passed through present-day Livingston and over the Bozeman Pass.

By 1880, the population of the County was only about 200. In 1881, the Northern Pacific Railroad, building a line westward, entered the State of Montana. Livingston was reached November 22, 1882 where a settlement of 500 people had sprung up, awaiting the railroad. In 1883, the National Park branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad was completed and the east-west sections of the railroad joined together near Garrison, essentially opening up the entire country. In February 1887, Park County was created from the “east side” of Gallatin County and included large portions of present day Sweet Grass, Stillwater and Carbon Counties. By 1890, the local area had a period of rapid growth and reached a population of 6,900. Railroad services, along with extractive industries related to precious metals, coal and timber remained an early economic focus of the new County, but tourism and agriculture rapidly emerged. Today, Park County's diverse economy ranges from agriculture, logging, mining, art and recreation to internet service providers and other digital technologies. In addition to the County seat of Livingston, the County includes the incorporated town of Clyde Park and the unincorporated communities of Cooke City, Emigrant, Gardiner, Jardine, Pray, Silver Gate, Springdale and Wilsall. The County has one critical access hospital, two medical clinics and four dental clinics; an Urgent Care facility is expected to be open to the public by June 2015.

As of the 2010 census, Park County had 6,828 households of which 28.10% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 51% were married couples living together, 7.3% had a female householder with no husband present and 38.2% were non-families. Just over 32% of all households were made up of individuals and 11.7% had someone living

alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.27 and the average family size was 2.88. The median income for a household in the County was \$31,739, and the median income for a family was \$40,561. Males had a median income of \$28,215 versus \$19,973 for females. The per capita income for the County was \$17,704. About 7.20% of families and 11.4% of the population were below the poverty line, including 13.1% under age 18 and 10.1% age 65 or over.



A population of 15,682 (2013) mostly resides in a half-dozen small towns, including the County seat of Livingston. Total population growth for Park County between 1970 to 2000 increased by 43%, from 11,364 to 15,587 people. From 2000 – 2011, the population grew just 2% with 160 new residents. The median age is 41 years.

## **Health Department Divisions**

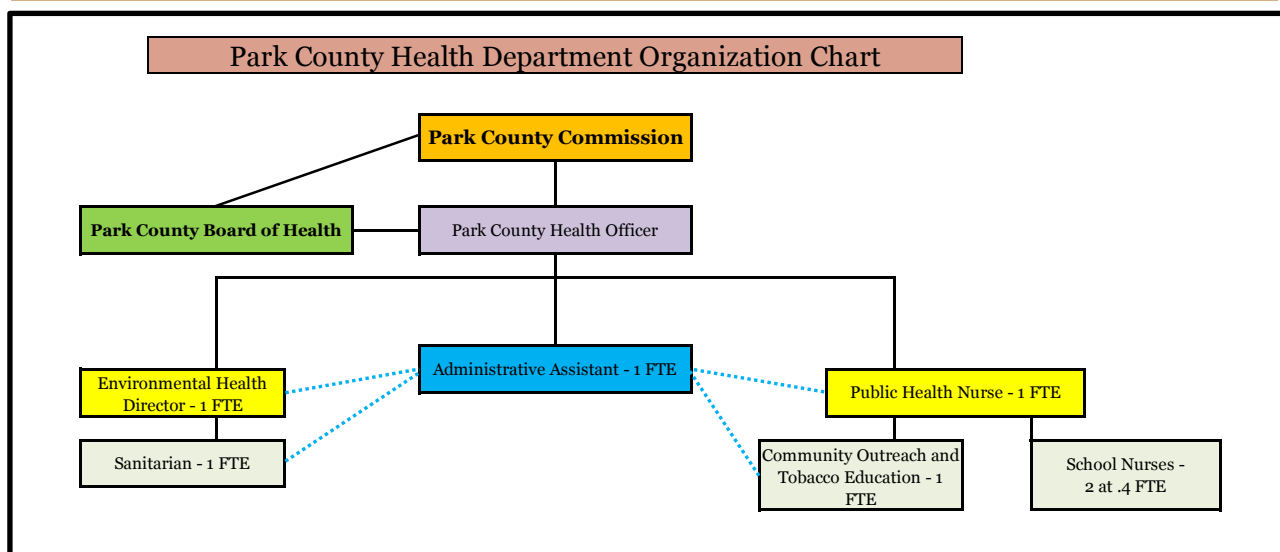
The Park County Health Department is comprised of two distinct divisions – Human Services and Environmental Health Services. Each Department provides the following services throughout the County:

### ***Human Services***

The Human Services Department focuses on the health of individuals through services of targeted public home health visitation, immunizations, communicable disease surveillance and prevention, public health emergency preparedness, senior health, mental health and education outreach.

### ***Environmental Health Services***

Environmental Health Services focuses on environment and sanitation issues by providing public health protection; offering educational and training opportunities; supplying beneficial information; and, enforcing health protection standards as outlined by the State of Montana or federal government guidelines. Primary responsibilities include assistance to citizens for regulatory compliance; inspections and reviews of food service establishments, public accommodations, pools and spas, campgrounds, trailer parks and body care facilities; investigations of food borne illnesses; on-site wastewater treatment system inspection and permitting; and, floodplain administration.



## Mission and Guiding Principles

The vision and mission statements of Park County Health Department were updated as part of the strategic planning process in order to better reflect the identity of the department to the public as well as to affirm the work that is conducted by the staff.

**Mission:** To promote and protect health while preventing disease through education, development and implementation of community health services in Park County.

### **Guiding Principles:**

- Evidence-based practices.
- Collaboration and communication among community members and partners.
- Education and outreach.
- Empowering community members to make healthy choices.

## Planning Process

In January 2015, Park County Commissioners hired an interim Public Health Director to direct Public Health processes and planning for the first part of 2015 during the hiring process for a new Public Health Director/Nurse. It was at this time that the interim Public Health Director and Commissioners determined the need for a dedicated Park County Public Health Strategic Plan.

The strategic plan was completed over the course of nearly three months from February through April 2015. Broad input was sought to provide involvement into the process and to create a document that will help guide the direction of Park County Health Department from July 1,





2015 through June 30, 2019.

A strategic planning team was convened in February 2015. This team consisted of the Park County Public Health Director, Environmental Health Director, Human Resources Director, Special Projects Coordinator, Planning Director and one Board of Health member.

## Timeline

Activity	Timeline	Participants
All staff meetings for strategic plan input and vision.	January/February 2015	All Public Health Department staff and directors
Identification of strategic priorities, goals and objectives.	February 19, 2015	Strategic Planning Team
Workplan, internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities and weaknesses developed.	March 5, 2015	Strategic Planning Team
Development of draft strategic plan.	March 6 – 26, 2015	Special Projects Coordinator
Draft strategic plan presented to Board of Health.	March 26, 2015 via email distribution	Strategic Planning Team
Revision and refinement of draft strategic plan.	March 27 – April 12, 2015	Special Projects Coordinator
Final strategic plan presented to Board of Health.	April 14, 2015	Board of Health and Strategic Planning Team
Strategic plan finalized and accepted by Park County Commission.	April 16, 2015	Strategic Planning Team
Annual updates to Strategic Plan.	Annually in January and February.	Board of Health and Public Health Nurse

The initial step in the strategic planning process was to involve all staff in the initial steps of the process, utilizing other Montana county strategic plans as guiding documents. Committee members and current Public Health staff were asked to identify aspects of each program area that they would like to keep (preserve), alter (change), or start (create). In addition to staff and committee member input, the following data sources were also referenced in order to inform the strategic priorities:

- Gallatin City-County Health Department Strategic Plan
- DPHHS Plan to Improve the Health of Montanans
- 2012 Community Health Profile – Park County
- Park County Health Department 2015 fiscal year budget



Information was compiled by the Strategic Planning Team and the Special Projects Coordinator in order to understand the internal and external forces that may affect the department's ability to move toward the Health Department mission and vision. The results were used to identify goals and objectives.

The purpose of this document is to serve as a guide for achieving goals and objectives associated with the four priorities identified in this Plan. As with most plans, there may be times in which objectives or work plans are not fulfilling their intended function. If that is the case, steps will be taken to edit or update the objective during the annual review and update process planned for this Plan.

## Internal Strengths and Challenges

Category	Strengths	Challenges
Health Assessment and Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued quarterly immunization, maternal child health care and emergency preparedness as mandated by the State</li> <li>Educational materials and other related documents are available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for more in-depth health assessments specific to this community.</li> <li>Lack of key staff and department resources.</li> <li>Need more collaboration with local area health organizations.</li> <li>Communication of data and reports to community.</li> </ul>
Health Education, Promotion and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some established and fully functioning, collaborative partnerships.</li> <li>School nurse presence in Gardiner, Cooke City and Clyde Park.</li> <li>Food safety practices and training is improving.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Fair collaboration need.</li> <li>Education of new programs and disease prevention control.</li> <li>Always a need for additional public outreach and education.</li> </ul>
Child and Maternal Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents as Teachers is a successful local program through Community Health Partners.</li> <li>Maternal health outreach has resulted in positive health outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreased funding for home visitation.</li> <li>Number of babies born last year versus the number of home visits made is inadequate.</li> </ul>

Disease Prevention and Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The area has safe water and sanitation.</li> <li>• Strong healthcare systems in Park County.</li> <li>• Good data available for education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park County has low immunization rates.</li> <li>• Not enough education and public awareness.</li> </ul>
Policies, Enforcement and Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some policies in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement and monitoring difficult with lack of regulations and inadequate staffing.</li> <li>• Internal communication.</li> </ul>
Public Health Emergency Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School nurse education outreach.</li> <li>• New HAZMAT Response Plan in development and to be finished by October 2015.</li> <li>• New DES Director with much emergency preparedness experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No quarantine areas in Park County.</li> <li>• Lack of mental health assistance when community tragedies take place.</li> </ul>
Environmental Protection and Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong program and staff currently meeting all requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement and monitoring difficult with lack of regulations and inadequate staffing.</li> <li>• Education and outreach by staff limited by overall county resources.</li> </ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced and educated staff members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire for efficient and effective Public Health team.</li> </ul>

## External Opportunities and Challenges

Category	Strengths	Challenges
Access to Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open access providers.</li> <li>• Many existing partnerships and collaborative efforts.</li> <li>• Rural community school nursing services for both students and families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uninsured and underinsured.</li> <li>• Services navigation among patients is sometimes difficult.</li> <li>• Resource outreach difficulties.</li> </ul>
Public Health System Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong interest in planning and development.</li> <li>• New urgent care services soon to be implemented.</li> <li>• Well-developed environmental health program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public health department in transitional stages.</li> </ul>
Political Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong county commission.</li> <li>• Good working relationships with political representatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding from state and federal agencies is often questionable.</li> </ul>
Youth Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong administration in schools seeking wrap-around services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of poverty among students.</li> <li>• Limited extracurricular activity availability.</li> </ul>
Substance Use/Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low tobacco use rates.</li> <li>• MT Tobacco Prevention Program.</li> <li>• School-based prevention tactics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High marijuana use among high school students.</li> </ul>
Population Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low obesity rates.</li> <li>• Low tobacco use rates.</li> <li>• Good maternal health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low immunization rates.</li> <li>• High workplace injury rates.</li> <li>• High motor vehicle accident rates.</li> <li>• High mental health disability rates.</li> </ul>

## Strategic Priorities, Goals and Objectives

### Priority Area: Disease Prevention and Healthy Behavior Promotion



Prevention of disease is a bedrock principal of public health. In some cases, such as communicable disease surveillance and response, no other organization in Park County can or will provide these services essential to public safety. In other areas, such as empowering people to eat healthy and lead physically active lives, the Park County Health Department can help residents prevent chronic diseases that are the leading causes of death and biggest drivers of the cost of health care. The Health Department can also play a pivotal role in gathering, analyzing and using data to identify and address emerging health issues. Finally, the Department should continue to provide preventative services, such as immunizations, public health emergency preparedness planning and public health home visitation to ensure that all residents have access

regardless of their ability to pay.

Whenever possible, the Department will utilize peer-reviewed scientific evidence and guidance from organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to address health issues.

#### ***Goal 1: Promote healthy behaviors and prevent disease.***

##### Objectives:

- Increase rate of home visitation to newborns born in Park County from 0% to 50% by 2018
- Increase interagency collaboration between the Health Department and local agencies providing care for seniors, mental health patients, substance abuse and the birth-3 age group, starting from the current lack of collaboration and working toward eight meetings per year with other agencies to identify needs, common goals and cooperative activities by 2018
- Research, design and engage in at least one annual collaborative project, partnering with another agency to promote healthy behaviors in a vulnerable population group in Park County
- Research current immunization rates and practices in Park County and engage in community-based education programs to improve infant, adolescent and adult vaccination rates in Park County by 20% by 2018
- Participate with schools in substance use prevention programs
- Improve dental health in Park County through education and outreach programs regarding prevention of dental disease through effective dental hygiene, provider education regarding fluoride supplementation and patient education of available dental care resources options



- Research current rates of smoking in pregnancy in Park County and develop and initiate a program to reduce rates by 20% by 2018
- Research workplace accidents in Park County to develop strategies for prevention with employers and employees at high-risk work places

### **Priority Area: Environmental Quality**

The beauty, vast natural resources and diverse economy of Park County help make it an attractive place to live and visit. These assets, along with a recovering economy, are likely to spur population growth that will bring with it more construction, more wastewater and more potential for pollution of our water, air and soil. Park County Environmental Health Department will work to protect and improve the quality of those natural resources.



The Department will utilize the significant expertise in water quality to identify and improve wastewater systems of concern. Staff will work to educate and empower residents to keep air clean and clear, both outside and inside homes. Staff will also work with the Board of Health, when appropriate, to encourage the continued clean-up of sites where soil and water has been contaminated. We will continue to work to ensure the health and safety of restaurants, hotels and motels, and other establishments, while empowering the public to access guidelines and policies necessary to make healthy decisions. The Department will perform this work both by enforcing state and local laws and by working collaboratively with the public to educate, empower and collaborate.

### ***Goal 2: Monitor and enforce environmental quality throughout Park County.***

#### **Objectives:**

- Complete the septic permit scanning project and launch online access to septic permits by the fall of 2015
- Compile a list of all public water and wastewater systems in Park County. Assess records of each system and compile any systems of concern by December 2016
- Develop more outreach and educational opportunities on environmental health topics: e.g. watershed groups, schools, health fairs
- Build on existing Food Safety and Septic Installer/Site Evaluator education programs
- Increase use of electronic systems for data storage and accessibility
- Improve environmental health information resources available through the Park County Health Department



### **Priority Area: Collaborative Connectivity**

The American health system is poised to change rapidly and significantly in the coming years as the nation seeks to improve the quality of health care services while also making these services accessible and affordable, in part by providing access to health insurance for all Americans. Meeting this challenge with constrained economic resources will require all health care

providers to work smarter. The Park County Health Department will work to build more robust connections between health care providers and human service organizations that together can address the social determinants of health, such as economic security, education, strong families, and cohesive communities.

As the lead public health organization in Park County, the Health Department and the Board of Health will become a catalyst for creation of innovative and best practice solutions, particularly where other agencies are not otherwise engaged. The Department will work with partners to convene community leaders to build true collaborations and identify health priorities, build capacity and connect the people of Park County to health resources and services they require to lead healthy, productive lives.

### ***Goal 3: Connect the community to resources, services and information.***

#### **Objectives:**

- Develop and distribute a resource guide for individuals and families with insecure housing in Park County
- Establish the Park County Department of Public Health as a reliable information resource to direct people based on their specific needs to the appropriate health and human service organizations throughout the county by the end of 2017
- Increase the number of newborn referrals from pre-natal care providers to the Public Health Home Visitation
- By fall 2018, ensure that 75% of schools in Park County will have a policy requiring parents to acknowledge that students who are under-vaccinated may be excluded during a communicable disease outbreak

## **Priority Area: Organizational Excellence**

The Park County Health Department will strive to achieve organizational excellence both to ensure the quality of services provided and to create a workplace that fosters well-trained, creative and motivated staff. The Department will strive to build consistent, effective systems and policies that drive quality services and encourage innovation that improve health outcomes.

### ***Goal 4: Maintain and improve organizational excellence within the Health Department.***

#### **Objectives:**

- Submit and continue to maintain reporting requirements with all current grants through the state, meeting or exceeding the state's expectations for deliverables
- Assume management of the Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program
- Seek out new options for funding in order to address a broader range of public health needs in the community and in order to deliver a standard of excellence in public health owed to and expected of the residents of Park County
- Maintain, implement and assess the Health Department Workforce Development Plan by the end of 2018; the plan will address staff training needs and core competencies development in order to perform duties and carry out the Health Department's mission
- Create sustainable methods to measure employee satisfaction within the Health Department by 2018
- By 2018, develop and implement a sustainable plan to increase awareness and recognition of services within the Park County Health Department and the community
- Improve processes and technology used to manage large scale communicable disease outbreaks by 2018
- Formalize and improve orientation to include information on Health Department programs and processes among new and current staff by 2018
- Improve Health Board and County Commissioner engagement and ownership in the Health Department through quarterly updates on programs and action plans



## Alignment with Community Health Improvement Plans

Throughout the priority areas, there are several objectives that have been taken directly from the Park County, Montana Community Health Services Development Survey Report (CHSDSR). The CHSDSR was the result of an 18-month effort by Livingston HealthCare in cooperation with the Montana Office of Rural Health and the National Rural Health Resource Center to assess and then priorities health issues in Park County. The CHSDSR document is a result of community engagement through health care service surveys and focus group participation. The objectives that have CHSDSR alignment within the Strategic Plan are owned by the Health Department and have been copied directly from the CHSDSR where appropriate.



## Stakeholder Participation

On Feb. 19, 2015 the first of two strategic planning sessions were held and one-half of the outline for the plan was discussed and edited; on March 5, 2015 the remaining half of the document was discussed and edited at a scheduled meeting. The draft plan was then sent electronically to planning committee members for final edits and

comments. Once those edits were received and incorporated, the draft plan was then sent electronically to Park County Board of Health members to include the members in the final editing and comment period. On April 14<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Health approved the plan and on April 21<sup>st</sup>, the Park County Commission accepted the plan by unanimous vote.

## Monitoring

In order to achieve the strategic objectives, work plans will be developed. Each work plan has a staff owner, outcome indicators, strategies, tactics and performance indicators associated with each tactic. Each work plan is in place to operationalize and monitor the progress of each objective.

In order to integrate the work plans into the functions of the Health Department, each program's annual performance plan will include time-appropriate parts of the objectives that they have ownership of. Performance plans must include all applicable strategic plan objectives, but performance planning may include additional objectives that are not strategic in nature, and therefore will not be reflected in the strategic plan.

Every program will meet at least semi-annually to review and discuss the progress of the objectives and evaluate the results.