



# Metro Denver

HEALTH & WELLNESS COMMISSION

Creating America's Healthiest Community

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## ***Mission:***

Metro Denver — America's healthiest community.

## ***Organizers:***

The Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission (MDHWC) is a collaborative endeavor of the Center for Human Nutrition at the University of Colorado at Denver Health Sciences Center, America on the Move, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and Civic Results. The MDHWC initiative will be managed by Civic Results, which is home to both the Livable Communities Support Center and Metro Mayors Caucus programs. Early supporters of the initiative include the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation and the Denver Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Colorado Physical Activity & Nutrition Program has provided the early planning money for the MDHWC initiative.

## ***Background:***

Colorado is known for its sunny and relatively mild climate, four season recreational opportunities and active outdoor lifestyle. Colorado can also boast one of the nation's lowest rates of obesity. Healthier people are more energetic, productive, and place fewer demands on the healthcare system than their overweight and obese peers; so arguably, our state's healthy employees are better employees. Unfortunately, mirroring the national trend, the rate of overweight and obesity is steadily increasing among Colorado's citizens, including our children. *What is driving this trend and how can we act now as a region - across sectors - to stem this trend and maintain our economic and cultural advantage of a healthy citizenry?*

With a concentration of medical research facilities, bio-science companies and health and wellness related industries, the Denver region is well suited to attract additional health and wellness related business and institutions. *What marketing strategies and economic development tools could be employed to draw new health and wellness related businesses, research facilities and organizations to our area and to promote the region as the "go to" region for health and wellness related events including competitions, seminars, conferences and athletic events?*

Work is being done in public health, the non-profit sector, schools, and by health providers to address the obesity epidemic. A focus on health and wellness has just begun emerging among employers. *What messaging and community outreach could be used across all sectors to emphasize the importance of active living and healthy eating as keys to good health and living "the Denver lifestyle."*

In the end, individuals, families and communities will choose or not choose to take the steps that ensure whether Colorado and metro Denver remain the health and wellness capital of the United

States. *What kind of incentives through public policy and legislation can we provide to communities and individuals to encourage a healthy lifestyle?*

### ***The Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission***

The MDHWC will be an invitation only body comprised of key stakeholders and leaders from metro area cities, health care providers, and representatives from the academic, business and philanthropic communities. The MDHWC will be charged with drafting a strategic plan to transform the metro area into “America’s Healthiest Community.”

#### ***Objectives:***

- To develop policies and strategies that can be implemented by schools, employers, and communities that will result in a measurable decline in the rate of obesity and obesity related diseases in the Denver metro region;
- To identify and quantify the impact of rising health care costs on our regional economy and the economic benefit of decreasing these costs at the regional level;
- To strengthen and expand the region’s economic development cluster of health and wellness related services and industry;
- To develop messaging and community outreach regarding the importance of healthy eating and active living, and to promote Denver nationally as the leader in health and wellness; and finally
- To grow the MDHWC to include additional partners that recognize the importance of health and wellness in our region and who can help to promote the programs and activities of the MDHWC.

#### ***Year 1 Scope of Work & Initiative Deliverables:***

The core work components of the MDHWC in this first year of operation will include the following:

- **Convene Stakeholder Meetings:** Beginning with a presentation to the Metro Mayors Caucus (January 2006), MDHWC organizers have held a series of stakeholder meetings to identify key metrics of health and wellness and potential members of the formal MDHWC. Broader stakeholder meetings will be held in metro area counties as directed by the MDHWC.
- **Convene the MDHWC, a Technical Advisory Committee and Subcommittees:** The work of the MDHWC will be supported by a Technical Advisory Committee and Topical Subcommittees as needed.
- **Develop an Index of Key Metrics:** The technical advisory committee will develop an index of key metrics to measure regional performance in a variety of areas related to health and wellness. The metrics will quantify the impact of promoting and implementing health and wellness strategies in metro area communities and associated health care savings.

- Create a Strategic Plan: Identify goals and develop a strategic plan to transform and brand the Denver metropolitan region as the nation's health and wellness capitol through: policies and programming, economic development, and communications and public relations strategies.
- Create a State-of-the-Region health report: This report will provide quantitative and qualitative data on the region's population, identify health trends and highlight existing efforts in the region. The report will include information from the metrics study about the potential impact of a healthy populace on the local economy.

### ***Year 1 Timeline:***

#### **May, 2006**

- ✧ Research on potential health and wellness metrics is underway
- ✧ Identification of potential MDHWC members is underway
- ✧ Recruit Commission Members
- ✧ May 10, stakeholder meetings to review list of names and finalize invitation list
- ✧ Recruit Technical Advisory Committee members
  - Technical advisory committee will support the commission with professional advice, research, etc
- ✧ Invitation to Commission members by May 24
- ✧ Begin development and implementation of a media strategy

#### **June, 2006**

- ✧ Kickoff Meeting of Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission
  - June 29 Meeting
    - Orientation
    - Review Index of Metrics
    - Articulate a vision for Denver's health and wellness future
- ✧ Topical subcommittees will be formed as needed to refine Commission recommendations and action plans in specific arenas
- ✧ Commission will meet every other month

#### **July & August, 2006**

- ✧ Public Outreach — Listening Session
  - Ask public and stakeholders to provide input on health & wellness goals
- ✧ August Meeting of Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission
  - Set health and wellness goals for the metro area
  - Identify strategies
  - Consider the makeup of subcommittees

#### **September & October, 2006**

- ✧ October Meeting of Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission
  - Subcommittees meet to establish scope of work and develop strategies
  - Initial presentation of strategies & potential new program and policy initiatives

### **November & December, 2006**

- ✧ Public Outreach — Listening Session
  - Ask public and stakeholders to provide input on selected goals and subcommittees' scopes of work

### **January & February, 2007**

- ✧ January Meeting of Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission
  - Review initiatives and action plans proposed by subcommittees
  - Agree on outline for the final report
- ✧ Public Outreach — Listening Session
  - Ask public and stakeholders to provide input on possible initiatives

### **March & April, 2007**

- ✧ March Meeting of Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission
  - Review draft report
  - Finalize initiatives and action plans

### **May, 2007**

- ✧ May Meeting of Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission
  - Final meeting of MDHWC
  - Presentation of the final report *The State of the Region's Health & Wellness*
- ✧ Listening sessions
- ✧ Health & Wellness Symposium
- ✧ State of the Region Health and Wellness Report

# Metro Denver Health and Wellness Commission — Process Overview



