

CHAPTER 7

Health

Fargo will encourage and support healthy choices and improve the health of residents by enhancing awareness, increasing year-round recreational opportunities, increasing access to healthy food, and ensuring access to quality healthcare.



Health

HEALTH

Residents in Fargo generally rank higher and rate their physical health better than most of North Dakota and the nation. Like the rest of the nation, however, Fargo faces public health challenges including chronic disease, diabetes, and obesity issues. In Cass County 62.4% of adults are either overweight or obese. Health behaviors contributing to disease are of concern, with only half of adult residents meeting physical activity requirements and less than one fourth consuming recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables. Having access to healthy food and recreational opportunities within the community can improve these behaviors, and a well designed community can improve health outcomes.

Initiatives:

01: HEALTHY FOOD

Ensure all neighborhoods have access to healthy food. Promote Farmers' Markets and community gardens in Fargo and work to strengthen the local food system.

02: CITY-WIDE TRAIL LOOP

Connect the city with a greenway that is made up of primarily off street trails.

03: YEAR-ROUND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Develop a year-round regional amenity within the city.

04: REGIONAL RECREATIONAL AMENITY

Develop a regional recreational destination, such as a water park, indoor athletic center, or zoo.

05: ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Ensure all resident have access to quality healthcare.



BEFORE: UNDERUTILIZED SPACE

This chapter focuses on ways to increase the health of Fargo residents through physical enhancements in the city that encourage walking and programs, such as farmers' markets, that increase access to healthy food and healthcare. These before and after photo simulations demonstrate how underutilized land could be used to support a farmers' market or other community healthy event.



AFTER: FARMERS' MARKET

INITIATIVE 01

HEALTHY FOOD



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a Food Policy Council appointed by city leaders to guide the city on food system policy development.
- Complete a community wide food system assessment. Use assessment findings to develop recommendations and a community wide plan to strengthen the local food system
- Establish transportation infrastructure which increases equitable access to healthy food.
- Identify and establish permanent farmers' market and community garden locations distributed throughout neighborhoods in Fargo.
- Support local food production and distribution by establishing zoning codes that encourage urban agricultural land uses and policies and incentives to strengthen food entrepreneurship.

DESCRIPTION

Fargo will develop policies which increase access to healthy food, encourage healthy choices, and improve the health of residents. Policies and programs will build on the agricultural heritage of Fargo and the assets and resources within and surrounding the city. Food-related economic development will foster an innovative entrepreneurial environment. The vitality of Fargo neighborhoods will be increased by the presence of healthy food sources and markets within walking distance of residential areas. Transportation infrastructure will increase equitable access to healthy food.

Fargo will explore developing a food policy council appointed by city leaders to guide the city on food system policy development. The food policy council will collaborate with a metro-wide food policy coalition composed of member organizations, agencies, and residents representing a broad base of perspectives within private, non-profit, and public sectors. Potential partners in the coalition include stakeholders participating in existing initiatives: Cass Clay Food Systems Initiative,

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FROM MINDMIXER

We have convenience stores all over the city. Sadly they do not provide the best quality food. Have each neighborhood start working with these stores to provide an outlet for citizens in their area to sell excess produce. In addition have the convenience stores start buying better food not available from the local neighborhood growers by having the convenience store buy from the local food co-op movement –lloydh

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Fargo Cass Public Health, Cass Clay Healthy People Initiative, Great Plains Food Bank (with 70 partner agencies), CHARISM, Worksite Wellness Initiative, Back Pack Program, Fill the Dome, Hunger Free Garden initiative, Cass Clay Hunger Coalition, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments, Dakota Medical Foundation, local school systems, and North Dakota State University (NDSU), and NDSU Extension Service.

A community-wide food system assessment will build on existing assessments, including the 2009 Nutrition Environment Measures Survey and the 2010 North Dakota Department of Agriculture Local Food Assessment Survey. A systems based assessment will identify both the assets and needs of the Fargo food system as it is embedded within its region and the larger food system context. Assessment findings will guide partners in developing a community wide plan to strengthen the local food system.

Right now, 8 of 10 grocery stores/ super centers in Fargo are on a transit line. The Dike East Farmers Market is located on two transit routes. Transportation infrastructure development will expand transit service, increase walkable and bikable routes to healthy food markets, and support the development of an efficient food distribution system for local food producers.

The development of permanent farmers markets throughout Fargo will provide a reliable market outlet for local producers and consumers. In addition, having land available for residents to garden offers a means for healthy food access. Currently 8,472 acres (33 percent) of land in Fargo is zoned agriculture/vacant/no code. This land represents a resource and with the proper land use policies and educational infrastructure could support the development of local production within and surrounding Fargo and increase the presence of healthy food markets within a walkable distance of residential areas.

BENEFITS

A food policy council legitimizes and lends structure to the process of food system planning and can codify, coordinate, and stabilize local food projects by placing their efforts in the framework of municipal policies that meet the city's vision for the future of Fargo's food system. A food policy council can stimulate public participation in a more democratic food system, and can encourage inter-jurisdictional cooperation on regional food system issues.

A collaborative process involved in food policy council and coalition efforts allows interdependent stakeholders to create integrative, multi-sector solutions that ensure consideration of a broad base of perspectives, constructively deal with differences among stakeholders, and align common interests and goals. Collaboration leads to joint ownership of decisions and empowers participants to take collective responsibility for the implementation of coalition strategies.

A thorough food system assessment designed to meet the research goals of the food policy coalition would lead to greater community capacity through the relationships and strategic alliances that emerge from the process, and provides a fact base for practical outcomes such as recommendations, policies, and programs.

CASE STUDY

**Dane County Food Council**

The food council works through collaborative program and policy initiatives to create a healthy, accessible, and sustainable food system in Dane County, Wisconsin.

<http://www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil/default.aspx>

Greater Philadelphia Food System Study

The Greater Philadelphia Food System Study evaluated the agricultural resource, distribution infrastructure, regional economy, and stakeholders acting within a 100-mile regional “foodshed”

<http://www.dvrpc.org/food/FoodSystemStudy.htm>

Kansas City, Missouri Urban Agriculture Ordinance

The city of Kansas City, Missouri, adopted an ordinance in June 2010 which amends the Zoning and Development Codes as they address agriculture and horticultural activities in residential neighborhoods. The codes were reviewed six months and 18 months after passage to evaluate their efficacy.

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FROM MINDMIXER

Recognize that community gardening is a vehicle for providing access to healthy food, and physical activity..be intentional about setting aside space for neighbors to come together near their homes to share garden space. Encourage faith communities, business and public owned land such as the land along the green ways next to the river or bike/walking trails to be opened up to community members as garden spaces. –Nola S

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CASE STUDY



Lawrence Common Grounds Program

The City of Lawrence and Douglas County, Kansas have implemented an urban agriculture/ community garden land use program that provides rolling 3-year leases to farm 12 designated municipal sites to individuals, businesses, and non-profits. A nominal lease fee of \$1 per acre is offered in exchange for the implementation of a community benefit plan.

http://lawrenceks.org/common_ground



Cultivate Kansas City

Cultivate Kansas City is a non-profit organization in Kansas City, Kansas that works to catalyze the production and consumption of locally grown food in Kansas City neighborhoods. The Farm Business Development program at Juniper Gardens, the Get Growing program, and Gibbs Road Farm educate apprentices, farmers and back yard growers in every aspect of farming from production through consumption.

<http://www.cultivatekc.org/>

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FROM MINDMIXER

We need a food policy council to help decision makers develop and support policy that enhances our local food system. –Goldie

FROM MINDMIXER

[The] City needs to help promote the Farmers' markets we already have. Build a structure that can hold them all year round, butchers, bakers, crafts. –Sam N

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INITIATIVE 02

CITY-WIDE TRAIL LOOP



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Complete a feasibility study for a city-wide trail loop.
- Continue pursuing a recreational plan for the proposed Red River Diversion that includes trails.
- Continue the pursuit of trail connections with each new subdivision of land through the dedication of right of way and easements.
- Continue constructing off-street trails, side paths, and on-street bike lanes whenever new roadway construction, county drains, or street reconstruction projects present the opportunity.
- Leverage levy construction projects to secure land and funding for new trail connections along the Red River.



DESCRIPTION

Fargo will continue to plan and construct a trail system that provides access and connectivity throughout the city and connects with trails in Moorhead and West Fargo. The city will work towards a system that can be easily interpreted by the public as a trail loop, with multiple connections to the local street system. The existing trail system along the Red River and along arterial and collector roadways will become the starting point for the development of this system.

Fargo has successfully installed 10-foot trails along most of the arterials in the newly developed areas of the community as well as along drainage channels, under power transmission lines, and on former railroad right of way. In addition, the city has stepped up its implementation of on-street bike lanes and share-the-road designations. These facilities will feed into and potentially become part of a city-wide

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FROM MINDMIXER

If you make these accessible and connected, I can see a huge increase in bicycle, walking, x-country ski commuting. –Drew FM

FROM MINDMIXER

“It would be great to link the cross-country ski trails at Lindenwood, Gooseberry, Dike West, Hjemkomst, and Edgewood. Each one is nice, but a bit short.” –Kelly Sassi

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The transformation of the existing system and the addition of new trail facilities to create a city-wide trail loop involves overcoming barriers such as the railroad tracks, I-29 and I-94, and working with the plans for levies along the river to relocate trails to higher elevations that aren't as affected by nuisance floods. Alternative routes to the river trails, such as parallel roadways, need to be designated for times when river trails are not accessible due to flooding. Trail loop plans will include connections to planned trails along the Red River Diversion. A full feasibility study will identify existing conditions, constraints, and opportunities, and will inform the coordinated development of a complete city-wide trail loop.

BENEFITS

There is a direct link between health and exercise. A city-wide trail loop offers recreational riders another option for both exercise and transportation. Populations that have access to a safe and comfortable trail systems are far more likely to use such a system as either part of their exercise routine, or for special outings. A looped route with multiple "jumping off" points at eating, resting, and shopping destinations ensures that the route will be attractive to all ages and levels. Connections to trails and bike lanes along the city street system will provide users with the assurance they need that they can cut their route short if they choose not to complete the entire trail loop. The citizens of Fargo have expressed a very strong desire for a city-wide trail loop and for an increased ability to safely bike and walk throughout the community.

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FROM MINDMIXER

A recreation trail that circumnavigates the city would give users a safe trail that can be utilized for exercise and provide a means for getting about the city without cars. Ideally, the river would have a complete trail running along it that would also connect with a trail that goes through the central/western part of the city that would complete a loop. —Laura S

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Source: <http://www.gptn.org/> and <http://lincoln.ne.gov/city/parks/parksfacilities/trails/distances.htm>

CASE STUDIES



Allen, Texas

The city of Allen, Texas is working to implement a trail system that would allow citizens to travel throughout town without the use of a motorized vehicle. There are currently 40 miles of trails in the city of Allen utilized for biking and hiking. The city wide system is comprised of four trail systems; Allen Parkway Loop, Rowlett Creek Loop, Watters Branch Loop, and Cottonwood Loop. While focusing on the implementation of a loop around the city, regional connections are also being made to allow for intercity connections. Many existing trails and planned future trails utilize areas located within the 100 year flood plain of the three creeks running through the city, which also connect to many of the city's 62 parks. The implementation plan for the city of Allen trail system includes three phases:

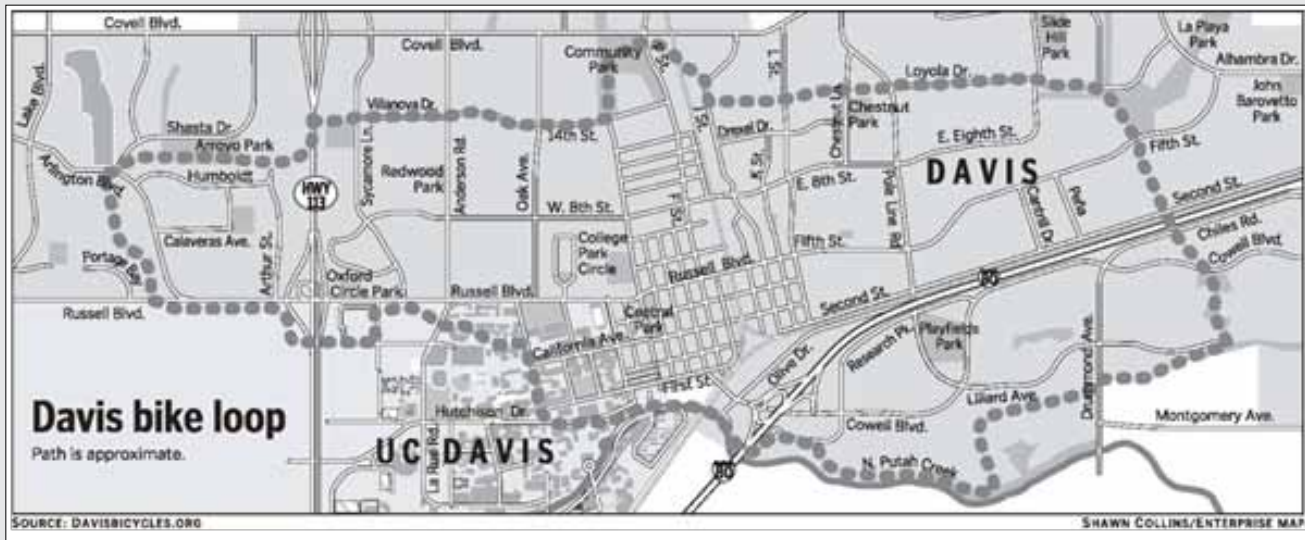
Phase 1 – Complete two trail loops and continue work on a third.

Phase 2 – Complete the trail loop work continued from phase one and construct branching segments from existing loops.

Phase 3 – Complete smaller neighborhood loops so they can be connected to the larger trail loop.

Source: http://www.cityofallen.org/departments/parks_recreation/parks_trails/trails.htm

CASE STUDIES



Davis, California

The City of Davis has a goal to create and maintain an integrated system of bikeways. The city provides miles of on-street facilities, both stripped and signed, and unmarked connector routes. As part of this bicycle network, the city has developed the Davis Bike Loop which utilizes designated routes to create a loop around the core of the city and through UC Davis's campus. This loop varies between bike lanes and bike paths, which allows for the successful implementation of the loop into the existing system. The City of Davis Bicycle Advisory Committee is committed to the continued achievement of the comprehensive bicycle plan goals and recommendations to improve safety for cyclists.

INITIATIVE 03

YEAR-ROUND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaborate with schools, senior citizen organizations, and other community groups to identify barriers to participation in existing recreational opportunities and potential solutions.
- Partner with the Fargo Park District to sponsor a competition for ideas about activities and venues that could be included in a winter festival or a series of winter recreational events.
- Provide support to neighborhood organizations in their efforts to hold neighborhood recreational events and year-round programs.
- Support local organizations and nonprofits in their efforts to provide year-round recreational events aimed at improving the health and quality of life the city's residents.

DESCRIPTION

The City will seek opportunities to partner with and support the Fargo Park District and other organizations in their efforts to provide year-round recreational facilities and events. Citizens cherish facilities such as trails, sidewalks, parks, and outdoor dining establishments that allow them to fully appreciate and embrace late spring, summer, and early fall. In addition, events such as Trollwood Performing Arts, the Street Fair, the Fargo Marathon, Redhawks baseball, the Studio Crawl, and Streets Alive offer spring and summer events that bring people together and add a sense of anticipation, excitement and culture to the community. However, for many Fargo citizens, wintertime brings an unhealthy reduction in their level of exercise and opportunities for recreation and social interaction. Residents crave facilities and events that will help them stay active and socially involved during the winter.



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FROM MINDMIXER

Let's embrace winter and get more people outside to enjoy the beauty it brings. - Laura S

FROM MINDMIXER

Adding cross-country ski trails, snowshoe trails, and skijoring trails (for a person on skis and 1-3 dogs in a sled dog harness) would really expand our winter recreational opportunities. – Kelly Sassi

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Partnerships between the Fargo Park District, Fargo Cass Public Health, and local fitness centers to sponsor fitness programs throughout the winter, and efforts to inform the public about their availability, will help increase access to healthy recreational programs that offer exercise and socialization. Recreational events that celebrate winter, such as a winter festival with ice sculptures and organized outdoor activities would offer a recreational highlight that does not currently exist. (see Arts and Culture - Festivals and Cultural Events.)

Increased focus on winter recreational facilities such as a natural ice skating course, a more extensive network of cross country ski trails, and sponsored nighttime walks on trails along the Red River will help encourage residents to venture outdoors with friends and family.

BENEFITS

Recreational opportunities improve physical and mental health year-round. A general population that stays more physically active and socially engaged throughout the year is less prone to depression and diseases that are at least partially the result of isolation and inactivity. Recreational opportunities that focus on health, physical fitness and culture also help to discourage the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

Recreational opportunities often become a catalyst for residents and visitors to piggyback other social get-togethers and recreational events between families, friends, church groups, and neighborhoods.

Health benefits translate into economic benefits, as a community that is healthier overall can focus more on preventative care and less on treating diseases. This reduces overall healthcare costs and results in a higher level of disposable income for citizens. Communities become known for their year-round recreational opportunities, spurring tourism and heightened interest in the community by businesses and prospective residents.

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FROM MINDMIXER

Indoor playgrounds would be a welcome addition for those who want to keep their kids active during inclement weather. – Chris F

FROM MINDMIXER

I thought the idea of a small skating rink downtown was really cool. Would be a fun way to get more people downtown and would be fun for people watching when downtown shopping or eating. - MikeFGO

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CASE STUDY



The Depot Rink

Minneapolis, MN

The Depot Rink was named one of the top ten best places in the United States to ice skate. This historic Downtown Minneapolis train shed has transformed to an indoor ice skating rink with floor to ceiling windows showcasing the Minneapolis Skyline. The rink is open for public skating at a fee, but can also be reserved for private parties. The Depot Rink is associated with the Depot Hotel, which is also the home to the Waterpark at the Depot.

Source: <http://www.thedepotminneapolis.com/ice-rink.php>



The Forks

Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Forks is located in the heart of downtown of Winnipeg at the junction of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers. Ownership, management, and continuing renewal of the site is the responsibility of the Forks North Portage Partnership. In addition to the variety of shopping opportunities available to visitors, The Forks has a variety of year round recreational events for all ages including; The Children's Museum, Riverwalk, Bee2gether Bikes, and the Oodena Celebration Circle. Along with the year-round activities at The Forks, a variety of signature events are planned each year which include; the Arctic Glacier Winter Park, Summer on the Scotiabank Stage, Skating Trails, and the Scotiabank Festival of Fools.

Source: <http://www.theforks.com/events/signature-events>

INITIATIVE 04

REGIONAL RECREATIONAL AMENITY



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Study suitability potential sites for a regional recreational amenity.
- Create partnerships between local governments, nonprofits, and philanthropic organizations to explore funding options.

DESCRIPTION

A regional recreation amenity, such as a water park, indoor athletic center, conservatory, or expanded zoo would build community and increase the health of residents by bringing people from across the region together to participate in healthy, fun activities. This facility is also an economic development tool and can be used to attract people from the Metropolitan area and beyond to Fargo. If strategically located, the regional recreation destination can encourage visitors to stay and shop or eat in Fargo. Additionally, this kind of facility could be recognized nationally and attract creative workers to Fargo.

BENEFITS

A year round regional recreation amenity can increase the health of residents and build community. It can attract visitors from surrounding areas and spending both at the recreational facilities and in restaurants and shops in Fargo. Recreation amenities contribute to the livability of an area, and can attract creative workers and firms.



CASE STUDY

**Garfield Park Conservatory,
Chicago, IL**

The Garfield Park Conservatory, constructed in 1906-7 and updated in 1994, is one of the largest conservatories in the United States. Exhibits such as the Palm Room and 300 year old ferns give visitors a respite from the cold Chicago winters.

**Wilderness Territory Resort,
Wisconsin Dells, WI**

Owned by a private company, this 600 acre indoor water park is America's largest water park.

INITIATIVE 05

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify shortages of healthcare access, healthcare programs, and specialty services that are required to fill the needs of the community.
- Monitor the location of emergency health care services relative to the location of the population.
- Refer underinsured and uninsured residents to needed health services while assuring provision of health care for all.
- Collaborate with transportation services offered by public, quasi-public and private organizations to provide transportation for residents who have no other means of getting to a healthcare provider.

DESCRIPTION

Fargo is a regional health care provider and the health care sector is a fundamental part of the local economy. Fargo will continue to improve the public's access to healthcare. This will be accomplished through regular monitoring of public health trends by Fargo Cass Public Health in cooperation with the state of North Dakota and private healthcare providers, as well as others who work with the public in a manner that allows them to be aware of emerging health trends and healthcare needs.

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FROM MINDMIXER

What Fargo should do is continue to promote health care developments in the city that give residents more options and more access to the latest in healthcare technology. - fmmetroplex

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This initiative can also be accomplished by ensuring that Fargo Cass Public Health has the resources to quickly and effectively respond to societal and disease-related trends that require health-related public education or access to healthcare services. Working with private healthcare providers such as Sanford Health and Essentia, as well as independent healthcare providers, to address a variety of issues such as the supply and demand of healthcare services, location of emergency facilities, prevention programs, nutritional services, and specialty services will also increase health care opportunities.

The importance of health care to the community, the growing demand for quality care, and the potential collaborations between private and public providers creates an opportunity for Fargo to emerge as a national leader for how integrated health care can improve health, lead to better community development, and power economic growth.

BENEFITS

A community with access to healthcare translates into a community with a higher quality of life. When citizens have straight-forward access to healthcare, they are more likely to seek preventative care and spend less time being unwell before seeking healthcare services. Earlier care prevents continued deterioration of health and lowers healthcare costs.

From an economic standpoint, access to healthcare can be expected to result in less time away from work, and more disposable income to spend on other goods and services. Healthcare services attract visitors from other communities, helping to stimulate the local economy.

Finally, access to healthcare is typically one of the factors that attracts people to live in a community. The reputation of a community with high healthcare accessibility attracts both users and providers of healthcare.

CASE STUDY

**Mayo Clinic – Rochester, Minnesota**

The Mayo Clinic began as St. Mary's Hospital in 1889 to provide medical care after a devastating tornado. The Mayo Clinic is now noted as one of the largest and most respected medical facilities in the world. Over 30,000 people work for the Clinic which welcomes over 750,000 patients and families to Rochester every year. The City of Rochester has embraced the presence of the Mayo Clinic through its years of development, providing a variety of services to supplement employees and visitors. Downtown Rochester houses many of the clinic's primary buildings.

Sources: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/>, <http://www.rochestermn.gov/default.aspx>, <http://www.city-data.com/us-cities/The-Midwest/Rochester-Economy.html>, <http://socialmedia.mayoclinic.org/2011/03/31/save-the-dates-october-social-media-summit-in-rochester/>, <http://weezyschannel.hubpages.com/hub/mayoclinic>

CASE STUDY

**Public Health Departments of Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale Counties, Georgia**

The three counties of Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale, located on the east side of Atlanta, work together to provide a range of public health services to the residents of Georgia. Services provided include clinical services, epidemiology services, environmental health services, Women's, Child & Adolescent Health Services, and Emergency Preparedness. The department works out of thirteen different offices to service the large geographic region. There are also a variety of clinics available throughout the three counties, to provide the best access to affordable health care for each resident. The department provides a variety of information for residents on their website, including topics such as emergency preparedness for your vehicle.

Source: <http://www.gnrhealth.com/>

