



Norwalk Health Department

2023-2024 Strategic Plan



Last Updated March 30, 2023

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Overview of the Process

A team was formed in the spring of 2022 to plan the process for updating the health department's strategic plan, enlist a facilitator to engage staff in planning sessions, develop and launch a stakeholder survey, and complete an environmental scan that could guide determination of priorities. The Planning Team included Deanna D'Amore, Director of Health, Megan Faugno, Special Projects Manager, and Aniella Fignon, former Public Health Program Associate/current Project Coordinator. After the Planning Team completed the prework, a group of Norwalk Health Department staff and Norwalk Board of Health members met on July 7, 2022, to participate in the first strategic planning session for the 2023-2024 plan. Staff at all levels of the department were represented and participants included leadership, management, and frontline staff. Deanna D'Amore began the session with introductions and an overview of the strategic planning process. Consultant Emily Melnick then reviewed the purpose of mission, vision, and value statements, and participants decided to form a subgroup that would update the health department vision and value statements. Next, Deanna D'Amore and Aniella Fignon presented an environmental scan on the current organizational context and future outlook. Findings included data on community health, health department revenue and expenditures, evaluator and stakeholder perspectives on effectiveness and efficiency of the health department, past strategic plan implementation progress, state/national/legislative updates, and results of the Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs (PH WINS) assessment.

Next, the group engaged in a strength, weaknesses/areas for improvement, opportunities, and threats/challenges (SWOT) analysis of the health department and external forces of influence using Google Jamboard. Participants then joined three small breakout groups to discuss the environmental scan and SWOT findings and to generate ideas for potential strategic issues to focus on and address over the next two years. Representatives from each breakout group summarized their discussions, and Emily Melnick facilitated a discussion among the entire group to refine ideas and to generate a list of potential strategic issues. Deanna D'Amore concluded the session by requesting that any final thoughts about the health department's SWOT analysis or the tentative areas of focus be submitted electronically within the following week.

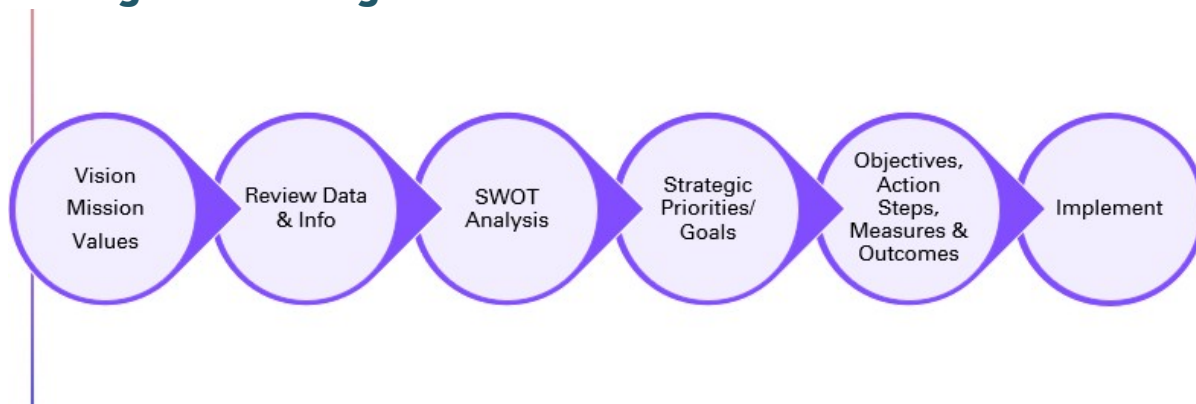
On July 12, Deanna D'Amore emailed the group to describe how a prioritization matrix would be used to narrow the list of potential strategic priorities. Participants individually evaluated the six identified potential strategic focus areas against each of the prioritization criteria (core public health service/function; value to customer; fiscal return on investment; health return on investment; strategic alignment; readiness; and importance to risk mitigation) and assigned ratings on a scale from 1 to 5 on how well they fit the criteria. The ratings were averaged and then were placed within the matrix and calculated with assigned weights that were established in previous strategic planning processes and updates by staff and Board members. Based on this analysis, five strategic priorities, as well as cross-cutting themes of climate change and health equity, were identified and presented to the group.

Between July and September, a workgroup convened monthly to reimagine the health department’s vision and value statements. After discussing the intended spirit of vision and values, the workgroup used brainwriting exercises to draft statements via Google Jamboard and continued brainstorming independently. A survey was conducted to select preferred statements. In addition, the workgroup developed a list of words that capture the essence of the health department and its community. The list was used to develop a word cloud, which was produced in November, to be used on health department documents and media as appropriate.

Workgroups were created for each of the five strategic priorities, and a separate workgroup was dedicated to considering how climate change would be incorporated across those five areas. Staff also agreed to serve as workgroup leaders and facilitators, including Theresa Argondezzi, Megan Faugno, Aniella Fignon, Darleen Hoffer, Karla Rodriguez-Alicea, and Brian Weeks. On September 8th, Deanna D’Amore led a training for the workgroup facilitators to ensure consistency in the process of developing goal statements, objectives, strategies, deliverables, and timeframes. Each workgroup met up to three times between mid-September and mid-October. Each workgroup reviewed the mission and updated vision and value statements, examples of pertinent issues that were raised in the initial planning session, and the workgroup’s purpose and tasks. Brainwriting exercises were used to elicit ideas about how to frame the goal, critical objectives for addressing the goal, and the strategies, deliverables, timeframe, and team members needed to achieve the goal. Later, facilitators and/or Megan Faugno coalesced and organized workgroup products into a draft workplan.

The Planning Team met on a biweekly basis to refine the workplan and develop other materials needed for the strategic plan. On November 22, Deanna D’Amore presented the revised vision and value statements, as well as the word cloud, strategic priorities, and goal statements, to the full Board of Health. The workplans were further revised in February 2023 and finalized in March 2023. The Planning Team worked with the senior management team to set a schedule for report outs on strategic plan implementation. Each member of the senior management team will report on progress once a month during senior management team meetings. Annual progress will be reported to the Board of Health.

Strategic Planning Process Flowchart



Strategic Plan Participants

Theresa Argondezzi, MPH, CHES, Assistant Director of Health, Community Health

Pam Bates, BSN, RN, Immunization Action Coordinator

Cindy Bermudez, Housing Inspector

Kevin Closter, RS, Sanitarian

Deanna D'Amore, MPH, Director of Health

Lamond Daniels, LCSW, MPA, Chief of Community Services

Patricia DiPietro, Administrative Technician

Aniella Fignon, JD, MPH, Project Coordinator

Megan Faugno, Special Projects Manager

Elsa Garcia, Administrative Assistant

Jahliah Green, Health Education Associate

Darleen Hoffer, RN, Supervisor of Clinical Services

Glenn Iannaccone, MPA, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Ken Lalime, RPh, Board of Health Member

Bill Mooney, RS, Assistant Director of Health, Environmental Health

Theresa Quell, PhD, MSN, RN, Board of Health Member

Karla Rodriguez-Alicea, Health Operations Manager

Donna Schlegel, Volunteer Coordinator

Kelley Tomlinson, MPH, CHES, Health Educator

Shari Van Ness, Supervisor of Contact Tracing

Brian Weeks, MSPH, CIC, Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics

Facilitator:

Emily Melnick, MA

Vision

Healthy Norwalkers thriving in our vibrant community.

Mission

The Mission of the Norwalk Health Department is to prevent and control the spread of disease, promote a healthy environment, and protect the quality of life within our changing community.

Value Statements

We value health equity and our role in promoting optimal health for everyone in our diverse community.

We value quality and consistency by incorporating public health standards and best practices into our operations and maintaining our status as a nationally accredited health department.

We value ethical behavior, accountability, integrity, and transparency.

We value high levels of customer satisfaction and community trust.

We value the development and growth of our staff, volunteers, and the future public health workforce.

We value collaboration and partnerships to improve community health by sharing information, resources, and ideas.

Strategic Priorities

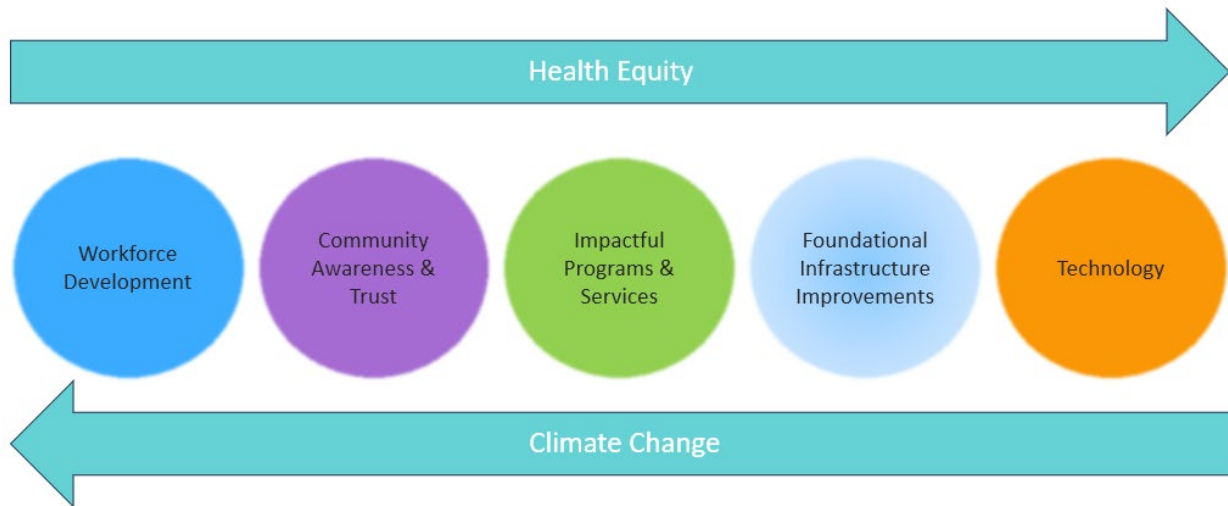
Workforce Development

Community Awareness and Trust

Evaluation of Programs and Services

Foundational Infrastructure Improvements

Technology



Goal 1: Continue to build and support a diverse, happy, and skilled workforce

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	
1.1	Update and implement the workforce development plan and strategies	1.1.1: Update the Workforce Development Plan and incorporate addressing gaps that were identified through workforce assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Workforce assessment ➤ Final WFD Plan 	Project Coordinator	January 2023 – June 2023
		1.1.2: Implement the Workforce Development Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tracking tools ➤ Training materials ➤ Sign-in sheets 	Project Coordinator	July 2023 – December 2024
		1.1.3: Encourage staff to complete individual professional development plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of individual professional development plans created for staff members 	Senior Management Team, Project Coordinator	January 2023 – December 2024
1.2	Recruit and promote the development of a qualified and diverse public health workforce	1.2.1: Upon vacancies, review job descriptions with a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens. Update descriptions, which may include changing minimum qualifications to broaden the pool of eligible applicants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revisions/updated job descriptions 	Senior Management Team	January 2023 – December 2024
		1.2.2: Consult with the City's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer on recruitment and hiring efforts for recommendations on improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting notes ➤ List of recommendations 	Director of Health, Asst Dir Health (Community Health), Supervisor of Clinical Services	January 2023 – June 2023
		1.2.3: Collaborate with community groups and academic institutions to support recruitment for specific positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Examples of partnerships and assistance with recruitment 	Director of Health, Asst Dir Health (Community Health), Supervisor of Clinical Services	July 2023 – December 2024
		1.2.4: Partner with academic institutions to develop the future workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of written agreements with academic institutions ➤ # of student internships ➤ # guest lectures given by NHD staff 	Senior Management Team	January 2023 – December 2024

Objective		Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.3	Refine the department onboarding process and address existing onboarding gaps	1.3.1: Update onboarding policies and procedures for staff, interns, and volunteers and develop standardized materials and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Volunteer Management Guide ➤ Internship Policy ➤ Revised New Employee Orientation Policy ➤ Onboarding Toolkit (including forms, checklists, NHD Orientation PowerPoint, Emergency Preparedness orientation, External Communications Policy, Branding Guide, etc.) 	Project Coordinator, ERT Volunteer Coordinator, PHEP Coordinator, Director of Health	January 2023 – June 2023
		1.3.2: Identify and address gaps in orientation for employees onboarded during the pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Survey to assess staff onboarding gaps and findings ➤ Schedule staff that need review of orientation ➤ % of staff completed 	Project Coordinator, Senior Management Team, Director of Health, staff hired within past 3 years	Jan 2023 – April 2023
		1.3.3: Develop a job guide template for NHD positions to assist with onboarding new hires and succession planning. Pilot guide with a minimum of two positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Job guide template ➤ Two examples of completed guides 	Project Coordinator	July 2023 – June 2024
1.4	Build a supportive work environment	1.4.1: Develop a supportive work environment policy that includes provisions around employee wellness, work-life balance, employee recognition, and inclusive culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1 policy or set of policies 	Project Coordinator, Public Health Program Associate, Health Education Associate, Special Projects Manager	April 2023 – August 2023
		1.4.2: Implement the supportive work environment policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of employees recognized ➤ Efforts to support staff improve their mental wellbeing following the COVID-19 pandemic stressors, in collaboration with Personnel and EAP ➤ Examples of employee wellness activities 	Public Health Program Associate, Senior Management Team	July 2023 – December 2024
		1.4.3: Utilize findings from the Public Health WINS survey and other sources of staff feedback to improve the work environment and improve employee satisfaction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At least two examples of improvement efforts, one of which includes addressing safety 	Public Health Program Associate, Senior Management Team	March 2023- December 2024

Objective		Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.5	Increase capacity for staff to address climate change and advance health equity	1.5.1: Incorporate climate change and health equity trainings within the workforce development plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of trainings offered to staff ➤ List of trainings staff participate in ➤ # of staff completing each training session 	Project Coordinator, Public Health Program Associate, Special Projects Manager, Asst Dir Health (Community Health)	March 2023 – June 2023
		1.5.2: Research training opportunities and provide access to trainings.			July 2023 – December 2024

Goal 2: Strengthen community awareness and trust of the Health Department

Objective		Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.1	Provide clear, reliable, accessible communication about the Health Department and public health topics	2.1.1: Create a process and budget for consistent translation of communications materials into Spanish and Haitian Creole in order to provide equitable access to information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Process map and/or description ➤ Budget 	Asst Dir Health (Community Health)	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
		2.1.2: Create a process for maintaining current, up-to-date, consistent communications (e.g., website, print materials).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Process map and/or description ➤ Tracking spreadsheet 	Health Educator	June 2023 – June 2024
		2.1.3: Ensure that external communications meet relevant CLAS standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assessment tool 	Asst Dir Health (Community Health)	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
2.2	Create consistent, sustainable methods for meaningful and equitable community engagement, dialogue, and feedback	2.2.1: Create and implement customer/client survey(s) to gauge perceived quality of service provided and gain insight into other community needs/requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2 completed surveys per year, 4 in total 	Senior Management Team	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
		2.2.2: Create consistent and meaningful methods of community feedback and representation (public forums, Community Ambassadors/Advisory Committee, focus groups, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2 examples of methods ➤ Summary of findings 	Asst Dir Health (Community Health), Program Staff in all divisions	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
2.3	Increase the visibility of the Health Department in the community and increase the community's understanding of where local health fits in the larger public health system	2.3.1: Enhance existing health department social media channels with more visibility, more photos/videos, and analyses of insights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of social media engagements 	Health Educator and Health Education Associate	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
		2.3.2: Explore new (e.g., YouTube) and innovative social media methods/channels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of new social media methods/channels researched and used 		Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
		2.3.3: Strengthen collaboration with community/regional partners on public health initiatives and messaging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Examples of collaboration and messaging 	Senior Management Team and Staff	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
		2.3.4: Become a spotlight in the Norwalk Library regular newsletter with updates and opportunities for questions/feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # of newsletters with health department topics 	Asst Dir Health (Community Health), Health Educator and	July 2023 – Dec 2023
		2.3.5: Update Programs and Services brochure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revised brochure 	Health Education Associate	Jan 2023 – March 2023

Goal 3: Provide impactful programs and services that support community needs

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe	
3.1	Facilitate partnerships to enhance our programs and services and better meet community needs	3.1.1: Assess gaps where external partner support is needed for clinical services and community health initiatives.	➤ Gap analysis	Supervisor of Clinical Services, Asst Dir Health (Community Health)	April – Oct 2023
		3.1.2: Identify potential community providers/external partners to support programs and services.	➤ Meeting notes		
		3.1.3: Work with corporation counsel to set up formal processes and agreements for sharing resources and partnering with external organizations.	➤ MOUs/agreements/ contracts	Director of Health, Asst Dir Health (Community Health), Supervisor of Clinical Services	April – Oct 2023
		3.1.4: Enhance new and existing partnerships to implement community health improvement initiatives.	➤ Meeting notes ➤ Examples of partnerships	Asst Dir Health (Community Health) and Staff	Jan 2023 – Dec 2024
3.2	Evaluate clinical programs and services and implement improvements	3.2.1: Conduct a program evaluation (including economic evaluation) of the Travel Clinic program.	➤ Program evaluation design and framework ➤ Evaluation findings	Supervisor of Clinical Services, Director of Health, Project Coordinator, Special Projects Manager, Program Dir of Epi & Informatics, Health Operations Manager, Medical Director	March 2023 – Dec 2023
		3.2.2: Implement improvements to strengthen the Sexual Health Clinic.	➤ Increased clinic hours/days	Supervisor of Clinical Services, Director of Health, Medical Director	April 2023 – Dec 2023
		3.2.3: Determine billable services and assess potential new revenues for Sexual Health Clinic.	➤ Summary of findings ➤ List of billable services	Health Operations Manager, Director of Health, Supervisor of Clinical Services, Medical Director, Medical Biller	May 2023 – Dec 2023
		3.2.4: Identify supports necessary to implement and sustain instituting billable programs/services.	➤ Written plan to bill for billable programs/services	Health Operations Manager, Director of Health, Supervisor of Clinical Services, Medical Biller, Receptionist	Jan 2024 – Dec 2024

Goal 4: Strengthen systems, processes, plans, and policies to assure a high performing health department

Objective		Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
4.1	Maintain PHAB accreditation	4.1.1: Review reaccreditation standards and measures (version 2022).	➤ Gap assessment and identification of next steps	Project Coordinator	April 2023
		4.1.2: Complete annual report.	➤ Submit annual report to PHAB	Project Coordinator, Director of Health	Jan-March 2023; Jan-March 2024
4.2	Update and implement the Quality Improvement Plan	4.2.1: Reinvigorate QI workgroup.	➤ Workplan members selected and convened ➤ # meetings scheduled	Project Coordinator	Jan 2023
		4.2.2: Conduct a QI culture assessment.	➤ Summary of assessment results	Project Coordinator, QI Workgroup	March 2023 – May 2023
		4.2.3: Update the QI plan.	➤ Final QI Plan		Feb 2023 – June 2023
		4.2.4: Complete a minimum of two QI projects per year.	➤ # QI projects completed		Jan 2023- Dec 2024
4.3	Continue to take a leadership role in the Community Health Improvement Initiative	4.3.1: Complete Norwalk CHIP.	➤ Updated CHIP	Asst Dir of Health (Community Health), Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics	Jan 2023-Dec 2024
		4.3.2 Complete CHIP monitoring and evaluation.	➤ Description of the process used to track outcomes (meets PHAB 5.2.1 A (e)) ➤ Evaluation metrics		Jan 2024 – Dec 2024
4.4	Implement improved electronic grants filing and organization system	4.4.1: Migrate all official grant documentation from FY 2021-22 forward to new grants filing system.	➤ Completed file folders and documentation in place	Project Coordinator, Special Projects Manager, Senior Management Team	Jan-Jun 2023

Objective		Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
4.5	Update written policies, procedures, plans, and supporting materials	4.5.1: Complete review of all policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tracking spreadsheet ➤ Revised policies 	Project Coordinator, Senior Management, Director of Health, Board of Health	Jan 2023-Dec 2024
		4.5.2: Review and revise performance improvement plans and policies (QI, strategic plan, CHIP, performance management, workforce development) to strengthen linkages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revised plans and policies ➤ Narrative description(s) of linkages 	Director of Health, Project Coordinator, Senior Management Team	Jan 2023-Dec 2024
		4.5.3: Create materials to summarize emergency plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Executive summaries for all emergency plans 	Project Coordinator, PHEP Coordinator	Jan-June 2023
		4.5.4: Document ERT program operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adopt a written guide for implementing the ERT program 	ERT Volunteer Coordinator, PHEP Coordinator, Project Coordinator	Jan-Dec 2023
4.6	Strengthen peer sharing and learning within the department	4.6.1: Assess staff knowledge of department activities and efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All-staff internal survey 	Senior Management Team, Public Health Program Associate	April-May 2023
		4.6.2: Hold quarterly department-wide staff meetings and include opportunities for presentations and updates from staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ # all-staff meetings held annually ➤ Meeting agendas & materials 	Director of Health, Public Health Program Associate	Jan 2023-Dec 2024
		4.6.3: Create a monthly update/email highlighting a program, division, or person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly internal department email/update. 	Public Health Program Associate, Health Educator	Jun 2023-Dec 2024
4.7	Position health department to engage in more initiatives to address climate change	4.7.1: Meet with internal City partners to clarify roles and inventory existing local government climate change work and planned initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inventory of related projects, programs, services, etc. 	Project Coordinator, Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics, Asst Directors of Health, Director of Health	July 2023-Dec 2024
		4.7.2: Participate in City's climate change planning and policy efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meeting attendance/notes ➤ Narrative description of participation 		Jan-Dec 2024
		4.7.3: Identify intersections between climate change and CHA/CHIP using a health equity lens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "Crosswalk" evaluation 		Jan-June 2024
		4.7.4: Identify new public health-related climate initiative opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ List/summary 		Jan-Dec 2024

Goal 5: Effectively use and enhance technology to optimize the delivery of public health services at the Health Department

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	Objective	Strategies/Actions	Deliverables/ Measures	Responsibility	Timeframe
5.1	Maintain a secure information management infrastructure to ensure security and confidentiality	5.1.1: Utilize secure communications tools and methods for confidential/sensitive information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Secure platform(s) ➤ Updated confidentiality policy reflecting new tools and methods (e.g., email encryption, Veoci, etc.) ➤ Staff training materials and records 	Project Coordinator, Supervisor of Clinical Services, Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics	Jan 2023- Dec 2024
		5.1.2: Work with a consultant to assess the Health Department's compliance with HIPAA requirements and guide the establishment of a hybrid entity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Updated policies and procedures ➤ HIPAA risk assessment ➤ Hybrid entity policy 	Director of Health, Supervisor of Clinical Services, Project Coordinator, Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics	Jan 2023- Dec 2024
5.2	Improve operational efficiency with application of user-friendly technological solutions	5.2.1: Explore plan/process to update from FoxPro for revenue/expenditures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Minutes from meetings with City Departments 	Health Operations Manager, Director of Health, Administrative Staff	July 2023- Dec 2024
		5.2.2: Implement new environmental health system to improve tracking for field staff and public accessibility for license renewals/fees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Secured funding to support transition ➤ Bid documents/RFP ➤ Contract with vendor 	Asst Dir of Health (Environmental Health), Project Coordinator, Director of Health	July 2023- Dec 2024
		5.2.3: Convert paper records to electronic format, where feasible, to reduce clutter and improve organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ #/% of paper conversion to electronic format 	Asst Dir Health (Environmental Health), Supervisor of Clinical Services, Health Operations Manager, Project Coordinator	July 2023- Dec 2024
5.3	Enhance use of software as a service and other solutions for health informatics and public data accessibility	5.3.1: Expand public access technologies to inform/guide public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public data/analyses portals for COVID-19 and other public health topics 	Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics	Jan 2023- Dec 2024
		5.3.2: Implement Veoci software to support surveys, track/document grant and health activities, distribute communications, help inform decision-making, support emergency preparedness, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contract with vendor ➤ Implemented tools and methods 	Program Director of Epidemiology & Informatics, Director of Health, PHEP Coordinator	