Minnesota Healthy Homes and Communities
Practical Vision Elements

What do we want to see in place in the State of Minnesota in three to five years as a result of collaboration among health, housing, and community development programs?

Develop Resources and Services

- Establish a Centralized and Accessible Information Clearinghouse
  - One organization designated to provide leadership for Healthy Housing and Communities (HH & C)
  - Central location for HH & C information and resources
  - One stop shop for families to access HH & C services
  - User-friendly HH & C programs and regulations
  - Access to electronic resources

- Provide increased, sustainable public funding for healthy homes and communities
  - Prioritized funding for residential housing issues
  - Funding for incentives and rebates to reduce healthy housing costs

- Provide integrated health programs
- Ensure stable funding for transit/biking/walking
- Volunteer transportation for kid’s activities (help for working parents)
- Mold mitigation programs offered by agencies
- Access to mental health services (reducing stigma)
- Community center/library as the to-go-to resource
- Referral list of community programs for service providers and residents (fitness, housing, cooking)
  - How-to classes

Increase Public Awareness and Education

- Comprehensive public education campaign
- Families making informed housing choices
- Community based efforts using local expertise and partners
- Policy and financial incentives to encourage behavior change
- Create HH & C movement starting in elementary school (teacher training)
- Market homes and apartments as “healthy homes”
  - Healthy homes registry (especially for renters)
  - Real estate market tracking by healthy homes and communities attributes
- Referral list of community programs for service providers and residents (fitness, housing, cooking)
Practical Vision Elements (continued)

Increased Opportunities for Social Connectedness
• People live, work, and play in the same community
• Referral list of local activities, how-to classes
• Police presence on foot, bike, and horse
• Neighbors know neighbors’ full names
• Latch key program
• Family members live in the same neighborhood
• Block clubs for social and neighborhood advocacy
• Neighborhood watch—neighbors helping neighbors
• Pet parks

Develop Capacity in the Medical and Referral System
• HH & C issues recognized by health plans/insurers
• HH & C integrated into primary care services
• Educated medical providers
• Referral system for healthy homes interventions
• Comprehensive network for HH & C services

Create Healthier Built Environment
• Stronger bike/walk/transit, connecting suburbs to city, towns to regional centers
  – Connect bicycle trails to destinations and nearby communities
  – Bike parking at all schools
  – Sidewalks and paths friendly to users of all ages and abilities
  – Clearance of winter sidewalks, intersections
• Decreased food desserts
  – Access to grocery stores, farmers markets, community gardens, and affordable produce
• Attend to Neighborhood Beauty and Access to Nature
  – Beautification projects on main thoroughfares
  – Trees/gardens along residential streets
  – Neighborhood has mentor gardener
  – Community gardens
• Safe housing and neighborhood choices for lower-income families
• Convenient electrical car hook-up stations
• Solar panels on business roofs to support grid
Practical Vision Elements (continued)

Adoption of Safe, Healthy Housing and Healthy Communities Policies and Corresponding Regulations

• Foster health-centric leadership with a shared vision among government levels and departments
  - Public policy supports healthy lifestyles (exercise, healthy eating, no tobacco, low/no alcohol)
• Holistic approach to the built environment and programs
• Coalition established to address systemic problems
• State guidelines and standards for health and safety hazards
  - HH & C standards required for housing interventions that are publicly funded
  - Active radon systems required for new construction
  - Smoke-free requirements for foster and child care
• Smoke-free multi-unit housing and smoke-free rental property enforced
• Coordinated funding across sectors
  - Pooled funding for HH & C remediation, outreach, and education
• Statewide adoption of International Code Council/Green Building Codes
  - One building official per county statewide

Implement Widespread and Comprehensive Healthy Housing Inspections

• Standardized (and simple) healthy housing assessment
• Healthy Housing assessments integrated into all inspectional service
  - Cross-disciplinary training and certification of inspectors
  - Housing inspectors trained/funded to do environmental healthy homes assessments
• Comprehensive (inter- and intra-agency) referral/tracking system
• Uniform enforcement of statewide housing/building codes
• Red flag referrals for housing inspections
• HH&C assessments of non-licensed day cares

Ensure Evaluation Infrastructure and Documented Outcomes

• Clearly defined HH & C goals and metrics
• Document Return on Investment (ROI)
• Build upon existing data system
• One stop shop for HH & C program data, policies, and metrics
  - Integrated housing and health data/survey
• Target high risk areas