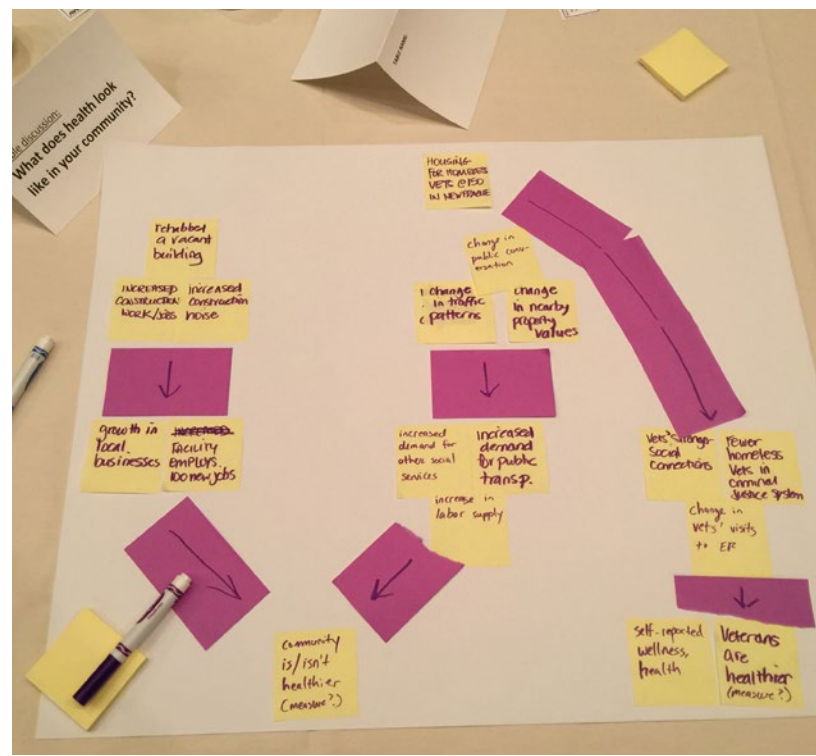
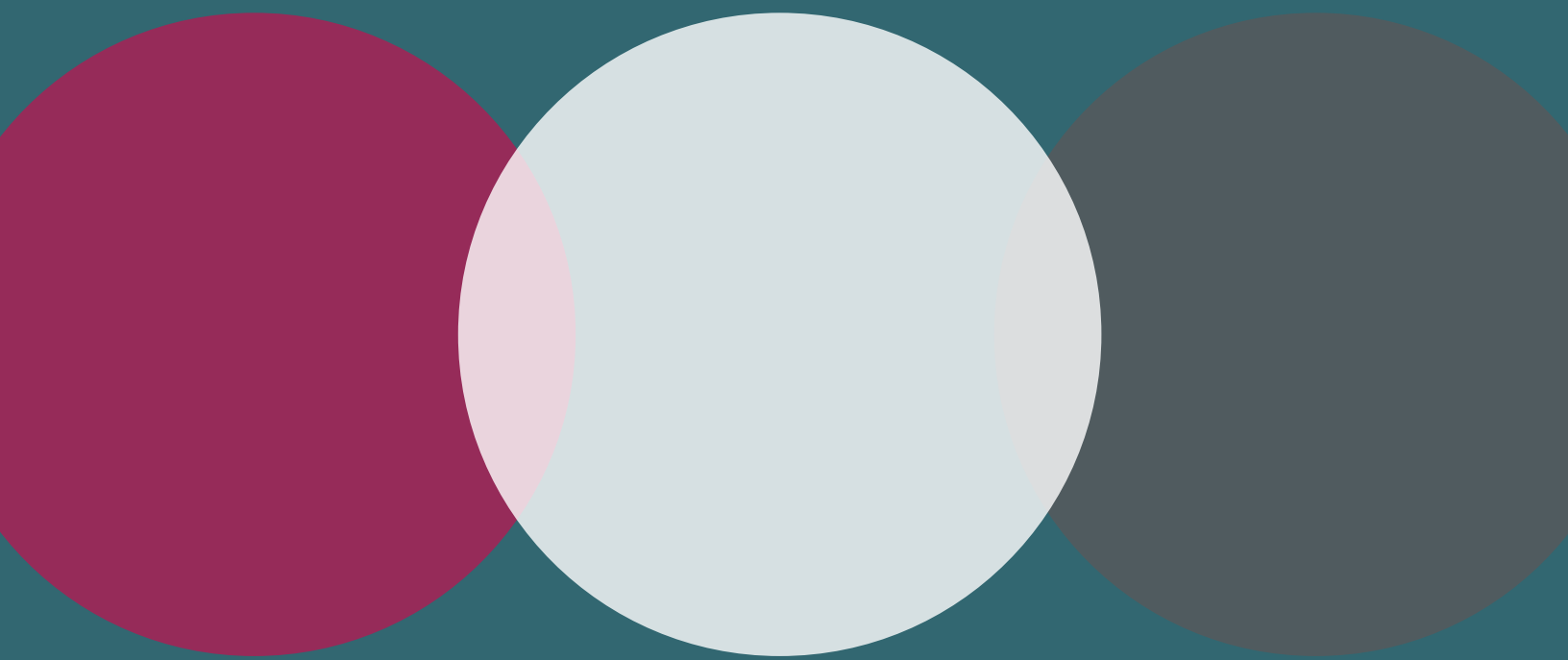


MINNESOTA HIA ACTION GUIDE



ADVANCING CAPACITY AND UNDERSTANDING FOR HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN MINNESOTA



MINNESOTA HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT COALITION

www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hia/

The Minnesota Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Coalition is a diverse group of professionals from government agencies, nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, health care organizations, and foundations interested in incorporating health into decision-making through the use of HIA. This guide was created to advance HIA capacity and understanding in Minnesota and will be updated as needed.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS GUIDE

WHAT IS A HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

TALKING POINTS

HIA PROJECTS IN MINNESOTA

SECTOR BREAKDOWN

HIA PROJECTS IN MINNESOTA

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HIA READINESS QUESTIONS

HUMAN IMPACT PARTNERS: IS HIA RIGHT FOR YOU?

MINNESOTA HIA RESOURCES

TOOLS, DATA, & ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

MINNESOTA HIA RESOURCES

GUIDES, REPORTS, & SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is an evidence-based tool used to influence decisions on policies, plans, and projects before they are finalized to create more equitable, healthier communities.

EVIDENCE-BASED TOOL

- » Also known as HIA.
- » HIAs combine scientific data, public health expertise, and stakeholder and community input.
- » HIAs evaluate real life conditions that affect health and well-being including economic, political, social, psychological, and environmental factors. This could range from air quality to living wages.
- » HIAs promote cross-sector collaborations to bring health considerations to projects outside the health sector.
- » More than 350 HIAs have been completed, or are in progress, in the United States, with 30 of those in Minnesota.

USED BEFORE DECISIONS ARE FINALIZED

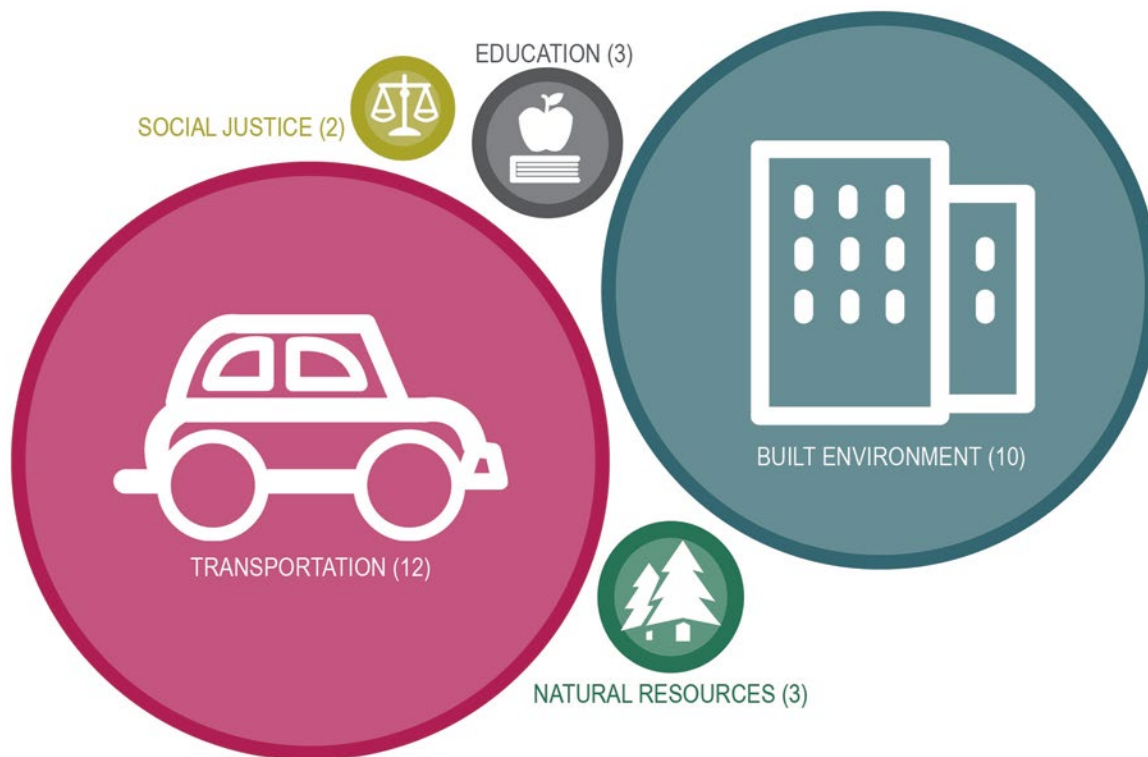
- » HIA is a proactive, collaborative process that precedes decision making – and that's where the value lies.
- » Early and often stakeholder engagement reduces the risk of failure and helps avoid costly fixes down the road.
- » HIA is a rigorous process that includes six steps: Screening, Scoping, Assessment, Recommendations, Reporting, and Monitoring and Evaluation.
- » HIA is a flexible framework that can be completed rapidly by one person or over the course of a year by several people from multiple organizations or communities.

TO CREATE MORE EQUITABLE, HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

- » HIAs attempt to quantify the potential health benefits and adverse health effects of policies, plans, or projects.
- » HIAs examine the equitable distribution of benefits or burdens across different communities or populations. This can lead to more equitable, healthier communities.
- » Because of HIA's participatory process, a main benefit is increased awareness and understanding of health consequences by stakeholders.
- » The experience of an HIA is uniting – it builds relationships to help ensure that health remains a critical consideration.

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA) PROJECTS IN MINNESOTA

SECTOR BREAKDOWN



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- » Gary/New Duluth Small Area Plan HIA (2014)
- » Goodhue County Zoning Districts HIA (2014)
- » Lincoln Park Small Area Plan HIA (2014)
- » Winona County Active Living Plan HIA (2014)
- » Above the Falls HIA (2013)
- » Divine Mercy Development Environmental Assessment Worksheet HIA (2011)
- » Douglas County Comprehensive Plan HIA (2010)
- » St. Louis Park Comprehensive Plan HIA (2010)
- » City of Apple Valley Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update HIA (2008)
- » City of Ramsey Threshold HIA (2008)

NATURAL RESOURCES

- » Region Nine Development Commission Climate Change Adaptation HIA (2016)
- » Marshall GreenStep Cities HIA (2015)
- » St. Paul Emerald Ash Borer Policy HIA (2014)

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- » Payday Loan Reform HIA (2016)
- » Minnesota Drug Sentencing Reform HIA (2016)

EDUCATION

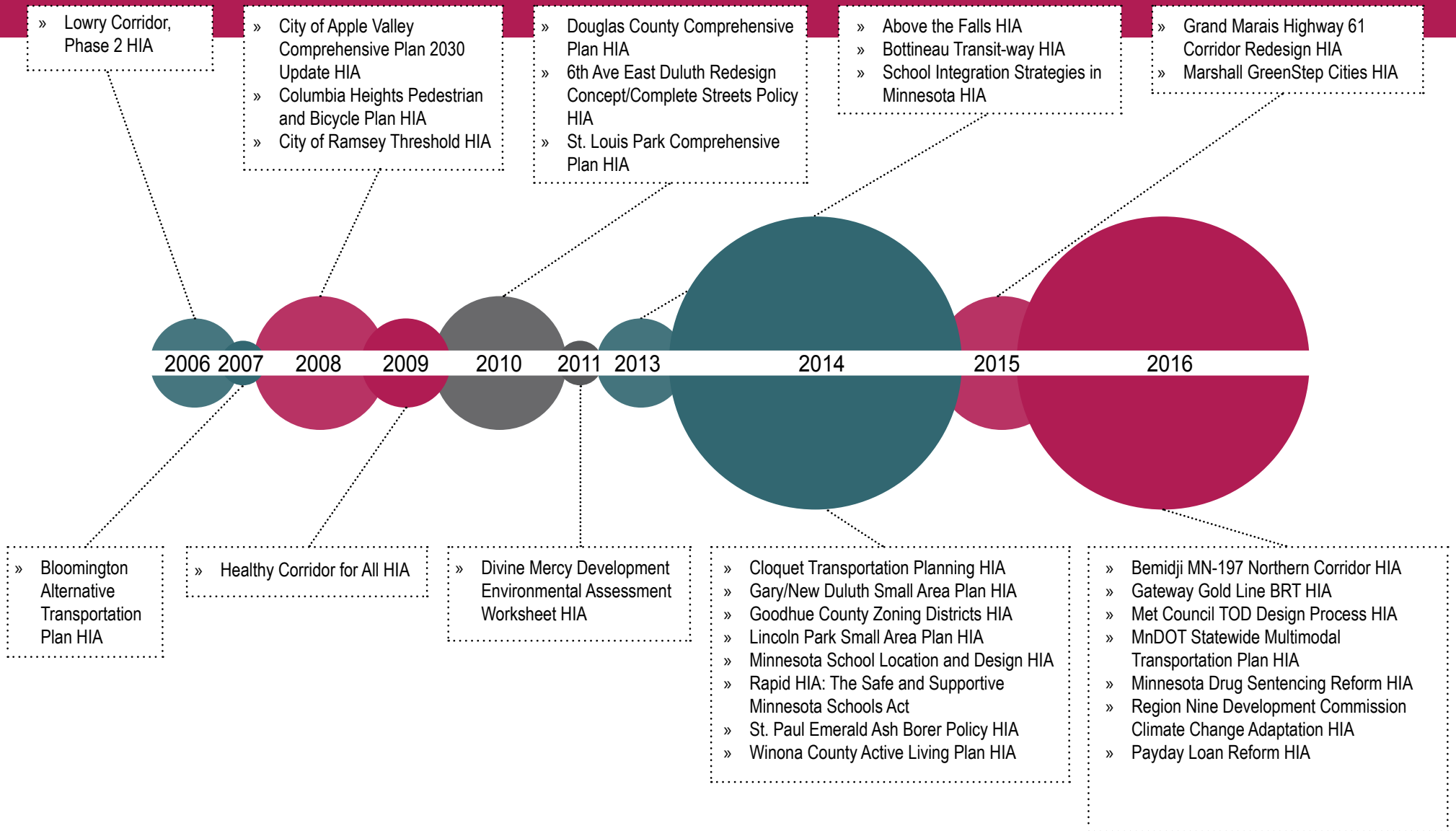
- » Minnesota School Location and Design HIA (2014)
- » Rapid HIA: The Safe and Supportive Minnesota Schools Act (2014)
- » School Integration Strategies in MN HIA (2013)

TRANSPORTATION

- » Bemidji MN-197 Northern Corridor HIA (2016)
- » MnDOT Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan HIA (2016)
- » Met Council TOD Design Process HIA (2016)
- » Gateway Corridor Gold Line BRT HIA (2016)
- » Grand Marais Highway 61 Corridor Redesign HIA (2015)
- » Cloquet Transportation Planning HIA (2014)
- » Bottineau Transitway HIA (2013)
- » 6th Ave East Duluth Redesign Concept/Complete Streets Policy HIA (2010)
- » Healthy Corridor for All HIA (2009)
- » Columbia Heights Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan HIA (2008)
- » Bloomington Alternative Transportation Plan HIA (2007)
- » Lowry Corridor, Phase 2 HIA (2006)

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA) PROJECTS IN MINNESOTA

TIMELINE



HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT FACT SHEET

What is a Health Impact Assessment (HIA)?

Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a practical approach that uses data, research, and stakeholder input to determine a policy or project's impact on the health of a population.

In practice, HIA is a useful way to:

- » Ensure that health and health disparities are considered in decision-making.
- » Engage stakeholders in the process.

How is it Done?

A typical HIA includes six steps:

- » Screening - Determines the need and value of an HIA
- » Scoping - Determines which health impacts to evaluate, the methods for analysis, and the work plan for completing the assessment.
- » Assessment - Provides: a) profile of existing health conditions; b) evaluation of health impacts
- » Recommendations - Provide strategies to manage identified adverse health impacts
- » Reporting - Includes development of the HIA report and communication of findings and recommendations
- » Monitoring - Tracks impacts of the HIA on decision-making processes and the decision, as well as impacts of the decision on health determinants.

Within this general framework, approaches to HIA vary as they are tailored to work with the specific needs, timeline, and resources of each particular project.

When is it Done?

The HIA process is flexible. Generally an HIA should be carried out before a decision is made or policy is implemented to allow the HIA to inform the decision or policy.

Is HIA Time Consuming?

The length of time to complete an HIA can vary. However, even a long and complicated HIA is likely to reduce the time associated with approval of the project being assessed. When recommendations from a well-executed HIA are implemented, the project is less likely to be held up in the approval process or by litigation.

HOW DO HIAs START?

HIAs can be initiated by public health practitioners, community groups, advocacy organizations, affected stakeholders, responsible public agencies, or policy-makers who are interested in the consideration of health in a decision-making process. HIAs can also be required by project-specific legislation or to comply with environmental regulations.

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT FACT SHEET

How Much Does it Cost?

Because HIAs can be applied across a spectrum of practice, there are no standard costs. HIAs are highly tailored to work within individual budgets. Scale and approaches of HIA vary based on:

- » The depth and breadth of the issue
- » The types of research methods employed
- » The extent to which stakeholders are involved in developing the HIA
- » The way that HIA findings are used
- » The relationship to regulatory requirements

Health-focused foundations and public agencies are increasingly interested in funding HIAs as a way to proactively reduce costly negative health outcomes that may be associated with a proposed decision or policy.

What Does an HIA Produce?

Generally, a completed HIA results in a report that documents the HIA process and findings. The report can be used to inform policy-makers and to engage communities in advocating for decisions that are in the best interest of the community's health.

How Do I Know if an HIA is Appropriate?

In order to assess whether an HIA is appropriate, one should consider the potential for the HIA to influence the proposed decision or policy and the capacity of stakeholders and community members to participate in the HIA process. Screening is the first step in conducting an HIA and is designed to determine if an HIA is appropriate.

Is an HIA Ever Required?

Currently, there are few state and no federal regulations that require HIAs. However, because many laws and regulations do require the consideration and analysis of health effects on proposed projects and plans, an HIA can be a great way to comply with these types of requirements. HIAs can also add value to Environmental Impact Assessments.

What is the Result of an HIA?

There are two desired outcomes of an HIA. One is to influence policies and projects in a way that improves health and diminishes health disparities. The other is to engage community members and stakeholders so they understand what impacts health and how to advocate for improving health.

READINESS QUESTIONS

Note: These questions are adapted from Human Impact Partners (with permission) and are intended as a step in the process of evaluating an organization's readiness to conduct an HIA. We intend these questions to be answered as part of a dialogue, not as a test.

What is the decision target?

- » What is the problem your organization is trying to address that involves the use of an HIA?
- » Is there currently a defined project, plan, or policy proposal that is suitable for a Health Impact Assessment? Or is one very likely to be proposed in the immediate future? Please describe the proposal.

What are the health issues?

- » Have neighborhood health issues (defined broadly) been identified as high priorities by community residents or organizations potentially involved in the HIA? If so, which ones?
- » List the most important research questions about the health impacts of the decision that an HIA could answer.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

Why is an HIA warranted?

- » Describe the goal that your organization would set for the Health Impact Assessment.
 - a. Are there known or suspected health or environmental health impacts of the project, plan, or policy being proposed?
 - b. What established community health needs could potentially be addressed by doing an HIA on the project, plan or policy?
 - c. Could identification or quantification of health impacts affect public or political support for the plan, its alternatives, or the policy that is being proposed?
- » Will health questions be considered in other parts of the decision making process (e.g., through other regulatory processes such as Environmental Impact Assessment)?

Who are decision-makers?

- » Who are the decision-makers that you would want to influence with the HIA findings and recommendations?
- » Should public health agencies or other health constituencies be more engaged in the decision-making processes? If so, do you have contacts yet at your county public health department?

READINESS QUESTIONS

Who will be involved in the HIA?

- » Which stakeholders are engaged in or expect to be engaged in the decision-making process? How many community members are likely to engage? How high a priority is this project for stakeholders or community members?
 - a. What is most needed to achieve readiness to conduct the HIA?
 - Education about what an HIA is?
 - Examples of past HIAs so we know what to expect?
 - Training about how to frame health issues when advocating for our project, plan or policy?
- » Do stakeholders or engaged community members currently have the capacity to participate in the HIA?
 - a. Is your organization able to participate in scoping sessions (2 – 3 one to two-hour meetings) to better define research questions?
 - b. Is your organization able to participate in a steering committee to provide oversight and direction for the HIA?
 - c. Are community organizations able to organize and bring residents to a focus group or are they able to conduct a survey?
 - d. Are community members or organizations able to use or communicate results of a HIA?
- » Who put forward the idea of considering an HIA for this project? How will they be involved in the process or communication of the HIA, if at all?
- » Who would be likely to use the results of the HIA?

When will the decision be made?

- » What is the timing of the decision you will use your HIA to influence? How much time would be available for conducting an HIA?

How will the HIA be used?

- » How might the results of the HIA be used to impact the decision-making process by any of the stakeholders involved?

How would your organization use the HIA, based on its specific strengths?

- » On a day-to-day basis, how does your organization prioritize the issues that you work on and/or the strategies you use to work on them? (please select all that apply)
 - a. We go to our membership for guidance
 - b. Staff decides and gets input from committees/board
 - c. We take direction from our national organization
 - d. Other – please describe:
- » Would you describe your organization as primarily providing services, training others to advocate for themselves, advocating for policy changes, or a combination of all three? Please elaborate.

MINNESOTA HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

These resources were compiled on behalf of the Minnesota Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Coalition. Interested in learning more? Visit www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hia or e-mail health.hia@state.mn.us.

TOOLS, DATA, & ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

» **Amherst H. Wilder Foundation - Minnesota Compass**

Minnesota Compass measures progress in Minnesota, tracking trends in topic areas such as education, economy and workforce, health, housing, public safety, and a host of others.

Available online at: www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Minnesota-Compass/Pages/default.aspx

» **Census Reporter**

As a Knight News Challenge-funded project, this site uses information from the U.S. Census Bureau to provide a user-friendly interface for navigating data. Available online at: <https://censusreporter.org/>

» **Design for Health (DFH) - Tools, Research, and Resources**

DFH bridges the gap between the emerging research base on community design and healthy living and local government planning. One of its four primary avenues is to provide evidence-based tools for conducting HIAs.

Available online at: <http://designforhealth.net/>

» **MDH - Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature**

This report provides an overview of Minnesota's health disparities and health inequities, to identify the inequitable conditions that produce health disparities, and make recommendations to advance health equity in Minnesota.

Available online at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/healthequity/ahe_leg_report_020414.pdf

» **Minnesota Tracking Program - HIA Data User Guide**

This guide provides step-by-step instructions about how to access and use data from the Minnesota Tracking Program to conduct a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) using the Data Access Portal.

Available online at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/tracking/hia/hia.html

» **U.S. Department of Transportation and Centers for Disease Prevention and Control - Transportation and Health Tool**

This tool was developed to provide easy access to data that practitioners can use to examine the health impacts of transportation systems. Available online at: www.transportation.gov/transportation-health-tool

» **U.S. EPA - Community-Focused Exposure and Risk Screening Tool (C-FERST)**

C-FERST is developed as a community mapping, information access tool to help inform community assessments and decision-making. Available online at: <https://www.epa.gov/healthresearch/introduction-community-focused-exposure-and-risk-screening-tool-c-ferst>

» **U.S. EPA - Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN)**

EJSCREEN is based on nationally consistent data and an approach that combines environmental and demographic indicators in maps and reports. Available online at: www.epa.gov/ejscreen

MINNESOTA HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

GUIDES, REPORTS, & SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

- » **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthy Places - Health Impact Assessment**
The CDC HIA resources include a Parks and Trails HIA Toolkit, Transportation HIA Toolkit, and focused issue areas on Injury, Mental Health, Physical Activity, Respiratory Health, Social Capital, and Water Quality. Available online at: www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm
- » **Community Participation in Health Impact Assessments: A National Evaluation**
Human Impact Partners and the Center for Community Health and Evaluation partnered to find out how community members participate in HIAs and what outcomes this participation leads to. Released in January 2016, this report offers new insights related to community participation in the U.S.-based HIA practice. Available online at: www.grouphealthresearch.org/files/2914/5462/6921/CommunityParticipationInHIA_EvaluationFullReport.pdf
- » **Health Impact Project**
The Health Impact Project, a collaboration of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts, is a national initiative designed to promote the use of HIAs as a decision-making tool for policymakers. Available online at: www.pewtrusts.org/en/projects/health-impact-project
- » **Human Impact Partners (HIP)**
HIP works in partnership with communities, public health, and academic experts to build capacity to conduct HIAs and strives to create a world in which health is considered in all decision-making. Available online at: www.humanimpact.org/
- » **Promoting Equity through the Practice of Health Impact Assessment**
This report co-authored by PolicyLink and three partner organizations is a tool for advancing health equity in your community through health impact assessment. Available online at: www.policylink.org/find-resources/library/promoting-equity-through-health-impact-assessments
- » **The Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessments (SOPHIA)**
SOPHIA is an organization serving the needs of HIA practitioners in North America and worldwide. Among many useful tools, SOPHIA publishes the [Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for Health Impact Assessment](https://sophia.wildapricot.org/). Available online at: <https://sophia.wildapricot.org/>
- » **UCLA Health Impact Assessment Clearinghouse**
The Learning and Information Center provides information on completed HIAs, methods and resources, training, and other topics to support a better understanding of HIA. Available online at: www.hiaguide.org/
- » **World Health Organization (WHO)**
The WHO works to promote health across all sectors of activity. Explore the vast resources this website provides to learn about the global importance of conducting HIAs. Available online at: www.who.int/hia/en/