



Big Sky Villas Rehabilitation Health Impact Assessment

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

This project aimed to identify the potential health impacts of the proposed rehabilitation for the Big Sky Villas Apartments complex using a Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

Research questions addressed the relationship between housing and health. The HIA provided an opportunity to address health inequities identified in the most recent Community Health Assessment conducted by Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital and its partners.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Residents of Big Sky Villas, an affordable family housing complex located in a low-income census tract in Belgrade, Montana, where 10 percent of residents live in poverty and nearly 50 percent are housing cost-burdened (pay more than 30 percent of their income for monthly rent).

MAJOR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Gallatin City-County Health Department, National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), Human Resource Development Council District IX, Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program, Montana State University Health and Human Development, and City of Belgrade Planning Department

WHAT WORKS IN MONTANA

PROJECT
12

MAJOR OUTCOMES

Participation raised the profile of health in other sectors, reconnected public health and city planning, and focused on equity. Ultimately, the HIA helped make health a shared value among stakeholders and created a basis for coordinated action. Recommendations:

Manage temporary relocations to minimize school and work disruptions; consider a phased construction schedule so not all residents are displaced at once.

Develop a community garden, adopt and enforce smoking policies, create a resident council, develop a playground adjacent to the new building, recruit residents to help make streets more pedestrian- and bike-friendly.

Use the Green Building and Energy Conservation Standards developed by the State of Montana Department of Commerce to prevent exposure to toxins, chemicals, and enhance energy efficiency.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

Big Sky Villas residents participated in a workshop that produced a map of the community with resident-identified assets and areas of need. This helped inform HRDC and others involved in the building's rehab.

The project team identified indicators to evaluate the implementation of recommendations and continues to meet quarterly to track progress.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

“Start working with willing partners and invite new partners into this mix. The rapport that exists between previous partners ... can stimulate new relationship building. Be cognizant of the jargon used in each profession and work towards common meaning and understanding. Have a backbone organization or individual charged with organizing and facilitating clear, concise meetings to help partners accomplish goals.”

— Lori Christenson, Gallatin City-County Health Department