

# **Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service Strategic Plan 2026**



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Prepared by the Fillmore-Houston Strategic Planning Team

Implemented: January 27, 2026

Reviewed and Revised: January 26, 2026

Approved by the Executive Team and Joint Board of Health: January 27, 2026

Fillmore-Houston CHS Administrator:

Fillmore-Houston Community Health Board of Chairperson:

## **Strategic Plan Development Process**

The Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service (FHCHS) embarked on the strategic planning journey in 2024-2025. Both counties conducted internal processes both independently and jointly as applicable. A seven-member team consisting of two public health directors, two health educators, two lead nurses, and one case aide lead. Leadership from both counties collaboratively reviewed results from the Minnesota Public Health Systems Cost and Capacity Assessment, Local Public Health Act Performance Measures, Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals, Workforce Development Tools, Budgets, and relevant Legislative Priorities and Impacts. After this occurred, the seven-member team was convened to complete a visioning process, stakeholder analysis, and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. Information gathered during these processes concluded with the creation and implementation of the Fillmore-Houston CHS Strategic Plan. Staff from both counties continue to work collaboratively to review and revise the Fillmore-Houston CHS Strategic Plan on an ongoing basis.

## **Vision Statement**

The vision of the Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service is “Partnering for a Healthy Bluff Country.” Vision elements identified were partnerships and collaboration, rich resources, competent staff, community leadership, increased quality of health and life, engaged elected officials, and application of evidence-based practices.

## **Mission Statement**

The Fillmore County Public Health mission is “Supporting healthy lifestyles among Fillmore County residents through prevention, promotion, and protection.”

The mission of Houston County Public Health is “Bringing people together to create a healthy future for everyone in Houston County.”

## **Guiding Principles and Values**

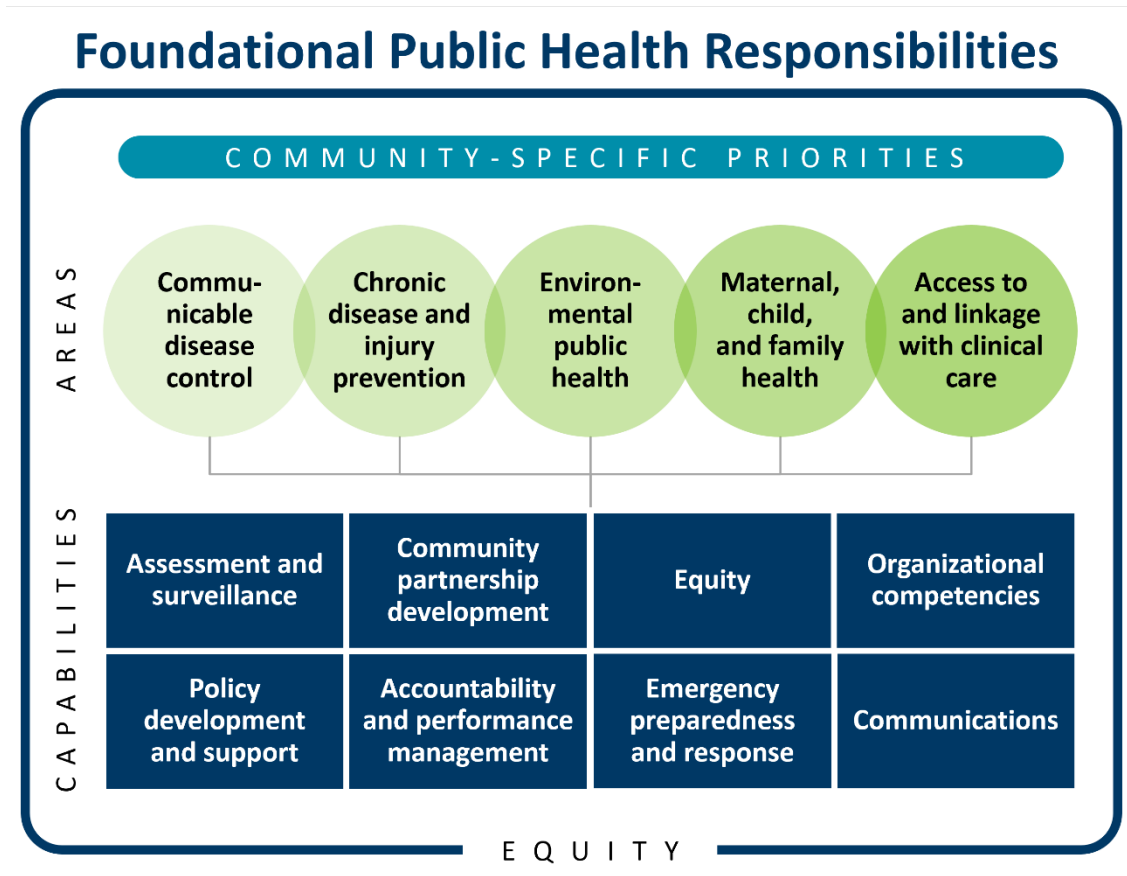
The Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service values:

- **Prevention and promotion.** Strategies that prevent disease and promote healthy living in healthy environments lead to long term benefits for everyone.
- **Collaboration.** County and community partnerships produce well-supported and cost-effective health outcomes by bringing people, resources, and organizations together.
- **Data-driven, evidence-based services.** Effective public health interventions depend on the best and most accurate, up-to-date research and information available.
- **Whole community approaches.** A healthy community supports both individual and community opportunities for attaining full potential for health and well-being.

- **Trauma-Informed Care.** Understanding individual and community life experiences helps to deliver effective care and has the potential to improve engagement, treatment, health outcomes, and provider and staff wellness.
- **Customer service and accountability.** As vigilant stewards of the public’s trust, we provide services that are responsive and accountable to the community’s needs.
- **A skilled, flexible, innovative, and professional workforce.** A well-trained, creative, and resolute workforce is the foundation of our ability to assess and address the health of our communities.

**Organization Self-Assessment**

In 2021, the Minnesota Legislature allocated resources to support the first steps of public to public health transformation. The goal of the public health transformation is address what needs to be in place everywhere for Minnesota’s public health system to work anywhere. In fall 2022, both Fillmore and Houston County Public Health independently completed the Cost and Capacity Assessment conducted by the University of Minnesota. The assessment was used to determine the current level of county expertise, capacity, and financial resources available to address what is currently known as the Foundational Public Health Responsibilities Framework. Data from annual Public Health Performance Measures which align with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Standards and Measures also guided creation of this Strategic Plan.



Overall scores for thirteen areas analyzed as part of the Cost and Capacity Assessment are noted below in Table 1. Scoring for the assessment ranges from 1 to 4. The areas of greatest expertise and capacity included Assessment and Planning, Communication, Community Partnerships, Leadership and Governance, and Organizational Management. The areas for greatest growth include Environmental Health, Prevention and Population Health Improvement, and Access to Health Services.

**Table 1.** 2022 Minnesota Cost and Capacity Assessment Results for Fillmore and Houston County Public Health.

<b>Foundational Areas</b>	<b>Fillmore</b>	<b>Houston</b>
Assessment and Planning	2.5	2.5
Communication	2.7	2.5
Community Partnerships	2.6	2.5
Data and Epidemiology	2.3	2.0
Health Equity	2.3	2.3
Leadership and Governance	3.1	2.1
Organizational Management	2.3	2.9
Policy Development	2.2	1.7
Preparedness and Response	2.5	2.0
Infectious Disease Prevention and Control	2.2	2.0
Environmental Health	2.0	1.0
Prevention and Population Health Improvement	2.1	1.3
Access to Health Services	2.0	1.0

Review of Fillmore-Houston 2023 Local Public Health Act Performance Measures, which aligns with PHAB, noted the greatest room for improvement surrounding:

- PHAB 6: Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public’s health.
- PHAB 7: Contribute to an effective system that enables equitable access to individual services and care needed to be healthy.
- PHAB 8: Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.
- PHAB 10: Build and maintain a strong organizations infrastructure for public health.

Both counties also completed workforce assessment processes. In Fillmore County, all staff completed the Core Competencies for a Public Health Professionals Assessment and the Gallup CliftonStrengths Assessment. FCPHs greatest workforce strengths were communications, community partnerships, and health equity. The areas identified for growth were policy development and program planning skills, public health science skills, data analytics and assessment skills.

Houston County Public Health (HCPH) worked with Ciel Strategic Innovations to complete a comprehensive workforce strategic assessment. This assessment identified the four strategic directions of the department which are:

- Building the Workforce
- Re-Establishing Public Health Visibility and Trust
- Building Local Political Support
- Enhancing Flexibility and Efficiency

Stakeholder Analysis completed between 2024-2025 identified twenty-five stakeholders that have the potential to impact or intersect with the Fillmore-Houston CHS initiatives (Table 2).

Table 2: Stakeholders of the Fillmore-Houston CHS.

Business Community	Health Plans	People with Disabilities
Clients	Joint Board of Health	Public Health Advisories
Clinics	Long-Term Care Facilities	Schools
Daycare Providers	MDH	Schools of Nursing/Students
Diverse Populations	Media	Semcac
Elected Officials	Medical Professionals	Staff
Emergency Food Programs	Mental Health Services	Visitors/Tourists
Emergency Medical Services	Non-Profit Organizations	Volunteer Organizations
Fellow County Departments		

An additional prioritization process was completed in 2025 to identify the level of stakeholder influence on public health and potential strategic priority success (Table 3).

Table 3: Fillmore-Houston CHS Stakeholder Prioritization.

<b>More Influential</b>	<b>More Interested</b>
Business Community Joint Board of Health Clinics/Medical Professionals Diverse Populations Elected Officials Fellow County Departments Health Plans MDH Media Mental Health Services People with Disabilities Staff	Clients Elected Officials Emergency Food Programs Health Plans Joint Board of Health Long-Term Care Facilities MDH Media Non-Profit Organizations Public Health Advisory Committees Schools Schools of Nursing/Students Semcac Staff Volunteer Organizations
<b>Less Influential</b>	<b>Less Interested</b>
Clients Daycare Providers Emergency Food Programs Emergency Medical Services Long-Term Care Facilities Non-Profit Organizations Public Health Advisory Committees Schools Schools of Nursing/Students Semcac Visitors/Tourists Volunteer Organizations	Business Community Clinics Daycare Providers Diverse Populations Emergency Medical Services Fellow County Departments Medical Professionals Mental Health Services People with Disabilities Visitors/Tourists

Ongoing Strategic Planning Meetings were held in 2024 and 2025. A Summary Report of Key Trends was completed that noted the significant trends and accomplishments of the Fillmore-Houston CHS. Significant trends are noted on Table 4 and Accomplishments noted on Table 5.

Table 4: Significant Trends within the Fillmore-Houston CHS.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improvements in preparedness planning, activities, and exercises.</li><li>• Increased governing board education.</li><li>• Increased integration and collaboration within the Fillmore-Houston CHS.</li><li>• Increased national, state, and local visibility of public health.</li><li>• Increased work load with fewer employment, training, support, and resource opportunities.</li><li>• Leadership changes due to transitions, agency integration, and elections.</li><li>• Loss of knowledgeable, experienced, and long-term employees from partnering agencies like schools, clinics, etc.</li><li>• Loss or restructuring of health and community services like clinics, nursing homes, dental providers, and health plans.</li><li>• Redesign and regionalization discussions.</li><li>• Standardized use of technology like PH-Doc.</li></ul>
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Table 5: Accomplishments of the Fillmore-Houston CHS.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased education provided to and engagement with elected officials using various formats.</li><li>• Increased use of technology</li><li>• Joint completion of key elements of the Local Public Health Assessment and Planning Process such as the Community Health Improvement Plan and Strategic Plan</li><li>• Reviewed CHB grant allocation methodologies and created document to outline and summarize grant processes to ensure consistency over time, specifically when CHS Administration role transitions from county to county.</li><li>• Shared grant writing, program implementation, and technical skills.</li></ul>
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A SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) Analysis was conducted in 2024. Findings from the SWOC Analysis were prioritized and can be reviewed in Table 6.

Table 6: SWOC Analysis Results of the Fillmore-Houston CHS.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative mindset, attitude, and relationships</li> <li>• Competent workforce</li> <li>• Improved technologies</li> <li>• Shared grant writing</li> <li>• Shared programming and service delivery</li> <li>• Support from MDH</li> <li>• Supportive leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community availability of dental, clinical, and mental health resources in a rural landscape</li> <li>• Community awareness and marketing about public health services and their importance</li> <li>• Lack of funding and funding uncertainties</li> <li>• Lack of policies can cultivate stability</li> <li>• Lack of succession planning</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment and Direction</li> <li>• Engaging the community</li> <li>• Grants and funding</li> <li>• Promoting public health practices</li> <li>• Employee commitment and sharing</li> <li>• Staff education</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• Using enhanced technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition related to grant writing, private sector competition, accreditation, and new technologies</li> <li>• Lack of commitment/support from the community</li> <li>• Loss of funding sources</li> <li>• Regionalization/Redesign</li> </ul>

**Strategic Priorities and Goals**

In 2025, all of the data resources identified above were used to determine a single strategic plan priority for the Fillmore-Houston CHS. The seven-member team brought forward priority preferences from their county. It was noted that the theme most frequently identified was the need for building, supporting, and maintaining a diverse and skilled public health workforce. By consensus voting, team members chose the strategic priority of workforce development.

**Community Health Improvement Plan Linkage**

The FHCHS Community Health Improvement Plan, Performance Management Plan, and Strategic Plan are all part of the Local Public Health Assessment and Planning process. The main connection between the Community Health Improvement Plan and the Strategic Plan are that they both recognize the need to identify and implement strategies to improve access to health care services. The strategic plan strives to improve access to health care services by strengthening staff capacity and partnering with community organizations to leverage knowledge and resources.

### **Performance Management Plan Linkage**

The Strategic Plan identifies that staff awareness of and participation in performance management and quality improvement processes and projects is a vital component in building a solid public health foundation. The FHCHS Strategic Plan also acknowledges that sharing the Performance Management Plan, quality improvement projects, and quality improvement outcomes provides transparency while increasing the visibility and transparency of public health efforts within the community. There are tools available to assess and monitor workforce development which serve also as a performance management metric. One example of this being, the Core Competency for Public Health Professionals Assessment.

### **Strategic Plan Implementation and Monitoring**

The Strategic Plan serves as a guide for how Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service staff will conduct public health operations in order to advance health outcomes. This plan outlines clear directions related to the strategic priority of building, supporting, and maintaining a diverse and skilled public health workforce. Appendix A identifies the goals, objectives, actions, time line, staff, and benchmarks for implementation of the specific strategic priority. This plan also offers flexibility for each county to address other internal strategic plan items as needed. FHCHS Strategic Plan outcomes will be monitored by the Strategic Planning Teams in both counties at least twice per year and once a year as a community health service. Sharing of Strategic Plan progress with staff, governing entities, and/or advisory committees will be completed on an annual basis. Modifications to the plan may be made as the need for course correction arises.

**Appendix A: Fillmore-Houston CHS Strategic Priority - Building and Support a Diverse and Skilled Public Health Workforce (PHAB Domain 8)**

**Goal 1:** Improve the skills and capabilities of Fillmore-Houston CHS employees in order to meet requirements and advance public health priorities.

**Objective:** From 2026-2030, maintain or increase the capacity of Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service professionals to deliver effective and efficient public health services as evidenced by increases from baseline Public Health Competency Assessment or other assessment scores.

Evidence Based Actions	Timeline	Responsible Staff	Progress Indicators or Benchmarks
Update orientation plans to with job specific requirements and training.	December 2027	Directors Orientation Teams Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation updates completed and documented.</li> </ul>
Conduct a baseline workforce assessment that includes strengths, skills, interests, well-being, values, recognition, and training needs. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1 and PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)	January to December 2026	PH Directors Health Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on organization-wide assessment of staff capabilities available. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1)</li> <li>• Number of workforce assessments completed.</li> <li>• Workforce assessments analyzed at the team level for trends.</li> <li>• Responsive strategies implemented to address individual employee and team needs.</li> <li>• Employee recognition policy and plan developed. (PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)</li> </ul>
Reassess workforce using the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals. (FCPH) (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1.)	December 2028	PH Director Health Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on organization-wide assessment of staff capabilities available. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1)</li> <li>• Public Health Core Competency Assessment individual, team, and department scores evaluated and compared to previous scores.</li> <li>• Scores used to guide future department-wide professional development options.</li> </ul>
Establish and monitor annual individual workforce development plans with each staff member. (PHAB 8.2.2.A.1)	January 2026 to December 2030	Directors Public Health Leads Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Health Core Competency Assessment individual scores changes.</li> <li>• Individual Workforce Development Plan evidence and completion percentage.</li> </ul>

Provide staff with self-directed or required training opportunities to improve public health and other professional competencies. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.2)	January 2026 to November 2028	Directors Health Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on organization-wide assessment of staff capabilities available. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1)</li> <li>• Public Health Core Competency Assessment individual scores changes.</li> <li>• Training guide with options developed.</li> </ul>
Develop and institute systems for recognizing and retaining staff based upon individual and team preferences. (PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)	January 2026 to December 2030	Directors Public Health Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual recognition and retention policy and plan developed, implemented, monitored, and available as evidence. (PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)</li> </ul>
Institute annual mandatory completion of ICS-100 and ICS-700 to ensure an emergency-ready department. (HCPH) (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)	Ongoing	Director Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percentage of FEMA courses completed with evidence available by spreadsheet and/or certificates. (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)</li> </ul>
Institute mandatory completion of FEMA courses in alignment with Job Descriptions, PAQs, and MDH recommendations to ensure an emergency-ready department. (FCPH) (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)	Ongoing	Director Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percentage of FEMA courses completed with evidence available by spreadsheet and/or certificates. (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)</li> </ul>
Implement a new data management system to support staff. (HCPH)	January 2026 to December 2030	Director Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data management system operational.</li> </ul>
Partner with high schools and colleges to provide preceptorship and job shadowing experiences that promote public health as a career choice. (PHAB 8.1.1)	Ongoing	Directors Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership established with at least three schools.</li> <li>• Preceptorship partnership agreements established and available for review. (PHAB 8.1.1)</li> <li>• Number of precepted students documented.</li> </ul>

**Appendix A: Fillmore-Houston Progress Report for Building and Support a Diverse and Skilled Public Health Workforce (PHAB Domain 8)**

**Goal 1:** Improve the skills and capabilities of Fillmore-Houston CHS employees in order to meet requirements and advance public health priorities.

**Objective:** From 2026-2030, maintain or increase the capacity of Fillmore-Houston Community Health Service professionals to deliver effective and efficient public health services as evidenced by increases from baseline Public Health Competency Assessment or other assessment scores.

Evidence Based Actions	Progress Indicators or Benchmarks	Strategic Plan Progress	Revision Description	Revision Rationale
Update orientation plans to with job specific requirements and training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation updates completed and documented.</li> </ul>			
Conduct a baseline workforce assessment that includes strengths, skills, interests, well-being, values, recognition, and training needs. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1 and PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on organization-wide assessment of staff capabilities available. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1)</li> <li>• Number of workforce assessments completed.</li> <li>• Workforce assessments analyzed at the team level for trends.</li> <li>• Responsive strategies implemented to address individual employee and team needs.</li> <li>• Employee recognition policy and plan developed. (PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)</li> </ul>			
Reassess workforce using the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals. (FCPH) (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on organization-wide assessment of staff capabilities available. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1)</li> <li>• Public Health Core Competency Assessment individual, team, and department scores evaluated and compared to previous scores.</li> <li>• Scores used to guide future department-wide professional development options.</li> </ul>			

Establish and monitor annual individual workforce development plans with each staff member. (PHAB 8.2.2.A.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Health Core Competency Assessment individual scores changes.</li> <li>• Individual Workforce Development Plan evidence and completion percentage.</li> </ul>			
Provide staff with self-directed or required training opportunities to improve public health and other professional competencies. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on organization-wide assessment of staff capabilities available. (PHAB 8.2.1.A.1)</li> <li>• Public Health Core Competency Assessment individual scores changes.</li> <li>• Training guide with options developed.</li> </ul>			
Develop and institute systems for recognizing and retaining staff based upon individual and team preferences. (PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual recognition and retention policy and plan developed, implemented, monitored, and available as evidence. (PHAB 8.2.3.A.1)</li> </ul>			
Institute annual mandatory completion of ICS-100 and ICS-700 to ensure an emergency-ready department. (HCPH) (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percentage of FEMA courses completed with evidence available by spreadsheet and/or certificates. (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)</li> </ul>			
Institute mandatory completion of FEMA courses in alignment with Job Descriptions, PAQs, and MDH recommendations to ensure an emergency-ready department. (FCPH) (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and percentage of FEMA courses completed with evidence available by spreadsheet and/or certificates. (PHAB 2.2.4.A.1)</li> </ul>			
Implement a new data management system to support staff. (HCPH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data management system operational.</li> </ul>			
Partner with high schools and colleges to provide preceptorship and job shadowing experiences that promote public health as a career choice. (PHAB 8.1.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership established with at least three schools.</li> <li>• Preceptorship partnership agreements established and available for review. (PHAB 8.1.1)</li> <li>• Number of precepted students documented.</li> </ul>			