

COLUMBIA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN



Columbia County
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



2023-2028

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Frequently Used Acronyms

CBO	Community based organization
CLHO	Coalition of Local Health Officials
CHA	Community Health Assessment
CHIP	Community Health Improvement Plan
LPHA	Local public health authority
CCPH	Columbia County Public Health Department
OHA	Oregon Health Authority
PH	Public Health
SP	Strategic Priority

This plan was prepared by Rede Group on behalf of Columbia County Public Health in August 2023.

Cover image by Krueger Photography.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Columbia County
Public Health

Greetings!

I am excited to share the Columbia County Department of Public Health Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 with you. This strategic plan will help guide our work for the next five years.

Our new vision statement demonstrates Columbia County Public Health is committed to be a leader in creating a resilient and healthy community for all. As Columbia County Public Health is in the development phase, it will take time and significant collaboration with multiple partners across many sectors, some common and uncommon to public health. This strategic plan outlines our next steps in becoming a trusted community partner providing leadership and solution-oriented programs that address the local social, economic, and environmental conditions in our communities.

Many hours were spent developing this plan and it is reflective of the thoughts and ideas from Department staff and community stakeholders. Thank you to those who provided input and feedback. We look forward to working with you to ensure opportunities for all to achieve a healthy life in a thriving community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jaime Aanensen'.

Jaime Aanensen, MHS, CPM, MCHES®
Director of Public Health



COLUMBIA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH



Columbia County
Public Health

Mission

Columbia County Public Health works to be a trusted community partner that provides leadership and solution-oriented programs that address the local social, economic, and environmental conditions, ensuring opportunity for all to achieve a healthy life in a thriving community.

Vision

Columbia County Public Health strives to be a leader in creating a resilient and healthy community for all people of Columbia County.

Values

- **Well-being:** *Meeting community members where they are to help them achieve a quality life.*
- **Making a difference:** *With kindness and ambition, we work together as a team and with clients, county leaders, and the population for long-term improved community health.*
- **Adaptable:** *Continuously striving to be an agile, strong, and sustainable health department focused on a healthy future.*
- **Inclusion:** *With an appreciation for diversity, providing opportunities for all people to reach their full potential.*

BACKGROUND

The Columbia County Public Health Department (CCPH) completed a five-year strategic plan in summer of 2023 to span the years of 2023 to 2028. The plan was developed by the whole CCPH team, including leadership, managers, the county health officer, and staff.

The information collected from staff surveys and external partner interviews, two in-person full-team planning sessions held in St. Helens, Oregon, and leadership team feedback throughout the process was used to create this plan, which utilizes the Public Health Modernization Framework to guide the development of the mission, vision, and values as well as the strategic priorities outlined in this document.

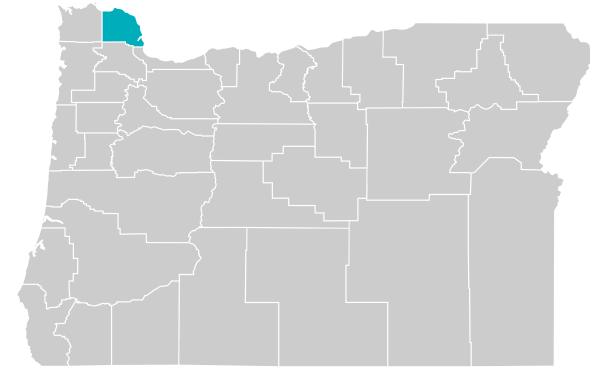
Participants included:

- Alisha Davis
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- Manda Palmertree
- Suzanne Beaupre
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About Columbia County

The Columbia County Public Health Department (CCPH) serves Columbia County, Oregon as the local public health authority, with the main CCPH office located in the county seat of St. Helens. Columbia County's northeast border is made up of 62 miles of the Columbia River. To the south is Multnomah and Washington Counties, and to the west is Clatsop County. The southern county line is approximately 30 minutes from Portland, the largest metropolitan area in Oregon and the western county line is approximately 30 minutes from the Pacific coast. The county's primary economic drivers are agriculture, lumber, fishing, and tourism.

CCPH has 11 employees and a contract health officer that work in the following programs:



Columbia County is home to
53,300 residents

- Environmental Public Health
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Tobacco Prevention and Education
- Infectious Disease Prevention and Control
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Alcohol and Drug Prevention Education

Public Health Modernization

In 2013, the Oregon State Legislature passed legislation creating the Task Force on the Future of Public Health Services. The Task Force was responsible for developing recommendations for the future of public health in Oregon. The recommendations created by the Task Force envisioned a modern public health system that offers foundational public health programs and capabilities in communities across Oregon.

The goals of modernization are: every Oregonian has access to vital public health services to keep them healthy, reduce the need for costly medical care, and ensure children are ready to learn before entering a classroom.

In 2015, the Legislature passed legislation, based on the findings of the Task Force, to establish a framework

and funding for moving forward with the modernization of public health in Oregon. In 2016, after an assessment of Oregon's public health system identified a need to invest in public health modernization, a portion of a \$60.6 million legislative investment allowed local public health authorities to begin modernization work.

Modernization work includes:¹

- Collecting comprehensive environmental health data to identify and mitigate risks to health and disproportionate impacts to communities experiencing racism, oppression and systemic under-investment.
- Identifying the top environmental health risks and the people most exposed to those risks at the state and community level, with a focus on risks intensified by rapidly

Note:

1. Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division. [2021 Legislative Investment In Public Health Modernization.](#)

accelerating climate change.

- Developing local and regional strategies that support equitable climate adaptation to increased fire, smoke, heat, floods, drought, water-borne disease and vector-borne disease including options for those particularly vulnerable to effects of smoke inhalation. More broadly, identifying opportunities to maximize health co-benefits in land use, transportation, housing, energy, food and other systems shaped by public policies and investments.
- Investing in communities to co-create solutions to climate and other environmental public health issues in ways that are culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate and address the community's priorities.
- Increasing local and regional environmental hazard preparedness planning, community engagement,

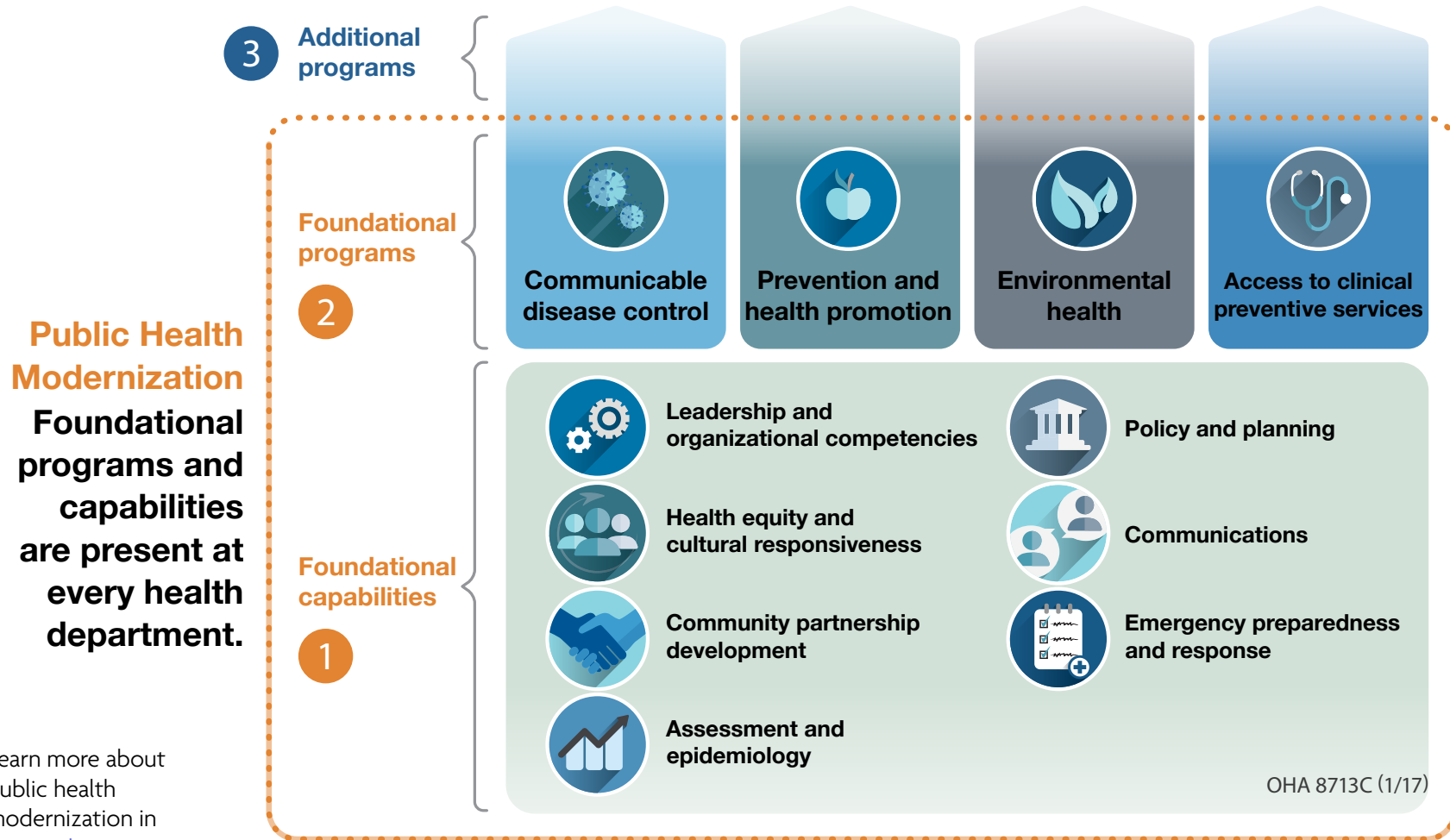
and response capacity including proactive and timely risk assessment communications and response.

- Partnering across state agencies to promote environmental health co-benefits of state natural resource, land use, built environment, and other environmental policies and programs.

Columbia County Public Health has begun engaging in the work prior to this strategic plan planning process and is honing the focus on modernization through the strategic priorities identified in this plan. Oregon's modernization framework includes foundational programs, which, when they are staffed with professionals with skills in foundational capabilities, can meet the needs of the community (see Figure 1 on the following page).

Figure 1: Modernized Framework for Governmental Public Health Services

This graphic describes the public health modernization framework as defined by the Oregon Health Authority.



Learn more about public health modernization in Oregon [here](#).

ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Planning Stages

The Columbia County Public Health (CCPH) Department Strategic Plan will span five years, starting in the fall of 2023 and ending in the fall of 2028.

- **09/2023 - 12/2024: Planning and development**

During this stage, objectives and actions will be focused on organizing internally, such as doing internal assessments and audits and creating subplans, such as a communication plan that addresses internal operation improvements. CCPH will begin to implement these subplans as they are ready to do so, this may mean subplans will be at different stages throughout the five-year plan.

- **01/2025 - 09/2027: Implementation**

During this stage, CCPH will be focusing on implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the individual subplans held within the overall Strategic Plan.

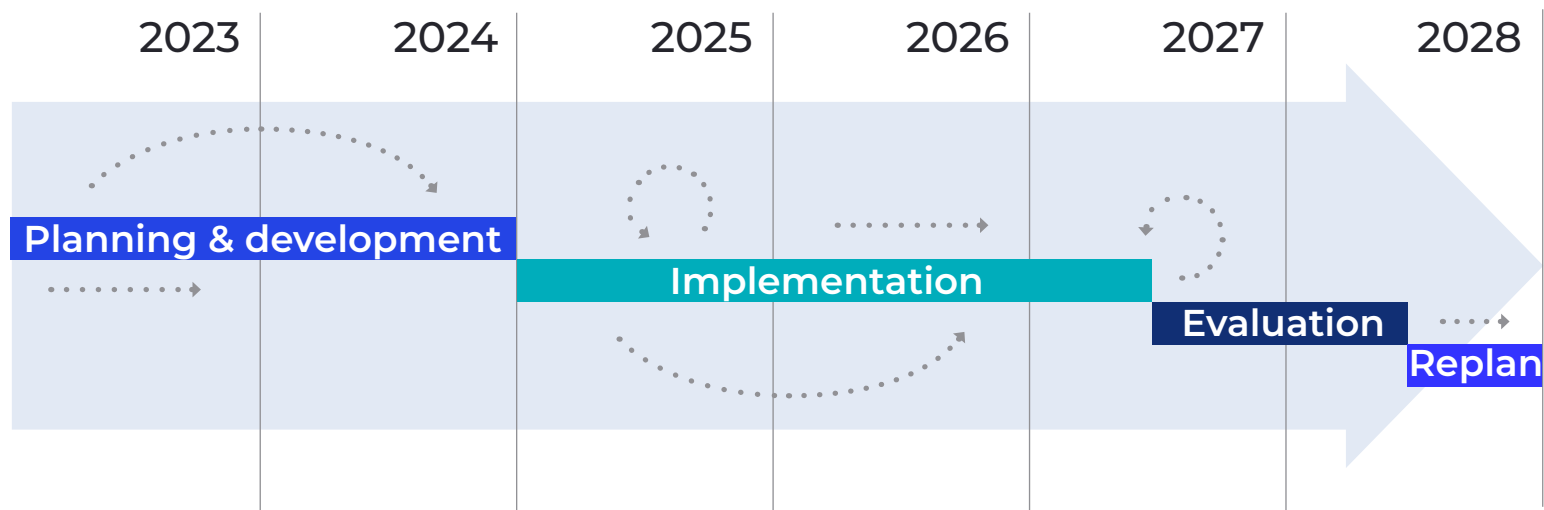
- **10/2027 - 05/2028: Evaluation**

During this stage, CCPH will be focusing on evaluating the overall Strategic Plan, including utilizing the evaluations of the individual subplans that occurred during the five-year strategic plan period, such as the communications and marketing plan seen in Strategic Priority 1 Community Engagement.

- 06/2028 - 09/2028: Develop new strategic plan**
 During this stage, CCPH will utilize the information gathered during the evaluation stage as well as assess current needs and capacity of the CCPH department to develop a new five-year Strategic Plan.

Overall, strategic plans move people and programs forward toward achieving goals, however, the process may involve repeating tasks, adjusting timeframes, shifting priorities, and more. What happens during the strategic plan may look like back and forth movement, but overall, the plan moves forward as it best fits the organization.

Figure 3: Strategic Planning Stages



How will CCPH utilize their strategic plan?

A strategic plan determines what the organization wants to achieve and how the organization will achieve it. CCPH will utilize this strategic plan to direct the department's development and capacity building over the next

five years, evaluate progress and then replan another five-year Strategic Plan in 2028. The shared understanding of the mission, vision, goals, and objectives among employees and stakeholders will guide priorities, decision-making in programs and for the department as a whole, partnerships with the community and other organizations, hiring and training staff, and more.

Developing Strategic Priorities

The priorities follow the format illustrated in Figure 4 on the following page.

As the CCPH team works to achieve the identified objectives and goals over the next five years, new information and changes to the department due to the plan may result in additions or changes to the action level. Leadership will guide the team through the plan as well as through any changes that may occur.



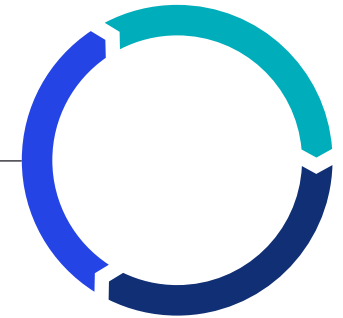
Figure 4: Strategic Priority Framework

STRATEGIC PRIORITY



- **Strategic priorities** are items that require prompt, significant attention for an organization to achieve its vision and mission.
- **Goals** are broad statements about what CCPH wants to achieve, are qualitative in nature, and are linked to the mission and the strategic issues.
- **Objectives** are quantifiable, time-specific statements articulating exactly what will be accomplished and by when.
- **Actions** are the “detailed how” of the strategic plan; they are often sequenced, providing a step-by-step overview of the pathway to achieving the objectives.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



1

Community Engagement

Strengthen trusting relationships between CCPH and the population using communication, education, engagement opportunities, and partnerships.

2

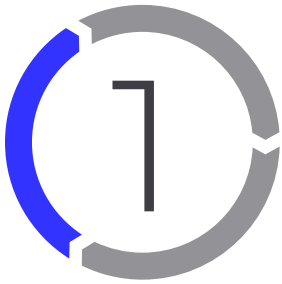
Program Development

Use collaborative processes to assess community health and identify health priorities; strengthen and/or develop agency capacity based on Public Health Modernization priorities.

3

Operational & Work-force Development

Enhance organizational effectiveness and support staff development through the creation and implementation of formalized policies, procedures, and systems.



Strategic Priority 1: Community Engagement

Strengthen trusting relationships between CCPH and the population using communication, education, engagement opportunities, and partnerships

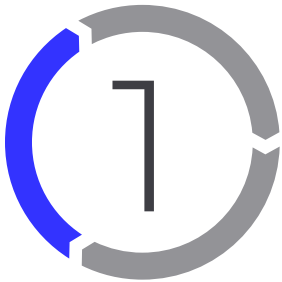
Goal 1: Improve outreach with the public to increase community knowledge of CCPH programs, services, and activities.

Objectives:

1. By March 31, 2024, CCPH will develop a two-year communications and marketing plan

Actions:

- a. Develop a Communications Plan committee to develop the plan
- b. Conduct a communications assessment
- c. Write the plan
2. From March 2024 - March 2026, implement and evaluate the communications and marketing plan
3. During April 2026 - June 2026, using the evaluation of the communications and marketing plan, develop next plan



4. By June 2024, build capacity for communications (*intersects with SP 3)

Actions:

- a. In connection with Strategic Priority 3, identify staff positions to perform communication tasks; adjust job descriptions and work plans accordingly; develop organizational systems and procedures for communication tasks

Goal 2: Build and strengthen partnership development with local CBOs

Objectives:

1. By June 2024, develop a working database to identify and track community partners

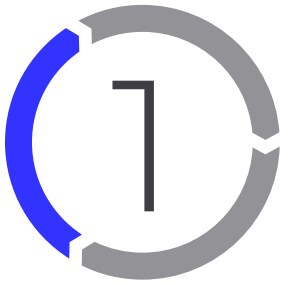
Actions:

- a. Convene program staff to identify database needs, begin completing database with current and potential partners

2. By December 2024, build capacity for community partnerships

Actions:

- a. Identify CBO committees to have CCPH representation
- b. Identify CCPH committee for CBOs to be represented on



Goal 3: Support and increase awareness and knowledge among decision-makers

Objectives:

1. By December 2024, establish and begin a schedule for delivering quarterly updates to decision makers regarding PH programs

Actions:

- a. Identify key decision makers for regular updates (i.e. Board of Commissioners, City Councils, Parks committee, etc.)
- b. Assess what decision makers want to know/need to know, recommendations CCPH can provide, and how best to deliver information
- c. Identify opportunities to include decision makers in committees, programs, and projects. Regularly offer information and extend invites
- d. In connection with SP 3, identify staff to perform decision-maker communication; update job descriptions and work plans accordingly; develop organizational systems and procedures for staff to perform decision-maker education/communication



Strategic Priority 2: Program Development

Use collaborative processes to assess community health and identify health priorities; strengthen and/or develop agency capacity based on Public Health Modernization priorities.

Goal 1: Improve on best practice programs and services that meet the PH needs of the community

Objectives:

1. In connection with Strategic Priority 1, by March 2024, establish a CHA/CHIP committee with CCPH staff, CBO partners, and local decision-makers

Actions:

- a. Create and implement a plan to recruit partners for a CHA/CHIP committee
 - b. Begin meeting
2. By September 2024, complete a CHA

Actions:

- a. Compile and review existing regional assessment and data



Strategic Priority 3: Operational & Workforce Development

Enhance organizational effectiveness and support staff development through the creation and implementation of formalized policies, procedures, and systems

Goal 1: Improve internal operations, including ensuring continuity of operations, through the development of procedures, workflows, and clear communication of policies

Objectives:

1. By March 2024, complete a policies and procedures audit

Actions:

- a. CCPH Leadership develop a list of existing written policies and procedures (including where they are located within an electronic system or as hard copies)
 - b. CCPH Leadership survey staff on what policies and procedures they are aware of from the list of what exists as well as what staff believe is missing
2. By December 2024, policies and procedures are updated, developed, and communicated to all staff



Actions:

- a. CCPH Leadership update existing and create new high level, programmatic workflows that explain and display the overall functions of programs and their inter-departmental functions
- b. CCPH Leadership update existing and create new administrative workflows that explain and display administrative tasks for staff to complete (checking out equipment, submitting for reimbursement, etc.)
- c. In accordance with state and federal rules, CCPH Leadership update and create written policies, both internal and those that CCPH must follow as a governmental agency
- d. CCPH Leadership develop a policy approval process for future use when new policies and procedures must get added
- e. All policies and procedures are communicated to staff and held in a location known and accessible

Goal 2: Increase staff's participation in professional development opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge

Objectives:

1. By April 2025, identify positions and specific tasks that require cross-training to ensure continuity of operations



Actions:

- a. Utilizing the programmatic procedures, identify necessary cross-departmental training needs
 - b. Update job descriptions to reflect positions that require cross-departmental training, knowledge, skills, and tasks
 - c. Meet with staff about cross-training requirements and opportunities
2. By June 2025, complete an assessment of current staff and general program training needs and requirements

Actions:

- a. Develop a list of skills and knowledge required for positions and programs, aligning with PH Modernization
 - b. In connection with Goal 1 of SP 3, develop staff professional development policy and procedures
 - c. Identify current staff training needs
 - d. Conduct one-on-one staff meetings to create one-year individual professional development plans based on program and job requirements as well as staff's interests and goals
3. By February 2024, implement professional development plans, evaluate and re-plan annually



Actions:

- a. Staff and leadership to identify potential trainings for the calendar year
- b. Leadership to organize trainings when applicable

Goal 3: Develop grant writing capacity to diversify funding to add staff

Objectives:

1. By July 2025, develop a recruitment plan
2. By January 2026, identify partnership and funding opportunities for capacity expansion and a plan to apply for funding