



**REINVESTMENT
FUND**

INVEST HEALTH

Strategies for Healthier Cities

A Project of the *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*
and *Reinvestment Fund*



Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation

Rethinking Community Health: A tale of three cities

Invest Health Background

Invest Health is an initiative that brings together diverse leaders from mid-sized U.S. cities across the nation to develop new strategies for increasing and leveraging private and public investments to accelerate neighborhood revitalization efforts in communities facing the biggest barriers to better health.

The program is a collaborative partnership between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Reinvestment Fund. Three cities chosen to be part of the Invest Health work were Missoula, MT; Eau Claire, WI; and Iowa City, IA. These cities collaborated with local community partners to develop and implement new strategies that improve community health and well-being. All three cities experienced successes and challenges resulting in transformational

community health projects. Although the initial Invest Health grant came to an end the collaboration opportunity between cities did not.

In early 2018, a collaborative grant became available through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Building on the momentum created through the Invest Health work Missoula, Eau Claire, and Iowa City knew peer exchange could reshape how our communities move forward with insights from similar cities in the United States. The collaborative grant was awarded to the three cities and the joint effort to change community health continues. The three cities share similar demographics and are seeking to understand the similarities and differences in the strategic approach to improving community health.



Eau Claire, WI



Iowa City, IA



Missoula, MT

Demographics

Eau Claire, WI

Population: 68,339
Median household income: \$45,403
Median rental price (1bed): \$758
Economic focus: Healthcare and Education
College: University of Wisconsin
Persons in poverty (%): 17.7%
Ethnicity top 3 reported:
 White: 91.5%
 Asian: 4.5%
 Hispanic or Latino: 2.3%

Iowa City, IA

Population: 74,398
Median household income: \$42,720
Median rental price (1bed): \$873
Economic focus: Healthcare and Education
College: University of Iowa
Persons in poverty (%): 28%
Ethnicity top 3 reported:
 White: 78.8%
 Asian: 8.2%
 African American: 7.1%

Missoula, MT

Population: 72,364
Median household income: \$46,371
Median rental price (1bed): \$772
Economic focus: Healthcare and Education
College: University of Montana
Persons in poverty (%): 19.3%
Ethnicity top 3 reported:
 White: 91.2%
 2 or more: 4%
 Hispanic or Latino: 3.5%

Invest. Partner. Learn More.

Inspiring change through collaboration.

Invest Health Goals

Each Invest Health team envisioned different but similar goals for their cities. The social determinant of health they were most interested in was housing, in particular homeownership and housing quality.

Eau Claire, WI

• *Create vibrant safe, and healthy central city neighborhoods through meaningful investment. Develop and implement housing projects through five major sectors, policy, social connection, physical activity, food, and housing.*

Iowa City, IA

• *Focus on asthma and mental health through developing a network among health and housing sectors, and developing pipeline projects that impact health outcomes for those with asthma and mental health issues.*

Missoula, MT

• *Improve the health of neighborhoods through changes to the built environment, including housing, nutritious food, transportation, trails, sidewalks, trees, and parks.*

Success Stories



Eau Claire, WI

Advocate for Housing Code update, and housing assistance for low-wealth neighborhood

Employer-assisted housing seminar

Data collection for housing burden, food access, mental health, and income

Community connections through back-to-school block party (low-wealth neighborhood)



Iowa City, IA

Healthy Homes Asthma Initiative

Code Inspection for Healthier Homes Training

Arthur Street Healthy Life Center

Neighborhood Connections Program

Birth to Five Child Care Incubator

Free Wheels Program



Missoula, MT

Funding for 1 mile of sidewalks

Community Health Map

Advocate for health and wellness in city growth policies

Provided support for installation of trees within neighborhoods.

For more information and details about each city visit:

Eau Claire, WI: <https://www.investhealth.org/teams/eau-claire-wi/>

Iowa City, IA: <https://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/about-invest-health/>

Missoula, MT: <http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/2036/Missoula-Invest-Health>