

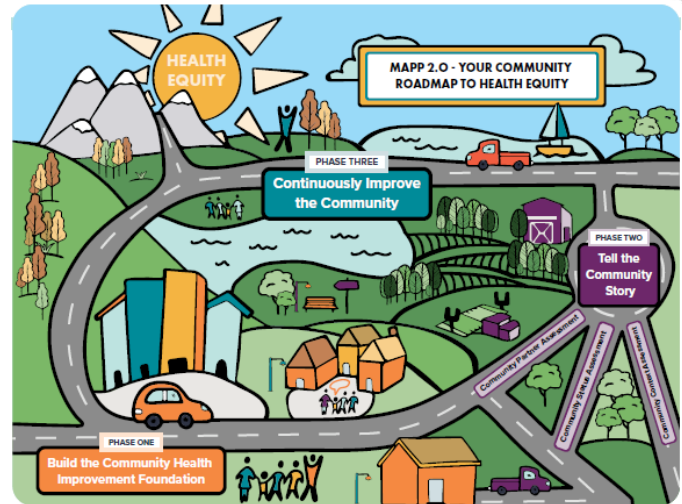


### PURPOSE

In the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships 2.0 (MAPP 2.0) process, Phase Two: Tell the Community Story involves conducting three different assessments to paint a comprehensive picture of health in the community.

The Community Context Assessment (CCA) uses qualitative data to assess community strengths and assets, built environment, and forces of change. It collects insights, expertise, and views of people and communities with lived experience who may be experiencing inequities firsthand. It answers questions like:

- What strengths and assets do community members have that contribute to health?
- How does the built environment impact health and health inequities?
- What access to care gaps or barriers exist? Who is most affected?
- What changes are occurring in the community that affect health? Who is most affected?
- How has COVID-19 affected the community? What have health departments done well or not well to help?



### PROCESS

The Village of Schaumburg project team used several methods to gather community perspectives. The first was an online community survey conducted between October and December 2023. The survey was available in five languages: English, Spanish, Polish, Gujarati, and Hindi. Survey questions covered health insurance, school and work, home, quality of life, health needs, and community needs. A total of 480 survey responses were received in four languages, with 463 responses (96%) from residents of the four Schaumburg zip codes.

As a second methodology, subject matter expert interviews were conducted in October and November 2023 with individuals recommended by the village project team as having knowledge of and perspectives on the health needs of the community.

Finally, LHF facilitated four focus groups in October and November 2023 to gather insights from populations whose perspectives were vital to include. These groups were older adults, teens, business owners, and direct service providers in the health, mental health, and disability sectors.

### RESULTS

Common themes emerged from the survey, interviews, and focus groups around the strengths and assets of the community, including collaborative agencies, parks and green spaces, and access to health care facilities and community services. Themes also emerged around barriers in housing, transportation, access to health care and insurance, behavioral health needs, and availability of health facilities, providers, and services. Key findings are summarized here.

#### Self-identified demographics of survey respondents

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96% Schaumburg residents (all four zip codes), 3% adjacent zip codes

81% white, 8% Asian, 4% Latino/a/x, 2% Black/African American

73% female, 25% male, 1% other

44% age 65 and older, 56% mix of other ages from 18 to 64

Survey responses received in English, Polish, Gujarati, and Spanish



### Community Strengths and Assets

- Strengths of village and other government agencies, including their strong collaboration, many resources and services, and proactive approach to caring for underserved populations.
- Natural and built environment as assets, including robust green spaces, parks, bike paths, recreation opportunities.
- Strong, vibrant business community, job opportunities, and tourism as well as tolerant community of residents.

### Built Environment

- **Housing:** 15% of community survey respondents said they had been worried about losing their home or apartment. A majority of interviews and focus groups discussed housing-related concerns and gaps in availability, affordability, and accessibility, especially housing for seniors, adults with disabilities, and low-income individuals and families.
- **Transportation:** Transportation in general is a challenge and a barrier to getting care, as not everyone drives or has a vehicle. Public transit and paratransit are better than other suburbs but still very limited in where they go and when. More transit or shuttles options are needed for seniors, low-income people, and others.
- **Community Safety:** Schaumburg is generally regarded as safe. Some participants did express safety concerns.

### Access to Care Gaps and Barriers

- **Access to Health Care and Insurance:** In the last year, 9% of survey respondents reported that they or their family were unable to get medical, dental, or vision care when it was needed, 7% were unable to get mental health support, and 6% were unable to get medications. When asked what keeps people in the community from seeing a medical provider, the top responses were costs are too much (62%) and lack of health insurance (43%).
- **Insurance Challenges:** While many survey respondents experience no problems with their insurance, 23% say their plan does not cover the services they need, 20% say monthly payments or bills from visits are too expensive, 16% say medications are not covered or are too expensive, and 10% say it is confusing. Insurance and cost barriers associated with insurance were also highlighted by qualitative conversation participants.
- **Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services:** There are many mental health, psychiatric health, and substance use disorder needs, yet barriers exist in accessing care for these needs. When asked what keeps people from seeking mental health care, the top reported barriers were costs are too much (48%), do not know where to go or how to access services (35%), lack of health insurance (33%), and fear, stigma, or lack of trust (31%).
- **Availability of Health Facilities, Providers, and Services:** There are many health facilities in close proximity to Schaumburg, though fewer within the village. Workforce challenges like burnout, shortages of some provider types, and insufficient bilingual providers can make it hard to have enough access and availability.

### COVID-19 and Public Health Response

- Participating stakeholders largely felt the response to COVID went well in Schaumburg. The community came together, and the county and other agencies (CDC, etc.) provided information.
- Others pointed out shortcomings in the local COVID response, including wishing for greater flexibility for the village to make its own decisions, and perceiving county services as not readily available within a reasonable distance.
- COVID has also had a lasting impact on the community, including high rates of anxiety, trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and grief, and the many people with losses of loved ones or stability during COVID.

### Forces of Change

- Qualitative conversations highlighted a variety of demographic changes that the community is seeing and that may affect the services and initiatives that will be needed in the future, including increasing community diversity, increasing immigration, more languages spoken, and an aging population with more seniors aging in place in Schaumburg.