Project Summary

Pathways to Implementing HEAL in the Mid-Atlantic: Building Healthy Communities, Driving Economic Development
Fall 2016

The Client: The Institute for Public Health Innovation leads the HEAL (Healthy Eating Active Living) Cities and Towns Campaign for the Mid-Atlantic, an initiative in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League and the Virginia Municipal League. IPHI staff provide training, resources, and technical assistance to local policymakers and government officials who work to adopt policies and resolutions that enable their residents and employees to make healthy choices about physical activity and nutrition.

The Problem: Despite the success of the Campaign thus far, after municipalities become members of HEAL, their implementation efforts sometimes become stagnant. The misperception that HEAL-related policies will put additional strain on municipal budgets is among the most common reasons given by cities for not adopting such policies. Therefore, IPHI and its partners retained CJP to explore how HEAL policies can be linked to the economic development concerns of current and prospective HEAL cities and towns.

The Outcome: The CJP student attorneys researched the links between economic development and health policies and conducted interviews with municipal leaders and other key stakeholders. The CJP team used this information to provide the HEAL Campaign with a report that contains recommendations on how to improve the implementation of HEAL policies and programs as well as how to best convey information to municipal leaders about both the HEAL Campaign and its relation to economic development. The report will guide the HEAL Campaign as it works to build healthier communities across the Mid-Atlantic region.