

PURPOSE

In Phase Three of the Mobilizing for Action Through Planning and Partnerships, or MAPP, process, four different assessments are conducted to paint a comprehensive picture of health in the community.

The Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA) identifies forces, trends, factors, events, or other changes that affect the health of the community and the local public health system. It answers the questions:

- What is occurring or might occur that will affect the local public health system or community?
- What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these forces?

PROCESS

To conduct the FOCA, the IPLAN core team first sought to identify and brainstorm all the forces of change affecting the community, including patterns, trends, factors, or events. This brainstorming was first done through an online survey which was shared with partners between May 17, 2022 and June 22, 2022. The IPLAN core team also met on June 16, 2022 to generate additional possible forces of change.

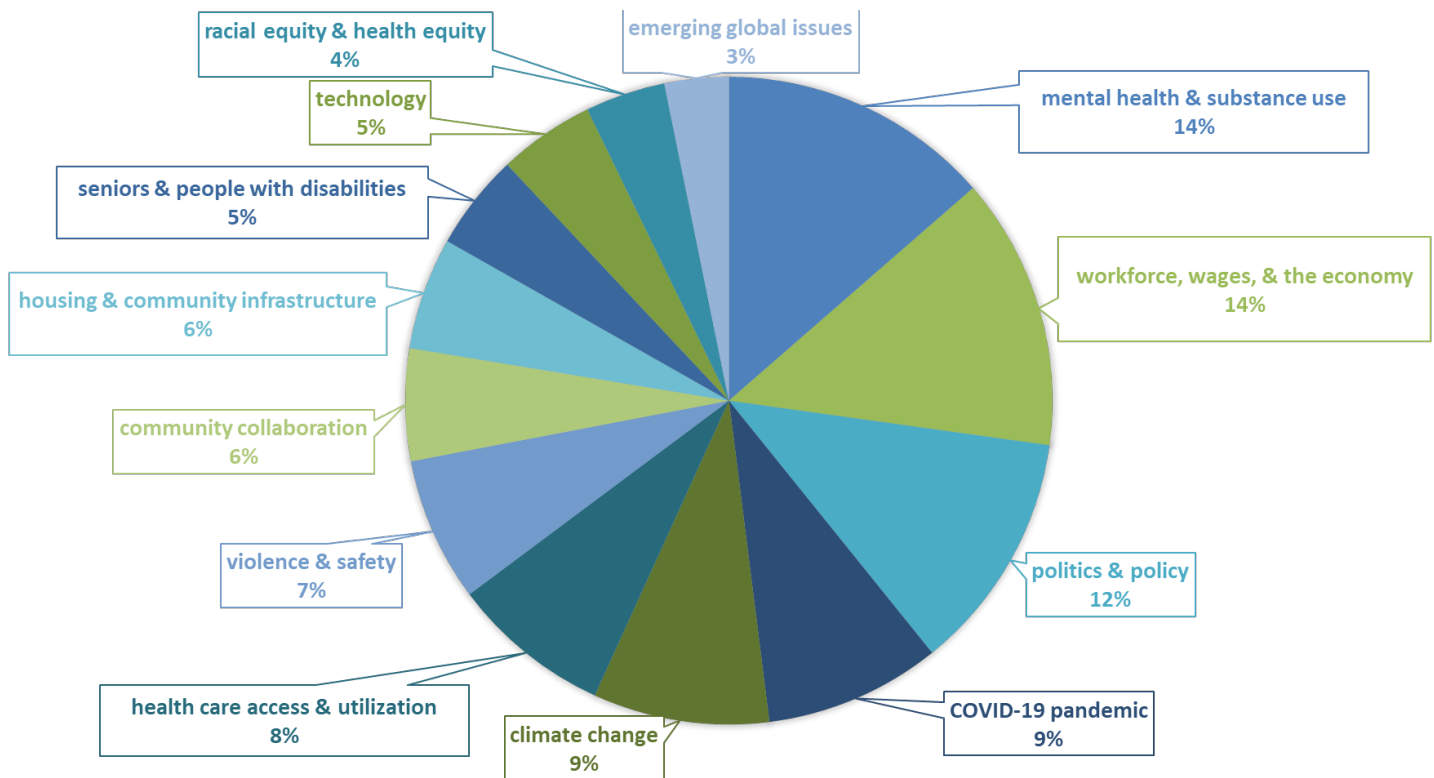
Out of these two brainstorming methodologies, 125 total forces of change emerged. These were then categorized into 13 high-level categories. The IPLAN core team then met again on June 23, 2022 to identify specific threats posed and opportunities created by each force, or collection of forces, and to consider cross-cutting priorities among these threats and opportunities.

RESULTS

Based on the survey results, additional brainstorming meeting, and consolidation of findings, a total of thirteen high-level forces were identified that affect Oak Park and River Forest's communities and public health system. These were:

1. Mental health & substance use (14%)
2. Workforce, wages, & the economy (14%)
3. Politics & policy (12%)
4. COVID-19 pandemic and its impact (9%)
5. Climate change (9%)
6. Health care access & utilization (8%)
7. Violence & safety (7%)
8. Community collaboration (6%)
9. Housing & community infrastructure (6%)
10. Seniors & people with disabilities (5%)
11. Technology (5%)
12. Racial equity & health equity (4%)
13. Emerging global issues and their local impact (3%)





For each category, threats and opportunities were discussed, with seven key cross-cutting threats and six key cross-cutting opportunities identified.

Threats Posed

- Weakening of public health laws, willingness of public to listen
- Workforce shortages, great resignation
- Inability for people to meet basic needs, need for social/public services
- Limited safety net providers/access
- Heightened grief, anxiety, hopelessness (COVID, climate change, gun violence)
- Spread of misinformation online
- Racism, stereotyping, stigma

Opportunities Created

- Greater awareness of public health
- New funding for mental health, public health
- New programs and modalities – 988, telehealth, senior housing, community center, CHWs
- Greater activism around gun violence, climate, abortion policy
- Greater interest in collaboration
- Increased attention to equity, systemic/institutional racism