

## The Four MAPP Assessments

### What are the Four MAPP Assessments?

The four MAPP Assessments — the third phase of MAPP — and the issues they address are described below:

- *The **Community Themes and Strengths Assessment*** provides a deep understanding of the issues residents feel are important by answering the questions, "What is important to our community?" "How is quality of life perceived in our community?" and "What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?"
- The ***Local Public Health System Assessment*** focuses on all of the organizations and entities that contribute to the public's health. The Local Public Health System Assessment answers the questions, "What are the components, activities, competencies and capacities of our local public health system?" and "How are the Essential Services being provided to our community?"
- The ***Community Health Status Assessment*** identifies priority community health and quality of life issues. Questions answered here include, "How healthy are our residents?" and "What does the health status of our community look like?"
- The ***Forces of Change Assessment*** focuses on identifying forces such as legislation, technology and other impending changes that affect the context in which the community and its public health system operate. This answers the questions, "What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the local public health system?" and "What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?"

### Why are the four MAPP Assessments important?

While each of the assessments alone will yield important information for improving community health, the value of the four MAPP Assessments is multiplied by considering the findings of each individual assessment together. Disregarding any of the four assessments will leave participants with an incomplete understanding of the factors that affect the local public health system and, ultimately, the health of the community.

### Collectively, the four MAPP Assessments have several purposes, including:

- Providing insight on the gaps between current circumstances and a community's vision (as determined in the Visioning phase);
- Providing information to use in identifying the strategic issues that must be addressed to achieve the vision.
- Serving as the source of information from which the strategic issues, strategies and goals are built.

### How to Implement the Four MAPP Assessments

Guidance for implementing the four MAPP Assessments is included in each of the sections. Below are some tips for implementing them in a coordinated and effective fashion.

- **Plan how the assessments will be implemented** — There is no prescribed order in which to carry out the four assessments. When designing the planning process, the MAPP Committee should recognize that some assessments may be conducted concurrently or may overlap. In determining the order, however, the MAPP Committee should consider how the findings of one assessment, Community Themes and Strengths, for example, might be used to inform another assessment. It may be beneficial to conduct certain activities of one assessment before beginning another. In addition, the findings of

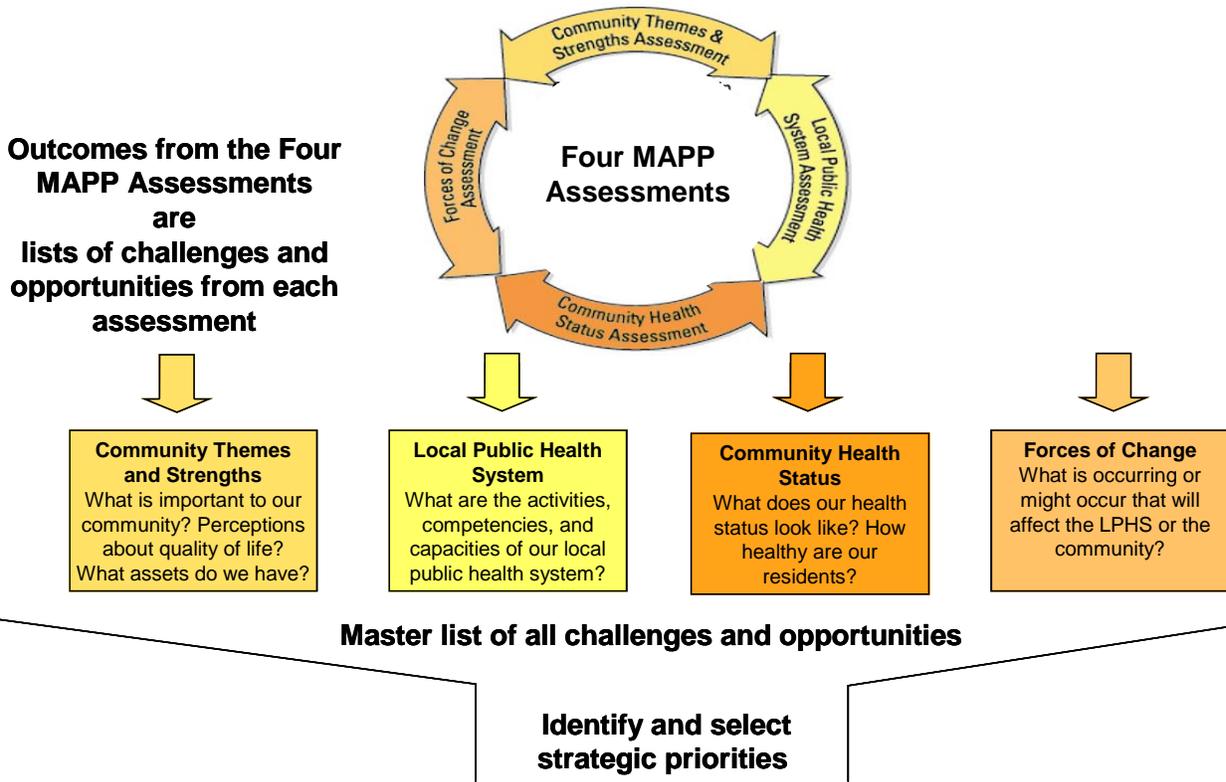
one assessment may suggest that further work is needed on another. The example timeline work plan included in the Organize for Success and Partnership Development section illustrates how the pieces of the four assessments can be done concurrently.

- **Establish subcommittees for each assessment** — The MAPP Committee should determine who will be responsible for each assessment. The guidance for each assessment, with the exception of Forces of Change, recommends that a subcommittee oversee each process. This ensures that the assessments move forward efficiently. Membership on the subcommittees should reflect the skills and capacities most needed for each assessment. Overlapping membership, where possible, may also facilitate the sharing of information and coordination of activities.
- **Promote linkages among assessments** — Although each assessment is conducted for a specific purpose, there are many connections that should be made to promote broader involvement and facilitate linkages. For example, the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment discussions may be very useful in identifying indicators for the Community Health Status Assessment, as well as helping to identify potential threats and opportunities for the Forces of Change Assessment.
- **Celebrate successes** – As each assessment is being conducted, identify and recognize achievements. The assessments can be very challenging, and recognition of the hard work of the entire community will go a long way toward strengthening morale and creating excitement for the process. Public recognition can also help to bolster interest among the wider community.

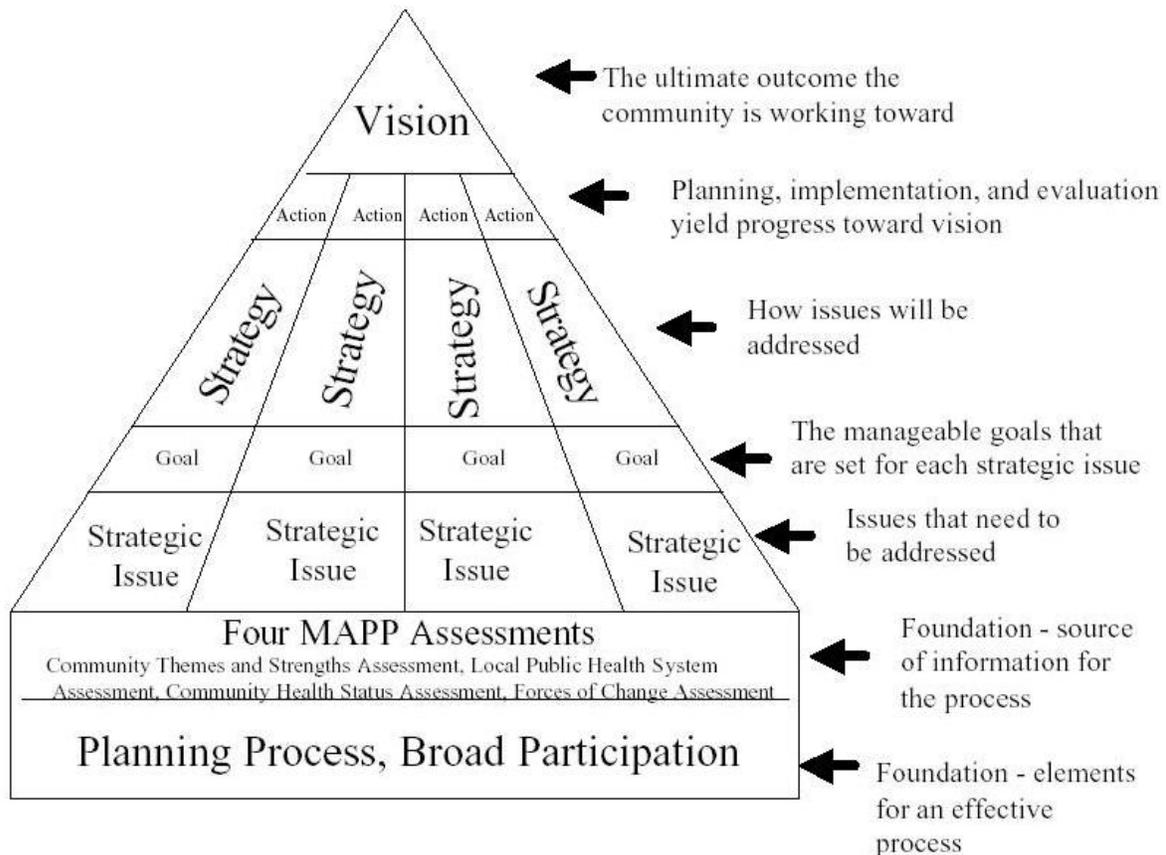
The four MAPP Assessments form the core of the MAPP process. Only intense community attention to these activities can assure appropriate community ownership of the entire MAPP effort. Results of the assessments will drive the identification of strategic issues and activities of the local public health system and the community for years to come. Therefore, although they may appear to be time-consuming, it is important to take great care in implementing the assessments and ensuring that they are done effectively and with broad participation.

## Four MAPP Assessments Flowchart

Results of the Four MAPP Assessments interact to provide the basis for the development of community strategic issues.



## How do the MAPP Components Relate?



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