



BLUE ZONES PROJECT®

Blue Zones Project Case Study: Fort Worth

Fort Worth is among the fastest-growing cities in the U.S., located in North Central Texas, just 30 miles west of Dallas. Known for Texas hospitality and a dozen remarkable districts, Fort Worth launched the Blue Zones Project in 2014 and became a Certified Blue Zones Community in 2018. During this time, Fort Worth created and implemented 24 new food systems, built environment, and smoking policies to bring neighborhoods together and create lasting change.¹ Civic leaders invested at least \$50 million in private funds to transform Fort Worth into a national model of health and wellness, with a conservative five-year estimated return on investment of 5:1.² As a major champion for the Blue Zones Project, former Mayor Betsy Price cited how important health is to economic development: “We will attract and retain more business and industry as Fort Worth raises its profile as a great place to live, work, and play.” From 2014 to 2018, Fort Worth engaged more than 88,691 residents in Blue Zones Project programs and a total of \$6.5 million was secured in media value, reaching 2.9 billion people through outlets including The New York Times, HuffPost, and National Geographic. Every day, roughly 200,000 people in Fort Worth experience the permanent or semi-permanent changes brought by Blue Zones Project through partner organizations.



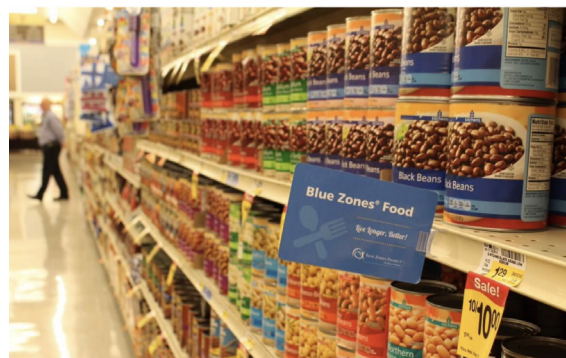
Built Environment

Living better, longer starts with environmental change. To ensure all users and modes of transportation are accommodated in new development and redevelopment, Fort Worth implemented a Complete Streets Policy and an updated Street Design Manual. An Active Transportation Plan was implemented to create a safe, well-connected network of roadways, sidewalks, bicycle routes, and trails. From 2010 to 2018, 77 miles of bike lanes and 19 miles of bike routes were added to maximize the ability of residents to move naturally. During this time period, the City and community partners secured over \$9.9 million in funding for built environment policies and infrastructure projects, \$15 million for sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure, and \$5 million for Safe Routes to School improvements.³ The Fort Worth Independent School District and City also secured \$6.4 million for infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to encourage safer walking and biking to schools.

Food Systems

Many residents in Fort Worth, especially those in low-income areas, have limited access to fresh food that is affordable.

To improve health equity, the City's Zoning Ordinance was amended to allow urban farms, aquaponics inside a covered structure, and mobile sales of produce grown in all districts of Fort Worth.⁴ Prior to this, it was legal to sell sugary treats from trucks, but not healthy foods like apples or carrots. A Healthy Food Financing Initiative was created by the City, offering low-cost microloans of up to \$50,000 to owners of stores located in food deserts who agreed to stock and sell healthier options.⁵ The City and community partners then secured \$656,000 in funding for community and school



gardens and corner store transformations to make the healthy choice the easy choice for all. Thanks to coalition efforts on food policy and accessibility, 103,000 neighborhood residents now have easier access to healthy food.⁶ According to Planning Manager Jocelyn Murphy, the Blue Zones initiative gave Fort Worth the political and civic support, funding, and momentum to help get health improvement initiatives such as the urban agriculture ordinance "over the finish line."⁷

Tobacco

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the U.S., yet many cities do not have a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance in place. In 2018, Fort Worth cleared the air by enacting a policy to protect residents, employees, and visitors from secondhand smoke in workspaces and public places. The policy prohibits smoking in bars, bingo parlors, and city parks; ensures a smoke-free environment for all employees; prevents stand-alone smoke shops from locating within 300 feet of schools, universities, and hospitals; and includes e-cigarettes in these restrictions.⁸ Gallup estimates that Fort Worth saved \$268 million in healthcare savings and lost productivity due to the 31% decrease in smoking rates of adult residents from 2014 to 2018, with 38,074 fewer smokers overall.⁹

For more information, please contact: builtenvironment@bluezones.com

Footnotes

1. Texas Health Resources. Blue Zones Project. <https://www.texashealth.org/Community-Health/Blue-Zones-Project>
2. Fort Worth Star-Telegram. (2015, December 1). Blue Zones Project Up and Running in Fort Worth. <https://www.star-telegram.com/news/local/fort-worth/article47027470.html>
3. Blue Zones. Blue Zones Project Results: Fort Worth, TX. <https://www.bluezones.com/blue-zones-project-results-fort-worth-tx-2/>
4. City of Fort Worth. Growing Good Food in Fort Worth. <https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/files/assets/public/development-services/documents/urban-agriculture.pdf>
5. Moving Healthcare Upstream. Healthy Food Access: Healthy Tarrant County Collaboration. <https://www.movinghealthcareupstream.org/healthy-food-access-healthy-tarrant-county-collaboration/>
6. Blue Zones, LLC and ShareCare, Inc. (2019). Fort Worth TX A Certified Blue Zones Community. https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/217817/National/BZP_ForthWorthBook_04_PrintReady-Pages-compressed.pdf
7. Healthy Food Policy Project. Case Studies: Fort Worth, TX. <https://healthyfoodpolicyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/fort-worth-tx.pdf>
8. Fort Worth, TX Code of Ordinances. Chapter 29.5: Smoking. <https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/files/assets/public/code-compliance/health/documents/final-smoking-ordiance-4-2018.pdf>
9. Blue Zones. How is Fort Worth, TX Getting Healthier While the Rest of the Country is Getting Sicker? <https://www.bluezones.com/2018/12/fort-worth-tx-is-getting-healthier-while-rest-of-country-is-getting-sicker/>