"Walking for the Health of McMinn"
Move with the Mayor™ (MWTM) has been added to the Community Health Improvement Plan as a vital function in changing Athens and McMinn County health stats. The county-wide community walking program serves as a part of MWTM.

Miles Walked

**6,639**

People Participated

**220**

*March 3 to August 23, 2022*

City Partnerships

The city partners with the Tennessee Department of Health and Health Council, producing several events, and offering information during local food distribution events and to schools.

Health Council

Resource van is used for welfare checks and food distribution

Health resources for students

Mass vaccination drives and testing events

Athens and McMinn County created the Eureka trail

Rail to trail conversion

Good for all ages

5.6 Miles Nature Trail

Connects to neighboring town

Different level hikes available

Athens' collaboration with local organizations has increased accessibility to healthcare, physical activity, and educational resources.
Partnerships to Encourage Healthy Living
The City and Health Department work together on several events throughout the year, including mass vaccination drives and testing. The Health Department regularly provides resources and information during local food distribution events. When youth vaping was identified as a priority by school representatives on the Health Council, the Health Department stepped up to provide education in schools.

Connecting People
In 2022, Athens implemented a county-wide exercise program for the community as part of Move with the Mayor. Over 220 community members participated and logged 6,629 walking miles. Athens and McMinn County have joined together to create a 5.6-mile Rails to Trails conversion that bisects the county and connects Athens to a neighboring town. The trail was developed as a regional health initiative. Athens is developing a mobility plan to add bike lanes and dedicated bikeways in town and expand sidewalks.

The Health Council and City have a mutually beneficial relationship - each brings its resources to the table and willingly shares, for the benefit of all. To further strengthen this bond, the Health Council will have regular opportunities to present on their work to the City Council.

Lessons Learned
- Reach out to local organizations to identify common goals
- Bring information to where your residents are
- Teach residents how to use local resources
A Successful City-County-Health Department Partnership in Athens, TN

CASE STUDY

Partnerships have been essential to the success of local public health projects that serve the unmet needs of residents in Athens, Tennessee. The city, along with other cities in the county, have spent the last 8 years building partnerships, and the Athens community continues to reap the rewards.

Introduction
Tennessee established County Health Councils over three decades ago to bring community partners together to promote health. Move with the Mayor™ participants Athens and the McMinn County Health Council have worked closely together for many years to bring this vision to life. Having strong personal and professional ties within the Mayor’s Office has been instrumental in ensuring the partnership remains strong. A high level of underlying trust enables everyone to remain on the same page and work together to share resources. The Health Council meets monthly to discuss priorities, identify areas for collaborative action, and share resources. It is supported by the Tennessee Department of Health with Health Educators and Healthy Development Coordinators assigned to McMinn County. The Woods Foundation was created from the sale of the Woods Memorial Hospital in McMinn County. The Health Council assists in managing pooled resources from the Woods Foundation. These funds were placed into the Woods Foundation to be invested in programs to serve the unmet needs of Athens residents, in addition to residents within McMinn County, Tennessee. As an example, the Health Council is consulted on how to best spend dollars received from lawsuits related to the opioid crisis and the county health trust.

Identifying Priorities
In Fall 2022, the City, County, and Health Council engaged the community to conduct a health assessment. They received nearly 400 survey responses and heard feedback at three listening sessions to identify residents’ top health priorities. This information was compiled into a three-year “Community Health Improvement Plan” (CHIP). The Health Council evaluates monthly and then will re-evaluate after 3 years. Move with the Mayor™ has been added to the CHIP as a vital function in changing Athens and McMinn County health stats. The McMinn County Health Council gives quarterly updates to the Athens City Council. Data sharing is a core part of the relationship between the Health Council and the City. The Health Council and Health Department regularly share data, so the City understands the health needs of the community. The City reciprocates by sharing data back with the Health Council—such as the number of people who come to joint events (screenings, testing, vaccination drives, etc.).

LESSONS LEARNED
- **Collaborate with local partners** from a range of different sectors
- **Find common goals** and develop a strong mission
- **Create local relationships** and nurture them over time
- **Pool resources** to accomplish large goals