

## Resident Perceptions Drive Progress on Health in Reno County

Thank you to community members for taking the community perception survey each year since 2016. The invaluable feedback we received has guided Heal Reno County through the years of the [Pathways to a Healthy Kansas](#) project, an initiative of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas. As we reflect on our work, we are especially proud of the following accomplishments:

- Hutchinson adopted a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2019 with a focus on health equity and neighborhood development.
- Five Reno County schools adopted effective policies to improve nutrition and physical activity.
- 10 businesses started or strengthened Worksite Wellness programs to improve the health of their employees.

The survey findings highlight progress that has been made and opportunities for additional work in our community.

**Finding #1:** Two-thirds of survey respondents say it is easy to choose healthy foods for each meal and believe Reno County has sufficient opportunities for healthy eating.

**Heal Action:** We are proud of the five locally-owned restaurants and two retailers who made healthy changes to their menus or environments to make it easier for residents to choose and eat nutritious food. To increase access to healthy foods during the COVID-19 crisis, we are helping to distribute produce boxes to vulnerable populations in Reno County (*Figure 1*).



Figure 1. A grab-and-go cooler by the entrance at Jackson Meats provides easy access to fresh and healthy options, thanks to a Pathways grant.



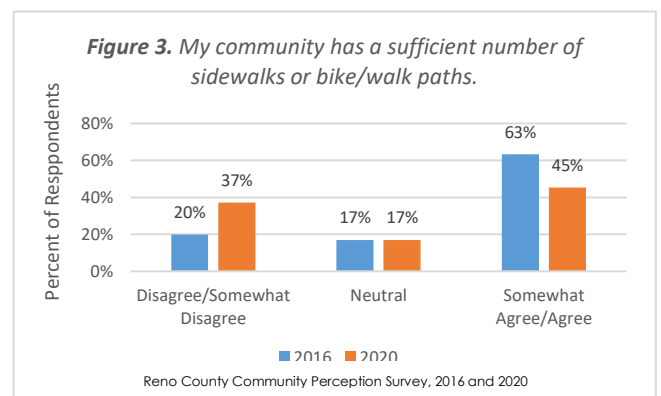
Figure 2. County Commissioner Bob Bush reads the Kick Butts Day proclamation for RESIST in March, 2019.

**Finding #2:** 69% of survey respondents are aware of community efforts to promote smoking cessation.

**Heal Action:** Reno County youth have been active in advocacy to prevent and end tobacco use through RESIST chapters, especially vaping in recent years. This builds from a partnership with Rise Up Reno in 2017 that led to six Reno County cities adopting Tobacco Free Parks policies (*Figure 2*).

**Finding #3:** More than half of survey respondents say Reno County does not have a sufficient number of sidewalks and bike paths. Whereas, in 2016, only one in three respondents felt that way (*Figure 3*).

**Heal Action:** Both the 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan illuminated the need for increased pedestrian and bicycle facilities to improve connectivity in Hutchinson and increase equitable access to parks and greenspaces. We continue to advocate for implementation of these plans and identify funding options to partner with the City.



For more information about the Pathways to a Healthy Kansas initiative or to get involved with Heal Reno County, visit [healrenocounty.org/pathways](http://healrenocounty.org/pathways) or contact Laurie Carr, [laurie.carr@renocounty.org](mailto:laurie.carr@renocounty.org) or 620-259-8463.