Numerous barriers to public health exist in low-income communities, including but not limited to the access and affordability of healthy foods; access and affordability of local exercise facilities; and safe, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods facilitating outdoor activity. Outcomes of such barriers include poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles, and increased incidence of diabetes, obesity, and hypertension. Our purpose was to elucidate perceived barriers to public health in the First Ward, a low-income community in Columbia, MO. In May, 2009, mixed age and gender First Ward community residents were interviewed by a community-based organization (n=73). Interviewers (children who live in the ward) elicited qualitative information; survey accounts, photographs, and audio transcription of interviewers’ accounts were imported into NVivo software and coded for analysis of themes using a grounded theory approach. Data indicated barriers including cost of healthy foods and lack of transportation to grocery stores; unregulated traffic through neighborhoods and violence discouraging outdoor activity; and high entry fees and transportation difficulties regarding exercise facilities. Community residents’ desires included increased police presence on the streets, increased parental supervision for children, community gardening, affordable and local exercise opportunities, lower food prices, and greater healthy food availability.