



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

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To: All Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: Central Michigan Municipalities Initiative

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**LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES HELP RESIDENTS MOVE FORWARD WITH
"COMPLETE STREETS"**

Local Policy Grant Helps Towns Build and Repair Walkways, Biking Trails, Hiking Paths

This past year, thirteen separate municipalities throughout Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola, and Roscommon counties received up to \$17,500 each to create plans to build and restore pathways and sidewalks throughout their local communities. And now, the efforts of that initiative are beginning to see results.

The Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) reached agreements with the municipalities to provide money through a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to create Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans for their areas. These Plans are designed to provide areas where physical activity opportunities are available for local residents.

Municipalities receiving the funding include townships, villages, and cities in four of the six-counties served by the CMDHD. Recipients who received funding are listed by county. **Arenac County:** Arenac Heritage Authority and the City of Omer. **Clare County:** the city of Clare, the city of Harrison, and Hayes Township. **Gladwin County:** the City of Gladwin, the City of Beaverton, Grout Township, and Tobacco Township. **Roscommon County:** the Village of Roscommon partnered with Higgins Township, Markey Township, Denton Township, and Lake Township partnering with Roscommon Township.

The grant funding allows each municipality to receive between \$7,500 and \$17,500 to create master plans that include land policies for curbs, complete streets and sidewalks, bicycle paths, and pedestrian walkways. Allowing access to bike paths, walking trails, or even improved sidewalks can greatly increase the chances of local residents taking to the streets on foot.

Success stories resulting from the CMDHD initiative include Lake and Roscommon Townships partnering to develop plans for connecting the two townships with biking and walking paths, and to make sure crosswalks are safe, especially near baseball fields where local Little League games are played.

The Village of Roscommon and Higgins Township are also working together to connect the two municipalities with a walking path. While the plan is still in its final stages, there have already been discussions with MDOT to assist with crosswalk and signal repairs. Emphasis is also being given to assure that the Village of Roscommon is walkable, as a number of residents will use the pathways to walk to both work and school.

Gladwin County's Beaverton, Buckeye, and Grout Townships are also working together to create a walking and biking path which will run alongside River Road, the main roadway connecting several cities in each township.

“Increased physical activity is a major part of what the Health Department is all about,” says Heather Cole, Health Educator for the CMDHD, “and we are very happy that so many of our local communities are getting involved in making sure our residents have safe, available walking areas.” Most health agencies, including the CDC, recommend physical activity as a major part of a healthy lifestyle, and it seems that with their help, all the improvements the municipalities have planned will help get central Michigan residents off on the right foot towards healthier living.

This article was made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for CMDHD's Together We Can Transform Communities Initiative. 100% of the \$1,643,798 Together We Can Transform Communities Initiative fund is financed with Federal funds.

If you would like an opportunity to get involved to encourage physical activity in your community, consider joining Together We Can. Together We Can is a community project aimed at improving health status in the central Michigan area. For more information LIKE Together We Can Health Improvement Council on Facebook, visit our website at www.together-we-can.org or email us at TogetherWeCan@cmdhd.org.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org and LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook.

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