

Region Five Development Commission awarded a Community Transformation Grant

Focus on Creating Healthier Communities through Active Transportation

STAPLES, Jun 29, 2012 - Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) has been awarded a grant from the Minnesota Department of Health in partnership with the Community Transformation Grants (CTG) program to improve health and wellness through Active Transportation by increasing access to more physical activity opportunities for Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd and Wadena counties, plus Leech Lake Indian Reservation. The award will be grants in \$50,000 increments renewable on an annual basis for five years. Judy Jones has been named as Active Transportation Planner for this program.

In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health's (MDH), the CTG Grant program goal focuses on exploring active transportation and/or land use design standards that include walking and bicycling, providing opportunities for residents to incorporate physical activity into their daily routine. We want to engage partners from multiple sectors to ensure broad participation in providing sustainable strategies to improve access for non-motorized modes of transportation, most commonly walking and bicycling, making it easier and safer for people to walk and ride bikes.

Lack of physical activity, combined with a poor diet, is the second leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States. The most significant loss in health is a result of the reduction, over the past three decades, in activities like walking to the store, to work or to school. Small incremental changes, involving moderate physical activity such as walking and bicycling, can make the biggest difference between a healthy and a hazardous lifestyle. Active Transportation principles and practices in community design, land use, and facility access have been proven effective to increase physical activity. Communities can coordinate with local and regional public works, transportation, and planning professionals to support environment and

system changes that encourage regular Active Transportation opportunities to maximize on the health of our people, the environment, and the economy.

The mission of Region Five Development Commission is to enhance the vitality and quality of life in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, and Wadena Counties.

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