

NEWS RELEASE

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SIDNEY LAUNCHES ACTIVE LIVING CITY RESOLUTION

Advisory committee to encourage walking, biking initiatives

Sidney, Neb., *March 22, 2016* – The City of Sidney is taking steps toward improved community health. At the March 22 City Council meeting, a newly formed Active Living Advisory Committee will share action plan strategies with the mayor and city staff on potential policies about walking, biking, trails and infrastructure to make it easier for residents to be active.

“For the past six months, the advisory committee has been working to advise the city on decisions that could improve the overall health and quality of life of our community,” said Jessica Davies, wellness coordinator of the Panhandle Public Health District.

Members of this volunteer group – including businesses, community and health care organizations, the chamber and city planning and development – have been working on an action plan to make the city more walkable. Possible improvements could include an overpass to connect the north and south ends of town and the expansion of an already significant trail system.

“We know that people are looking for places to live that support active lifestyles,” said Tina Hochwender, economic development director, City of Sidney. “It is not only good for individual health but it also supports the economic development of a community.”

Sidney is part of a select group of cities across Nebraska focusing on these efforts as part of the #WalkNE Nebraska Walkable Communities Project. The initiative grew out of a community-wide meeting held in October 2015 where residents discussed specific ideas centered on safety and physical activity for all abilities and ages.

Specific community actions that were identified include an assessment of current walking and biking policies and infrastructure. Based on the findings, committee members will recommend policy changes and other supporters in Sidney and Cheyenne County to promote overall health. Other aspects include a new park banner and trailer markers for the Deadwood Trail. Additional signage will promote safe, active transportation to work and other key points along the trail system and throughout the community as a visual connection to this work and worksite wellness initiatives at area organizations and businesses.

In order to gain more community awareness, the active living advisory committee members welcome schools, churches, community organizations and individuals to join the initiative and/or share their ideas.

“We are interested in everyone’s opinions so that we continue to create a city that is vibrant, growing and supportive of community health,” said Hochwender.

For more information or to join the planning group, go to the Panhandle Public Health District website, www.pphd.org or call 308-487-3600 ext. 101. Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community.