



1930 Ninth Avenue  
Helena, MT 59601  
406-457-8900  
publichealth@lccountymt.gov  
www.LewisAndClarkHealth.org

**For immediate release**

**Nov. 23, 2015**

**Contact: Karen Lane, LCPH Chronic Disease Prevention Manager, 406-457-8960  
Allison Mouch, APA Western Central Chapter President, 406-841-2598**

## **Health Coalition Gets Grant to Combat Chronic Disease**

A local health coalition has received a \$125,000 grant to combat chronic disease by increasing access to nutritious food and physical activity.

The Healthy Communities Coalition was notified this week that it was one of 17 such groups in the nation – and the only one in the state – to get a “Plan4Health” grant from the American Planning Association. APA is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization dedicated to advancing the art, science, and profession of good planning to create better communities.

“We’re excited about the grant because we know our community strongly believes in the role that access to healthy food and physical activity plays in improving and sustaining health,” said Karen Lane, manager of the Lewis and Clark Public Health Chronic Disease Prevention Programs and coordinator of the coalition. “It’s an issue that consistently rises to the top during community-wide discussions of our most pressing health needs.”

The coalition was selected for the award after a competitive review process. It plans to use the money to design a wayfinding system, including signs and information kiosks, to encourage Helena-area residents and visitors to take advantage of the many parks, urban trails, and sources of healthy food in the area, Lane said.

Partners in the coalition include Lewis and Clark Public Health, Helena Parks and Recreation, Lewis and Clark County Community Development, the APA Western Central Chapter, the Helena Non Motorized Travel Advisory Council, Bike Walk Helena, Bike Walk Montana, Safe Routes to School, Youth Connections, Lewis and Clark County Extension Service, Exploration Works, Helena Food Share, the Midtown Homeowners Association, the Montana Independent Living Project, the YMCA, and the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Recreational Trails Program.

Plan4Health is a multi-year effort to strengthen the connection between planning and public health.

“Planning policy and decision-making play such an important role in promoting healthy, active communities,” said Allison Mouch, president of the Western Central Chapter of the APA. “We’re pleased to be able to support the efforts of the Healthy Communities Coalition.”

Plan4Health is implemented by APA in partnership with the American Public Health Association. The APA-Western Central Chapter and the Montana Public Health Association are regional and statewide affiliates. The program is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“The funding provides fuel to address existing health concerns to create communities of lasting value that are equitable and healthy for all,” said Anna Ricklin, Plan4Health program manager, in a news release announcing the awards.