



News Release

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Date: May 19, 2021

Ribbon cutting ceremony to open two new walking routes in Columbus

For Immediate Release

(COLUMBUS, Neb.) – Walking can offer numerous health benefits to people of all ages and fitness levels. It also may help prevent certain diseases and even prolong a person’s life. That’s why the Platte County Lifestyle Coalition (PCLC) is proud to introduce two new walking routes to Columbus.

The coalition will host a ribbon cutting for the routes at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 27, at Frankfort Square.

The routes are free and available to anyone in the public.

“The idea is to help create a walkable community,” said Dr. Luke Lemke, a physician at Columbus Medical Center and chairman of the PCLC. “We wanted to work in collaboration with the city to highlight some of the excellent walking routes that we have available.”

The North walking route begins at 18th Street and 32nd Avenue. This route has a total distance of two miles. The South walking route begins at the corner of 26th Avenue and 11th Street and has a total distance of 1.6 miles.

Maps for the routes are located at the starting point and corners of each route. Signs that display the pillars of the PCLC also are posted along the routes.

“Our goal is twofold,” said Lemke. “We want to get people moving more, expose them to places they haven’t seen and promote pretty areas of Columbus. We also want to spread the message of the coalition, which is that simple lifestyle changes can make a big difference in people’s lives.”

The routes also provide an avenue for people in nearby neighborhoods to access businesses without a car. Walkers may even discover new businesses and favorite stopping points.

“People who live north or south of the railroad tracks can now walk to some of the downtown businesses and city services like the library, courthouse and city offices,” said Gene Vis,



coordinator of the PCLC. “Also, Frankfort Square is in the middle of the North route, so if someone wants to take a break, have a seat and enjoy the atmosphere, they could.”

As a continued celebration of the new routes, Lemke will be hosting a Walk with A Doc event at 5:30 p.m. on May 27. The event will begin at the starting point of the South walking route. During the event, he will share background information on the PCLC and answer questions from attendees.

The PCLC created the routes with support from America Walks, an organization that works to promote safe places to walk. It provides support to the growing network of advocates, organizations and agencies using innovative, engaging and inclusive programs and projects to create change at the community level.

“The grant was awarded in early 2020, but the project was delayed due to the pandemic,” said Vis. “So, we are excited to see this come full circle.”

The PCLC is a local coalition dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles. The group comprises two local coalitions from the East Central District Health Department and Columbus Community Hospital and representatives from local businesses, schools, city offices, health care providers and service agencies. Concerned citizens also are involved in the coalition.

Its overall goal is to increase healthy behaviors across five pillars of overall health: physical activity, healthy eating, reducing stress, restful sleep and social connectedness.

“The foundation of a city is its health,” Lemke said. “If a city has good health, it’s going to be a much happier community and much more successful. We need to come together with all the great people we have in this community to help forge an environment of health.”

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