



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Communities Invited to Apply for Greenspace Improvement Dollars**

CHARLEVOIX, Mich. – The Health Department of Northwest Michigan invites local communities to apply for funds to improve public greenspaces. These funds, given by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, are used to enhance infrastructure, like improving walking trails, lighting, benches or other physical features of the space. Funds are also used to create or expand community programs that use the greenspace for physical activity. The purpose of the project is to increase use of public greenspaces by making them more inviting, accessible, and safe. Improved greenspaces allow more opportunities for community members to be physically active, and therefore stay healthier.

Eligible applicants include any local government department, agency, special purpose district, public school district, Indian Tribal organization or 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Several grants will be awarded, with individual grants limited to \$15,000. Organizations with greenspace sites in Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Otsego, and Wexford counties are eligible to apply.

The Building Healthy Communities grant is part of continued work by the Health Department of Northwest Michigan to ensure all residents have an opportunity to live a healthy life. A portion of the grant aims to fund sustainable public greenspace enhancements that will create a lasting impact on the health of the community.

“We are thrilled to be supporting local agencies in their work to improve greenspaces while also promoting a healthier lifestyle through the Building Healthy Communities grant for the second year,” said Erika Van Dam, Deputy Health Officer at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. “Last year’s request for proposals was extremely successful, and we are excited to see what this year will bring.”

Previously funded projects include: the construction of the first mile of The North Street Trail located in Central Lake, improving an existing greenspace at Spring Lake Park in Bear Creek Township, connecting Grow Benzie’s 4-acre property with a trail system located in Benzonia, and the renovation of a walking path by the Kalkaska County Commission on Aging.

Letters of Intent are due January 26th and the submission deadline is February 9th. An informational call will take place on January 29th. For further information, including application requirements, visit [www.nwhealth.org/gip.html](http://www.nwhealth.org/gip.html) or call the Health Department of Northwest Michigan at (800) 432-4121.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties.

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