

NEWS RELEASE
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Complete Streets topic of public meetings Thursday

(Lawrence, KS) — Darren Smith and Cynthia Hoyle, representatives of the National Complete Streets Coalition, will talk about “Streets Designed for Everyone” during two public meetings Thursday, Oct. 24, in Lawrence.

The meetings will be:

- 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. in the Community Health Facility, 200 Maine St.
- 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. in the Lawrence Senior Center, 745 Vermont St.

Smith, of Washington, D.C. and a Lawrence native, is a policy representative for Smart Growth and State/Local Affairs at the National Association of Realtors (NAR). Hoyle, of Urbana, Ill., is a consultant for transportation planning. She has more than 30 years of planning experience at the local, state and national levels and is chair of the Champaign-Urbana Safe Routes to School Project.

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department is sponsoring the meetings, and the goal is to educate residents about Complete Streets and to promote public involvement in the implementation of the Lawrence Complete Streets Policy that was adopted in March 2012. Complete Streets are streets designed to enable safe access for all users — pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders.

During the past month, the Health Department has collected information from about 200 older adults, through surveys and focus group discussions, about the ways they stay active and the barriers they face when they are walking, bicycling and using transportation. Among the challenges: poorly maintained sidewalks and lack of connectivity between multi-use pathways. The findings will be discussed during the meetings, and community members will have the opportunity to weigh in on the challenges they face.

“Research shows the likelihood of people walking increases dramatically based on the availability of places to be active, like sidewalks, trails and parks,” said Community Health Director Chris Tilden. “We want the community to understand how continuing to build Complete Streets can improve our ability to be active and to live healthy lives.”

Tilden said adults could greatly decrease the risk of an array of chronic diseases by engaging in 30 minutes of activity, five times a week. “While Lawrence feels like an active community, the evidence clearly shows that many residents live very sedentary lifestyles.”

The Health Department received a \$20,000 grant from the National Association of County and City Health Officials to promote Complete Streets.

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 120 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

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