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\$75,000 in Grants Awarded to Complete Streets Projects

Six grants totaling \$75,000 have been awarded to complete streets projects that make the streets of Greater Des Moines safer and easier to use for all people, regardless of whether they walk, bike, drive, take transit or use a mobility device.

The Complete Streets Tactical Starts Mini-Grants Program was funded by The Wellmark Foundation and administered by the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. The program sought to fund projects that remove barriers to daily physical activity, promote more active transportation, and improve the health outcomes of the community.

“We are pleased with the projects that received funding,” said Stephanie Perry, manager of The Wellmark Foundation. “Each of these projects will make it easier for residents to choose active forms of transportation such as walking and biking. We commend the communities that are making changes to the transportation network that are helping improve the health of all residents by encouraging active transportation.”

The grant program was part of a larger effort by region’s cities to adopt complete streets policies. To date, five cities in the region have complete streets policies, including Carlisle, Des Moines, Norwalk, West Des Moines and Windsor Heights. More information on complete streets and the grant program can be found at dmampo.org/complete-streets.

The six projects awarded funding are:

- Add bike racks and two portable parklets along University Avenue in Windsor Heights (\$15,000)
- Connect Neal Smith Trail to 6th Avenue in Des Moines (\$9,165)
- Add a dedicated bike lane and shared lane markings on South 5th St. in Carlisle (\$14,835)
- Extend the trail and provide safe crossing of Northwest 60th Avenue in Johnston (\$15,000)
- Support expansion of Des Moines BCycle bike-share program in Des Moines (\$15,000)
- Convert three parking spaces to protected bike corrals along Ingersoll Avenue in Des Moines (\$6,000)

Each of these projects demonstrated complete streets principles and will help add transportation options to the community, improve public health outcomes, and demonstrate positive solutions that can be used throughout the region. For more information, call or email the MPO staff at 515-334-0075 or info@dmampo.org.

The Wellmark Foundation is a private, non-profit foundation created by Wellmark, Inc., doing business as Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Iowa. Please visit The Wellmark Foundation's Web site at www.wellmark.com/foundation to learn more about our grant program, as well as a list of previous grant recipients. Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield and The Wellmark Foundation are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) acts as a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state, and federal agencies in regard to planning issues and to prepare transportation plans and programs. The MPO develops both long- and short-range multimodal transportation plans, selects and approves projects for federal funding based upon regional priorities, and develops methods to reduce traffic congestion.