

Lansing-area signs encourage walking



Kate DuHadway, kduhadway@lsj.com 1:32 p.m. EDT June 30, 2015



(Photo: Kate DuHadway, Lansing State Journal)

Take a stroll through downtown Lansing, DeWitt or Dimondale and you might notice a few signs geared specifically toward pedestrians.

The signs point walkers to nearby parks, trails or landmarks, and include information about how long it takes to get there on foot. A "QR" code on the signs provides walking directions via smartphone.

The signs are there to encourage people to walk to more places, said Kathy Hollister, executive director of the Capital Area Health Alliance.

"The whole point of the signs is to help people see that they can incorporate walking into they daily lifestyle,"

Hollister said. "It raises awareness that there are a lot of places to walk to."

The Capital Area Health Alliance installed 61 signs in five communities last year to destinations such as the Lansing River Trail and Michigan State University, Hollister said.

This year, the alliance is planning to install 70 more in nine communities, including Lansing, East Lansing, Eaton Rapids, Okemos, Haslett and St. Johns.

Hollister said everyone in the tri-county area can request a walking sign in their neighborhood. The location needs to be a prominent pedestrian intersection and within a 15-minute walk to a park, trail, neighborhood center, farmers market or other community destination, she said.

The Capital Area Health Alliance pays for the signs and installation costs through a grant from Michigan's 4x4 Health and Wellness Plan, a statewide initiative aimed at reducing obesity and chronic illness. Hollister said the community groups or individuals who request the signs are responsible for obtaining the necessary permission to place them.

The walking signs are a part of the alliance's broader initiative to getting people in the region walking more, Hollister said. That initiative includes a recently published parks and trails brochure for the area and a monthly "Let's Walk and Talk with a Doctor" series.

"We want people to see that walking is attainable and has huge benefits," Hollister said.

To find out how to place a walking sign in your neighborhood, contact the Capital Area Health Alliance at (517) 347-3377 or visit www.cahealthalliance.org (<http://www.cahealthalliance.org>).

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