

84 Communities Want to Demonstrate How to be Healthier

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Eighty-four Iowa communities, including big cities and small towns, want to be chosen as demonstration projects for Iowa's effort to become the nation's healthiest state.

The communities have filed "statements of interest" to become Blue Zones. The project, sponsored by Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield, is modeled on Blue Zones books by Dan Buettner, who looked at regions of the world where people tend to live extraordinarily long and healthy lives. Wellmark has pledged to spend up to \$25 million over five years to help 10 Iowa towns nudge residents toward healthier habits. National experts will help the towns encourage better eating, more exercise and stronger social ties.

The Blue Zones project is part of an initiative to make Iowa the healthiest state in the nation.

Here are the 84 towns that have shown initial interest in the project. Organizers will ask some of them to file formal applications.

Albia, Algona, Alta, Altoona, Ames, Ankeny, Atlantic, Audubon, Bellevue, Bondurant, Burlington, Carroll, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, Chariton, Charles City, Cherokee, Clarion, Clinton, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Decorah, Denison, Des Moines, Dubuque, Dyersville, Estherville, Fairfield, Fort Dodge, Glenwood, Greater Cedar Valley Alliance, Grinnell, Grundy Center, Harlan, Holstein, Independence, Indianola, Iowa City area, Johnston, Jones County, LaPorte City, Lake View, Le Mars, Manning, Marengo, Marion, Marshalltown, Mason City, Monroe, Mount Pleasant, Mount Vernon, Muscatine, Nevada, Newton, Norwalk, Oelwein, Orange City, Osage, Osceola, Oskaloosa, Ottumwa, Pella, Perry, Polk City, Red Oak, Reinbeck, Riceville, Sac City, Sheldon, Sibley, Sioux Center, Sioux City, Spencer, Spirit Lake, St. Ansgar, Storm Lake, Story City, Stratford, Waterloo, Waverly, West Branch, West Des Moines, Winterset, and Woodbine.