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## Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi promoting healthy living in Tate County

By: Travis Ashcraft

March 02, 2011

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The Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi recently held a Tate County Partners meeting at the NWCC Haraway Center.

At the meeting the Tate County Healthy Community Strategic Plan was presented. This plan was designed as a result of input collected at the Your Town Your Health conference held in Demcember 2010 by the Bouchillon Institute for Community Planning and sponsored by the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Community leaders from Tate County participated in a planning charrette to develop a strategy advancing a healthy community.

A charrette is an intensive planning session with a goal of producing immediate strategy outcomes.

Participants spent the day discussing needs and goals and the information that follows represents the outcome of the charrette.

This information is intended to guide Tate County and it communities as they seek to make progress in building healthy communities.

Participants were encouraged to plan in five steps which included developing a vision statement, identify an inventory of assets for active living and healthy eating, identifying deficits, cataloging partnership resources and setting goals.

The plan showed that Tate County is a healthy and appealing community, by all measures, planned around policy and environmental changes to promote healthy living.

Goals listed in the plan include: Community safety for walking, biking and after school foot traffic; Restructuring core community to encourage land use planning designed to make the community more walkable and bikeable; More indoor and outdoor recreation; Shared use of facilities to make better use of local and grant funds; Improved Farmer's Market in Senatobia and to start a Farmer's Market in Coldwater; Community gardens; Requiring sidewalks in subdivision regulations; Church involvement; More accessibility to fruits and vegetables; Making public lands available for recreation and exercise use; A more educated, aware and responsible public; Food policies in schools restrict unhealthy foods; and Accessible primary health care.

The meeting held at the Haraway Center included maps displaying existing resources for healthy eating such as grocery stores and resources for healthy living including playgrounds, parks and walking trails.

These maps also pointed out potential sources for healthy foods and activities that should be developed.

Some ideas spelled out in the plan include: Developing joint use agreements with local schools and NWCC; The establishment of community/church gardens; Recruiting fresh fruit and vegetable providers to expand into the communities; To audit existing ordinances for needed changes for the promotion of a healthy community; Establishing a county-wide greenway/blueway plan; Establish gardens at the County Extension Service office during the next growing season; Expand the Healthy Congregations

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program into more churches; Work with convenience stores to expand fresh fruit and vegetable offerings; Tate County Extension Service and NWCC Nursing School collaborate on a community health fair; Encourage businesses to use wellness care/preventative care strategies with employees; and have well-lit walking areas and bikelanes and have law enforcement patrol those areas.

More information can be found at the following links:  
[Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi](#)  
[Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities](#)

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