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## Healthy Polk 2020

*Who we are; What we're doing*

Healthy Polk is a movement of individuals, businesses and organizations working to improve the quality of life and health status of people in the community. Beginning in 2008, Healthy Polk engaged 2,300 people who live, work and play in Polk County to share their vision about what a healthier community would look like, and out of these “community conversations,” the *Healthy Polk 2020 Plan* emerged. This is the third ten-year plan from Healthy Polk (2000, 2010, 2020).

Several key agencies have made substantial commitments to the movement by providing leadership and structure to Healthy Polk. Polk County Health Department has a statutory charge—from both the State of Iowa and from the Polk County Board of Supervisors—to regularly assess the health needs of the community. Polk County supports Healthy Polk by providing planning and logistical support, and seed money to support small projects that advance the ten Healthy Polk priorities. Healthy Polk also selects a Chair who helps with convening, communication and leadership. The current chair is Chris McCarthy, Project Manager, for Center for Healthy Communities (Iowa Health-Des Moines).

By definition, the work of a movement is carried out by *everyone* who is working to create the necessary changes. *But exactly what kind of work needs to happen?* Early on, it became clear that dozens of people with passion didn't know how to turn their passion to action—they didn't know where to begin. It was also clear that to be effective, the work should build on all the effort already underway.

So what Healthy Polk is doing is gathering experts—identified by their peers—around each one of the ten priorities. Through a facilitated process, these experts identify the existing work and then do an analysis of *why the current work isn't enough*. Key barriers are identified, and specific strategies are developed to address the barriers. In the end, a comprehensive set of proposals is produced. Healthy Polk will then gather key community leaders and stakeholders in one room to confirm these strategies, and work together to begin implementing the proposals in the way that makes the most sense for those who will do the work. The first set of proposals, around the Healthy Polk priority ***Ensure access to affordable, healthy food for everyone***, is being unveiled on February 18, 2011.