

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CITY OF LAWRENCE SELECTED FOR NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES ACCELERATOR

The program will advance city-wide health and wellness initiatives

LAWRENCE, IN - The city of Lawrence has been selected by the National League of Cities (NLC) to participate in the 2025-2026 Community Health and Well-being Accelerator. The Community Health and Wellbeing Accelerator is a 12-month process during which city employees will assess opportunities, learn from peers and NLC technical assistance partners, and co-design a collaborative roadmap for change. The city has created a working group that will include representatives from Lawrence Township Schools, Community Health Network, and Purdue Extension Marion County.

Lawrence is one of six cities nationwide that have been selected to participate. The city was chosen because of the “Live Longer in Lawrence” initiative, launched in April 2025, led by the city’s first-ever Chief Medical Officer, Dr. John Kunzer. “Through this initiative, we will address key challenges, from preventing chronic diseases to expanding access to mental health care,” he stated. “We’re working to integrate health into all aspects of city life because transportation, housing, and community events influence our well-being.”

In discussing the selection, Lawrence Mayor Deb Whitfield stated, “I am thrilled that we will have the opportunity to study best practices and learn from thought leaders and subject matter experts who will help us identify innovative ideas to improve health outcomes for our families.” “When we launched ‘Live Longer in Lawrence,’ we knew partnerships would play an important role in our success. The National League of Cities, with its wide range of resources and opportunities, will help us remain committed to creating a healthier, more resilient Lawrence.”

The City held its first Live Longer in Lawrence Partnership Summit this summer. The Partnership Summit was attended by representatives from the Marion County Public Health Department, local churches, community-based organizations, and healthcare providers. Top health priorities identified included affordability/access to healthcare, mental health, social drivers of health, and navigation to healthcare resources. The Partner Summit themes will help inform the city's focus and efforts for the Health and Well-being Accelerator Program.

For more information about “Live Longer in Lawrence” and other health-focused activities, visit <https://www.cityoflawrence.org/content/live-longer-lawrence>.

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About the City of Lawrence, Indiana:

Located northeast of Indianapolis, the City of Lawrence is Indiana's 20th largest city and home to approximately 50,000 residents. While its military base was decommissioned in 1996, Lawrence has grown into a vibrant community that blends rich history with modern amenities. Under the leadership of Mayor Deb Whitfield, the city continues to thrive as a welcoming place to live, work, and play. Learn more at cityoflawrence.org.