



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## City of Pleasant Hill Promotes a Healthy Lifestyle Change by Making Parks and Trails Tobacco-free

**PLEASANT HILL, Iowa (March 21, 2016)** – On February 23, 2016 the Pleasant Hill City Council unanimously voted in favor of the health of Pleasant Hill citizens by making all city parks and trails tobacco free. Under this new policy, no person is allowed to use any form of tobacco in city parks or trails.

"Making all Pleasant Hill city parks and trails tobacco-free is a healthy decision," said Heath Ellis Parks & Recreation Supervisor. "Experiences in our parks and trails can have positive effects on our physical and mental health. They are great places to play, interact with each other, and encounter nature. Ultimately, it creates opportunities for healthy activities. Establishing tobacco-free parks ensures that our public spaces are healthier, cleaner and more enjoyable for everyone."

The term "tobacco" means any product made or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumption, including nicotine, including any component, part, or accessory of a tobacco product. This includes, among other products, cigarettes, electronic smoking devices, cigarette tobacco, roll-your-own tobacco, smokeless, and dissolvable tobacco.

The American Lung Association in Iowa approached Pleasant Hill Parks and Recreation about adopting this policy and assisted with implementation to align with neighboring communities and school systems in Iowa. City Council members adopted this policy because they believe tobacco use in park areas is detrimental to the health of everyone using the park system. Promoting a tobacco-free park system enhances the quality of the parks and recreational facilities by eliminating tobacco waste and creating an overall healthy environment for residents and visitors. They also feel the tobacco-free policy provides the opportunity to change community norms around tobacco use and will help to reduce youth tobacco use. Each year, 2,500 Iowa kids (under 18) become daily smokers.

The Pleasant Hill Mayor, City Council and staff would like to thank you for refraining from tobacco use while enjoying the city parks and trails.

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