



January 4, 2012

Dear Blue Zones Project Team,

As the Mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, I am pleased to submit the enclosed Blue Zone Community application with ten commitment letters from local healthcare organizations, large employers, media companies and elected officials. Cedar Rapids is fully committed to becoming a Blue Zone Community and supporting Governor Terry Branstad's Healthiest State Initiative.

Since submitting our statement of interest application in October 2011, 80 community volunteers have worked collaboratively to promote the Blue Zone online pledge, recruit Blue Zone Ambassadors, compile information for the application and plan several Blue Zone events in Cedar Rapids. Here is a sample of our community's dedication to this project:

- 16,591 Cedar Rapids residents participated in the Start Somewhere Walk on October 7, 2011, representing 60 percent of all the citizens who participated in Linn County;
- 15 supporters walked in the Fire & Ice Parade on December 3, 2011 to build awareness for the Blue Zones Project and encourage online pledges;
- More than 60 ambassadors have registered to participate in a Blue Zone Kickoff event to be held January 5, 2011;
- Plus, I will be declaring January 20, 2011 as Cedar Rapids Blue Zone Day. On this day, employees of all local businesses will be encouraged to wear blue clothes to work and to join me for a special noon walking event at Lindale Mall, all in an effort to build awareness and encourage online pledges.

In addition, our local media companies have printed and broadcast dozens of articles and advertisements about our commitment to becoming a Blue Zone Community. Please see appendix A for a sample of this media coverage.

If you choose to make Cedar Rapids a Blue Zone Community, we have the opportunity to influence a large population of Iowa. Cedar Rapids is the second largest city in Iowa and serves as a regional influence to seven surrounding counties. While 82.6 percent of adult residents live and work in Cedar Rapids, we also draw thousands of adult residents from throughout eastern Iowa to work and play in our community. According to 2000 Census data, 114,228 people commute to our county from around the state.

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As you review our application, please note that we are in the midst of rebuilding our city after the most devastating natural disaster in our history, the Flood of 2008. Our flood recovery efforts demonstrate our ability to work together for a common cause. We believe that your Blue Zone expertise would play a significant role in our flood recovery success. I invite you to visit our community so that we can show you how we are rebuilding Cedar Rapids better than ever – and with your help, our citizens will live healthier, longer, happier lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron J. Corbett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Ron Corbett
Mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa

P.S. I recently helped prepare a video about our Blue Zone commitment. Please review the video using this link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&list=UU9yKyaBs3sBCK8MhM8VohDQ&v=JvBgukTafWY.