

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 17, 2008

**Fit Community Designations and Grants Promoting Healthy Lifestyles
Available to NC Towns and Counties**

NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund announces fourth phase of Fit Community

RALEIGH, NC – Today the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a fourth phase of its *Fit Community* designation and grants program.

With escalating numbers of diseases and preventable deaths in North Carolina linked to physical inactivity, poor nutrition and tobacco use, the public health implications of being overweight have become a growing priority for HWTF. These behaviors increase the risks for cardiovascular disease, cancer, obesity, and many other serious chronic illnesses.

“North Carolina’s communities are taking charge to become healthier places to live, work and play,” said HWTF chair Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue. “A Fit Community designation is highly regarded among communities across North Carolina as an attractive asset that makes residents proud to live there.”

All North Carolina municipalities, counties, and lead agencies that represent municipal or county partnerships and meet specified eligibility criteria outlined in the RFP are eligible to apply for the designation. Grants up to \$60,000 will be awarded to applicants that demonstrate need, proven capacity, and opportunity for positive change in addressing physical activity and/or healthy eating in North Carolina. HWTF is committed to selecting designees that represent a broad geographic range, diversity of needs, and range of strategies used to address those needs.

There is no fee to apply for the *Fit Community* designation or grant. For more information about the *Fit Community* program, or to download a *Fit Community* application, visit www.fitcommunitync.com. Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on January 16th, 2009.

This program was made possible in part by contributions from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina.

About the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$143 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

###