# Wellville: Project is aimed at areas with fewer than 100,000 people

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"What does it mean to be the healthiest county in the nation?" Thompson asked Tuesday. "This is your opportunity to think outside the box."

Dyson and the other organizers used a social method of engaging people in conversation, known as the World Cafe, at the town hall event.

The community members, ranging from high school students to retirees, sat in groups around 10 tables inside the library. Each table was covered in white paper, which allowed the groups to write down their answers to three different questions:

What does good health mean to me? What does a healthy community look like? What are the fundamental strengths in my community that we can build off of?

The groups were given time to answer each question. After answering the first question, a group member stayed at each table while everyone else moved to another table.

The rotation continued and created more ideas to be shared, Brush said.

"A large part of what we will be doing is help you discuss what is already in Clatsop County and help improve the overall health of the community over the next five years," Brush said Tuesday.

Once each group wrote its answers to the three questions, the groups reported one by one.

To the question about what health means, one person wrote, "It's a person's ability to live, laugh and love and have the access to do it." About what health looks like, one person said, "A well-educated community." Another said, "serving without borders or boundaries.'

Overall, common health-related themes came through such as education, access, safety and economics.

The initial focus areas



A crowd of about 50 people gathered at the Seaside High School library for the kickoff of The Way to Wellville.

JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

'You will move forward and become a beacon for other communities across the country.'

**Rick Brush** HICCUP CEO

for Clatsop County include chemical dependency, mental health, access to primary care, S.C. employment, obesity and food access, prenatal education and care and time-banking service exchange.

Way to Wellville is aimed at communities with fewer than 100,000 in population. The other four communities selected out of 42 applicants are Greater Muskegon, Mich.,

Lake County, Calif., Niagara Falls, N.Y. and Spartanburg,

The Strategic Advisory Council will take local ideas and match them with interested investors. All ideas that work and fail will be shared among the participants and across the nation.

The five Wellville communities will be judged on overall health and financial impacts, social concepts, sustainability and a local priority decided by the community.

The measures will be tracked by collecting data from sources such as grocery store receipts, miles walked or the number of bicycles owned.

"You will move forward and become a beacon for other communities across the country," Brush said. "This is just the beginning."



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian Participants write down ideas and thoughts as they discuss what good health means.



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