



Aitkin County SHIP Program PartnerSHIP News!

MAY 2023

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Website](#)



Aitkin, Itasca, Koochiching, Carlton, Cook, Lake, and St. Louis counties
make up Healthy Northland.

Supported by the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP), Healthy Northland strives to make the healthy choice the easy choice for everyone in Northeastern Minnesota through collaborative and community-based policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change efforts.

Visit Healthy Northlands' Webpage!



In May's newsletter read about: Health Equity in the Northland and a Success Story on Lake County's Worksite Wellness! Upcoming Events & Resources: [Healthy Living for your Brain and Body](#) (June 1st); [Harm Reduction 101](#) (June 7th); [Medications for Opioid Use Disorder](#) (June 8th); and [Healthy Work Habits](#) (June 14th).

Read May Newsletter!

Featured Success Story

City of Aitkin Demonstration Project

On May 10, 2023 a group of volunteers and individuals from the Aitkin Improving



Safety and Active Transportation Coalition installed the Aitkin Demonstration Project. Have questions about the project? Click [HERE](#) to view a FAQ document created to answer any questions you might have.

[Read the Success Story!](#)



Did you try out the Demonstration Project yet?
Don't forget to complete the survey!

If you haven't taken the time to check out the demonstration, please do so! We want to learn from our community to help influence the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) plan for the 2030 reconstruction of Trunk Hwy. 169.



SCAN ME

Partner Spotlight!



Lon Nicko

*City of Aitkin Street
Department Director*

Along with his crew at
the Street Department!



*Every community needs a guy like
Lon!*

Lon Nicko is a well deserved recipient to be this month's SHIP Partner Spotlight! Lon is a champion from assisting in the planning of the Community Walk Audit in 2022 to the Installation of the Demonstration Project in 2023.

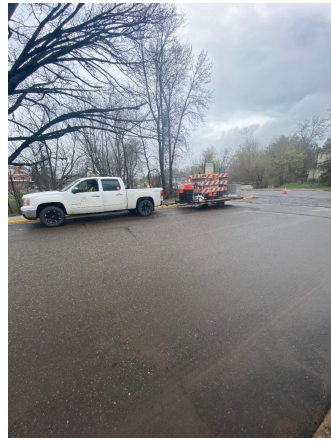
Lon takes pride in his community and this shows with all the hard work he puts into the City of Aitkin! From plowing snow to taking care of streets and the park. When asked of him, Nicko will step up and is someone you can rely on.

Leading up to the project, Nicko provided valuable input and feedback to help design the layout. Additionally, helped submit the permit and traffic control plan to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

During the installation, mother nature decided to give us a rainstorm instead of slight chance of rain. Lon was able to lead his crew and collaborators to figure out a game plan to still roll out the project. His crew was ready to prep the bollards, set up the work zone and be extra hands to create the bump-outs and pedestrian lane (temporary sidewalk).

Since the installation, Lon and his crew learned the design needed some tweaking and were ready to make those changes to help smooth out the flow of traffic in the school zone. Nicko and his crew will help monitor that area during May to October.

If you see Lon or any crew members from the City of Aitkin Street Department, give them a shoutout for all of their hard work to help improve the safety and promote active transportation in our community.



Chief Paul Ryan

City of Aitkin Police
Department

Serving and Protecting Aitkin

Chief Paul Ryan from the Aitkin Police Department is another recipient for this month's SHIP Partner Spotlight! Paul serves an important role in Aitkin by making sure our community is safe; including pedestrians and safer routes to school. Chief Ryan also helped plan the community walk audit and provided input when designing the installation project.

Since the installation, the coalition learned the demonstration project needed a few adjustments from Chief Ryan and the Aitkin Police Department to help the flow of traffic run more smoothly. Those adjustment were made thanks to his recommendations.

Thank you Chief Ryan for all that you and your department does for Aitkin to keep our community safe!

Special Shoutout!

Aitkin Improving Safety and Active Transportation Coalition

Since the community walk audit held in July of 2023, community members and stakeholders were interested in forming a coalition to plan a demonstration project.

The Aitkin Improving Safety and Active Transportation Coalition has been meeting monthly for the past 10 months to figure out the following:

- Determine the project site
- Sketch initial layout
- Engage road authority in project
- Estimate materials needed
- Discuss permitting requirements
- Create installation and removal plan
- Determine project duration
- Create public/residential/business engagement plan
- Engage key stakeholders
- Create evaluation plan



The coalition will continue to meet to monitor the project and review the outcomes.



Not one person or institution/organization could have done this on their own and every active member on the coalition played a huge part to make this happen. If you see these individuals out in our community, make sure you tell them THANK YOU for all of their hard work:

- **Lynne Jacobs** (Aitkin County CARE)
- **Tami Jacobs** (Growth Innovations/Community Member)
- **Lon Nicko** (City of Aitkin Street Department)
- **Amy Dotzler** (City of Aitkin Police Department/Toward Zero Deaths; "TZD")
- **Chief Paul Ryan** (City of Aitkin Police Department)
- **Jason Henke** (City of Aitkin Council Member)
- **John Welle** (Aitkin County Engineer)
- **Hannah Colby** (Aitkin County Public Health)
- **Erin Melz** (Aitkin County Public Health)
- **Naomi Larson** (Aitkin County Public Health, TZD Member)
- **Zach Whitley** (Minnesota Department of Transportation)
- **Griffin Enyart** (Minnesota Department of Transportation)
- **Luke Wehseler** (Minnesota Department of Transportation)
- **LeAnn Goltz** (Minnesota Department of Transportation)
- **Matthew Dyrda** (Alta Planning and Design)
- **Maria Wardoku** (Alta Planning and Design)

WHAT IS MN MOVES?

SHIP is working at the community level to make it easier for Minnesotans of all ages to improve their health and well-being by making routine physical activity more accessible and convenient.

[Learn More!](#)



SHIP builds stronger communities

“SHIP has been an invaluable asset to our community since I came here. They have helped us with Park Planning, Walking Trails, and Safe Pedestrian Route Upgrades. We are working on trail projects that will be ADA accessible and improving access to an upgraded community building that will also welcome people who cannot utilize our currently limited access. Our coordinator does a wonderful job bridging the interagency stakeholders that are working together to improve health and wellness in our region. She even comes to our park meetings and truly an interagency asset.”

—Michael Skrbich, City of Aitkin



A comprehensive approach through policy, systems, and environmental changes is known to increase access to physical activity opportunities and support behavior changes. These activities focus on creating opportunities that can reach the greatest number of people without the need for equipment or leisure time. As such, much work in MN MOVES emphasizes active transportation – walking, biking, and rolling to destinations – creating opportunities for movement as part of everyday living.



Aitkin Demonstration Project

Enhancing access to places for physical activity through local planning involves implementing PSE changes, such as supportive policies and practices to increase access to trails, transit, and nearby facilities and destinations (such as parks or grocery stores).



Aitkin Park Planning Project

Park Planning addresses improved access to parks, trails, and open spaces to create opportunities for physical activity.

This demonstration project will test out new features such as bump-outs to highlight the existing crosswalk and a visually separated pedestrian lane.

What are bump-outs or curb extensions? These are also called sidewalk extensions or bulb-outs. Their purpose is to reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians. It slows drivers through the area which also keeps pedestrians safer.

What is a temporary sidewalk (pedestrian lane)? There is a gap in the community's sidewalk network on the west side of Hwy 169/Minnesota Ave from 1st St to 3rd St. The demonstration project includes a temporary sidewalk along this stretch of roadway. The goal is to identify if a sidewalk or side path (A side path is wider than a sidewalk, and intended to serve people bicycling as well as walking) that would be appropriate for a permanent infrastructure change.

Have questions about the demonstration project. Go to the Aitkin County SHIP Website to view **Frequently Asked Questions!**

Safe Routes to School helps make it safe, convenient, and fun for children to bike, walk, and roll to school

Incorporating health equity into this approach is fundamental to this activity.

Park Planning includes engagement to identify and designate space, park access improvements, and activities that encourage the sustained use of parks. This work needs to address access through planning and PSE activities identified by the community. To truly reap the health, social, and environmental benefits of these vital public spaces, we need to make sure everyone, everywhere, can visit a park nearby.

The concept map and the master plan for the park is in the final stage and will be shown to the public this summer! Stay tuned!



SHIP STORY MAP

The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) creates wellness across Minnesota's communities through community-driven, evidence-based, and equity-focused programs that tackle the root causes of chronic diseases.

To see SHIP work across the state of Minnesota, click on the image above or the link below. From the We Are SHIP page, scroll down to the map. At the far right, you will see a box that includes the state total (2,172 in dark blue print), and below that the Search the Map selection tool. You can now choose Topic Areas, Settings, or County.

[We are SHIP](#)

FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE!

The Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, often called SHIP, supports community-driven solutions to expand opportunities for active living, healthy eating, and tobacco prevention. A primary goal of this collaboration is to prevent chronic diseases before they start. A few things have changed this year — we no longer call them grants and instead call them partner awards.

Funding is intended to support the implementation of action plans that



2023 Community Partner Awards Now Available!

Aitkin County Public Health's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) Program is pleased to announce a **Community Partner Award opportunity in 2023**. Funding is intended to support the implementation of action plans that create sustainable policy, system and/or environment (PSE) changes that expand opportunities for healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, tobacco-free living and well-being. To be eligible, your organization must serve Aitkin County.



PREVIOUS PROJECTS FUNDED



AITKIN CITY PARK PLANNING PROJECT



MATERIALS PURCHASED FOR A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN 2023 (AITKIN)



SUPERSHELF TRANSFORMATION AT AITKIN FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH FOOD SHELF



COMMUNITY GARDEN IN HILL CITY

To learn more about SHIP and the Community Partner Award opportunity visit www.aitkincountyship.org or scan the QR Code or call Hannah Colby, RD at 218-927-7271



create sustainable policy, system and/or environment (PSE) changes that expand opportunities for healthy eating, breastfeeding, physical activity, tobacco-free living and well-being. To be eligible, your organization must serve Aitkin County.

[Community Partner Award Instructions](#)

[Community Partner Award Application \(word\)](#)

[Community Partner Award \(PDF\)](#)

[Community Partner Award Budget Proposal](#)

[SHIP PSE MDH Document](#)

Aitkin County Health and Human Services

Contact:

Please direct all correspondence to the contact information provided below.

Hannah Colby, RD, LD, CLS
Registered Dietitian
Health Educator
Aitkin County Public Health
(218) 927-7271
hannah.colby@co.aitkin.mn.us



*Supported by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, Minnesota Department of Health

2023

Community Partner Funding Application

Section 1: Applicant Information

Date	
Organization Name	
Street Address	
Mailing Address if different	
City, State, Zip Code	
County	
Primary Contact	
Phone	
Email	
Financial Contact	
Phone	
Email	

Information provided in this application may be used for promotional materials. This includes, but is not limited to: fact sheets, Minnesota Department of Health reports, newsletters, social media posts, and media releases. Additional information may be requested by Sherburne County staff; e.g. a release might be requested for individuals in photographs.

☐ By checking this box, you acknowledge and accept the statement above.

Which project area are you applying under? Select only one.

(Your organization may apply for both a MN Well-being grant and one of the following: MN Eats, MN Moves or MN Commercial Tobacco Free grant. If choosing to do so, you must submit a separate application for each project.)

- ☐ MN Eats
☐ MN Moves
☐ MN Commercial Tobacco Free (CTF)
☐ MN Well-Being

Upcoming Events and/or Trainings!



Reach Out & Reach Up

A Celebration of Life!

When: Saturday, June 10th 2023 from 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

What: Food Trucks; Food Vendors; Arts & Crafts; Music; Speakers and Mental Health Fair

Speakers: Senior Health & Wellbeing; Grief; Mental Recovery After a Pandemic; Survivor's Guilt; Make it OK; Changing the Narrative; QPR; Health After COVID/Long COVID; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Mental Health through Mindfulness; Yoga Breathing Class; Little Red Wagon Craft Class



Reduce Tobacco Use and Vaping Webinar

When: It will be held on Wednesday, June 7, 2023, 2 p.m.

What: Healthier Generation is offering a professional learning webinar titled: Reduce Tobacco Use and Vaping through Supportive Discipline.

According to the CDC, 1 in 5 high school students and 1 in 20 middle school students use e-cigarettes.

Join [Craig Wethington](#) and [Jessica Reggi](#) to learn how school communities are adopting Healthier Generation's [Tobacco-Free District Model Policy](#).

- Discuss the health risks and educational impacts of youth vaping.
- Provide [prevention and cessation resources](#).
- Offer [supportive discipline strategies](#) for students who use tobacco and vaping products.

Register Here

Aitkin County SHIP Program | 204 1st Street NW, Aitkin, MN 56431

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