SHIIP creates partnerships to help design a community where safe and convenient spaces for walking and biking make it easier for residents to choose to be active. Appealing features like parks, playgrounds, trails, sidewalks and bike lanes encourage and allow people to move more often. SHIIP is currently working with the City of Aitkin to make healthy choices possible to advance active living.

Aitkin County SHIIP Coordinator and the City of Aitkin Administrator collaborate with one another to create an active community by increasing opportunities for active play in addition to walking and bicycling by looking at the following:

- community design
- land use
- site planning
- walking/biking facility access (trail feasibility study)
HEALTHY EATING- SCHOOLS

Building healthy habits at a young age is a recognized tool for improving health and preventing health issues that cost Minnesota over $3.2 billion annually. One of the things SHIP is designed to do is to help schools instill a lifetime of healthy habits for students which is where the Farm2School Program is involved. Children have increased access to minimally processed, local food and an environment conducive to learning about how food is grown and good nutrition is created because of the Farm2School Program. The program is at all three school districts in Aitkin County: Aitkin School District, Hill City School District and McGregor School District.

WHAT STAFF AND PARENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT FARM2SCHOOL AT AITKIN SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Farm to School Day stirs up excitement in students. Many students are willing to step out of their comfort zone and try something new."
- Rippleside staff member

"I recommend continued growth of garden program. Kids will be excited to eat what they grow. More discussion with kids about the food and how it effects their body and makes them feel. After school cooking classes for kids."
- Rippleside parent

"Have it A LOT more often!!"
- Rippleside parent

$38,271.05

SPENT ON LOCAL PRODUCTS FROM 2016-2019**

**These are preliminary numbers based on awarded contracts with farmers from Aitkin School District, Hill City School District and McGregor School District

THAT'S MONEY GOING RIGHT BACK INTO THE LOCAL ECONOMY!!

EVERY DOLLAR SPENT ON FARM TO SCHOOL GENERATES MORE THAN $2 IN LOCAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY- MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

WHAT 5TH GRADE STUDENTS AT RIPPLESIDE ELEMENTARY ARE SAYING ABOUT FARM2SCHOOL

"I think this is a great program because we can try new foods, and learn new things. I also think it is a great program because family, and friends can come join their children for a very healthy and local fresh lunch."

"Farm to school is healthy and you can learn a lot and try new things!!!"

"I love your food. Its so organic and fresh and I love the program. I think it tastes great and I appreciate the food you bring us. I love that it's fresh from a farm"

"Can we do it twice a month??"

ACTIVE LIVING- SCHOOLS

Aitkin County’s SHIP Program partners with Aitkin School District, the City of Aitkin and Aitkin Police Department to help make the City of Aitkin a community where students can safely and independently get from one place to another. The committee recently updated their Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan in 2018. The City of Aitkin applied for the SRTS infrastructure grant with hopes to receive funding to improve walking facilities along a high use connection between the high school and athletic fields by constructing concrete sidewalks on the south side of the 400-700 blocks of 1st Street NW.

Benefits:

- Kids are more active
- Walking benefits health
- Students arrive ready to learn
- Communities become more accessible and safer for all
- Safety
- Families benefit too!

Our local partners support maintaining SHIP funding at $35 million per biennium