



CASE STUDY

Community Garden: Increasing Access to Healthy Foods and Physical Activity



Ashland HEAL's Community Garden provides opportunities for fresh food and physical activity to people of all ages

To support increased access to physical activity and fresh produce, in 2014 the Ashland coalition created a community garden with 15 raised garden beds on a piece of land that was unused by the town. Much of the supplies and labor were donated by individuals and companies and the Ashland Water and Sewer Commission installed a water meter at no charge to the garden and supplied water free of charge for the first year. Ashland HEAL leveraged \$3,500 of additional funding for the garden through a community grant from the Meredith Village Saving Bank. Ashland's community garden has become a hub of the community that welcomes community members of all ages. Not only are garden beds available for purchase, but also there is a space open to anyone to plant their crops whether they can afford to purchase a plot or not.

In its second year, Ashland HEAL received a \$5,000 grant from the Harvard Pilgrim HealthCare Foundation to support the community garden, allowing for the purchase of fencing, a shed, and a lawn mower. The garden has expanded to 20 raised garden beds and three 50' x 4' beds for communal planting. The Ashland Water and Sewer Department is installing a permanent water connection to assist with irrigation and master gardeners continue to provide expertise and resources to assist those new to gardening.

Bike/Ped Committee: Increasing Walking and Bicycling for Children and Adults

A Bike/Pedestrian (Bike/Ped) Committee was formed to improve the town of Ashland's walking and biking infrastructure. During the asset mapping process, residents expressed concerns about the narrow roads and crumbling sidewalks as a barrier to safe, active transportation within the town. While budget constraints have hindered immediate, widespread infrastructure improvements, a member of the Bike/Ped Committee, Joe Mazzone, started the Re-cycle Program to provide affordable transportation by restoring old bikes and donating them to members of the Ashland and Plymouth communities.

Ashland HEAL leveraged a \$1,500 grant from the Central New Hampshire Bicycling Coalition for initial funding for the Re-cycle Program. These funds helped the program acquire tools to refurbish the bicycles and also helped fund the placement of bike racks at the Ashland Town Beach, Town Hall, Library, Post Office, and Memorial Park. Used bicycles are acquired from transfer stations, as well as from donations by the Recycled Cycles program of Goodwill Industries of Northern New England, S&W Sports of Concord, Raven Recycling, and individual community members. In just two years, more than 108 bikes have been distributed to community members through the Ashland and Plymouth Community Centers, as well as Ladders Thrift Store in Plymouth.



The Re-cycles Program has refurbished and donated more than 108 bikes in the two years since it began