

# HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE 2025 REPORT

The goal of this community funding opportunity, supported by the Minnesota Department of Health Statewide Health Improvement Partnership grant, is to support organizations in launching or expanding projects that improve **health equity** in Dakota County.

## FOCUS AREAS OF PROJECTS:



➔ Increased access to healthy food



➔ Improved community mental health & wellbeing



➔ Increased opportunities to be physically active

## GRANT AWARD PROCESS:



**17** Applications received

**10** Awarded short-term, small investments with big outcomes: 15-18 months at ≈\$6,300 each



## KEY OUTCOMES

- ▶ All 10 projects were community-led
- ▶ All projects centered around health equity or aimed to reach a specific community or population facing greater barriers to achieving their full health potential
- ▶ SHIP Dakota County expanded community partnerships to new food shelves, non-profits, culturally- focused organizations, sustainable agriculture, and faith communities
- ▶ SHIP Dakota County coordinated 3 capacity-building opportunities (Topics: community engagement best practices, evaluation, and strategic communications)



▶ **100%** of the partners met at least 6 out of 7 criteria on the sustainability checklist\*

\*key elements for sustaining policy, systems and environmental ('PSE') changes

## THE PROJECTS:



### ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

#### 360 Communities

##### **Burnsville Food Shelf:**

Purchased new gondola-style shelving which improved layout and increased shopper capacity. Food distribution rose to 660,777 pounds this year, up from 580,431 pounds last year.

##### Holiday Acres

The full-time food shelf within a 188-unit apartment community (in partnership with Neighbors Inc.) upgraded damaged carpet to new flooring and added commercial shelving, expanding capacity. The organization received the 2024 MADACS Outstanding Innovative Resident Experience Award.

##### Messiah Lutheran Church Food Shelf

The Messiah Food Shelf (part of 360 Communities) launched an on-site community garden, to grow herbs and vegetables (some not typically available) harvested by volunteers to expand healthy food options.

##### Mission Outpost

Provided “Culturally Responsive Practice” training (by People Inc.) to 120 staff and volunteers, redesigned the grocery layout, and implemented an open shopping model through surveys, volunteer planning, and site visits.

##### Shepherd of the Valley

##### **Apple Valley Food Shelf:**

Added refrigeration and an industrial sized food scale, improving capacity for fresh foods and enabling accurate tracking of incoming and outgoing food to better assess demand.



### COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

#### Rise Up Recovery

Implemented the evidence-based Trauma-Informed Effective Reinforcement (TIER) system to train staff and establish outcome monitoring. This led to a review of policies, procedures, and environment, and expanded partnerships with recovery organizations.

#### Restoration for All

Increased mental health awareness, reduced stigma, built skills, and strengthened community resilience through culturally responsive trauma-informed training sessions (7):

- Common Ground Conversations (community dialog event on mental health, bias, beliefs etc.) (1)
- Changing the Narrative on Mental Health and Suicide (1)
- Youth Mental Health First Aid (1)
- Trauma-Informed Care Training (4)

#### YMCA Burnsville

Expanded family wellbeing programming for East African community members through community engagement, surveys of 40+ families, nightly activities, and health seminars for guardians.



### INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

#### City of South St. Paul

Launched an [e-bike rental](#) program with 50 rentals in its first summer, supporting transportation, recreation, and errands.

#### City of Hastings Parks and Recreation

Introduced a [snowshoe rental library](#) and free guided hikes, increasing winter activity participation across ages, including older adults.



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Dakota County  
Public Health