



# Plan4Health Nashua



A collaborative project integrating planning and public health where we live, learn, work, and play.



## Nashua HEAL A COMMUNITY IN ACTION

*"I have been working with our Division of Public Health and Community Services and others to start a community garden on the Rail Trail section that PAL had adopted. It's near the community center. It's a high-traffic area. I think it will answer a lot of the questions about security."*

Shaun Nelson, Executive Director  
Nashua Police Athletic League

### Nashua's Top HEAL Strategies

The Nashua Division of Public Health and Community Services collaborated with over 25 local agencies to identify strategies that increase access to healthy foods and opportunities for recreation in the Tree Streets Neighborhood

- Neighborhood residents and local nonprofit agencies will create a community garden adjacent to the Heritage Rail Trail
- Nashua HEAL will promote increased usage of the Heritage Rail Trail through creation of interest centers, maps, and additional improvements



Nashua's Heritage Rail Trail is a vital non-motorized corridor with open space for a community garden in the heart of New Hampshire's second largest city.

**HEAL NH • Partnerships for Healthy Communities • [www.healnh.org](http://www.healnh.org)**

HEAL NH funding is provided by HNH Foundation, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, Endowment for Health, NH Charitable Foundation, and NH Department of Health and Human Services.

# Why Plan4Health?

How a community is designed has a direct effect on the health of its citizens



## Plan4Health Nashua: A Complete Streets Approach to Planning

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

*Smart Growth America*

“Complete Streets policy is an essential piece to help promote the health and safety of the community...and it reflects the goals of the CHIP.”

–Sarah Marchant, AICP  
Community Development Division Director,  
City of Nashua



# Integration with Community Health Improvement Initiatives

Plan4Health Nashua is a  
Strategy Approach in  
Nashua's 2015-2018  
Community Health  
Improvement Plan



## Other Communities with Complete Streets Policies

- Concord
- Portsmouth
- Dover
- Swanzey
- Keene



Concord Downtown

# Convening Partners

Project gained critical support from city leaders when it was endorsed by the Greater Nashua Public Health Advisory Council

The coalition continues to expand to include community members from all sectors

Some of the P4HN partners:

- NeighborWorks
- YMCA of Greater Nashua
- Greater Nashua Boys & Girls Club
- Police Athletic League
- Goodale's Bike Shop



# Community Outreach

- Educate community
- Garner support for Complete Streets
- Feedback about walking and bicycling habits and comfort level to adjust LTS data as necessary
  - YMCA
  - Local Neighborhood Events
  - Art Event
  - Local Bike Shop
  - Community Leaders



# Street Analysis

Objective: Determine how easy or difficult it is for bicyclists and pedestrians to get around the City

- Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) score was given to Nashua streets
- Origins & Destinations

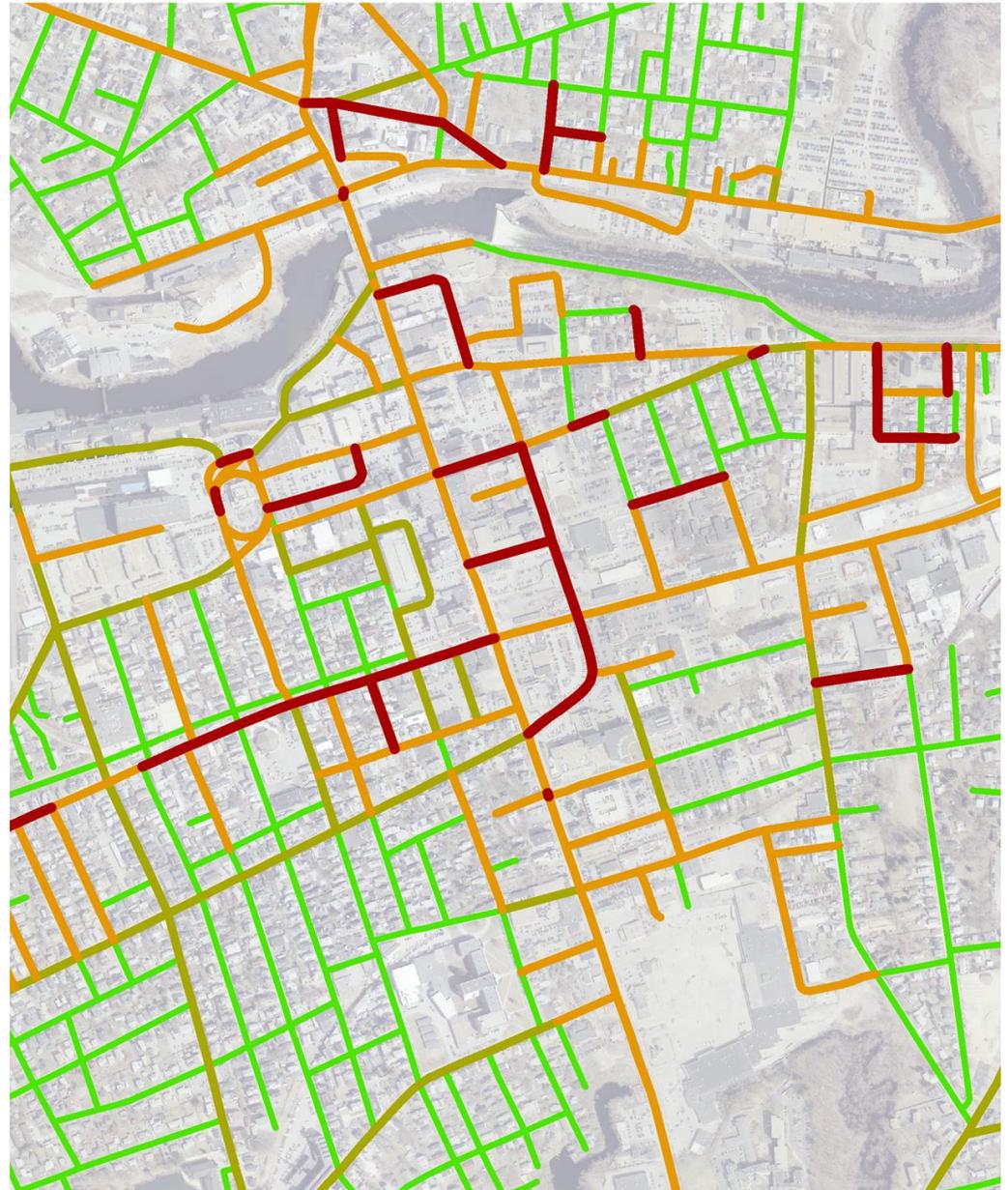


## Level of Traffic Stress Data

Segments, approaches, and intersections are given an LTS score from 1 to 4, with 4 being the most “stressful” – or least suitable for bicyclists

The five neighborhoods that show high LTS scores represent 50% of the Nashua population, and include areas with the greatest social, economic, and environmental disparities

Community Map with LTS data overlay:  
Orange and red indicate higher levels of traffic stress for bicyclists



# Land Use Regulatory Audit Recommendations

## PLAN4Health Nashua

Land Use Regulatory Audit Findings – Executive Summary

### Audit Introduction



Benches and plantings on Main Street.



Covered bicycle parking in South Nashua.

#### What is a Land Use Audit?

Land use audits are designed for communities who want to analyze their land use regulations and related documents to see how well they support specific goals and identify gaps for improvement.

#### Why is this Audit Important?

The Plan4Health Nashua project and audit is focused on promoting complete streets guidelines that support equitable access to safe, healthy multi-modal transportation, economic growth, and quality of life in Nashua.

#### What Topics are Addressed?

This audit is divided into the following five topics:

1. Safety
2. Transportation
3. Land Use
4. Design
5. Site Specific



Each of the five topic areas include an analysis, potential action steps and a matrix of all of the criteria used to review and evaluate each topic area. The matrix also indicates how thoroughly each element is addressed for each topic. The suggested action steps could be implemented by the city to better meet the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. This is further discussed in the Nashua Complete Streets Guide, 2016.



Wide sidewalks span the Nashua River Bridge on Main Street.



Attractive plantings and varied pavement materials on Main Street.



Gardens provide some buffer between sidewalks and traffic.

2/29/16

## Safety

- Develop a Traffic Calming Plan to serve as a planning and budgetary tool for staff and elected officials
- Long-term plan and prioritization of maintenance specific to trails, bike lanes and sidewalks

## Transportation

- Adopt a citywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan for specific infrastructure expansions or improvements
- Update the Standard Specifications for Road & Sidewalk Construction

# Land Use Regulatory Audit Recommendations

## PLAN4Health Nashua

Land Use Regulatory Audit Findings – Executive Summary

### Audit Introduction



Benches and plantings on Main Street.



Covered bicycle parking in South Nashua.

#### What is a Land Use Audit?

Land use audits are designed for communities who want to analyze their land use regulations and related documents to see how well they support specific goals and identify gaps for improvement.

#### Why is this Audit Important?

The Plan4Health Nashua project and audit is focused on promoting complete streets guidelines that support equitable access to safe, healthy multi-modal transportation, economic growth, and quality of life in Nashua.

#### What Topics are Addressed?

This audit is divided into the following five topics:

1. Safety
2. Transportation
3. Land Use
4. Design
5. Site Specific



Each of the five topic areas include an analysis, potential action steps and a matrix of all of the criteria used to review and evaluate each topic area. The matrix also indicates how thoroughly each element is addressed for each topic. The suggested action steps could be implemented by the city to better meet the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. This is further discussed in the Nashua Complete Streets Guide, 2016.

#### Understanding the Audit

- Land Use Code
- Code of the City of Nashua
- Roadway and Sidewalk Design Standards
- City of Nashua Master Plan
- Downtown Master Plan
- East Hollis Street Master Plan
- Tree Streets Plan



Wide sidewalks span the Nashua River Bridge on Main Street.



Attractive plantings and varied pavement materials on Main Street.



Gardens provide some buffer between sidewalks and traffic.

2/29/16

## Land Use

- Extend overnight on-street parking to all Central Nashua neighborhoods
- Consolidate the Downtown, Tree Streets and East Hollis Street master plans

## Design

- Improve accessibility to playgrounds and parks
- Develop a Complete Streets Design Manual
- Enhance existing commercial corridors to retrofit existing infrastructure to meet the current needs of pedestrians and bicyclists

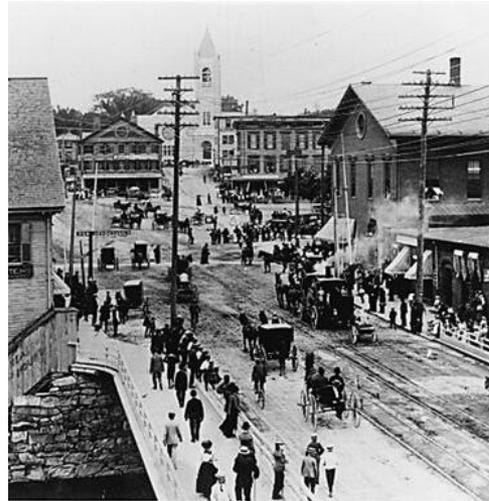
# Complete Streets Guidebook

## COMPLETE STREETS IN NASHUA NH



a guide

Final-3/14/16

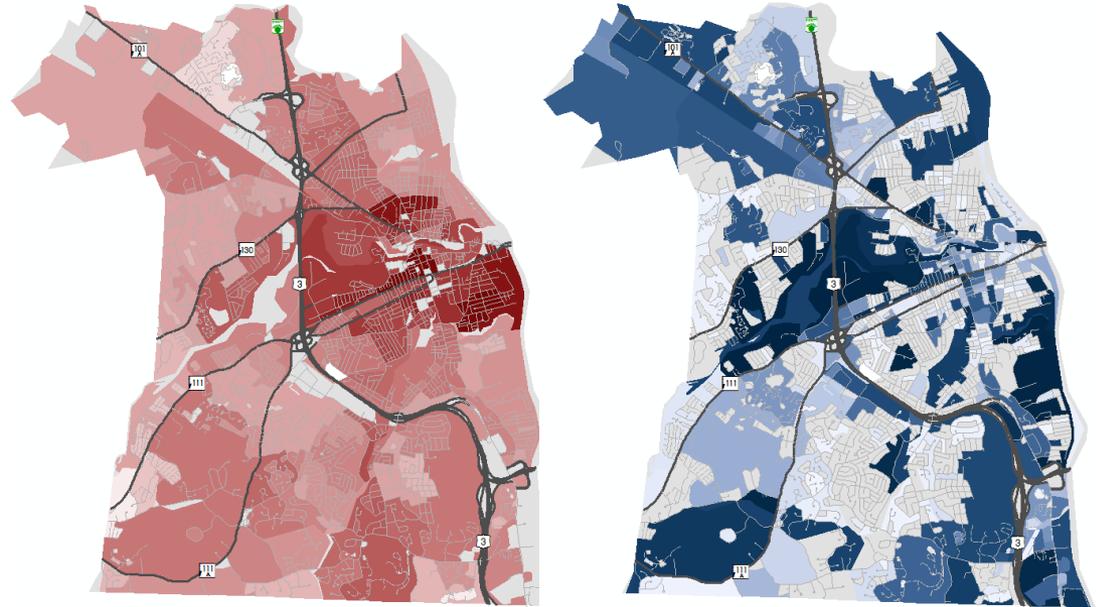


*Images courtesy of Nashua Historical Society*

*Guidance for incorporating complete streets into everyday practice so Nashua's streets increasingly support mobility for those using all travel modes.*

# Origins & Destinations

To help determine where complete streets improvements would have a positive impact on the most people in need.

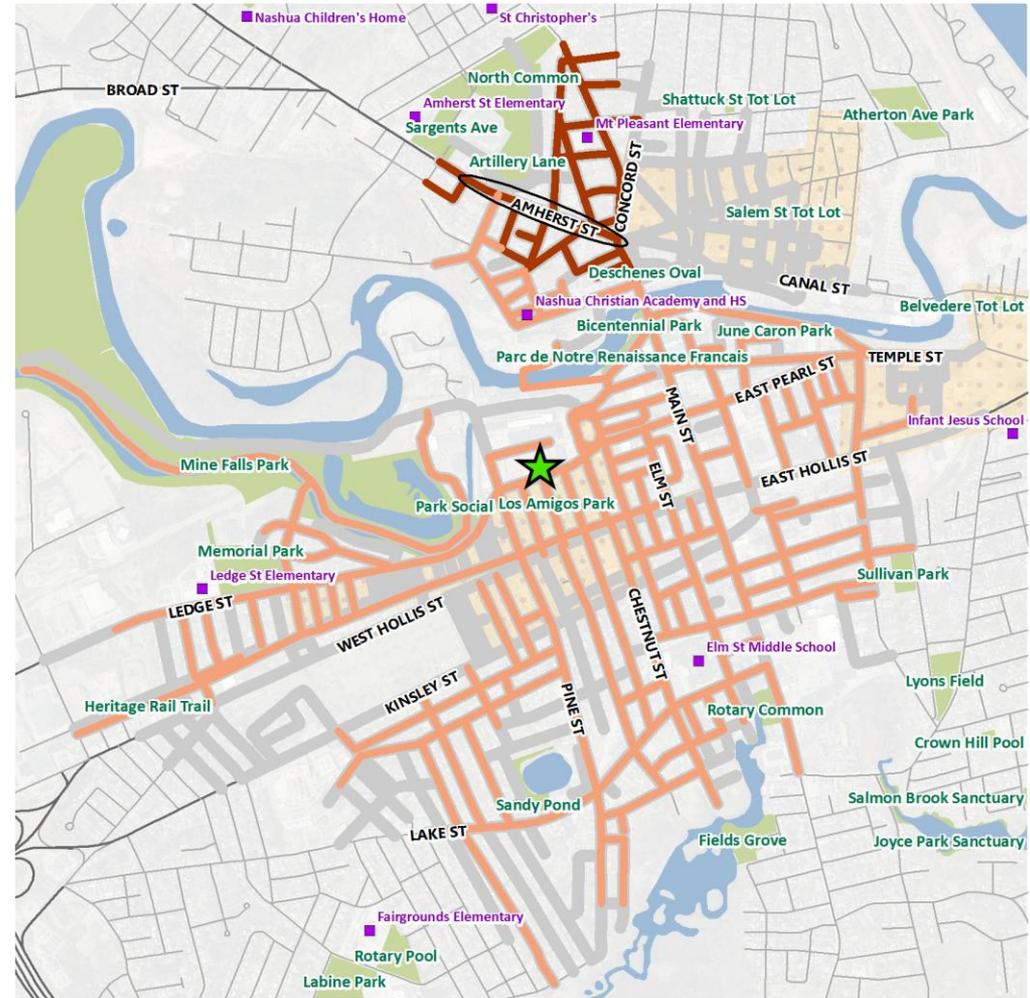


- Origin (left) and destination (right) score for Census blocks in Nashua
- Darker colors represent more likely areas for biking and walking trips

# Connectivity Islands

Finding corridors and broken connections along high-demand routes can lead to recommended complete streets improvements in order to safely get walkers and bicyclists where they want to go.

## Bronstein Apartments



# Connectivity Islands

## Target Study Areas:

- Bronstein Apartments
- Dr. Crisp School
- Greely Park
- Royal Crest
- Riverside Street
- Amherst Park Apartments

# Education

- NHPHA Annual Meeting
- HEAL NH Conference
- Planning Board and Planning & Economic Development Committee presentations
- Complete Streets Training
- Temporary installations
- Project updates to state legislators
- Newsletter articles to partners constituents



## HEALTHY PEOPLE HEALTHY PLACES PLAN ACTIVE RECREATION WORKGROUP

### ABOUT THE ACTIVE RECREATION WORKGROUP

The Active Recreation Workgroup was formed in 2014 in response to the development of the 2015-2019 Healthy People Healthy Places (HPPH) Plan. The Workgroup is made up of partners from across NH who are interested in increasing access to places to play and recreate for NH residents.

#### GOAL

NH Residents have equitable access to options for getting around, and safe, high-quality places to play and be active.

#### ACTIVE RECREATION OBJECTIVE (HPPH PLAN OBJECTIVE #2)

All NH communities have access to indoor and outdoor recreation facilities within a reasonable distance.

### ACTIVE RECREATION STRATEGIES

The activities of the Active Recreation Workgroup are aimed at accomplishing three strategies.

#### Strategy A: JOINT USE AGREEMENTS

Increase access to public and community facilities for physical activity through coordinated statewide education, outreach and advocacy for Joint Use Agreements, with a priority for highest need communities and neighborhoods.

**Outcome 1:** By 2016, establish a database of the public and community facilities throughout New Hampshire, and identify those with Joint Use Agreements.

**Outcome 2:** By 2016, establish an advocacy network to encourage the development and enactment of Joint Use Agreements statewide.

**Outcome 3:** By 2016, develop a toolkit for Joint Use Agreements and collaborate with NH agencies to distribute statewide.

#### Strategy B: PUBLIC & PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Increase public and private investment to create and improve access to healthy and safe parks, playgrounds, open spaces, and other places for community recreation.

**Outcome 1:** By 2016, complete assessment of public and private investment in local recreation infrastructure.

**Outcome 2:** By 2018, establish and begin initial implementation of a strategy for increasing public and private support for recreation investment.



#### Strategy C: INCREASE USE

Increase use of parks, playgrounds, open space, and other places for community recreation by highest need communities and neighborhoods through coordination and collaboration of staff, resources, and incentives.

**Outcome 1:** By 2015, develop a multi-sector state level network comprised of community recreation managers, program staff and others to inform the use of state and local recreation and parks by highest need communities and neighborhoods.

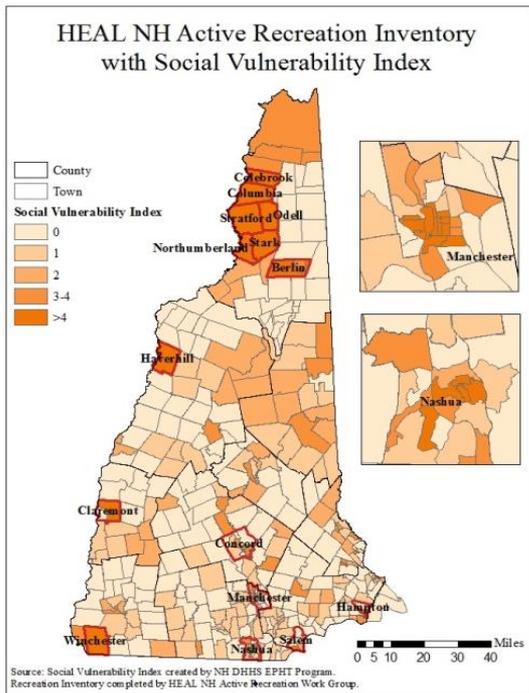
**Outcome 2:** By 2017, establish guidance for increasing use of parks, playgrounds, open space, and other community recreation places in high need communities and neighborhoods.

#### A network of HEAL partners from a variety of sectors are participating in the Active Recreation Workgroup:

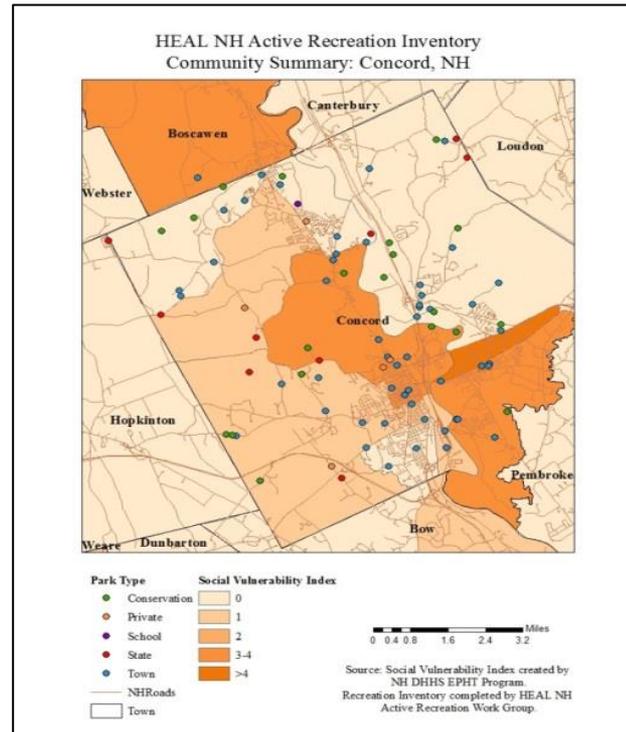
Kerry Horne, NH Recreation and Parks Association and HealthTrust | Robert Barcelona, Recreation Management and Policy, UNH Dept. of Health and Human Services | Barbara McCahan, Center for Active Living and Healthy Communities, Plymouth State University | Katie Bush, Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services | Chris Thayer, Appalachian Mountain Club | Paul Coats, City of Lebanon Department of Recreation and Parks | Cindy Heath, GP RED | Mike Loomis, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health | Beth Gustafson Wheeler, HEAL NH

# Active Recreation Inventory in NH's Highest Need Communities

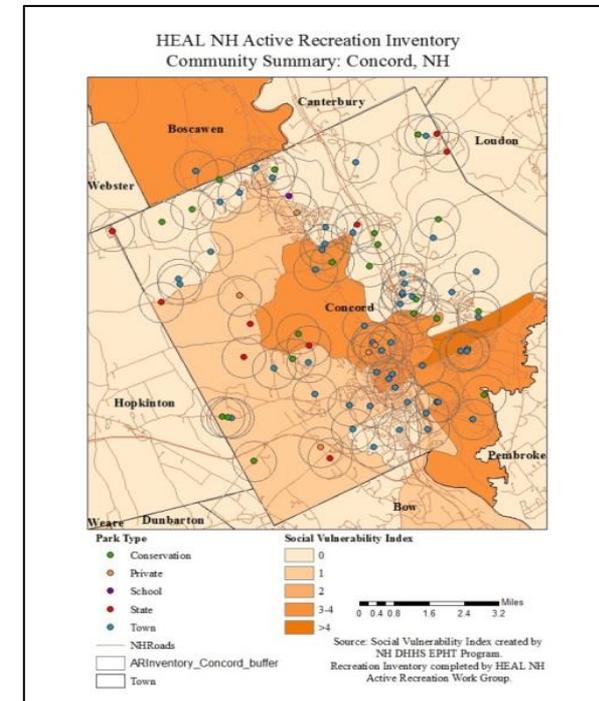
**Figure 1:** NH Highest Need Communities Identified



**Figure 2a:** Example of map developed for Concord, NH



**Figure 2b:** Example of map developed for Concord, NH with ½ mile radius





# Active Recreation Inventory in NH's Highest Need Communities

Table 1: Natural Outdoor Recreation Amenities			Table 2: Built Outdoor Recreation Amenities		
Amenity Type	N*	% of Properties	Amenity Type	N*	% of Properties
Walking Trails	96	39.7	Playgrounds	106	40.6
Bike Paths	84	35.3	Ball Fields (baseball/softball, soccer, football)	99	37.5
Fishing	36	13.9	Picnic Areas	69	27
Ice Skating	24	9.2	Basketball Courts	65	24.6
Boating	23	8.8	Tennis/Racquet Courts	30	11.5
Swimming	21	8.2	Ice Skating Rink	17	6.5
			Running/Jogging Tracks	14	5.3
			Skate Park	5	1.9

The presence of various natural and built outdoor recreation amenities was documented . Fewer than half of the properties provided natural or built amenities.

Urban properties were significantly more likely to have:	Rural areas were significantly more likely to be in close proximity to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built amenities such as:</li> <li>• Playgrounds</li> <li>• Ball fields</li> <li>• Basketball courts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking trails</li> <li>• Bike paths</li> <li>• Motorized trails</li> <li>• Boating opportunities</li> </ul>



# Safe Places for People to Play and Be Active

- Those who reside within a half a mile of a park are more likely to engage in physical activity
- Disparities exist in lower income communities in terms of park distribution and access
- Park distribution, access, amenities and features, park conditions, and park use vary across different populations and communities



# Safe Places for People to Play and Be Active

## Common barriers faced by low income populations include:

- Long distances to parks and recreational facilities
- Unsafe neighborhoods and traffic conditions
- Lack of meaningful transportation choices
- Expense of fitness/recreation centers
- Adequate childcare

## Improving park accessibility:

- Routes to parks that are safe from traffic and crime influence park use
- Safe walking and bike routes in and around a neighborhood



# Safe Places for People to Play and Be Active

## Features in a park that have been shown to influence park use:

- Playgrounds
- Sports facilities
- Paved or unpaved trails
- Enjoyable scenery
- Shade trees and other vegetation
- Seating and picnic areas
- Water features
- Perceived safety from crime or traffic
- Restrooms