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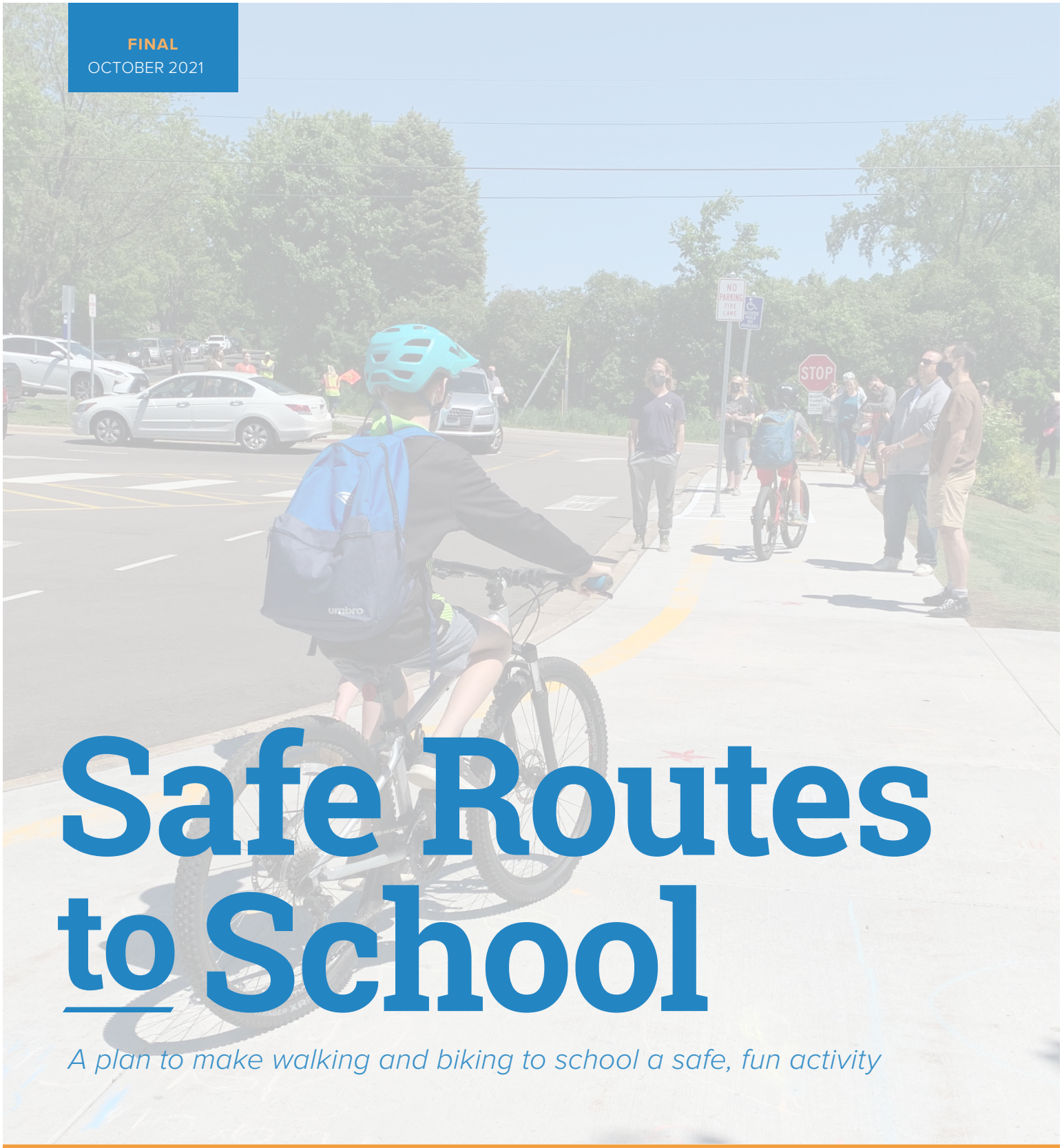

Safe Routes to School

A plan to make walking and biking to school a safe, fun activity

SOMERSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Mendota Heights, MN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following key people/entities participated in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan efforts for this Safe Routes to School Plan. Their creativity, energy, and commitment were critical to the success of this effort.

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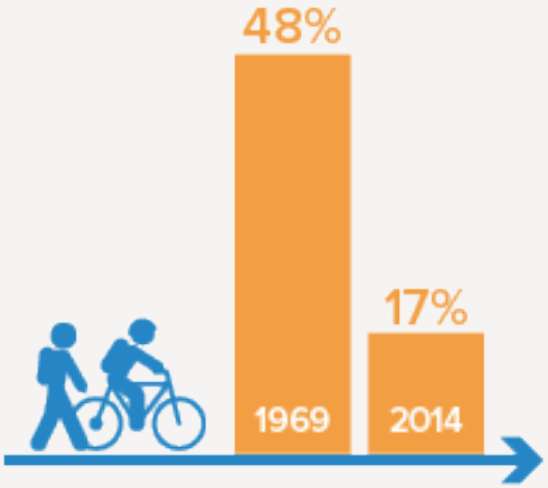
INTRODUCTION + CONTEXT

Why Safe Routes To School?



THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WALKING OR BIKING TO SCHOOL HAS DROPPED PRECIPITOUSLY WITHIN ONE GENERATION

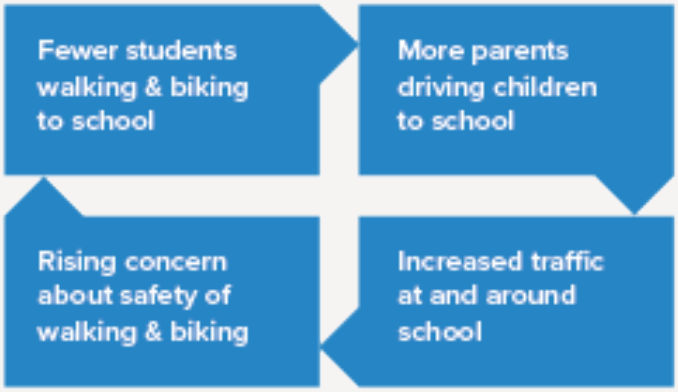
MOST KIDS ARE NOT GETTING ENOUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

ROADS NEAR SCHOOLS ARE CONGESTED, DECREASING SAFETY AND AIR QUALITY FOR CHILDREN

KIDS WHO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL:

- Arrive alert and able to focus on school
- Are more likely to be a healthy body weight
- Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety
- Get most of the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity during the trip to and from school
- Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance*

THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF INCREASED TRAFFIC LEADING TO REDUCED WALKING AND BICYCLING:



*More information, including primary sources, can be found at http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org

The Six E's

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs use a variety of strategies to make it easy, fun, and safe for students to walk and bike to school. These strategies are often called the "Six E's."

ENGAGEMENT

Listening to children, families, teachers, and school leaders and working with community partners and organizations to build intentional, ongoing engagement opportunities into the program structure.

EQUITY

Creating and implementing SRTS initiatives that benefit all demographic groups, with particular attention to ensuring positive outcomes for low-income students, Black students and students of color, students of all genders and sexual orientations, students with disabilities, and more.

ENGINEERING

Improving walking, biking, and rolling by making changes to the built environment.

EDUCATION

Providing children and community members with the skills safely walk and bike, educating them about the benefits active transportation, and teaching them about transportation options.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Building interest and enthusiasm for walking, biking, and rolling to school by using incentive programs, events, or classroom activities.

EVALUATION

Assessing which programs are more or less successful, ensuring that initiatives are supporting equitable outcomes, and identifying unintended consequences or opportunities to improve to effectiveness of each activity or approach.

Navigating this Plan

Below is a roadmap for navigating the way through this plan. Use it to find all the information you need for helping students be safer and more active!

PROGRAMS

Getting kids to walk and bike to school requires fun and engaging programs for schools and families. Turn to this section for recommended events, activities, and strategies that will get students moving.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensuring the safety of students on their trips to and from school means upgrading the streets. See this section for suggestions to improve the safety, comfort and convenience of walking and biking, including paint, signage, and signals.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The more people involved with a local Safe Routes to School process, the more successful it will be! Use this section to find out how you can be a part of this important initiative.

APPENDICES

There is more information available than could fit in this plan. For additional resources, turn to this section.

Caregivers and students gather outside Somerset Elementary and walk across Dodd Road during school dismissal.

The Vision

Walking, biking, and rolling to school is safe, comfortable, and fun for all Somerset students.

This plan was made possible with support from the Dakota County Department of Health and was developed in coordination with the Somerset Elementary community. Recommendations are the result of workshops, discussion, and site visits involving school district, city, county, and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) staff as well as teachers, school administrators, students, caregivers, and other stakeholders.

The Somerset SRTS Plan identifies program strategies to create a culture of walking, biking, and rolling and infrastructure recommendations to support a safe and comfortable environment for active transportation near campus. Some recommendations may be implemented almost immediately while others will require more planning, analysis, and funding. While not all of these recommendations can be implemented right away, achieving short-term successes where possible will help build momentum and lay the groundwork for more complex projects in the future.

EQUITY HIGHLIGHT

EQUITY IN SRTS

Equity in SRTS means that every student is able to safely, comfortably, and conveniently walk and bike to school, regardless of race, cultural identity, tribal affiliation, immigrant or refugee status, language, gender or sexual identity, income, religion, and whether or not a student receives special education, has a physical or mental disability, or is homeless or highly mobile.

An equity approach requires working with local partners to tailor programs and allocate resources to meet the unique needs of the community.

Plan Development

The Somerset SRTS Plan is a collaboration between stakeholders who work with students and transportation at Somerset Elementary School. For more information related to the planning process, see the Appendix.

- **SRTS Planning Team:** The SRTS planning team included representatives from the school, school district, city, county, and state with varying perspectives and expertise including teaching and learning, administration, planning, and engineering.
- **Caregiver Survey:** Surveys were distributed to gather information from caregivers about habits and barriers related to walking, biking, and rolling to school. A total of 36 surveys were completed.
- **Rapid Planning Workshop & Action Plan Meeting:** The SRTS planning team gathered for a Rapid Planning Workshop in spring 2021 to discuss infrastructure and programs, observe dismissal, conduct a walk assessment, and build consensus around issues and opportunities for walking and biking at Somerset Elementary. In summer, the team regrouped to refine and prioritize program and infrastructure action steps.
- **Student Travel Tallies:** In fall of 2021, a student hand tally was conducted in all Somerset classrooms to note the various modes of travel students were using to get to and from school each day.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Programs should consider ways to provide safe walking and biking experiences and skills training for students who live too far from school to walk or bike all the way from home
- Many caregivers who live within walking and biking distance from school expressed interest in doing so if conditions changed so that walking or biking was a safer and more inviting option
- Traffic and roadway conditions including speeds and lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure pose challenges for walking and biking at Somerset
- Somerset has many existing SRTS programs that can be expanded to increase awareness of SRTS and boost event participation and impact

SHIFT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

COVID-19 IMPACT

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically shifted the course of transportation, education, and planning.

Instead of attending classes in person, students completed coursework from home or attended school on a rotating hybrid schedule. Changes in school policies and limits on busing dramatically shifted school transportation patterns.

COVID-19 also created big changes for the typical planning process. While typical transportation was not taking place, plans for the future still needed to be made, so virtual workshops and online data collection tools became the new norm for public engagement.

A family walks across the school driveway.

Somerset Elementary School and the surrounding area.

Somerset Elementary in Context

Somerset Elementary School is located on Dodd Road in Mendota Heights, a first ring suburb of the Twin Cities in Dakota County, Minnesota just south of Saint Paul. It serves approximately 400 students in kindergarten through fourth grade.

Somerset is primarily surrounded by single-family residential neighborhoods. A school forest sits between Somerset Elementary and the neighborhood to the west. Walking trails through the woods provide a serene connect from homes to the main entrance. Sidewalks, trails, and dedicated bikeways are generally not present on streets surrounding Somerset Elementary School. This prevents many students and families who live near campus from walking or biking to school.

Due to traffic and roadway conditions surrounding campus, all Somerset students are eligible for busing with the exception of the 30-35 percent of students who open enroll. The significant portion of in-district transfer students and Somerset's early start time contribute to high caregiver drop-off numbers.

In 2020, Somerset's parking lot was reconstructed to provide separate dedicated areas for bus and private vehicle circulation. Both the bus loop and caregiver parking lot are accessible from Dodd Road, a two-lane Minnesota State Highway. During arrival and dismissal, the west shoulder of Dodd Road is filled with vehicles as caregivers queue up to enter the school parking lot.

Instead of using the dedicated loop, many caregivers park on Emerson Avenue east of school or in the small parking lot south of school and walk in to meet their student. This contributes to high pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Dodd Road near Emerson Avenue and the school driveway. The crossing is monitored by an adult crossing guard, but continues to be a primary area of concern for the school community.

In recent years, Somerset Elementary has used school communications, events, and programs to promote safe walking and biking to school and in daily life. Activities include participating in Walk & Bike to School Day in fall and spring, holding Park & Walk events for students who aren't able to walk or bike from home, teaching Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum in physical education classes, and participating in walking field trips.

02

PROGRAMS

Introduction to Programs

The SRTS movement acknowledges that infrastructure changes are necessary for shifting school travel behavior, but are insufficient on their own. Programs are a necessary component of any successful SRTS plan.

While engineering improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways are important, equally important are education programs to give students basic safety skills, encouragement programs to highlight walking and bicycling to school as fun and normal, engagement tools to give all community members a voice, and evaluation of the impact of investments and non-infrastructure efforts. When planning and implementing SRTS programs, it is important to design events and activities that are inclusive of students of all backgrounds and abilities.

Often, programs that help to get more youth walking, biking, and rolling lead to increased public support for infrastructure projects - they can be an important first step towards building out the physical elements that make walking, biking, and rolling safer and more comfortable. Also, relative to certain infrastructure projects, most programs are very low cost.

The Somerset Elementary School crossing guard facilitates pedestrian crossings across Dodd Road before and after school.

Existing Programs

Somerset Elementary School staff and community members have been actively working towards providing safe and inviting spaces around the school campus for students walking and biking to, from, and on campus. This foundation of encouraging student travel safety provides a valuable baseline for expanding programs to encourage more students and families to walk and bike to school and in daily life.

Somerset Elementary programs:

- Walk & Bike to School Day - Somerset regularly participates in October and May events
- Remote Drop & Walk - As part of Walk & Bike to School Day activities, school buses off students at Brookside Lane and Laura Lane and caregivers are encouraged to drop students in Laura Court
- School Communications - Somerset promotes Walk & Bike to School Day and Remote Drop & Walk through email blasts to caregivers
- Crossing Guard - A school staff member facilitates crossings of Dodd Road and Emerson Avenue during school arrival and dismissal
- Walking Field Trips - Students deliver May Day baskets to neighborhood homes and walk to Ivy Hills and Wentworth Park in spring
- Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum - Physical education teachers have taught Walk! Bike! Fun! intermittently including on-scooter education for grades K-2 and on-bike education for grades 3-4

On Walk & Bike to School Days, school buses drop students near the trail access point at Brookside Lane and Laura Lane and students walk the rest of the way to school.

Program Recommendations

Somerset Elementary already has a great foundation of SRTS programs. Rather than recommending a slew of new programs at Somerset, this plan recommends action steps to expand on existing efforts and partnerships to increase awareness, participation, and overall impact. Somerset should continue existing activities while implementing expansion recommendations.

Suggested action steps were identified and prioritized through conversations with school stakeholders. They are tailored to meet the unique needs and interests of the school community in the near term.

Program expansion efforts have been prioritized into the following categories:

- Immediate implementation (within one year)
- Short term (1-2 years)
- Medium term (2-3 years)

Additional details about each program recommendation including a description, suggested lead and support roles, and expansion considerations are provided on the following pages.

EQUITY HIGHLIGHT

EQUITY IN PROGRAMMING

When planning and implementing SRTS programs, it is important to design events and activities that are inclusive of students of all ethnicities, genders, backgrounds, and abilities. Language and cultural barriers, physical abilities, personal safety concerns, and infrastructure barriers can all create potential obstacles to participation. Creative outreach, low-cost solutions, and flexible implementation can help overcome obstacles and enable more students and families to participate.

For more information about equity in SRTS planning, see Appendix J.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Including SRTS messaging on school websites and regular communications is a great way to build awareness of the program, increase participation in events, promote active transportation options, and educate families about recommended walking, biking, and driving behavior on and near school. School communication may include paper and electronic newsletters, video, social media blasts, parent workshops, and other outreach strategies.

When: Immediately

Lead: School administrators

Support: ISD 197, Live Green Team

Implementation considerations:

- Add basic information about walking and biking to school and safely driving around pedestrians and bicyclists to the school's transportation webpage
- Consider creating a designated SRTS web page on the school website to house information about the SRTS plan, safe walking and biking tips, upcoming activities, and more
- Use email communications and social media to share time-sensitive SRTS information
- Routinely include walking and biking information in school communications including safety skills, tips on dressing for the weather, fun facts, and more
- Consider inviting the student Live Green Team to support communications including developing messaging or creating an SRTS campaign

CROSSING GUARD

Crossing guards are trained adults, paid or volunteer, who are legally empowered to stop traffic to assist students with crossing the street. The Minnesota SRTS Program offers adult crossing guard training to provide basic instruction on crossing guard procedures, common causes of crashes, and Minnesota state law regarding pedestrian crossings.

When: Immediately to short term

Lead: School administrators and staff

Support: ISD 197

Implementation considerations:

- Continue to use a crossing guard to facilitate crossings of Dodd Road near the school driveway
- Train existing and future crossing guards using MnDOT's Crossing Guard Training on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center
- When infrastructure improvements are implemented at Dodd Road near the school driveway shifting the crossing away from Emerson Street, prioritize the crossing guard presence at the Dodd Road crossing

WALK & BIKE TO SCHOOL DAYS

National Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day attract millions of students and families to try walking and biking to school every October and May. In addition, Minnesota also celebrates Winter Walk to School Day in February. Education and encouragement programming can be used to promote Walk & Bike to School Day events, increase awareness, and expand participation. Smaller scale walk and bike events such as Walking Wednesdays can take place more frequently if there is interest and capacity.

When: Short term

Lead: School administrators and staff, ISD 197

Support: Somerset PTO, Live Green Team, City of Mendota Heights

Implementation considerations:

- Continue participating in Walk & Bike to School Day in October and May and begin participating in Winter Walk to School Day in February
- Build excitement around Walk & Bike to School Days by participating in statewide competitions, offering incentives to students, and implementing supporting programming such as a dance party along the trail
- Hold more frequent and less formal walk and bike days in fall and spring; start with monthly events and increase frequency as interest and capacity allows
- Coordinate winter maintenance of the forest trail between the City of Mendota Heights and ISD 197 Buildings and Grounds

EVALUATION

CAREGIVER SURVEYS AND STUDENT TRAVEL TALLIES

There are two great tools to evaluate all the SRTS work in the community:

Caregiver Surveys: Recommended once every 2-3 years. A hard copy survey or link to an online version can be sent to caregivers to gather their perceptions of walking, biking, and rolling to school. Surveys can be distributed through newsletters, school websites, or at conferences.

Student Travel Tally: Recommended in fall and spring of every year. In-class tallies ask students how they traveled to and from school on a given day. These tallies are done for all classrooms at a school for a series of consecutive days in a week.

REMOTE DROP & WALK

During a Remote Drop & Walk, school buses and/or caregivers drop off students a short distance from school, and students walk the rest of the way. These types of events can help reduce vehicle congestion on campus and provide students who live further from school with the opportunity to experience walking to/from school. Remote drop programs can use a clearly defined site such as a nearby park or follow a dispersed model that makes use of neighborhood streets in a more general area.

When: Short term

Lead: School administrators and staff, ISD 197

Support: Somerset PTO, neighborhood association

Implementation considerations:

- Continue holding remote drop events as part of Walk & Bike to School Day
- Continue the informal dispersed drop activity already happening on Emerson Avenue
- Consider holding more formal remote drop events on a weekly or monthly basis
- Encourage caregivers to make use of Brookside Lane, Laura Lane, and the trails west of school following a dispersed remote drop model
- Consider partnering with residents west of school to chaperon students through the school forest

WALK & BIKE EDUCATION

Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum is a two-part curriculum designed specifically for Minnesota's schools. It is structured to meet Minnesota education standards and is an important part of the Safe Routes to School Program in Minnesota. Walk! Bike! Fun! helps children ages five to thirteen learn traffic rules and regulations, the potential hazards to traveling, and handling skills needed to bike and walk effectively, appropriately and safely through their community.

When: Short term

Lead: School administrators and staff

Support: ISD 197

Implementation considerations:

- Continue to include Walk! Bike! Fun! In PE classes
- Implement Walk! Bike! Fun! universally so all students receive consistent, ongoing pedestrian and bicycle education throughout elementary school
- Consider integrating Walk! Bike! Fun! modules with bus safety week
- Ensure that current and future PE teachers are aware of and trained in Walk! Bike! Fun!
- Promote use of Walk! Bike! Fun! outside of PE classes such as preparing students for walking field trips

WALK AND BIKE FIELD TRIPS

A field trip made by foot or by bicycle gives students a supportive environment in which to practice their pedestrian safety or bicycling skills. Walk/bike field trips can also showcase the many benefits of walking and bicycling for transportation including health and physical activity, pollution reduction, and cost savings. The destination of the field trip may vary, or the field trip could be the ride or walk itself.

When: Short term

Lead: School administrators and staff

Support: ISD 197, Fusion Lab, Dodge Nature Center

Implementation considerations:

- Continue existing Walking Field Trips including walks to Ivy Hills Park, Wentworth Park, and dropping off neighborhood May Day baskets
- Designated the wooded area west of school as a school forest and use it for outdoor education and physical activity such as hiking and mountain biking
- Partner with the Dodge Nature Center and Fusion Lab to develop place-based curriculum and after-school programming for the wooded area

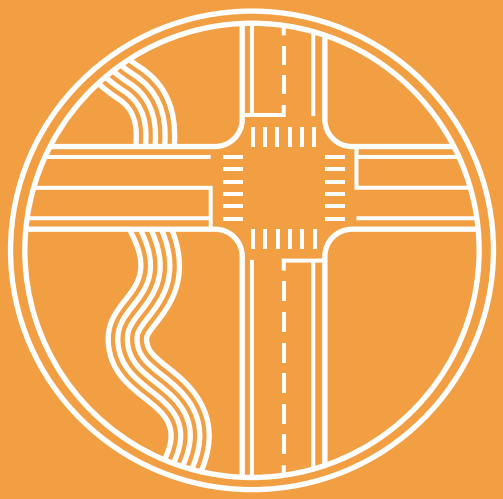
FOR MORE INFORMATION

MINNESOTA SRTS RESOURCE CENTER

There are many great resources already available on the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center. You can find answers to many common questions, information about upcoming events, and even promotional material that can easily be customized for your community's SRTS event.

The MN SRTS Resource Center is a great way to stay engaged throughout the year!

mnsaferoutestoschool.org



03

INFRASTRUCTURE

Introduction to Infrastructure

In addition to program recommendations, changes to the streetscape are essential to making walking, biking, and rolling to school safer and more comfortable.

The initial field review and subsequent meetings yielded specific recommendations to address the key identified barriers to walking and bicycling to Somerset Elementary.

This plan does not represent a comprehensive list of every project that could improve conditions for walking and bicycling in the neighborhood. Instead, it calls attention to key conflict points and potential improvements. Recommendations range from simple striping changes and signing to more significant changes to the streets, intersections, and school infrastructure.

Engineering recommendations are shown and described on the following page. It should be noted that funding is limited and all recommendations are planning level concepts only. Additional planning and engineering study will be needed to confirm feasibility and costs for all projects.

Existing Infrastructure

This section highlights existing infrastructure and challenge areas on and near campus. Photos and observations were made by the Somerset SRTS Team during a spring 2021 Rapid Planning Workshop which included a walk assessment that allowed the team to experience what it's like for students who walk and bike in the area.

School branded "STAR" bike parking near the school's main entrance was well used, though many bikes were not locked to the racks.

Curb ramps are needed at the school driveway to make walking/biking accessible to all students and caregivers. Updated turning arrows were completed in fall of 2021

A short sidewalk segment along Dodd Road connects Somerset's main entrance to a small parking lot to the south. It's used by caregivers who park in the south lot and by all students and families who walk to school through the school forest.

School speed zone signage for southbound traffic was located right at the edge of campus. Vegetation surrounding the sign needs to be maintained to ensure it is not blocked.

Caregivers queue up in the shoulder along Dodd Road. The shoulder is not wide enough to accommodate vehicles which results in unpredictable lane alignment by through traffic.

School buses prepare for pickup in a new designated bus loop on the north side of the school while caregivers line up in the southern parking lot.

Neighborhood kids bike by the parent pick-up line in the shoulder on Dodd Road, which is marked 35 mph.

The south parking lot was identified as a challenge due to a lack of pedestrian/bike facilities connecting to the school forest trail.

The Dodd Road crossing near the school driveway and Emerson Avenue W was identified as a key challenge for walking and biking and a top priority for improvements. High pedestrian crossing volumes, poor visibility around queued parent pick-up traffic, and high traffic speeds and volumes on Dodd Road make the crossing difficult for students and families.

A trail through the school forest provides a scenic pedestrian connection between campus and residential neighborhoods to the west.

Many caregivers park on Emerson Avenue during school arrival and dismissal and walk in the roadway to access the Dodd Road crossing.

Infrastructure Recommendations

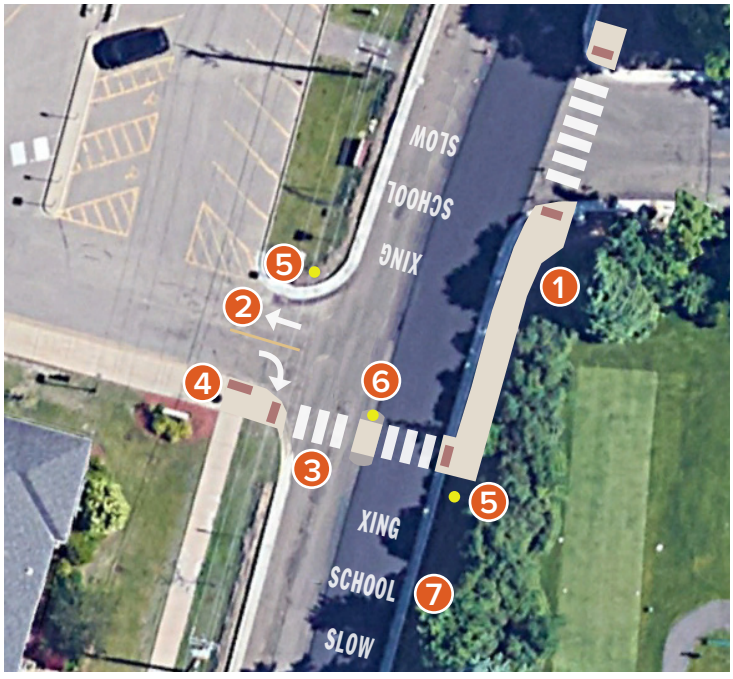
Infrastructure Recommendations

	LOCATION	ISSUE/OPPORTUNITY	POTENTIAL SOLUTION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	Dodd Road at Somerset Driveway / Emerson Avenue W	High activity area during school arrival and dismissal; caregivers in drop-off/pick-up queue block crosswalk; poor visibility between motorists and people walking or biking; poor driver yielding behavior; school driveway crossing lacks curb ramps and crosswalk markings; school driveway entrance lane improperly marked as a left turn out only; school crossing guard facilitates crossings of Dodd Road and Emerson Avenue W	Consider relocating Dodd Road crosswalk south of school driveway, extending pedestrian landing on east side of Dodd Road, and installing an RRFB, in-street school crossing signage, and/or geometric improvements such as a median refuge island; install ADA compliant curb ramps across school driveway; update pavement markings at school driveway to include dedicated in/out arrows; prioritize crossing guard at Dodd Road crossing; pursue opportunities for School District/MnDOT cost share on Dodd Road crossing enhancements	Reduce conflicts and increase visibility between motorists and people walking or biking; increase access for people with bikes, strollers, and/or mobility devices; increase comfort and safety for people walking and biking; increase driver yielding behavior; reduce undesired driver passing behavior; clarify vehicle movements at driveway	MnDOT City of Mendota Heights ISD 197	High
B	Dodd Road (signage)	Concerns about school speed zone placement, visibility, and adherence	Evaluate school speed zone placement and visibility; upgrade school speed zone signage to include flashing beacons and “WHEN FLASHING” assembly; maintain vegetation near crossings and school-related signage	Increase awareness of campus; increase compliance with school speed zone	MnDOT City of Mendota Heights	High
C	Southern Parking Lot	Caregivers and students who walk or bike on the trail to the west must travel through parking lot to get to the main entrance; no dedicated place for people walking and biking; concerns about visibility between motorists pulling in/out of parking spaces and people walking and biking through the parking lot between school and the trail	Program solution: assign student crossing guard to monitor recess door (i.e. Door 6) during arrival and dismissal, and eliminate need for caregivers and students to walk through southern parking lot Infrastructure solution: expand parking lot to the south and implement a sidewalk on the north side between the school and northernmost parking	Reduce conflicts between motorists and people walking or biking; increase comfort and safety for people walking and biking	ISD 197	Med
D	Emerson Avenue W between Dodd Road and Delaware Avenue	No sidewalk or trail present; caregivers park in north shoulder during school arrival and dismissal; concerns about in-road walking by caregivers and students; concerns about visibility between motorists and people walking, especially northbound to eastbound motorists near Dodd Road intersection	Conduct a sidewalk and/or trail feasibility study for Emerson Avenue W; explore partnership opportunities with the Somerset Country Club	Reduce conflicts between motorists and people walking or biking; increase comfort and safety for people walking and biking	City of Mendota Heights	Med
E	Dodd Road	No sidewalk or trail present; high traffic speeds and volumes; shoulder not wide enough to accommodate motorists queue approaching parking lot; unpredictable driver behavior; 2016 Dodd Road Trail Study includes implementation considerations	Pursue funding to implement a trail along the west side of Dodd Road per the 2016 Dodd Road Trail Study; consider installing a dedicated right turn lane into the school driveway for queuing	Reduce conflicts between motorists and people walking or biking; increase comfort and safety for people walking and biking; increase awareness of school zone; reduce undesired driver passing behavior	MnDOT City of Mendota Heights	Low
F	Sylvandale Road	No sidewalk or trail; concerns about driver speeds and cut-through traffic; part of school walking route to access local parks	Eliminate parking on one side and install a striped walking lane in coordination with routine striping efforts; in the long term, consider constructing a trail on one side of the street; consider installing traffic calming such as speed humps or speed cushions	Reduce conflicts between motorists and people walking and biking; reduce driver speeding behavior; reduce cut-through traffic; increase comfort and safety for people walking and biking	City of Mendota Heights	Low
	Laura Court and Brookside Lane and Laura Lane	Somerset Elementary has two designated remote drop sites west of the school that are used by school buses and caregivers during Walk & Bike to School Day events	Consider encouraging more frequent use of remote drop sites and existing trails west of school as part of formal events or routine pick-up and drop-off. For more information, see “Drop & Walk” in the Programs Chapter.	Reduce vehicle congestion on Dodd Road and in the school parking lot; increase opportunities for children to walk before or after school	ISD 197	See Programs Chapter
	Main entrance and bus loop	At time of school dismissal observations in spring 2021, stylized “STARS” bike rack at main entrance near capacity with several unlocked bikes nearby, and toaster-style rack in bus loop as unused	Opportunity to enhance bike parking by increasing number and quality of racks; see the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professional’s Essentials of Bike Parking for more information	Increase bike parking capacity and security	ISD 197	Med

The pedestrian crossing of Dodd Road near the school driveway and Emerson Avenue W is identified as a high priority for improvement. Potential solutions include relocating the crossing south of the driveway and extending the pedestrian landing on the east and installing an RRFB, in-street school crossing sign, and/or geometric improvements such as a median refuge.

A Safer Dodd Road Crossing

There are multiple ways to improve pedestrian safety at the Dodd Road crossing, as shown below. If time allows, these possible solutions can be tested by implementing a demonstration project (a temporary, low-cost, short-term test of a possible solution). A demonstration project is an affordable way to determine which solution might be best. At minimum, it is recommended to adjust the driveway arrow direction and provide a crossing guard at the Dodd Road crossing. Note that the solutions shown below are not drawn to scale. Further engineering and funding will be needed to determine the best possible solution(s). Additionally, not all solutions must be combined to provide a safe crossing. Selecting just a few from the options below may suffice.



1. EXTEND PEDESTRIAN LANDING
2. CHANGE TURNING ARROWS
3. MOVE CROSSWALK TO THE SOUTH
4. ADA-COMPLIANT CURB RAMPS
5. RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACON (RRFB)
6. MEDIAN REFUGE
7. IN-STREET SCHOOL CROSSING SIGNS

04

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Using this Plan

At the heart of every successful SRTS comprehensive program is a coordinated effort by caregiver volunteers, school staff, local agency staff, law enforcement, public health, and community advocates.

This plan provides an overview of SRTS with specific recommendations for a 6 E's approach to improve the safety and the health and wellness of students. The specific recommendations in this plan are intended to support improvements and programs over the next five years. These recommendations include both long- and short-term infrastructure improvements as well as programmatic recommendations.

It should be noted that not all of these projects and programs need to be implemented right away to improve the environment for walking and bicycling to school. The recommended projects and programs listed in this plan should be reviewed as part of the overall and ongoing SRTS strategy. Some projects will require more time, support, and funding than others. It is important to achieve shorter-term successes while laying the groundwork for progress toward some of the larger and more complex projects.

Staff from Somerset Elementary, ISD 197, the City of Mendota Heights, and MnDOT conduct a walk assessment as part of the Rapid Planning Workshop in spring 2021.

Who are you?

Successful programs are achieved through the coordinated efforts of caregiver volunteers, school staff, local agency staff, law enforcement, and community advocates, such as public health. Each partner has a key role to play in contributing to a plan's success. The following paragraphs highlight the unique contributions of key partners in SRTS.

I AM A STUDENT

Students can have incredible influence when advocating for change in their school and broader community. There are many ways that students can support and lead SRTS initiatives including: encourage safe walking, biking, and driving to, from, and near school; develop campaigns to generate enthusiasm and improve social conditions for SRTS; volunteer time to lead a Walking School Bus or organize a bike drive; promote SRTS activities through newspaper and media courses; advocate for funding and infrastructure improvements at City Hall, and more.

I AM A CAREGIVER

Caregivers can use this report to understand the conditions at their child's school and to become familiar with the ways an SRTS program can work to make walking and bicycling safer. Concerned caregivers or city residents have a very important role in the SRTS process. Caregiver groups, both formal and informal, have the ability and the responsibility to help implement many of the educational and encouragement programs suggested in this plan. Caregiver groups can also be key to ongoing success by helping to fundraiser for smaller projects and programs.

I AM A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

School administrators have an important role in implementing the recommendations contained within this SRTS plan. For a plan to succeed, the impetus for change and improvement must be supported by the leadership of the school.

School administrators can help with making policy and procedural changes to projects that are within school grounds and by distributing informational materials to caregivers within school publications. Please read the SRTS talking points in Appendix B.

I WORK FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

School district staff can use this report to prioritize improvements identified on District property and develop programs that educate and encourage students and caregivers to seek alternatives to single-family commutes to school.

District officials are perhaps the most stable of the stakeholders for a SRTS program and are in the best position to keep the program active over time. District staff can work with multiple schools, sharing information and bringing efficiencies to programs at each school working on Safe Routes.

I AM A TEACHER OR OTHER STAFF MEMBER

Other than caregivers, teachers might interact with students the most. Teachers can include bicycle and pedestrian safety in lesson plans (see *Walk! Bike! Fun!*). Sharing books in your classroom that promote walking, biking, and rolling is a good way to get kids interested at an early age. Teachers can also arrange for field trips within walking distance of school and incorporate informal lessons about safety along the way. In general, being positive and encouraging about walking, biking, and rolling is a great way to start!

I AM A COMMUNITY MEMBER

Community residents, even if they don't currently have children enrolled in school, can play an important role in supporting implementation of the plan. They can use this report to better understand where there may be opportunities to participate in programming initiatives and infrastructure improvements. Community members, including seniors or retirees who may have more flexible schedules than caregivers with school-aged children, may volunteer in established programs or work with school staff or community partners to start new programs recommended in this plan.

I WORK FOR THE CITY OR COUNTY

City and county staff can use this report to identify citywide issues and opportunities related to walking and bicycling and to prioritize infrastructure improvements. City staff can also use this report to support SRTS funding and support opportunities such as:

- MnDOT SRTS grants
- Federal SRTS grants
- Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)

For all infrastructure recommendations, a traffic study and more detailed engineering may be necessary to evaluate project feasibility. Additional public outreach should be conducted before final design and construction. For recommendations within the public right-of-way, the responsible agency will determine how (and if) to incorporate suggestions into local improvement plans and prioritize funding to best meet the needs of each school community.

I WORK FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police department staff can use this report to understand issues related to walking and bicycling to school and to lead and support education and encouragement activities that make it easier and safer for children to walk and bike to school. Enforcement efforts should focus on traffic safety education, rewarding positive behavior, and supporting school walk and bike events. Law enforcement representatives should be mindful of strategies that may disproportionately and negatively affect children and families of color, low wealth, or marginalized populations.

I WORK IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health staff can use this report to identify specific opportunities to collaborate with schools and local governments to support safety improvements and encourage healthy behaviors in school children and their families.


NO
PARKING
FIRE
LANE
ACCESS
AISLE
NO
PARKING
STOP

Next Steps

With a SRTS Plan in place, it's time to shift attention to implementation.

The strategies identified in this plan may seem overwhelming at first. Just remember that anything you can do to make walking, biking, and rolling to school safer, easier, and more fun for students is a step in the right direction. Here are some things to remember:

START SMALL

Small actions can have a big impact, especially when it comes to building support, interest, and momentum for bigger initiatives.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

Not everyone has equal opportunities to walk and bike to school. Identify and prioritize strategies to address and overcome barriers that disproportionately impact the most vulnerable students.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Look for opportunities to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones. Reach out to caregivers, community members, local agencies and community organizations, and other stakeholders to expand capacity and support for SRTS initiatives.

EMPOWER STUDENTS AS LEADERS

Students-led initiatives can generate enthusiasm and improve social conditions for SRTS. Empower students to take ownership of programs to raise awareness, build excitement, and expand opportunities for their peers to walk and bike to school.

TRACK PROGRESS

Continue to track trips and survey caregivers and students about their experiences walking, biking, and rolling to school. Conducting regular evaluation will help your team understand what works and what doesn't work and allocate resources accordingly. Consider reporting annually on progress.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Take time to recognize efforts and celebrate progress. Whether it's changing travel habits, achieving a major milestone, implementing an infrastructure improvement, launching a new program, or hosting a successful event, recognize and celebrate success.

A

APPENDIX
SOMERSET ELEMENTARY SRTS PLAN

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Appendix A. For More Information

This appendix provides contact information for local, state, and national SRTS program resources as well as school partners.

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Safe Routes to School Data Collection System
http://www.saferoutesdata.org/

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center
http://www.pedbikeinfo.com/

National Center for Safe Routes to School
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/

Safe Routes to School Policy Guide
http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Local_Policy_Guide_2011.pdf

School District Policy Workbook Tool
https://www.changelabsolutions.org/product/safe-routes-school-district-policy-workbook

Safe Routes to School National Partnership State Network Project
http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/state/network

Bike Train Planning Guide
http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/walking_school_bus/bicycle_trains.cfm

10 Tips for SRTS Programs and Liability
http://apps.saferoutesinfo.org/training/walking_school_bus/liabilitytipsheet.pdf

Tactical Urbanism and Safe Routes to School
http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/resources/fact-sheet/tactical-urbanism-and-safe-routes-school

STATE RESOURCES

Dave Cowan, Minnesota SRTS Coordinator
395 John Ireland Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-366-4180
dave.cowan@state.mn.us

Kelly Corbin, Safe Routes to School Planner
395 John Ireland Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155
507-286-7590
Kelly.Corbin@state.mn.us

MnDOT SRTS Educational Webinars:
http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/training/planning/index.html

MnDOT Safe Routes to School Resource Website
http://www.mnsaferoutestoschool.org

Minnesota Safe Routes to School Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaSafeRoutesto-School

Walk!Bike!Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum
http://www.bikemn.org/education/walk-bike-fun

LOCAL RESOURCES

Meghan Bernard
Sustainability Manager, Buildings & Grounds
School District 197
meghan.bernard@isd197.org

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Appendix B. SRTS Facts for School Communication

The following facts and statistics have been collected from national sources. They are intended to be submitted for use in individual school newsletters, emails or other communication with parents and the broader school community.

Except where otherwise noted, the following are based on research summarized by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. More information, including primary sources, can be found at http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org.

TRAFFIC: COSTS, CONGESTION, AND SAFETY

- In 1969, half of all US schoolchildren walked or biked to school; by 2009, that number had dropped to just 13 percent.
- In the United States, 31 percent of children in grades K–8 live within one mile of school; 38 percent of these children walk or bike to school. You can travel one mile in about 20 minutes by foot or six minutes by bicycle.
- In 2009, school travel by private family vehicle for students in grades K through 12 accounted for 10 to 14 percent of all automobile trips made during the morning peak travel and two to three percent of the total annual trips made by family vehicle in the United States.
- Among parents who drove their children to school, approximately 40 percent returned home immediately after dropping their children at school. If more children walked or bicycled to school, it would reduce the number of cars near the school at pick-up and drop-off times, making it safer for walkers and bicyclists through reduced traffic congestion and improved air quality.
- Over the past few decades, many school districts have moved away from smaller, centrally located schools and have instead built schools on the edge of communities where land costs are lower and acreage has been more available. As a result, the percentage of students in grades K through 8 who live less than one mile from school has declined from 41 percent in 1969 to 31 percent in 2009.
- Personal vehicles taking students to school accounted for 10 to 14 percent of all personal vehicle trips made during the morning peak commute times. Walking, bicycling, and carpooling to school reduces the numbers of cars dropping students off, reducing traffic safety conflicts with other students and creates a positive cycle—as the community sees more people walking and biking, more people feel comfortable walking and bicycling.
- Conservatively assuming that 5% of today's school busing costs are for hazard busing, making it safe for those children to walk or bicycle instead could save approximately $1 billion per year in busing costs.
- In 2009, American families drove 30 billion miles and made 6.5 billion vehicle trips to take their children to and from schools, representing 10-14 percent of traffic on the road during the morning commute.
- Reducing the miles parents drive to school by just 1% would reduce 300 million miles of vehicle travel and save an estimated $50 million in fuel costs each year.
- Did you know that as more people bicycle and walk, biking and walking crash rates decrease? This is also known as the 'safety in numbers' principle. As more families walk and bike to school, streets and school zones become safer for everyone.

HEALTH: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND OBESITY

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that children do one hour or more of physical activity each day. Walking just one mile each way to and from school would meet two-thirds of this goal.
- Studies have found that children who get regularly physical activity benefit from healthy hearts, lungs, bones and muscles, reduced risk of developing obesity and chronic diseases, and reduced feelings of depression and anxiety. Teachers also report that students who walk or bike to school arrive at school alert and "ready to learn."
- Researchers have found that people who start to include walking and biking at part of everyday life (such as the school commute trip) are more successful at sticking with their increased physical activity in the long term than people who join a gym.
- One recent study showed that children who joined a "walking school bus" ended up getting more physical activity than their peers. In fact, 65% of obese students who participated in the walking program were no longer obese at the end of the school year.
- Childhood obesity has increased among children ages 6 to 11 from 4% in 1969 to 19.6% in 2007.Now 23 million children and teens—nearly one-third of all young people in the U.S.—are overweight or obese.
- The 2010 Shape of the Nation report from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education found that, nationwide, less than one-third of all children ages 6 to 17 participate in physical activity for at least 20 minutes that made the child sweat and breathe hard.
- Children aren't exercising enough AND 78% of children aren't getting the 30 to 60 minutes a day of regular exercise plus 20 minutes of more vigorous exercise that doctors recommend.
- Children are increasingly overweight. 20% of children and 33% of teens are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight. This is a 50% to 100% increase from 10 years ago.
- According to a Spanish study of 1,700 boys and girls aged between 13 and 18 years, cognitive performance of adolescent girls who walk to school is better than that of girls who travel by bus or car. Moreover, cognitive performance is also better in girls who take more than 15 minutes than in those who live closer and have a shorter walk to school.
- One hundred calories can power a cyclist for three miles, but it would only power a car 280 feet. If you have a bowl of oatmeal with banana and milk for breakfast, you could bike more than nine miles. How far is the trip to school from your house?
- A 2004 study in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that, for every hour people spend in their cars, they are 6% more likely to be obese.
- Because of the health benefits, the cost of walking is actually negative.
- Childhood obesity rates have more than tripled in the past 30 years, while the number of children walking and biking to school has declined. According to the 2009 National Household Travel Survey, 13 percent of students between the ages of 5 and 14 walked or biked to or from school, compared to 48 percent in 1969.

ENVIRONMENT: AIR QUALITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESOURCE USE

- Did you know? When you walk, bike, or carpool, you're reducing auto emissions near schools. Students and adults with asthma are particularly sensitive to poor air quality. Approximately 5 million students in the U.S. suffer from asthma, and nearly 13 million school days per year are lost due to asthma-related illnesses.
- Did you know that modern cars don't need to idle? In fact, idling near schools exposes children and vehicle occupants to air pollution (including particulates and noxious emissions), wastes fuel and money, and increases unnecessary wear and tear on car engines. If you are waiting in your car for your child, please don't idle – you'll be doing your part to keep young lungs healthy!
- Families that walk two miles a day instead of driving will, in one year, prevent 730 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere.
- The United States moved into the 21st century with less than 30% of its original oil supply remaining.
- Americans drive more than 2 trillion vehicle miles per year.
- Short motor-vehicle trips contribute significant amounts of air pollution because they typically occur while an engine's pollution control system is cold and ineffective. Thus, shifting 1% of short automobile trips to walking or biking decreases emissions by 2 to 4%.
- There is more pollution inside a stationary car on a congested road than outside on the pavement.
- From 30% to 60% of urban America is given over to the car; two-thirds in Los Angeles.
- The transportation sector is the second largest source of CO2 emissions in the U.S. Automobiles and light-duty trucks account for almost two-thirds of emissions from the transportation sector. Emissions have steadily grown since 1990.
- In a year, a typical North American car will add close to five tons of CO2 into the atmosphere. Cars account for an estimated 15% to 25% of U.S. CO2 emissions.
- Transportation is the largest single source of air pollution in the United States. In 2006 it created over half of the carbon monoxide, over a third of the nitrogen oxides, and almost a quarter of the hydrocarbons in our atmosphere.
- Disposal of used motor oil sends more oil into the water each year than even the largest tanker spill.
- Going by bus instead of car cuts nitrogen oxide pollution by 25%, carbon monoxide by 80% and hydrocarbons by 90% per passenger mile.
- Eight bicycles can be parked in the space required for just one car.

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Appendix C. Summary of Planning Process

The Somerset SRTS Project began in April 2021 with a virtual kick-off meeting between staff from Somerset Elementary School, School District 197, and the consulting team. The kick-off meeting included a discussion of the issues around the school area, project goals, scope of work for the project (including the Rapid Planning Workshop approach and data collection (distribution of parent surveys and student tallies)), project timeline, and project logistics.

RAPID PLANNING SESSION

In May of 2021, a broad group of stakeholders met for an intensive three-day long Rapid Planning Workshop. This hybrid workshop combined virtual and physically-distanced outdoor activities, bringing together school, district, city and county staff, plus students, and public health professionals to discuss the challenges and opportunities for walking and biking to Somerset Elementary.

The Rapid Planning Workshop included:

- Introduction to SRTS for all participants including programs, infrastructure, and the planning process
- Mapping of routes, issues, assets, and destinations around Somerset Elementary
- Observation of student dismissal at Somerset Elementary School
- Walk assessment of campus and surrounding neighborhood
- Brainstorm of existing and potential programs
- Discussion of observations, consensus-building around primary issues and opportunities

Information gathered during the day was used to develop preliminary draft infrastructure and programming recommendations for each school. County and consulting team staff conducted arrival/dismissal observations and walking audits at Community Learning Center and Kaposia Education Center to gather information about existing conditions, issues, and student routes.

DATA COLLECTION

In April, parent perception surveys were distributed by schools through a link to an online survey. Surveys asked parents about how comfortable they were with their children walking and biking to school. In addition, the survey asked the distance from school families live, whether they feel like their school promotes biking and walking, and what changes would make them feel more confident about allowing their children to walk or bike.

In late September, school staff conducted student travel tallies to gather information about how students traveled to and from school. This student tally collected data on travel to and from school during three weekdays in September.

Both the student tally and parent survey were designed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. The results of these evaluation efforts are in Appendix E and F.

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Appendix D. Existing Conditions

The following is a brief summary of the existing conditions on and around school campus.

SOMERSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONTEXT

Basic Information

Somerset Elementary School
Principal: Libby Huettl
Grades: K-4
Arrival time: 7:45 am
Dismissal time: 2:15 pm
Enrollment: 400 Students

Student Locations and School Enrollment Boundary

The maps on the following page show the locations of students attending Somerset Elementary School in Mendota Heights during the 2020-2021 school year. The first map shows a heat map of students who live closer to the campuses, and the second map includes students who live further away. The campus location is identified with a green pin. As shown in the maps, Somerset draws students from Mendota Heights, as well as several surrounding communities including Highland Park, Mendota, Lilydale, and West St. Paul.

School/Campus Layout

Somerset Elementary School is situated off of Dodd Rd at the intersection of Dodd Rd and Emerson Ave. The front, or eastern portion, of the school campus is a combination circle drive for car/bus pickup and dropoff, as well as parking. The main entrance to the building is also on this side of the school, with bike racks available near the front entrance. Behind, or west, of the school building is a small baseball field as well as open green space and a playground. Additionally, there is a wooded pathway from the school property connecting to the surrounding neighborhoods. North of the building is limited additional parking as well as more bike parking, and south of the school building is a small parking lot.

Surrounding Land Use

The Somerset Elementary School campus is completely surrounded by One Family Residential zoning, with a large swath of land just southeast of campus dedicated to the Somerset Country Club. In the general area, there are several nearby parks, including Wentworth Park to the south, Ivy Hills Park to the north, and a series of parks and a greenway to the west along the Mississippi River.

SCHOOL TRAVEL PATTERNS

Student Hand Tally

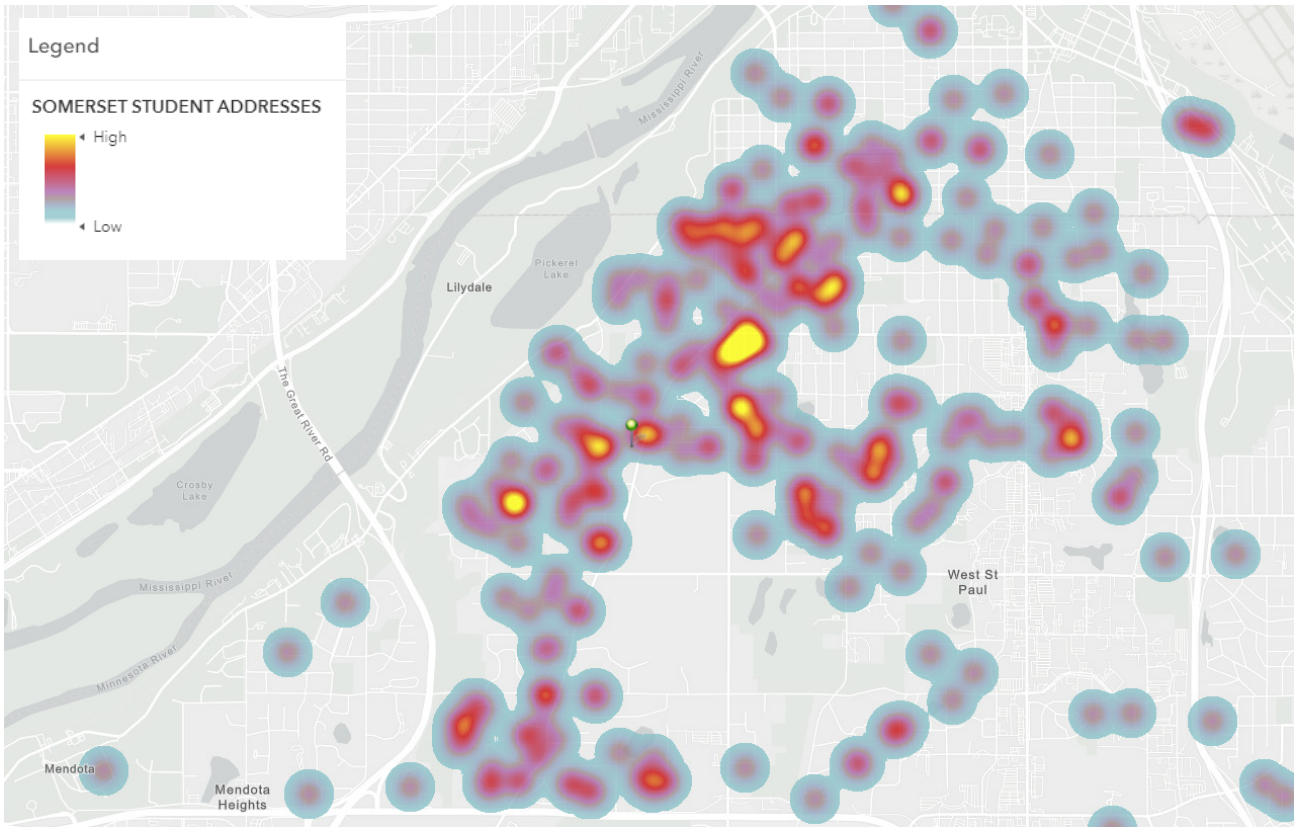
During the week of September 27th, 2021, a student hand tally was conducted in classrooms (K-4) for both before and after school travel on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week (full results included in Appendix F). A hand tally takes note of number of students in the classroom that day, grade, weather conditions that day, and modes of transportation used before and after school.

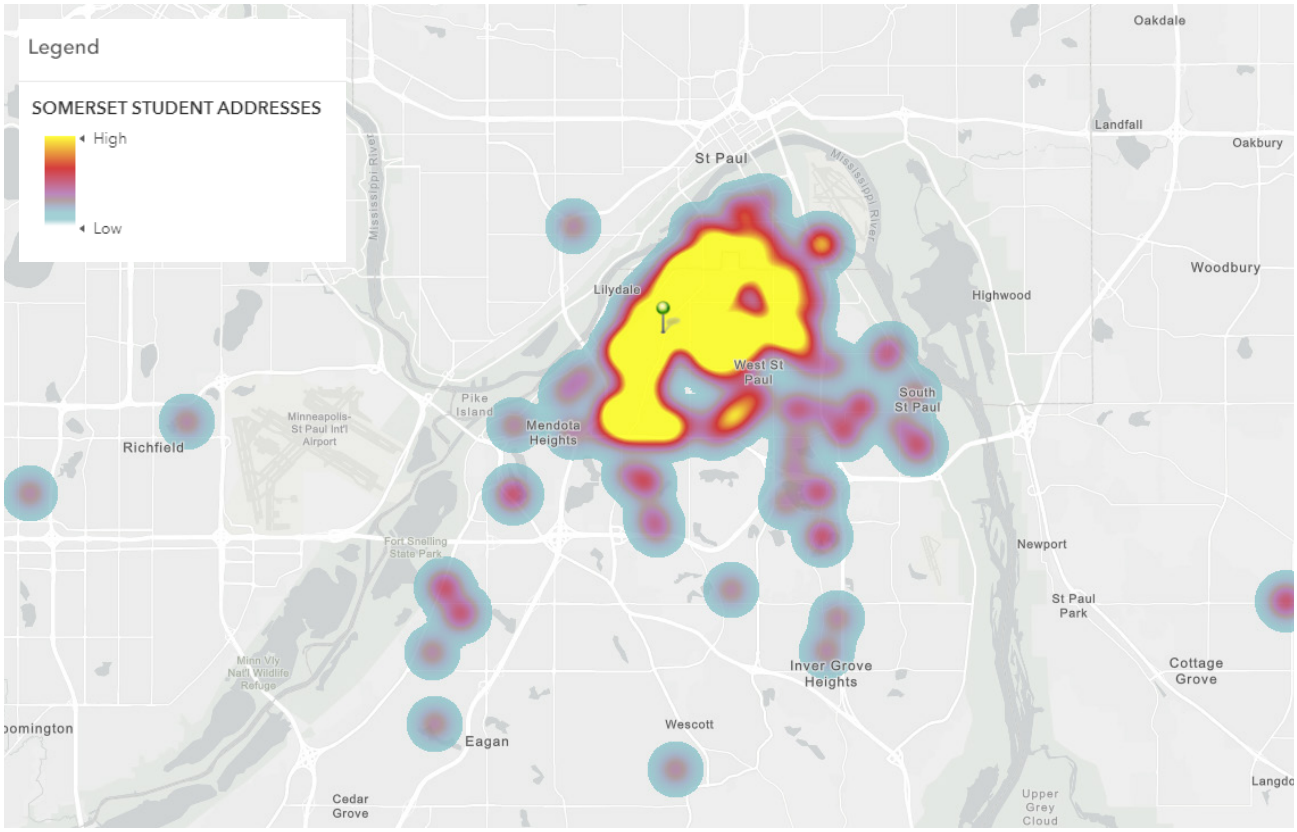
Caregiver Survey Summary

36 caretaker surveys were completed for Somerset Elementary. Out of 36 caregivers, the majority (ten) reported living one to two miles away, eight live one half to one mile away, and seven live over two miles away. To get to school, 48% of the caregivers reported driving their child in a family vehicle, and 39% reported taking the bus. Very small percentages of children (3-6%) carpool, walk, or bike. On the way home, a slightly larger number (52%) of students are picked up by a family vehicle and fewer take the bus or carpool.

When it comes to issues that prevent more caregivers from allowing their child to walk or bike, the main issues include the traffic speeds and amount of traffic along the route, limited sidewalks or pathways, safety of intersections,

SOMERSET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL





and age of their child/children. To address these concerns, caregivers would like to see more/better sidewalks or pathways, safer intersections, and slower traffic speeds with less traffic along the route.

Pedestrian and Bicycle-Involved Crashes

Pedestrian and bicycle-involved crashes were not tracked in 2020/2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic since in-person classes were either not held or were very limited. This meant few students were traveling to and from school, and thus, crash data was not relevant.

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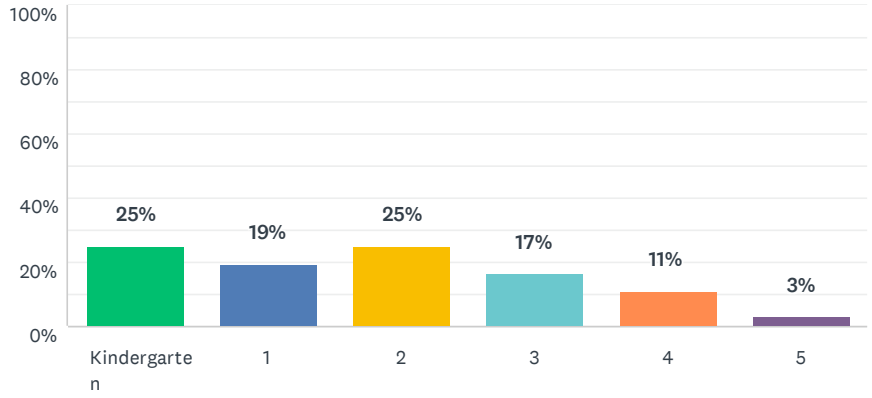
Appendix E. Parent Survey

The following shows a summary of a survey sent home to parents of children in April of 2021. It asks parents their feelings about walking and biking and is a direct export from the survey processor.

Somerset Elementary School Parent/Caregiver Survey About Walking and Biking to School

Q1 What is the grade of your child?

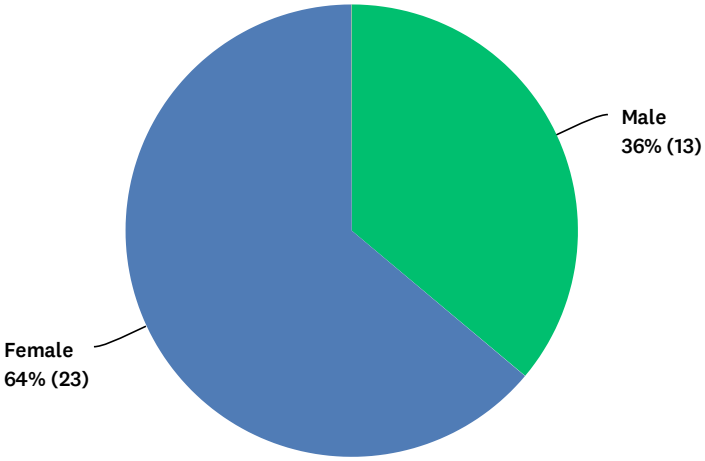
Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Kindergarten	25%	9
1	19%	7
2	25%	9
3	17%	6
4	11%	4
5	3%	1
TOTAL		36

Q2 What is the gender of your child?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	36%	13
Female	64%	23
Other	0%	0
Prefer not to answer	0%	0
TOTAL		36

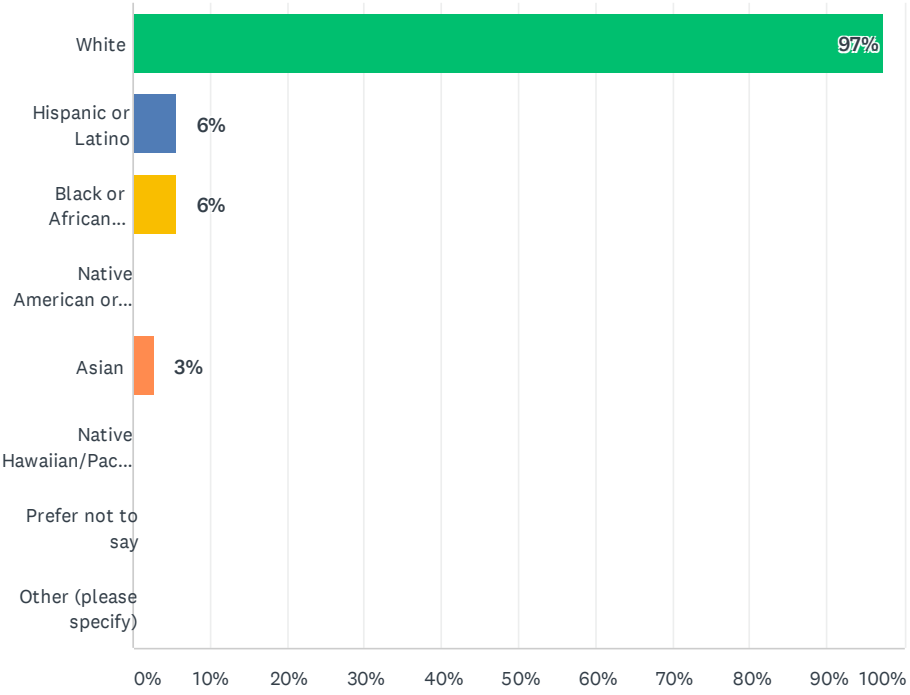
Q3 How many of your children attend Somerset Elementary School?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	1	5/10/2021 5:32 PM
2	1	5/10/2021 2:56 PM
3	2	5/8/2021 6:02 PM
4	1	5/8/2021 3:02 PM
5	2	5/8/2021 9:53 AM
6	1	5/8/2021 6:59 AM
7	1	5/7/2021 11:13 PM
8	1	5/7/2021 10:41 PM
9	1	5/7/2021 7:31 PM
10	1	5/7/2021 5:40 PM
11	2	5/7/2021 3:39 PM
12	2	5/7/2021 3:36 PM
13	2	5/6/2021 6:20 AM
14	1	5/5/2021 11:22 PM
15	2	5/5/2021 9:38 PM
16	1	5/5/2021 9:13 PM
17	1	5/5/2021 9:10 PM
18	2	5/5/2021 8:52 PM
19	1	5/3/2021 10:55 PM
20	1	5/3/2021 10:15 AM
21	1	5/3/2021 8:20 AM
22	1	5/3/2021 7:51 AM
23	2	5/3/2021 6:36 AM
24	1	5/2/2021 10:21 PM
25	1	5/2/2021 9:27 AM
26	1	5/1/2021 7:50 AM
27	1	5/1/2021 7:38 AM
28	2	5/1/2021 6:59 AM
29	1	5/1/2021 6:53 AM
30	1	4/30/2021 10:11 PM
31	1	4/30/2021 8:45 PM
32	2	4/30/2021 7:29 PM
33	2	4/30/2021 7:03 PM
34	1	4/30/2021 6:46 PM
35	2	4/30/2021 4:59 PM
36	2	4/30/2021 4:12 PM

Q4 What is the race/ethnicity of your child? (check all that apply)

Answered: 36 Skipped: 0

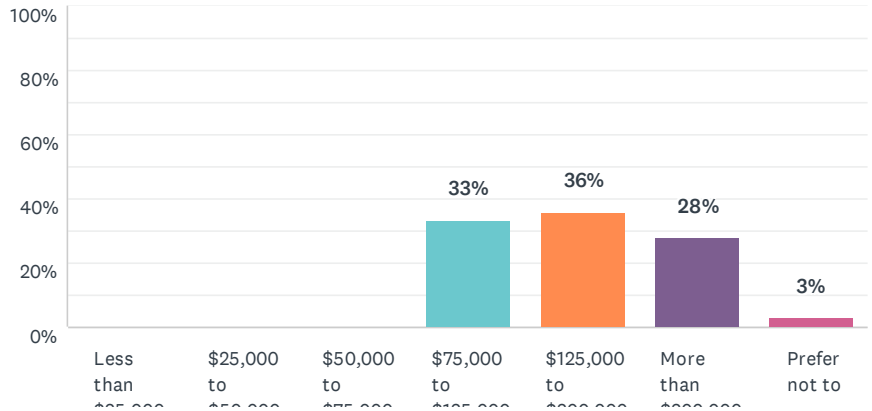


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
White	97%	35
Hispanic or Latino	6%	2
Black or African American	6%	2
Native American or American Indian	0%	0
Asian	3%	1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0
Prefer not to say	0%	0
Other (please specify)	0%	0
Total Respondents: 36		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q5 What is your annual household income?

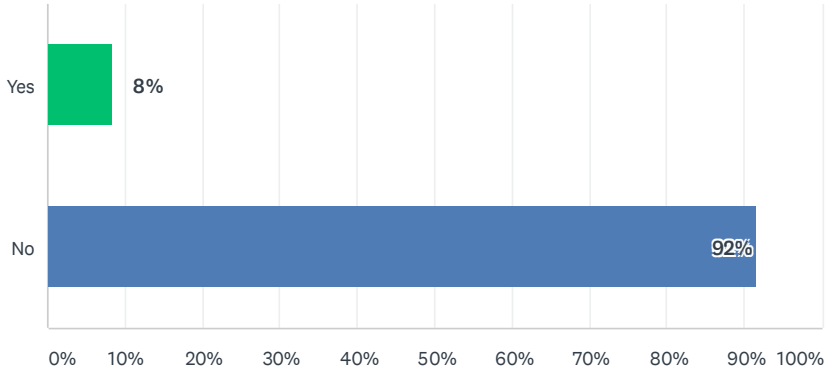
Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than $25,000	0%	0
$25,000 to $50,000	0%	0
$50,000 to $75,000	0%	0
$75,000 to $125,000	33%	12
$125,000 to $200,000	36%	13
More than $200,000	28%	10
Prefer not to say	3%	1
TOTAL		36

Q6 Do you speak a language other than English at home?

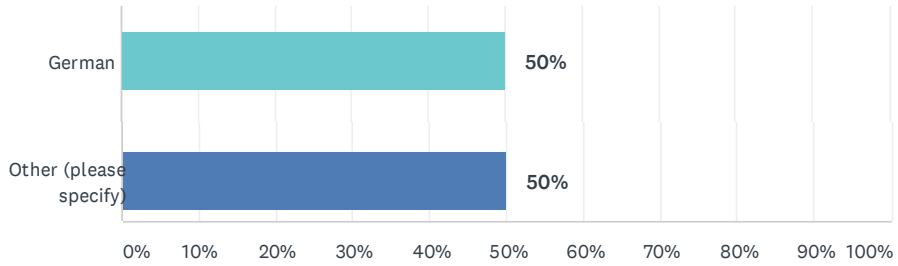
Answered: 36 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	8%	3
No	92%	33
TOTAL		36

Q7 What language(s) do you speak at home? (check all that apply)

Answered: 2 Skipped: 34



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Spanish	0%	0
Hmong	0%	0
Cushite (includes Romo, Somali, Sidamo, and other East African languages)	0%	0
German	50%	1
Vietnamese	0%	0
Chinese (includes Cantonese, Mandarin, and other Chinese languages)	0%	0
French (includes Patois and Cajun)	0%	0
Russian	0%	0
Laotian	0%	0
Arabic	0%	0
Amharic	0%	0
Hindi	0%	0
Kru, Ibo, Yoruba	0%	0
Korean	0%	0
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	0%	0
Tagalog	0%	0
Telegu	0%	0
Norwegian	0%	0
Ojibwa	0%	0
Karen	0%	0
Swahili	0%	0
Other (please specify)	50%	1
Total Respondents: 2		

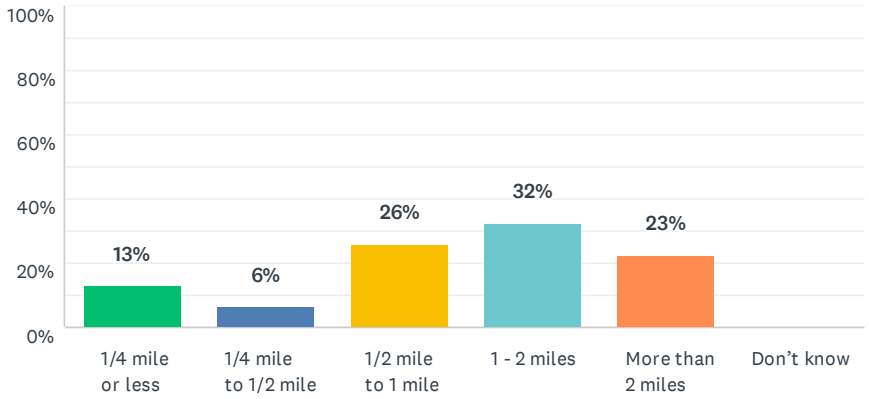
Q8 What is the street intersection nearest your home? (Provide the names of the two intersecting streets)

Answered: 31 Skipped: 5

NUMBER	STREET 1	STREET 2
1	Hall	Haskell
2	Emerson	Hingham Cir
3	Warrior	High Ridge Circle
4	Deleware Ave	Annapolis
5	Sylvandale Ct	Sylvandale Rd
6	Butler	Stassen Ln
7	James	Douglas
8	Chippewa	Dodd
9	Dodd Rd	Sunset Ln/Staples Ave
10	4th Ave	Dodd Rd
11	Dodd Road	Wesley Lane
12	Deleware	Hubor
13	HWY 62	Carmen Lane
14	Ottawa Ave	Moreland Ave
15	Sylvandale Rd	Maple Park Dr
16	Stanwich Lane	Dodd Road
17	Wentworth	Dodd
18	Sibley Ct	Warrior Drive
19	Bidwell	Moreland Ave
20	Emerson	Ottawa
21	Emerson Ave	Ottawa Ave
22	Marie	Dodd
23	Dodd	62
24	Woodridge	Cascade
25	Allen	Emerson
26	Willow Lane	Dodd Rd
27	Marie	Watchler
28	Hiawatha	Chippewa
29	Charlton Ridge	Charlton
30	Fremont	Chippewa
31	Skyline Drive	Rustic Hills Drive

Q9 How far does your child live from school?

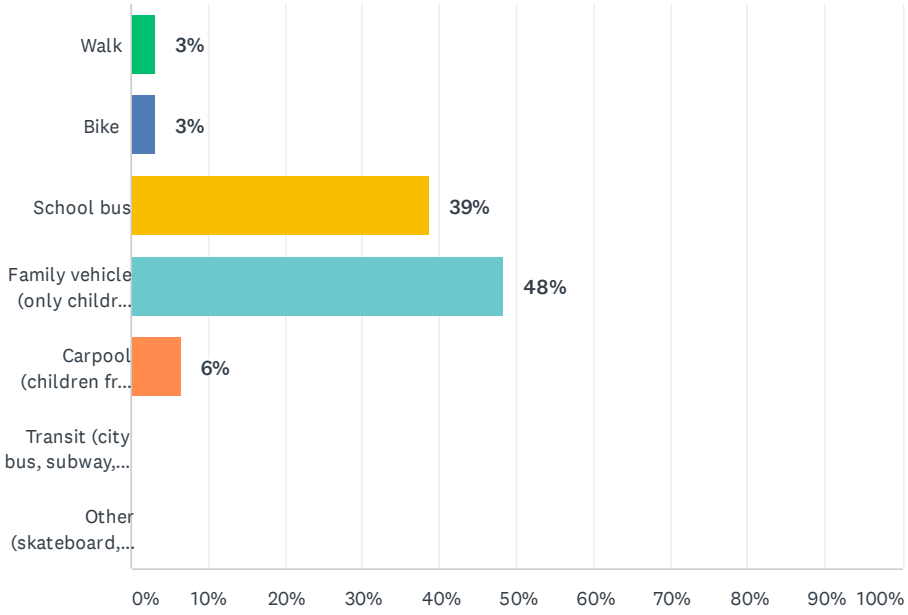
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1/4 mile or less	13%	4
1/4 mile to 1/2 mile	6%	2
1/2 mile to 1 mile	26%	8
1 - 2 miles	32%	10
More than 2 miles	23%	7
Don't know	0%	0
TOTAL		31

Q10 On most days, how does your child travel to and from school? Travel arriving to school

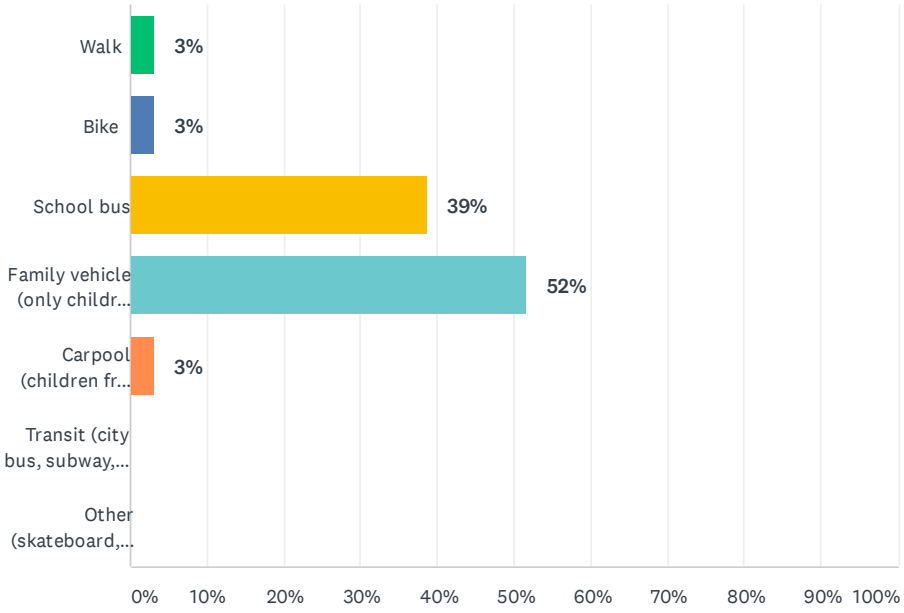
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walk	3%	1
Bike	3%	1
School bus	39%	12
Family vehicle (only children in your family)	48%	15
Carpool (children from other families)	6%	2
Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)	0%	0
Other (skateboard, scooter, inline skates, etc.)	0%	0
TOTAL		31

Q11 On most days, how does your child travel to and from school?Travel leaving from school

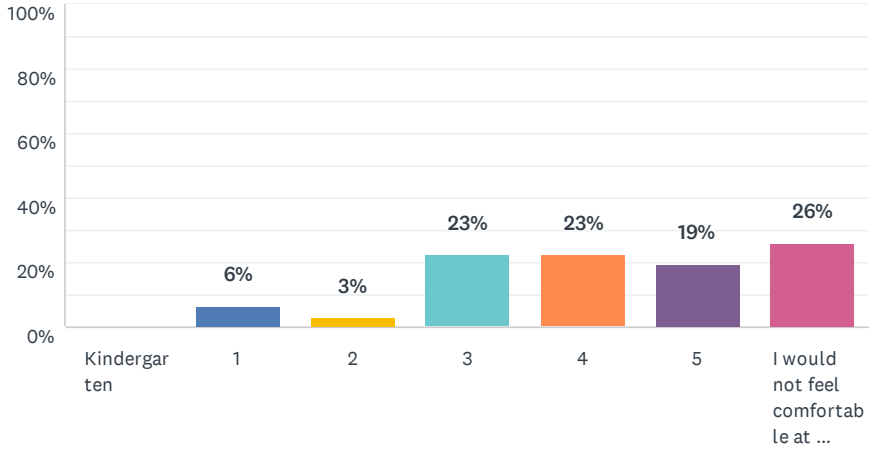
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walk	3%	1
Bike	3%	1
School bus	39%	12
Family vehicle (only children in your family)	52%	16
Carpool (children from other families)	3%	1
Transit (city bus, subway, etc.)	0%	0
Other (skateboard, scooter, inline skates, etc.)	0%	0
TOTAL		31

Q12 At what grade would you allow your child to walk or bike to/from school without an adult?

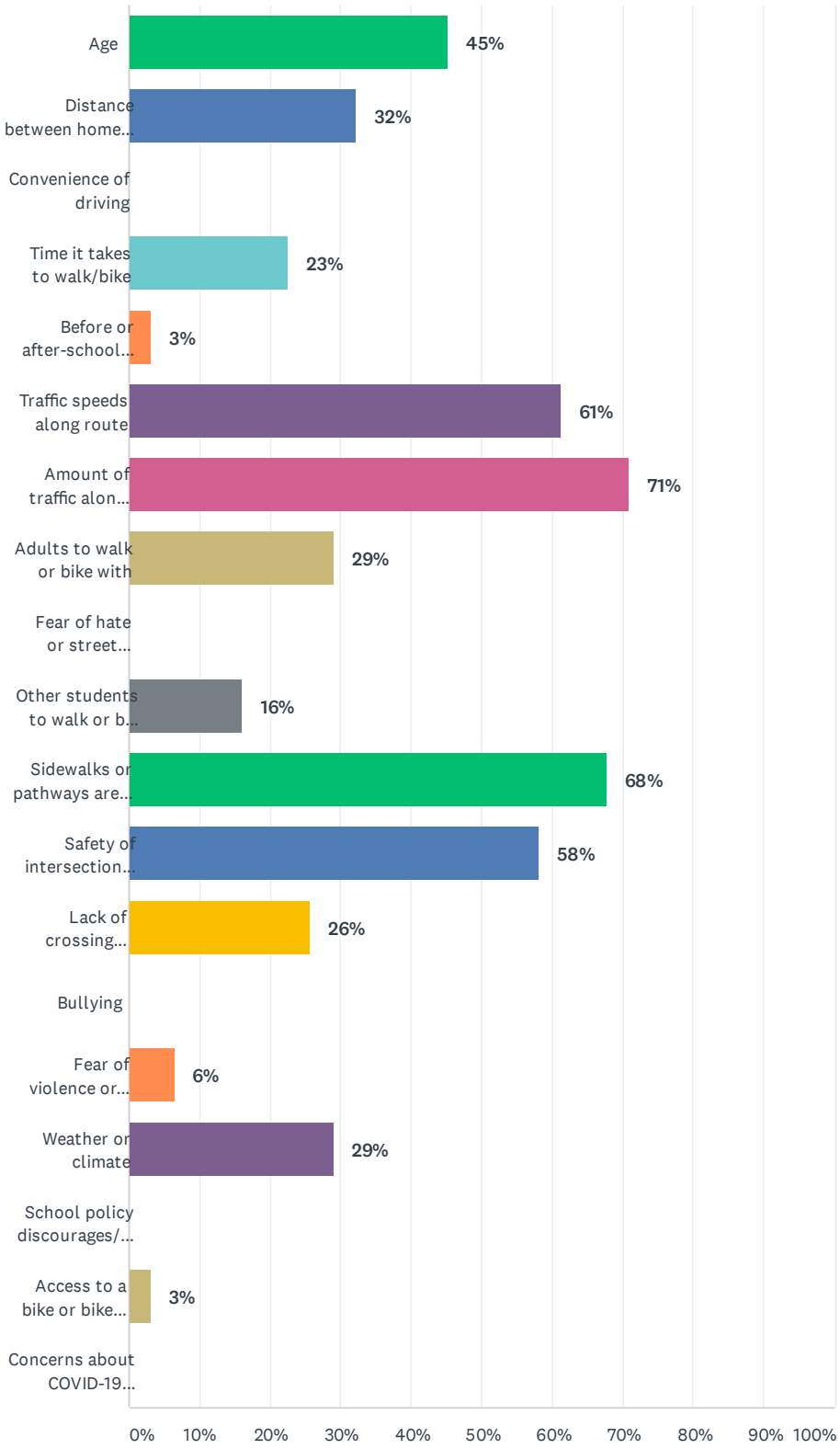
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Kindergarten	0%	0
1	6%	2
2	3%	1
3	23%	7
4	23%	7
5	19%	6
I would not feel comfortable at any grade	26%	8
TOTAL		31

Q13 Which of the following issues prevent your child from walking or biking to/from school? (check all that apply)

Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



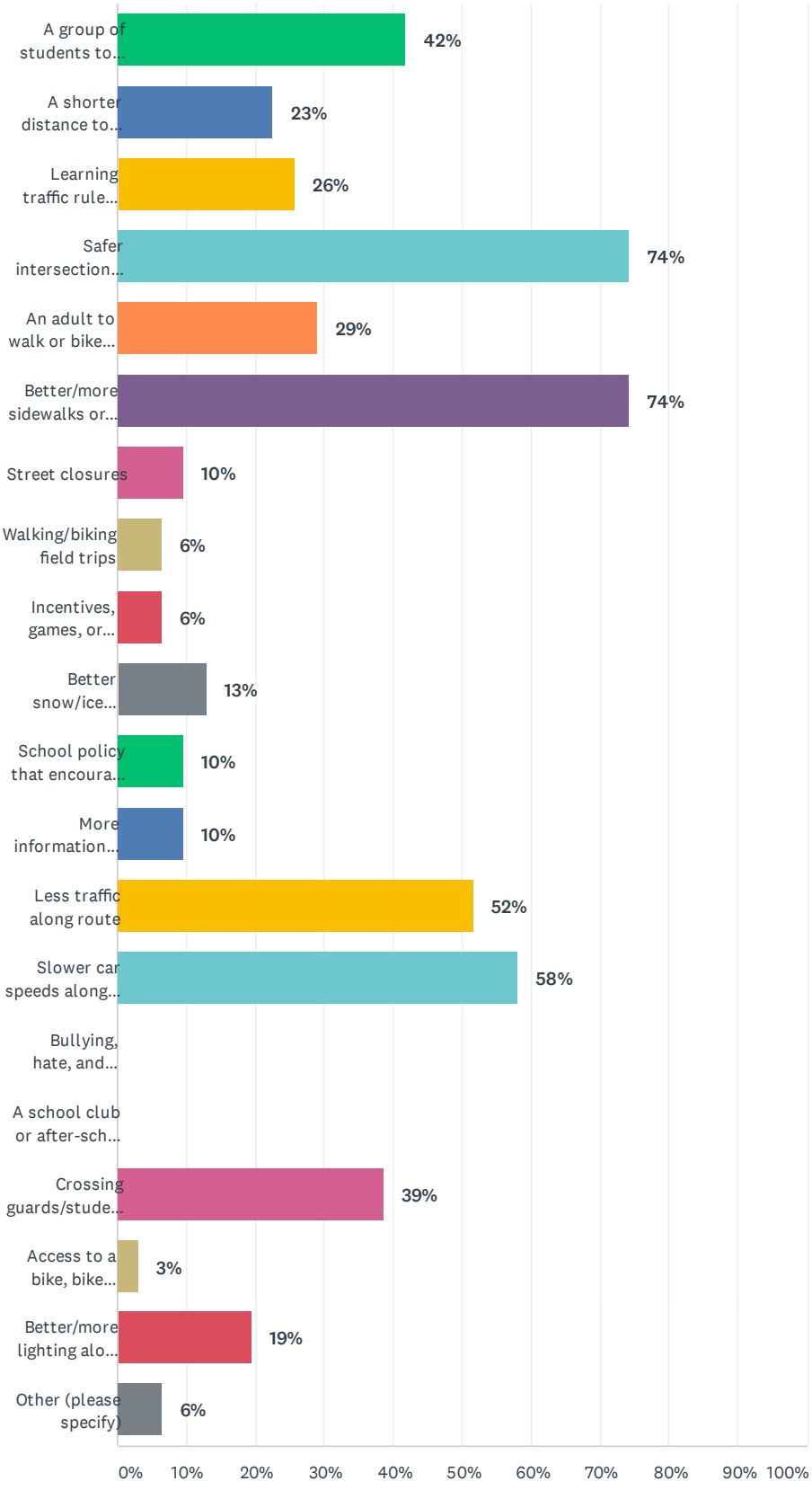
Q13 Which of the following issues prevent your child from walking or biking to/from school? (check all that apply)

Answered: 31 Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Age	45%	14
Distance between home and school	32%	10
Convenience of driving	0%	0
Time it takes to walk/bike	23%	7
Before or after-school activities	3%	1
Traffic speeds along route	61%	19
Amount of traffic along route	71%	22
Adults to walk or bike with	29%	9
Fear of hate or street harassment based on race, ethnicity, and/or gender identity	0%	0
Other students to walk or bike with	16%	5
Sidewalks or pathways are not present or are in poor condition	68%	21
Safety of intersections and crossings	58%	18
Lack of crossing guards/student patrols	26%	8
Bullying	0%	0
Fear of violence or crime	6%	2
Weather or climate	29%	9
School policy discourages/prohibits walking/biking	0%	0
Access to a bike or bike lock	3%	1
Concerns about COVID-19 transmission	0%	0
Total Respondents: 31		

Q14 What would help your child walk or bike to/from/at school more often? (check all that apply)

Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



Q14 What would help your child walk or bike to/from/at school more often? (check all that apply)

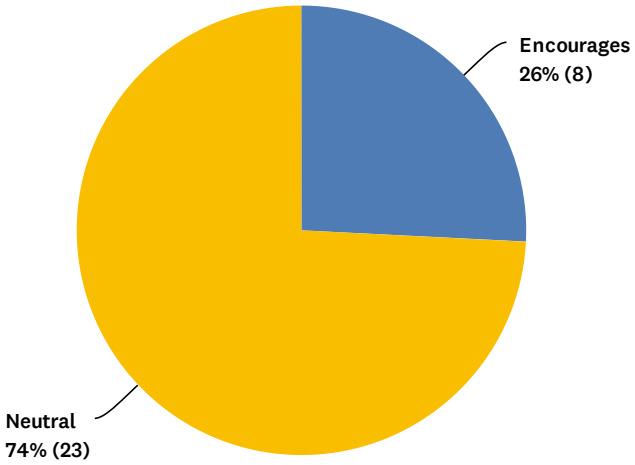
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A group of students to walk or bike with	42%	13
A shorter distance to walk or bike	23%	7
Learning traffic rules and regulations and how to walk/bike safely	26%	8
Safer intersections/crossings	74%	23
An adult to walk or bike with	29%	9
Better/more sidewalks or pathways	74%	23
Street closures	10%	3
Walking/biking field trips	6%	2
Incentives, games, or rewards for walking/biking	6%	2
Better snow/ice removal in winter	13%	4
School policy that encourages walking/biking	10%	3
More information about walking and biking routes	10%	3
Less traffic along route	52%	16
Slower car speeds along route	58%	18
Bullying, hate, and harassment prevention and bystander intervention training	0%	0
A school club or after-school program	0%	0
Crossing guards/student patrols/corner captains	39%	12
Access to a bike, bike lock, or secure bike parking	3%	1
Better/more lighting along route	19%	6
Other (please specify)	6%	2
Total Respondents: 31		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Some sort of notification that kids arrived safely at school	5/5/2021 8:55 PM
2	Traffic congestion on Dodd Road with parents waiting on corners and cars passing cars on shoulder. Does not feel safe.	4/30/2021 7:08 PM

Q15 Does Somerset Elementary School encourage walking and biking to/from school?

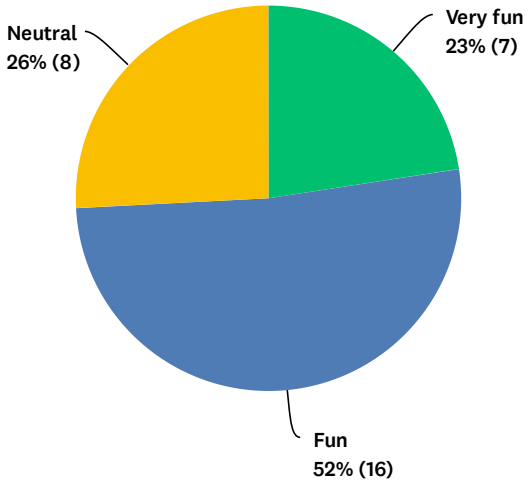
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly encourages	0%	0
Encourages	26%	8
Neutral	74%	23
Discourages	0%	0
Strongly discourages	0%	0
TOTAL		31

Q16 How much fun is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

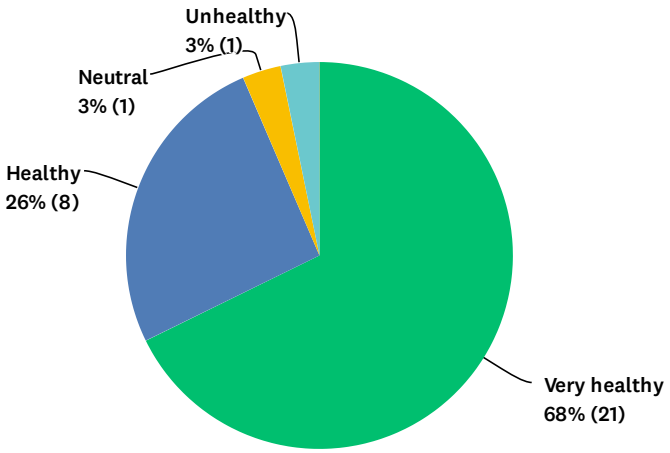
Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very fun	23%	7
Fun	52%	16
Neutral	26%	8
Boring	0%	0
Very boring	0%	0
TOTAL		31

Q17 How healthy is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very healthy	68%	21
Healthy	26%	8
Neutral	3%	1
Unhealthy	3%	1
Very unhealthy	0%	0
TOTAL		31

Q18 Please provide any additional comments below:

Answered: 16 Skipped: 20

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I would love a pathway along Dodd that isn't the shoulder. The cars go too fast along Dodd.	5/8/2021 3:08 PM
2	A sidewalk along dodge and Emerson would be so helpful for feeling like those are safe routes.	5/7/2021 10:44 PM
3	There's no safe walking option for kids that live in houses north of the school on the same side of the road as the school. Also, the shoulder/road narrows right at the bus entrance to almost nothing. It's not safe. We used to cut through yards in the summer, but now there's a retaining wall and fence blocking the path. In the winter this path was blocked by snow piles.	5/7/2021 3:53 PM
4	We'd love a bike/walking path! We are so close and Dodd Rd is just too busy and unsafe. Great idea Somerset!!	5/6/2021 6:24 AM
5	There is no way to walk to Somerset unless you live west of school. Dodd road is to busy with no sidewalks.	5/5/2021 11:24 PM
6	Too afraid of kidnapping, bullying and my kids dawdling & not making it on time or at all. They really want to walk or ride bikes. Maybe in another year?	5/5/2021 8:57 PM
7	Thank you for addressing this issue. Once it hits a tipping point, walking and biking can become the norm. Right now, walking and biking is the weird outlier in our community.	5/3/2021 10:22 AM
8	Dodd traffic is dangerous, Emerson has no sidewalks, Delaware had no Cross walks, even if it did it needs a light at the intersection of Delaware and Emerson — traffic drives too fast on Delaware.	5/3/2021 6:40 AM
9	My student would have to walk on Dodd rd to get to Somerset. I would love her to have the opportunity to walk but without sidewalks this is not an option as Dodd is a fast/busy road	5/1/2021 7:03 AM
10	I'd prefer he walk but I don't view it as safe due to his age and need to walk along sylvandale.	5/1/2021 6:58 AM
11	My daughters currently attend Somerset, but my oldest will be at Heritage next year. I would like her to have the option to bike to Heritage and hope to get more information about whether there are bike routes/crossing guards available.	4/30/2021 9:41 PM
12	We are extremely disappointed that sidewalks were not put in when Dodd Rd was resurfaced. It defeated the purpose of making Mendota Heights more safe & accessible via foot or bike. Cars go fast on Dodd even when pedestrians are present. The City, County & State overlooked the safety of our children who would otherwise bike to school (& use sidewalks to avoid traffic).	4/30/2021 8:58 PM
13	My kids do bike to school but I don't feel safe letting them do so alone because they have to bike along Dodd which only has a shoulder and higher speed limits.	4/30/2021 7:31 PM
14	Can probably ride too and from school quicker than any other mode, but with the current situation of cars using shoulder to pull into parking lot, we do not trust this mode.	4/30/2021 7:09 PM
15	Where Somerset is located is a problem to safely walk or bike as one as to go along Dodd Road or cross Dodd Road, even with a bike lane it's still on the road and not safe for kids	4/30/2021 6:51 PM
16	In my opinion, Dodd Road is not a very place for young children to be biking/walking.	4/30/2021 4:17 PM

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Appendix F. Student Hand Tally

During the week of September 27th, 2021, a student hand tally was conducted in classrooms (K-4) for both before and after school travel on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week (results included in the following table). A hand tally takes note of number of students in the classroom that day, grade, weather conditions that day, and modes of transportation used before and after school. In this study, it was consistently sunny during the period of data collection, so weather is not being considered as a factor. In reviewing the tally, it is clear that transport by school bus and family vehicle are the top two modes of travel in all grades and classrooms, with "other" (many that attend School Age Care (SAC) and then are picked up by a family vehicle) and walking as the next most common. No students reported using public transit, and very few outside of one fourth grade classroom traveled in a carpool.

When looking at individual grades, the youngest grades have the fewest walkers and bikers, while third grade has the most students walking and fourth grade has the most students biking. In looking at differences between trips in the morning and afternoon, in nearly every grade level, especially for the younger grades, students are more likely to walk in the morning, then take the bus or get picked up by a family vehicle to get home. In looking at the different days when tallys were taken, there are no clear correlations between day of the week and mode split.

Student Hand Tally Results

Grade	Class	Day of Week/Time During Week of 9/27	Student Total	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
K	1	Tuesday - AM	19	1	0	10	7			
		Tuesday - PM	18		0	7	9	1		
		Wednesday - AM	16	1		9	6			
				2	0	26	22	1	0	0
	2	Tuesday - AM	21	1		5	14		1	
		Tuesday - PM	21			4	16		1	
		Wednesday - AM	21	1		5	15			
		Wednesday - PM	21			3	18			
		Thursday - AM	21	1		5	14		1	
		Thursday - PM	21			3	17		1	
				3	0	25	94	0	4	0
	3	Tuesday - AM	20	1		10	1			
		Tuesday - PM	20	1		11	8			
		Wednesday - AM	22	1		13	9			
		Wednesday - PM	22	1		12	8			6
		Thursday - AM	21	1		13	3			
		Thursday - PM	21	1		11	7			6
				6	0	70	36	0	0	12
	4	Tuesday - AM	16			9	7			
		Tuesday - PM	16			12	4			
		Wednesday - AM	16	1		10	5			
		Wednesday - PM	16	1		11	3			1
		Thursday - AM	17	1		11	5			
		Thursday - PM	16			12	3			1
				3	0	65	27	0	0	2
1	5	Tuesday - AM	25	2		8	15			
		Tuesday - PM	25			11	9			5
		Wednesday - AM	25	3		8	14			
		Wednesday - PM	25			11	9			5
		Thursday - AM	24	4	1	3	15			1
		Thursday - PM	24		1	10	9			4
				9	2	51	71	0	0	15
	6	Tuesday - AM	22			11	11			
		Tuesday - PM	22			9	8			5
		Wednesday - AM	21			11	10			
		Wednesday - PM	22			10	7			5
		Thursday - AM	21			11	10			
		Thursday - PM	21			9	8			4
				0	0	61	54	0	0	14
	7	Tuesday - AM	22	2		10	10			
		Tuesday - PM	22			12	10			
		Wednesday - AM	23			10	12			1
		Wednesday - PM	23			10	12			1
		Thursday - AM	23	1		10	12			
		Thursday - PM	23			10	11			1
				3	0	62	67	0	0	3

Grade	Class	Day of Week/Time During Week of 9/27	Student Total	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
2	8	Tuesday - AM	16	1		9	6			
		Tuesday - PM	16			5	4			4
		Wednesday - AM	19	1		10	8			
		Wednesday - PM	19			10	4			
		Thursday - AM	19	1		10	8			
		Thursday - PM	19			11	4			4
				3	0	55	34	0	0	8
	9	Tuesday - AM	20	1		11	8			
		Tuesday - PM	20			7	8			5
		Wednesday - AM	16			8	8			
		Wednesday - PM	17			4	8			5
		Thursday - AM	20	1		10	9			
		Thursday - PM	20			7	8			5
				2	0	47	49	0	0	15
	10	Tuesday - AM	16			6	10			
		Tuesday - PM	16			7	5			4
		Wednesday - AM	17			8	9			
		Wednesday - PM	17			8	7			2
		Thursday - AM	17			6	11			
		Thursday - PM	17			7	6			3
3	11	Tuesday - AM	20	4		7	10			
		Tuesday - PM	20	3		11	4			3
		Wednesday - AM	21	3	1	8	9			
		Wednesday - PM	21	3	1	10	5			2
		Thursday - AM	21	4		9	8			
		Thursday - PM	20	3		10	6			1
				20	2	55	42	0	0	6
	12	Tuesday - AM	20	3		8	8	1		
		Tuesday - PM	20	1		9	4	1		5
		Wednesday - AM	22	3		10	9			
		Wednesday - PM	22	1		10	5	1		5
		Thursday - AM	22	3		10	8			1
		Thursday - PM	22	2		10	4			6
				13	0	57	38	3	0	17
	13	Tuesday - AM	21	2		15	3			1
		Tuesday - PM	21	2		13	3			3
		Wednesday - AM	22	2		14	5			1
		Wednesday - PM	22	2		13	4			3
		Thursday - AM	22	2	1	14	4			1
		Thursday - PM	22	2	1	12	5			2
				12	2	81	24	0	0	11
4	14	Tuesday - AM	24			12	12			
		Tuesday - PM	24			11	8			
		Wednesday - AM	24		1	13	10			
		Wednesday - PM	24		1	12	7			5
		Thursday - AM	26		2	11	13			
		Thursday - PM	26		2	11	8			5
				0	6	70	58	0	0	10
	15	Tuesday - AM	25	1		11	13			
		Tuesday - PM	25			11	8			6
		Wednesday - AM	25	1		12	12			
		Wednesday - PM	25	1		12	7	1		4
		Thursday - AM	26	1		12	13			
		Thursday - PM	26	1		12	10	1		3
				5	0	70	63	2	0	13
	16	Tuesday - AM	24	1	1	11	10	1		
		Tuesday - PM	24	1	1	8	12	1		
		Wednesday - AM	24	1	1	10	10	1		
		Wednesday - PM	24	1	1	7	6	2		6
		Thursday - AM	24	1	1	10	11	1		
		Thursday - PM	24	1	1	7	7	2		5
				6	6	53	56	8	0	11

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Appendix I. Infrastructure Toolbox

This infrastructure toolbox provides an overview of different infrastructure projects, separated by pedestrian facilities/enhancements, bike facilities, and street transformations. Each infrastructure project includes a pictorial representation, a brief description, a typical and estimated cost, and a list of resources for more specific engineering guidelines. References are shown at the end of this section.

PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES/ENHANCEMENTS

CROSSING GUARD

Description

Facilitated crossings are marked crossing locations along student routes where adult crossing guards or trained student patrols are stationed to assist students with safely crossing the street. Facilitated crossings may be located on or off campus. Determining whether a location is more appropriate for an adult crossing guard or student patrol may be based on location including distance from school, visibility, and traffic characteristics. Adult crossing guards and student patrols receive special training, and are equipped with high-visibility traffic vests and flags when on duty.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 52-54
- MnDOT Minnesota SRTS: School Crossing Guard Brief Guide
- MN MUTCD: Part 7. Traffic Controls for School Areas – Pages: 7D-1-2

Estimated Costs[D]

- $14.00 per hour average wage for a crossing guard

CURB EXTENSION/BULB OUT

Description

Curb extensions extend the sidewalk and curb into the motor-vehicle parking lanes at intersections or mid-block crossings. Also called bump-outs or bulb-outs, these facilities improve safety and convenience for people crossing the street by shortening the crossing distance and increasing visibility of people walking or biking to those driving.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 11-14
- FHWA Effects of Traffic Calming Measures on Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior – Pages: 6-11
- FHWA Signalized Intersections: Informational Guide – Pages: 190-192
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Pages: 45-59

Estimated Costs[E]

- $13,000 for a single corner

CURB RAMPS

Description

Curb ramps provide access for people between roadways and sidewalks for people using wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, crutches, bicycles, or who have mobility restrictions that make it difficult to step up or down from curbs. Curb ramps must be installed at intersections and mid-block crossings where pedestrian crossings are located, as mandated by federal law. Separate curb ramps should be provided for each direction of travel across the street.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 11-14
- FHWA Signalized Intersections: Informational Guide – Pages: 47-50
- United States Access Board Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in Public Right-of-Way – Pages: 66-67, 78-83

Estimated Costs

- Varies depending on retrofit or new construction, material used.

HAWK SIGNALS

Description

The High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk Beacon (HAWK), also referred to as a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon System by MnDOT, remains dark until activated by pressing the crossing button. Once activated, the signal responds immediately with a flashing yellow pattern which transitions to a solid red light, providing unequivocal 'stop' guidance to motorists. HAWK signals have been shown to elicit high rates of motorist compliance.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 46-48
- FHWA Safety Effectiveness of the HAWK Pedestrian Crossing Treatment
- FHWA Evaluation of Pedestrian and Bicycle Engineering Countermeasures: Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons, HAWKs, Sharrows, Crosswalk Markings, and the Development of an Evaluation Methods Report – Pages: 19-28

Estimated Costs[H]

- $80,000. Includes one HAWK signal in each direction

HIGH-VISIBILITY CROSSWALK

Description

High-visibility crosswalks help to create a continuous route network for people walking, biking, and rolling by alerting motorists to their potential presence at crossings and intersections. Crosswalks should be used at fully controlled intersections where sidewalks or shared-use paths exist.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 3-8
- MnDOT Guidance for Installation of Pedestrian Crosswalks on Minnesota State Highways – Page: 3
- MN MUTCD: Part 3. Markings – Pages: 3B-34-38
- MN MUTCD: Part 7. Traffic Controls for School Areas – Pages: 7A-1-3, 7B-5-8, 7C-1
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Pages: 4-7

Estimated Costs[E]

- $25,000 each, depending on materials: paint vs. thermoplastic

LEADING PEDESTRIAN INTERVAL

Description

A Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) provides pedestrians with a three to seven second head start when entering an intersection with a corresponding green signal in the same direction of travel. LPIs enhance the visibility of pedestrians in the crosswalk, and reinforce their right-of-way over turning vehicles. LPIs are most useful in areas where pedestrian travel and turning vehicle volumes are both high.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 28-30
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Page: 128

Estimated Costs[A]

- $0-$3,500, depending on the need for new hardware vs. revising existing signal timing

MEDIAN REFUGE ISLAND

Description

Median refuge islands (also known as median crossing islands) make crossings safer and easier by dividing them into two stages so that pedestrians and bicyclists only have to cross one direction of traffic at a time. Median refuges can be especially beneficial for slower walkers including children or the elderly. Crossing medians may also provide traffic calming benefits by visually narrowing the roadway.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 59-61
- FHWA Effects of Traffic Calming Measures on Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior – Pages: 17-20
- FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures: Medians and Pedestrian Crossing Islands in Urban and Suburban Areas
- MN MUTCD: Part 3. Markings – Page: 3I-2
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Page: 116

Estimated Costs[E]

- $13,500, $10 per square foot

RAISED CROSSWALKS

Description

Raised crosswalks are wide and gradual speed humps placed at pedestrian and bicyclist crossings. They are typically as high as the curb on either side of the street, eliminating grade changes for people crossing the street. Raised crosswalks help to calm approaching traffic and improve visibility of people crossing.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 18-21
- FHWA Effects of Traffic Calming Measures on Pedestrian and Motorist Behavior – Pages: 12-15
- MN MUTCD: Part 3. Markings – Pages: 3B-46-49
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Page: 54

Estimated Costs[E]

- $8,170 each

RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACON (RRFB)

Description

One type of activated flashing beacon is a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB). It uses an irregular stutter flash pattern with bright amber lights (similar to those on emergency vehicles) to alert drivers to yield to people waiting to cross. The RRFB offers a higher level of driver compliance than other flashing yellow beacons, but lower than the HAWK signal.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 49-51
- FHWA Effects of Yellow Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacon on Yielding at Multi-lane Uncontrolled Crosswalks
- FHWA Evaluation of Pedestrian and Bicycle Engineering Countermeasures: Rectangular Rapid-Flashing Beacons, HAWKs, Sharrows, Crosswalk Markings, and the Development of an Evaluation Methods Report – Pages: 13-18

Estimated Costs[B]

- $36,000 for two assemblies on poles

SIDEWALKS

Description

A well-connected sidewalk network is the foundation of pedestrian mobility and accessibility. Sidewalks provide people walking with space to travel within the public right-of-way that is separated from roadway vehicles. Sidewalks are associated with significant reductions in motor vehicle / pedestrian collisions.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 65-66
- AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Pages: 37-44
- United States Access Board Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in Public Right-of-Way

Estimated Costs[A, B]

- $84 per linear foot of 6 ft sidewalk with aggregate base

BIKE FACILITIES

BICYCLE BOULEVARDS

Description

A bicycle boulevard is a local street or series of connected local street segments that has been designated for use by bicycles and modified to provide priority treatment for bicyclists, while discouraging the use of these facilities by through traffic. Bicycle boulevards are intended to create conditions favored by bicyclists by taking advantage of bicycle-friendly characteristics that are typically found on local/residential streets—low traffic volumes and low vehicle operating speeds.

A bicycle boulevard can be tested through a demonstration project with paint, traffic tape, and bollards.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 76-78
- AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

Estimated Costs[I]

- The most likely revisions would involve moving STOP signs and adding guide signs, both of which could be done at very low cost. Other improvements involving crossing arterials would be $15,000 to $30,000 for adding median pedestrian refuge islands, $5,000 to $10,000 for curb extensions, and $10,000 to $120,000 for pedestrian, traffic control, such as rectangular rapid flash beacons or traffic signals

BUFFERED BIKE LANES

Description

Buffered bike lanes are conventional bicycle lanes paired with a designated, painted buffer space, separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent motor vehicle travel lane and/or parking lane.

Buffered bike lanes can be tested through a demonstration project with the use of paint and/or marking tape.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Page: 70-72
- MnDOT Bikeway Facility Design Manual – Pages: 123-168
- AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities – Chapter 5
- NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- MnDOT Demonstration Project Implementation Guide Page – 24

Estimated Costs[J]

- $2 per linear foot, bike lane with diagonal line striping (accounting for $0.69 per lane foot)

SEPARATED BIKE LANES

Description

Separated bike lanes (also known as protected bike lanes or cycletracks) are bike lanes that are physically separated from vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Separated bike lanes are known to be safer for people walking, biking, and driving. They are more attractive and comfortable to a wider range of people than traditional painted bike lanes because they provide physical separation from motor vehicles. Separated bike lanes are typically implemented as one-way facilities on either side of the roadway. In some cases, a two-way separated bikeway may be used.

Separated bike lanes can be tested through a demonstration project with the use of paint, marking tape, stencils, and flexible posts or other solid objects that physically separate the bike lane from moving traffic.

Estimated Costs[G]

- Average $133,170 per mile

Resources

- FHWA-SA-18-077: Bikeway Selection Guide
- FHWA-HEP-15-025: Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide
- FHWA-HEP-16-005: Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts
- MnDOT Bicycle Facility Design Manual
- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Page: 83-85
- MnDOT Demonstration Project Implementation Guide Page – 24

SHARED USE PATH

Description

Shared-use paths provide off-road connections for people walking, biking, and rolling. Paths are often located along waterways, abandoned or active railroad corridors, limited access highways, or parks and open spaces. Shared-use paths may also be located along high-speed, high-volume roads as an alternative to sidewalks and on-street bikeways; however, intersections with roadways should be minimal. Shared-use paths are generally comfortable for users of all ages and abilities.

Resources

- MnDOT Bikeway Facility Design Manual – Pages: 123-168
- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Page: 79-82
- AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities – Chapter 5

Estimated Costs[B]

- $55 per linear foot, 10 ft trail with aggregate base and associated costs

STREET TRANSFORMATIONS

ADVANCED STOP LINES

Description

An advanced stop line is a solid white line painted ahead of crosswalks on multi-lane approaches to alert drivers where to stop to let pedestrians cross. It is recommended that advanced stop lines be placed twenty to fifty feet before a crosswalk. This encourages drivers to stop back far enough for a pedestrian to see if a second motor vehicle is approaching, reducing the risk of a hidden-threat collision. Advanced stop lines can also be used with smaller turning radii to create a larger effective turning radius to accommodate infrequent (but large) vehicles.

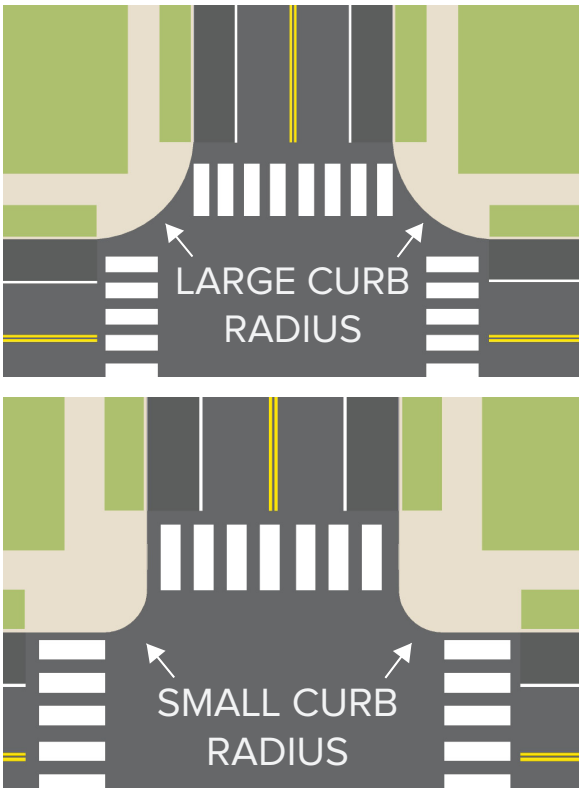
Estimated Costs[A,E]

- $8.50 per linear foot; $85 for a ten foot travel lane

Resources

- Reducing Conflicts Between Motor Vehicles and Pedestrians: The Separate and Combined Effects of Pavement Markings and a Sign Prompt
- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Page: 7
- FHWA Signalized Intersections: Informational Guide – Pages: 192- 193
- MN MUTCD: Part 3. Markings – Page: 3B-32
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Pages: 109-116, 144

CURB RADIUS REDUCTION



Description

Curb radii designs are determined based on the design vehicle of the roadway. In general, vehicles are able to take turns more quickly around corners with larger curb radii. Minimizing curb radii forces drivers to take turns at slower speeds, making it easier and safer for people walking or biking to cross the street. An actual curb radius of five to ten feet should be used wherever possible, while appropriate effective turning radii range from 15 to 30 feet, depending on the roadway and land use context.

Resources

- FHWA Signalized Intersections: Informational Guide – Pages: 187-189
- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Page: 11-14
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Pages: 117-120, 144-146

Estimated Costs[F, G]

- $2,000-$40,000, depending on need for utility relocation and drainage

ROAD DIET

Description

A classic road diet converts an existing four-lane roadway to a three-lane cross-section consisting of two through lanes and a center two-way left turn lane. Road diets improve safety by including a protected left-turn lane, calming traffic, reducing conflict points, and reducing crossing distance for pedestrians. In addition, road diets provide an opportunity to allocate excess roadway for alternative uses such as bike facilities, parking, transit lanes, and pedestrian or landscaping improvements.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 62-64
- FHWA Road Diet Desk Reference
- FHWA Road Diet Informational Guide
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Page: 14

Estimated Costs[E]

- $120,680 per mile, assuming eight blocks in a mile. Estimate includes 16 symbols, 16 signs, six curb extensions, one mini traffic circle

SCHOOL SPEED ZONE

Description

School speed zones reduce speed limits near schools, and alert motorists that they are driving near a school. School speed zones are defined as the section of road adjacent to school grounds, or where an established school crossing with advance school signs is present. Each road authority may establish school speed zone limits on roads under their jurisdiction. In general, school speed limits shall not be more than 30 mph below the established speed limit, and may not be lower than 15 mph. Speed violations within school speed zones are subject to a double fine.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 5, 35, 52-53,
- MnDOT School Zone Speed Limits
- MN MUTCD: Part 7. Traffic Controls for School Areas – Section: 7E

Estimated Costs[A, C]

- $600 for sign and post in each direction

TRAFFIC CIRCLES (MINI ROUNDABOUTS)

Description

Traffic circles are raised circular islands constructed in the center of residential intersections. They may take the place of a signal or four-way stop sign, and calm vehicle traffic speeds by forcing motorists to navigate around them without requiring a complete stop. Signage should be installed with traffic circles directing motorists to proceed around the right side of the circle before passing through or making a left turn.

Resources

- MnDOT Minnesota's Best Practice for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety – Pages: 37-39
- FHWA Technical Summary: Mini-Roundabouts
- FHWA Technical Summary: Roundabouts – Page: 7 (mention of school area siting)
- MN MUTCD: Part 3. Markings – Pages: 3C1-15
- NACTO Urban Street Design Guide – Page: 99

Estimated Costs[E]

- $35,000-$50,000 each

Sources

A: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bidlet/avgPrice/AVGPR162015.pdf
B: http://www.hennepin.us/~/media/hennepinus/residents/transportation/bottineau-documents-mpls-gv/estimated-infrastructure-costs-and-funding.pdf?la=en
C: http://www.trafficsign.us/signcost.html
D: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes339091.htm
E: http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/Countermeasure%20Costs_Report_Nov2013.pdf
F: http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/reduced_corner_radii.cfm
G: http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/cms/downloads/Countermeasure_Costs_Summary_Oct2013.pdf
H: http://www2.ku.edu/~kutc/pdffiles/LTAPFS11-Mid-Block.pdf
I: https://www.lrrb.org/pdf/201322.pdf
J: https://activelivingresearch.org/sites/activelivingresearch.org/files/Dill_Bicycle_Facility_Cost_June2013.pdf

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Appendix J. Bike Parking for Schools

Bicycle parking at schools does more than just provide space for storage during the school day. Depending on design, bicycle parking can actually encourage students and staff to choose to ride their bikes to school. Here are some things to think about when planning bicycle parking at school.

HOW MUCH PARKING SHOULD BE PROVIDED?

The amount of bike parking needed will depend on the capacity of your school, the ages of students, and the number of staff. But remember: be aspirational! Provide parking for the number of students and staff you want to see biking! The following are some guidelines:

- Aim for 25 percent of the maximum student capacity of the school.
- Provide additional parking to encourage staff and faculty to bike to school

For example, if each classroom has a max capacity of 20 students and there are 10 classrooms, space for 50 bicycles should be provided. Don't forget to add some for faculty and staff!

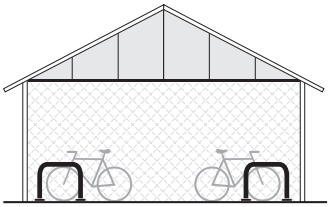
WHERE SHOULD PARKING BE LOCATED?

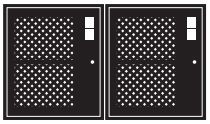
Well-located bike parking will be:

- visible to students, staff, and visitors
- near the primary school entrance/exit
- easily accessed without dismounting
- clear of obstructions which might limit the circulation of users and their bikes
- easily accessed without making a rider cross bus and car circulation
- installed on a hard, stable surface that is unaffected by weather
- often found near kindergarten and daycare entrance, which allows caregivers to conveniently pick up their children on their bikes

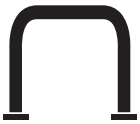
CAN MY SCHOOL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL AMENITIES?

Bike parking shelters and lockers provide extra comfort and security for those choosing to ride to school. They're also a great project for a shop class. Both can be very simple in construction and go a long way towards making biking attractive and prioritized!





WHICH RACKS ARE BEST?



INVERTED U

POST & RING

WHEELWELL SECURE

These racks provide two points of contact with the bicycle, accommodate varying styles of bike, allow for at least one wheel to be U-locked, and are intuitive to use!

WHICH RACKS ARE NOT RECOMMENDED?

WAVE

COMB

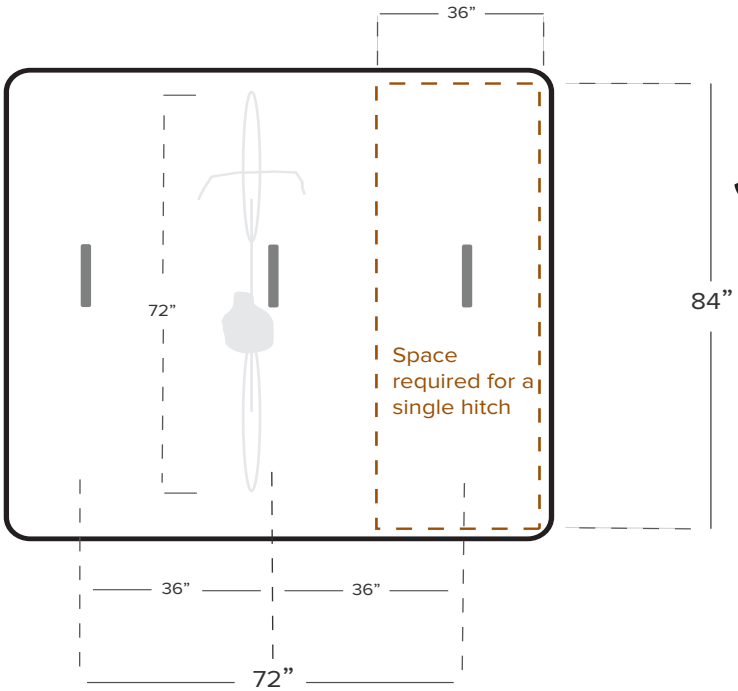
SPIRAL

WHEELWELL

These racks do not provide support at two places on the bike, can damage the wheel, do not provide adequate security, and are not intuitive to use!

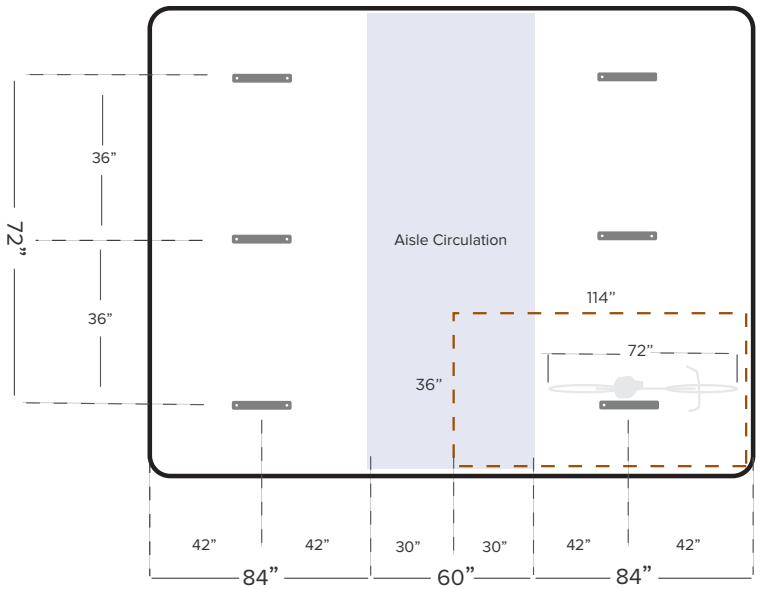
Graphics courtesy of Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals Essentials of Bike Parking report (2015).

SPACE REQUIREMENTS



The space requirements shown here assume a person parking their bike would have open access forward and from behind.

The space requirements shown here assume the area is confined on either side (left and right). Access is located at the top and bottom of the image, requiring a center aisle for circulation.



Space required for a single hitch

RESOURCES FOR EQUIPMENT

Dero
Sportworks
Urban Racks

MORE INFORMATION

APBP Essentials of Bike Parking
Bike Shelter Development Guide -Portland Public Schools

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Appendix K. Maintenance Planning

ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

School routes and crosswalks should be prioritized for maintenance. To ensure high visibility crosswalks maintain their effectiveness, review all crosswalks within one block of the school each year. If there is notable deterioration, crosswalks should be repainted annually. In addition, crosswalks on key school walking routes should be evaluated annually and repainted every other year or more often as needed.

SEASONAL PLANNING AND MAINTENANCE

Walking and cycling rates generally decline during the cold winter months as poorly maintained infrastructure and unpleasant weather conditions create barriers. However, maintaining infrastructure and planning inviting winterscapes for students can facilitate the convenience of walking, biking, and rolling as well as provide new opportunities to encourage students to spend more time outside.

In the winter, snow removal and maintenance of school routes should be prioritized since clear pathways are a critical component of pedestrian and bicycle safety. The presence of snow or ice on sidewalks, curb ramps, or bikeways will deter pedestrian and cyclist use of those facilities to a much higher degree than cold temperature alone. Families with children often avoid walking in locations where ice or snow accumulation creates slippery conditions that may cause a fall. Curb ramps that are blocked by ice or snow effectively sever access to pedestrian facilities. Additionally, inadequately maintained facilities may force pedestrians and bicyclists into the street.

While it is important to prioritize maintenance, additional planning should be employed to create new opportunities to encourage students to spend more time outside through design. According to the City of Edmonton's Winter Design Guidelines, the five main design principles for designing cities that are inviting and functional for outdoor public life year-round include blocking wind, capturing sunshine, using color, proper lighting, and providing infrastructure that supports desired winter activities.

Lighting is important year-round, but becomes increasingly important in the darker months of winter for creating more inviting winterscapes for pedestrians and bicyclists. Lighting can induce a sense of warmth and safety, as well as be used for wayfinding and as passive public art displays.

Lastly, providing infrastructure that supports desired winter activities can also encourage more active transportation. Some particularly encouraging strategies beyond providing ice skating rinks that have been employed in Edmonton, Canada include harnessing plowed snow piles and stored snow to create new play opportunities for students. These snow piles can be strategically placed in parks along walking routes and mounded into winter slides. Other practices have included regularly compacting snow to make it malleable enough for students to construct their own snow house structures, with maintenance crews compacting the snow every few days to prevent it from forming into denser ice.

Resources

Safe Routes Partnership - Let It Snow: Ways to Help Walking in the Winter Months
https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/blog/let-it-snow-ways-help-walking-winter-months

Winter Design Guidelines: Transforming Edmonton into a Great Winter City
https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PDF/WinterCityDesignGuidelines_draft.pdf

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Appendix L. Equity in SRTS Planning

When planning and implementing your SRTS programming, it is essential to design events and activities that are inclusive of students of all backgrounds and abilities. This appendix identifies potential obstacles to student participation and suggests creative outreach strategies, low-cost solutions, and flexible program additions that aim to:

- Reduce language and/or cultural barriers
- Engage students with disabilities
- Address personal safety concerns related to hate, harassment, and discrimination based on identity (race, ethnicity, language use, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics)
- Limit barriers related to school distance
- Mitigate the impact of any other unique challenges limiting a students ability to take part in a SRTS program

LANGUAGE AND/OR CULTURAL BARRIERS

To encourage families that do not speak English, are learning English, or are more comfortable conversing in another language to participate in Safe Routes to School programs, it is important to address any concerns and communicate how the program can benefit families. Hiring multilingual staff is the best way to communicate and form relationships with a diverse community.

Provide Materials in Multiple Languages

Some concepts change meaning unintentionally when translated literally, resulting in confusion. Also, words may have different meanings depending on different regional dialects.

- Ask families with native speakers to help communicate SRTS messages to others.
- Use images to supplement words so that handouts are easy to understand for all.

Use a Variety of Media

In schools where families speak different languages, it is a good idea to present information in multiple ways.

- Use a variety of mechanisms to communicate the benefits of walking and bicycling to caregivers.
- Have students perform to their caregivers, such as through a school play.
- Encourage youth-produced PSAs to educate caregivers on why walking, biking, and rolling are fun and healthy ways to get around.
- Provide emails, print materials, etc., in multiple languages.
- Use phone call/text trees, PTA meetings, or school events to reach caregivers.
- Work with staff members who speaks multiple languages to speak with caregivers at events.
- Employ staff from similar ethnic backgrounds to families at the school.
- Families increasingly use texting more than emails. Find out how families at the school communicate with each other and incorporate the methods they use in your messaging.

Meet People Where They Are

Some families may not feel comfortable coming to events or participating in formal PTAs and organizations.

- Build partnerships with community groups, such as places of worship, food banks, public/affordable housing communities, and other groups, to reach those who might not be part of PTA or other formal meetings.
- State-required English Learner Advisory Committees (ELACs) are good partners.
- Conduct outreach or table at school events (such as: Movie nights, family dance nights, Back to School nights, etc.).

Host Parent Workshops

All caregivers want their children to be successful when it comes to school. Caregiver workshops are a good opportunity to work through any barriers and articulate how SRTS services and programs can help them be successful.

- Create simple ways for caregivers to get involved with SRTS and help put on events and activities with their children, who can often help navigate the situation.
- Hold a "Caregiver University," or workshops where concerns with SRTS programming can be voiced.
- Listen to and act on concerns and suggestions to build trust in the community.
- Include an icebreaker activity to introduce yourself and to make the participants more comfortable sharing their thoughts and opinions.

Establish Flexible Programs

Create a trusting and welcoming environment by not requiring participants to provide information about themselves, which could be a deterrent to undocumented immigrants.

- Establish a training program for volunteers that does not require background checks or fingerprints since some caregivers who would like to volunteer may not be able to pass background checks.

Oftentimes, working adults have limited time to volunteer with their student's schools. The hours and benefits associated with many jobs can make it challenging to be available for school activities and take paid time off.

- Host meetings and events at varying times to accommodate differing work schedules.
- Make specific requests and delegate so no single person has to do the majority of the work.

Communicate Health Benefits

Families who are not well-connected to the school community may be unaware of SRTS programming benefits.

- Publicize to caregivers that walking, biking, and rolling to school provides great exercise and that it is fun, like an additional recess for students.
- Encourage caregivers to attend health fairs that highlight walking, biking, and rolling to create an association between those commute options and their benefits. Encouragement competitions such as the Golden Sneaker Award and Pollution Punch Card can show how many calories students have burned.

Address Clothing Choices

Some families might not have the resources to provide their student(s) with the proper clothing, outerwear, or footwear to make the walk or bike ride to school comfortable. There also may be a learning curve for knowing how to dress appropriately for different weather scenarios when a family moves from a different climate.

- Host a clothing drive or partner with local organizations that could provide necessary SRTS outfitting for those in need. This is especially important in winter—ensuring all students participating in SRTS have the necessary outerwear to stay warm in the colder months.
- Work with students who wear traditional cultural dress, religious head coverings, or select hairstyles who want to bike to school to make sure their bike is set up in a way that will not interfere with their clothing and that larger helmets or proper helmet fittings are provided.
- Include recommended layering strategies in SRTS communications and events to help students and families learn how to dress to be most comfortable, especially during the winter months.
- In the darker months, include education about the value of wearing bright clothing made with reflective materials or carrying reflective objects that make students walking or biking to/from school visible. Look for funding or groups willing to donate reflective pins for backpacks or coats, and/or bike reflectors. Safe Routes Utah provides some additional recommendations for dressing appropriately in winter months: https://saferoutes.utah.gov/winter-wear-for-walking-to-school/

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Some students may not be able to walk or bike to school, or for longer distances, because of mobility, auditory, physical-visual, cognitive-neurodiversity, or emotional behavior disabilities, but they still need to be included, welcomed, and accommodated in SRTS programs.

Look at Route and Program Improvements

- Invite students with disabilities to participate in school infrastructure audits to learn how to improve school access for all.
- Host focus groups or meetings with families that have a student or students with disabilities to gather feedback on how to make the SRTS routes or programs more inclusive of their specific disability.
- Understand that students with mental disabilities may have differing capacities for retaining personal and traffic safety information, but programs like neighborhood cleanups and after-school programs can be fun ways to socialize and participate with other students.
- Involve special education instructors and caregivers of disabled students in the planning and implementation of

these programs to better determine the needs of students with disabilities.

Normalize All Students Having Access to SRTS Programs

- Create SRTS materials that recognize students with disabilities. Include pictures of students with disabilities in program messaging to highlight that SRTS programs are suitable for all students.
- Talk about the differences in access to SRTS programs between students with and without disabilities to normalize the different ways that students can be considered pedestrians or bicyclists. There is no "one size fits all" definition.
- Work with local bike programs/shops to access adaptive bikes for students with disabilities that inhibit their mobility to make sure any student can bike to school if they would like to.

Additional Resources

- National Center for SRTS's Involving Students with Disabilities
- SRTS National Partnership's: Serving Students with Disabilities

PERSONAL SAFETY CONCERNS

In some communities, personal safety, or an individual's ability to go about their everyday life free from the threat or fear of psychological, emotional, or physical harm from others, can feel limited by concerns about hate and harassment, resulting in a significant barrier to walking and bicycling. These attacks on personal safety are often a result of differences in identity, including race, ethnicity, language use, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other identity characteristics.

Concerns about other criminal activity in the area, such as violence, dogs, drug use, and other deterrents can take precedence over SRTS activities in some communities. Higher-crime neighborhoods may also lack spaces like sidewalks or other facilities that offer highly visible, safe access for walking, biking, and rolling to school. This is a further deterrent for walking or biking to school.

Creating Safer Routes

Residents are often aware of traffic and personal safety issues in their neighborhoods, but don't know how to address them.

- Provide a safe place for caregivers to voice concerns to start the conversation about making improvements. Listen to their concerns, help caregivers prioritize, and connect them with the responsible agency to address the concerns.
- Encourage staff or caregiver volunteers to host house meetings, in which a small group gathers at the home of someone they know to voice concerns and brainstorm solutions.
- Seek common goals for community improvement that can be addressed through collaborative efforts with all caregiver groups.
- When looking for volunteers, start by looking to friends and neighbors to build your base group.
- Be creative; consider going to community events like Farmer's Markets, cultural events, and neighborhood gathering spots to recruit. Try different ways of engaging with participants; the City as Play Design Workshops have creative ideas for asking attendees to build their visions.
- Look for small victories: adding a crossing guard, signage and paint gives caregivers confidence that their issues can be addressed.

Neighborhood Watch Programs

Establishing community-led safety efforts, safety ambassadors, and safety zones can involve the community in addressing personal safety concerns as supervision reduces the risk of bullying, crime, and other unsafe behavior. It is important to remember that while police officers have historically been involved in these roles, increased police presence does not invoke the same feeling of safety for all communities, and may actually deter walking, biking, and rolling.

- Set up safety ambassadors (recruited and paid caregivers, youth, or community members) to roam areas of concern. Make sure these ambassadors match the diversity of students at the school so students have leaders that are similar to themselves to look up to. Safe Passages or Corner Greeter programs station caregiver or community volunteers on designated key street corners to increase adult presence to watch over children as they walk and bicycle to school.
- Issue special hats, vests, or jackets to give the volunteers legitimacy and identify them as ambassadors.
- Provide walkie-talkies to allow caregivers to radio for help if they are confronting a situation they are not able to

resolve.

- Work to identify “safe places” like a home along the route where children can go to in an emergency, or create a formal program with mapped safe places all children can go to if a situation feels dangerous.

SchoolPool with a Group

SchoolPool, or commuting to school with other families and trusted adults, can address personal safety concerns associated with traveling alone.

- Form Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, or carpools. For information about how to set up a SchoolPool at your school, read the Spare the Air Youth SchoolPool guidebook at https://sparetheairyouth.org/. More information about organizing a Walking School Bus or Bike Train is available online at https://sparetheairyouth.org/program-resources/events/walking-school-buses-bike-trains.

Sponsor Neighborhood Beautification Projects

Work with community members to identify what they want their neighborhood to look like, and determine what types of identity-building beautification projects could benefit them. Sustaining clean, community-maintained neighborhoods can create a sense of safety and help reduce crime rates.

- Host neighborhood beautification projects around schools, such as clean-up days, graffiti removal, and tree planting to help make families feel more comfortable and increase safety for walking or biking to school.
- Host a community dialogue about positive and negative uses of public space.

Education Programs

Teach students and their families about safety issues that might be present on the route to school. Caregivers may not want students to walk or bike if they are not confident in their child’s ability to handle certain difficult situations.

Safety Information for Students

- Use time at school, such as during recess, PE, or no-cost after school programs, to teach students how to bike and walk safely.
- Utilize either existing curricula or bring in volunteer instructors from local advocacy groups and non-profit organizations.
- Teach students what to do in the event of an emergency and where to report suspicious activity or bullying. Look to community responders that do not get the police involved immediately to avoid escalating situations that could be handled with the right people/groups stepping in. https://dontcallthepolice.com/minneapolis/ provides a list of non-police emergency response groups in Minnesota that can be utilized for different types of emergencies.
- Providing helmets and bikes during the trainings will allow all students to participate regardless of whether or not they have access to these items.
- Organize an Open Streets event as a strategy to create safe zones for teaching new skills in the street.

Safety Information for Caregivers

- Provide information about how to get to around safely.
- Develop and distribute suggested routes to school maps that highlight streets with amenities like sidewalks, lighting, low speeds, and less traffic. Create a series of maps in multiple languages and a map that uses primarily colors and symbols to provide legibility for students or family members who are unable to read. These maps could also incorporate tips for getting to school safely, share what to do in emergency situations, and mark safe places to go along the route should an emergency situation arise.
- Identify informal shortcuts and cut-throughs that students may take to reduce travel time. Consider whether these routes may put students at risk (for example, by cutting through a fence, across a field, or near railroad tracks) and work with city planners and local property owners to improve the route.
- Provide flyers for caregivers about how to find other families or groups to commute with or what to do in the event of an emergency to educate themselves and their children. Reference https://dontcallthepolice.com/minneapolis/ for a list of non-police emergency response groups that can be contacted for different types of emergencies.
- Offer pedestrian safety training walks. Make these fun and interactive and address caregivers’ safety concerns as well as provide tips for them to teach their children to be safe while walking.

Resources

- SRTS National Partnership’s Implementing Safe Routes to School in Low-Income Schools and Communities http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/LowIncomeGuide.pdf

BARRIERS RELATED TO SCHOOL DISTANCE

Some students simply live too far or experience housing instability that leads to consistently changing routes, making walking or biking to school seem impossible. However, there are programs that may be implemented to include these students in healthy physical activities, such as walking or biking.

Remote Drop-off

- Suggest remote drop-offs for caregivers to drop their children off a couple blocks from the school so they can walk the rest of the way. Volunteers wait at the drop-off points and walk with students at a designated time to ensure they arrive to school safely and on time.
- Remote drop-off sites can be places such as underutilized parking lots at churches or grocery stores that give permission for their property to be used for this program.
- Identify potential remote drop-off areas on route maps.

Walk to School Bus Stops

- Incorporate physical activity into students' morning schedule by encouraging them to walk to bus stops.
- Utilize walking school bus programming to organize nearby students in groups to walk to a centrally located bus stop, which may translate into fewer needed bus stops since more students will be boarding at each stop.

Frequent Walker Programs

- Implement before, during, or after school programs that identify walking opportunities on campus, which can be defined by specific routes or by amount of time spent walking on campus. This will allow students who arrive to school by bus or caregiver vehicle to benefit from the physical benefits provided by walking or biking at school.

Additional Resources

- Safe Routes to School National Partnership Rural Communities: Making Safe Routes Work
- Safe Routes to School National Partnership Rural Communities: Best Practices and Promising Approaches for Safe Routes
- Safe Routes to School National Partnership Rural Communities: A Two Pronged Approach for Improving Walking and Bicycling

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