

Worthington School District Safe Routes to School Plan

December

2015

This multi-jurisdictional plan includes the Independent School District No. 518 (Worthington School District) and the City of Worthington. This project was supported by a Safe Routes to School Grant Award awarded by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

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Commission

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<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/index.html>

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plans are community plans to promote an active lifestyle for all residents. The focus of SRTS plans are on teaching children pedestrian and bicycle safety, making the environment safer for children to walk and bicycle to school and around the community, and promoting a healthy lifestyle. The SRTS plan encourages children and the community as a whole to walk, bike, and be more physically active. By promoting a more active lifestyle, there are a number of positive externalities that include: reduced traffic congestion near schools and in the community, better air quality around schools and in the community, and an overall healthier community.

What is Safe Routes to School? According to the Safe Routes to School National Partnership:

“Safe Routes to School is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to bicycle and walk to and from schools. The program has been designed to reverse the decline in children walking and bicycling to schools. Safe Routes to School can also play a critical role in reversing the alarming nationwide trend toward childhood obesity and inactivity.

In 1969, approximately 50 percent of children in the US walked or bicycled to school, with approximately 87 percent of children living within one mile of school walking or bicycling. Today, fewer than 15 percent of schoolchildren walk or bicycle to school. As a result, kids today are less active, less independent and less healthy.”¹

Purpose

“The goal of Safe Routes to School is to get more children bicycling and walking to schools safely on an everyday basis.”² This goal starts with bringing the community together around a shared vision of being more active and healthy. Using the five E’s (evaluation, education, encouragement, engineering, and enforcement), schools can be the starting place to build momentum towards the shared vision of a more pedestrian-friendly community. The SRTS planning process helps to bring interested groups and individuals together to improve the built environment and to increase opportunities for healthy physical activity for everyone.

Benefits

There are a number of individual and community benefits of incorporating physical activity into your daily routine. Active Living is a way of life that integrates physical activity into your daily routine. This can start with making small trips. An example is walking between stores instead of driving from one end of Main Street to the other.

¹ Safe Routes to School National Partnership. Accessed: 12/26/14. Available: <http://saferoutespartnership.org/about/history/what-is-safe-routes-to-school>

² Safe Routes to School National Partnership. Accessed: 12/26/14. Available: <http://saferoutespartnership.org/about/history/what-is-safe-routes-to-school>

Health Benefits

Walking and biking are two of the most popular ways to integrate regular physical activity into your daily routine. “Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health.”³

Physical activity can help:

- ▶ Control your weight
- ▶ Reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease
- ▶ Reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- ▶ Reduce your risk of some cancers
- ▶ Strengthen your bones and muscles
- ▶ Improve your mental health and mood
- ▶ Improve your ability to do daily activities and prevent falls, if you're an older adult
- ▶ Increase your chances of living longer

Transportation Benefits

Communities that have pedestrian scale infrastructure and programs promoting walking and biking tend to be more physically active. “People who live by trails are 50 percent more likely to meet physical activity guidelines.”⁴ Adding pedestrian infrastructure and promoting walking and biking will help to reduce:

- ▶ Roadway congestion
- ▶ Time wasted stuck in traffic
- ▶ Driver frustration
- ▶ Pollution

“Roadway improvements to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists also can enhance safety for motorists. For example, adding paved shoulders on two-lane roads has been shown to reduce the frequency of run-off-road, head-on, and sideswipe motor vehicle crashes.”⁵

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Physical Activity and health. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/>

⁴ Active Living Research. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: http://activelivingresearch.org/files/ALR_Brief_ActiveTransportation_0.pdf

⁵ University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: <http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/data/factsheet.cfm>

Economic Development Benefits

Economic Development does not have one singular definition. Attracting businesses is only one strategy for economic development. Another strategy is to concentrate on attracting and retaining residents. Part of that strategy is planning for pedestrians and developing community facilities. Supporting walking and biking can have a positive impact on attracting and retaining residents, businesses, and workers. Compact, walkable developments provide economic development benefits through increased property values, enhanced marketability, and faster sales than conventional developments.⁶

The National Realtors Association points to the changing behavior of home buyers, “people prefer to live in communities that allow them to walk to shops, parks and other destinations and will pay more for a home that allows them to do just that.”⁷ First time home buyers are looking for neighborhoods and cities that are more walkable. “Millennials, though, are just part of the picture. As baby boomers get older, many are opting to live in places where they don’t have to drive as much to get to services and where they can age in place.”⁸ This is a national trend and Southwest Minnesota needs to recognize livability, walkability, and bikeability as economic development tools.

Environmental Benefits

Newer developments in cities have moved away from sidewalks on both sides of the street, having garages facing the alleyway behind the house, and having similar sized lots. This creates a disincentive to walk and bike and decreases the interconnectedness of the community. A study conducted by the University of British Columbia found that lowering neighborhoods’ walkability increases the use of motor vehicles and, therefore, raises the air pollution and body mass index per capita.⁹ Cul-de-Sacs were also found to decrease the walkability of a neighborhood.

Motor vehicle traffic generated by the travel to and from school adds 20 to 30 percent more traffic volume to the roads.¹⁰ Replacing short trips with walking or biking can help reduce air pollution and energy consumption. There are also a number of health benefits (refer to health benefits above).



⁶ Transportation Policy Institute: Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: <http://www.vtpi.org/walkability.pdf>

⁷ National Realtors Association. The Value of Walkability. Accessed: 5/13/15. Available: <http://www.realtor.org/newsroom/real-estate-story-ideas/the-value-of-walkability> Source: Brookings Institute: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>

⁸ Builder Magazine. Why Smart Builders Care About Walkability. Accessed: 5/29/15. Available: http://www.builderonline.com/land/development/why-smart-builders-care-about-walkability_o

⁹ Environmental Health Perspectives. Healthy Neighborhoods: Walkability and Air Pollution. Accessed 1/22/15. Available: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2801167/>

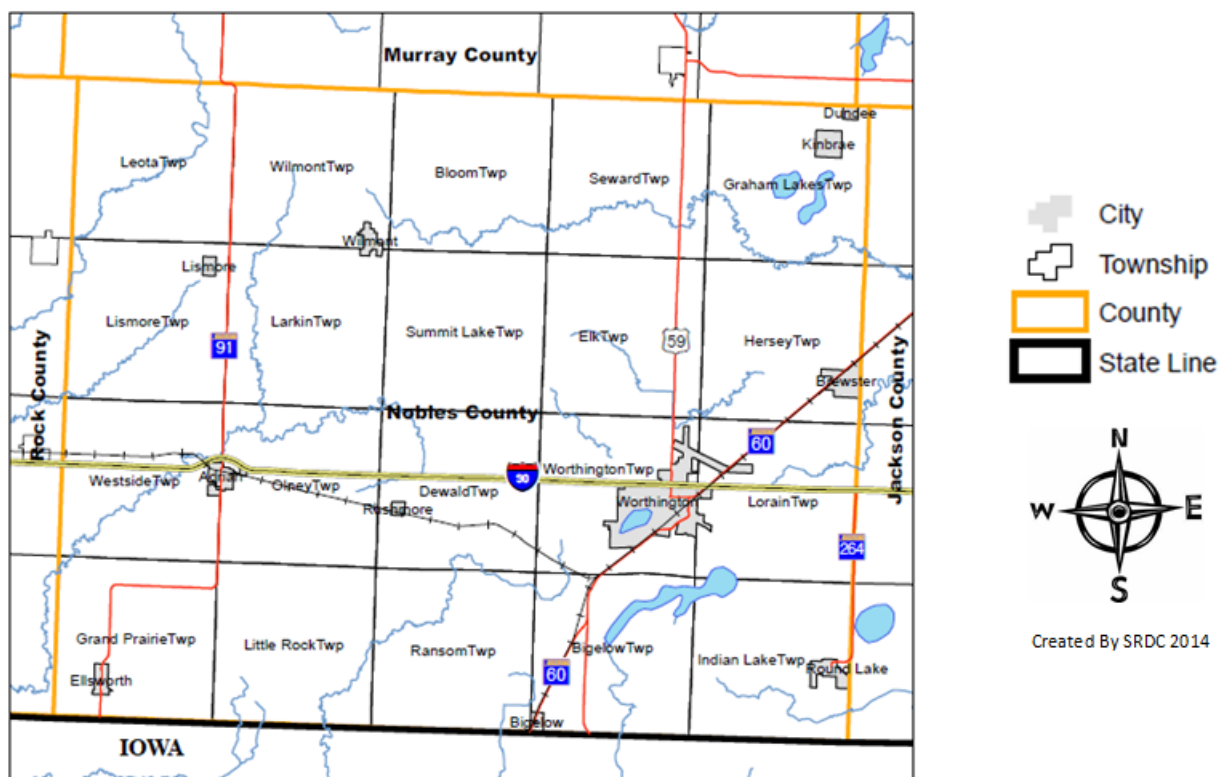
¹⁰ Safe Routes to School Guide. Accessed: 1/22/15. Available: http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/pdf/SRTS-Guide_Introduction.pdf

Geographic Location

Nobles County is located in southwest Minnesota. The county is bordered on the north by Murray County, on the south by the State of Iowa, on the east by Jackson County, and on the west by Rock County. Cities in Nobles County include: Adrian, Bigelow, Brewster, Dundee, Ellsworth, Kinbrae, Lismore, Round Lake, Rushmore, Wilmont, and Worthington. In addition, the county has three unincorporated communities— Org, Reading, and St. Kilian.

Worthington School District facilities are all located in the City of Worthington. The Worthington School District does draw students from neighboring communities. Worthington has a total area of 8.7 square miles, of which 1.4 square miles is water.¹¹ The population of Worthington was 12,764 in the 2010 census.¹²

Figure #1 Minor Civil Divisions - Nobles County



¹¹ United States Census Bureau. Accessed: 12/31/14. Available: http://www2.census.gov/geo/gazetteer/2014_Gazetteer/2014_gaz_place_27.txt

¹² United States Census. Accessed: 12/26/14. Available: <http://factfinder.census.gov>



Home of the Trojans



Independent School District No. 518

Independent School District 518 is a culturally diverse district (69% diverse) that is a rural district. The informal name of the school district is Worthington. Worthington School District includes the communities of Bigelow, Reading, Rushmore, Wilmont and Worthington. All of the schools are located within the City of Worthington. The district encompasses 263 miles within Nobles County and has a Pre-K – 12th grade enrollment of over 3,000 students in the 2014-15 school year.

The District includes: Prairie Elementary, Middle School, High School and the West Learning Center that houses the VIBE (on-line learning school), Area Learning Center, Community Education and other special programs or departments. All of the schools are located in the City of Worthington. Prairie Elementary provides early childhood education through fourth grade and is located at 1700 1st Avenue SW. The Middle School services grades fifth through eighth and is located at 1401 Crailsheim Road. The High School serves grades ninth through twelfth and is located at 1211 Clary Street. The West Learning Center is located at 117 Eleventh Avenue and offers a variety of learning programs to increase growth, credit recovery and explore career options. VIBE Academy is located at 117 Eleventh Avenue and is a K-12 online educational approach that tailors learning to each specific child.

Over all, the district is modern, and has a high expectation for academic achievement. They have incorporated technology into the district with 100% of the classrooms having Smart technology available and grades 3-8 having individual learning devices, while K-2 have access to learning devices in the classrooms.

The Worthington SRTS plan includes Prairie Elementary and the Middle School. Prairie Elementary provides many educational opportunities to approximately 1,250 students. The Middle School has a student enrollment of approximately 840 and offers many exploratory courses. The High School has an enrollment of approximately 840 students with a wide variety of curriculum opportunities and over 50 extra-curricular activities. The Alternative Learning Center's enrollment is approximately 95 students and the VIBE school has an enrollment of about 40 students.

All of the schools provide a quality education for students at their current level with many opportunities to explore a variety of options that will not only provide the basic skills, but address those looking to challenge themselves with higher level courses. Worthington School District is proud of its mission to educate all students and provide the quality of education expected by the residents of our district. For more information about the district, please visit our web site at www.isd518.net.

Prairie Elementary
1700 1st Avenue
Worthington, MN 56187
[507] 727-1250

Worthington Middle School
1401 North Crailsheim Road
Worthington, MN 56187
[507] 376-4174



Prairie Elementary



Middle School

Figure #2

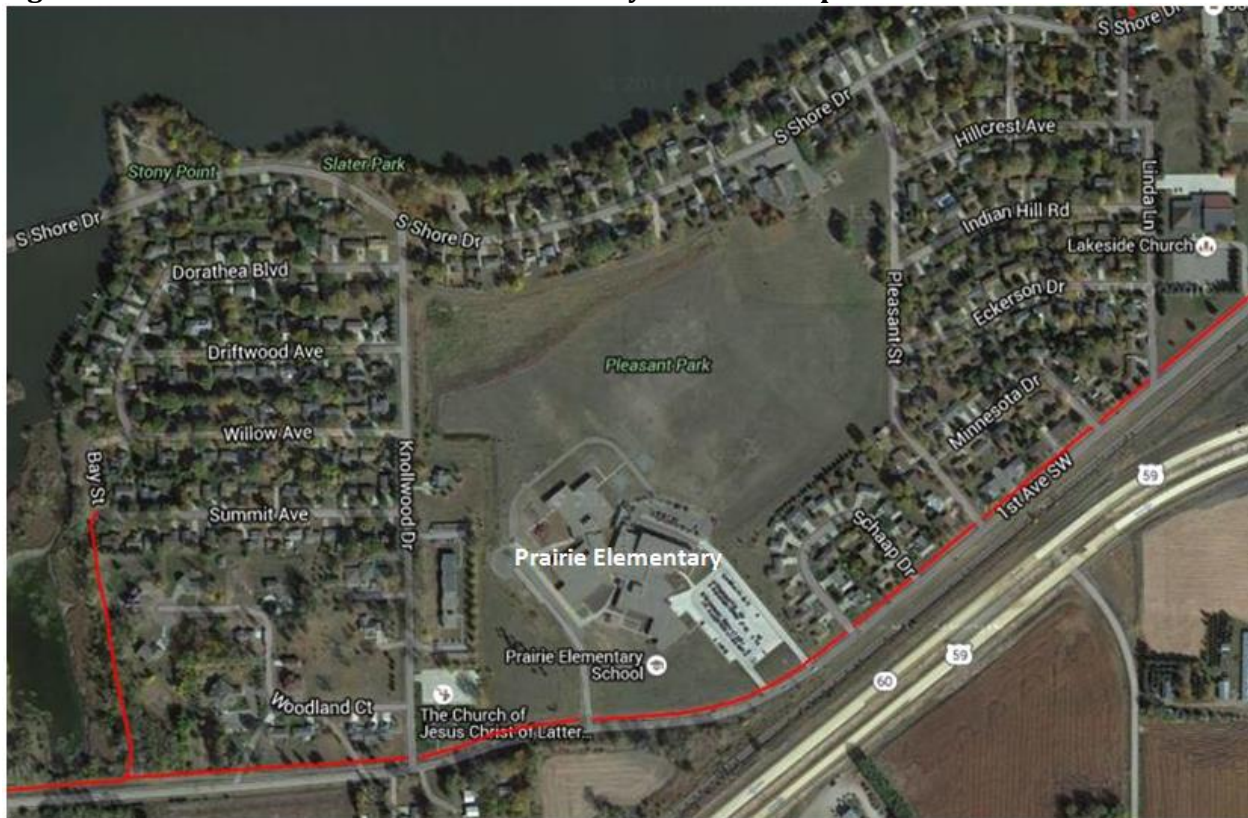
City of Worthington



- Worthington Middle School
- Prairie Elementary

Figure #3

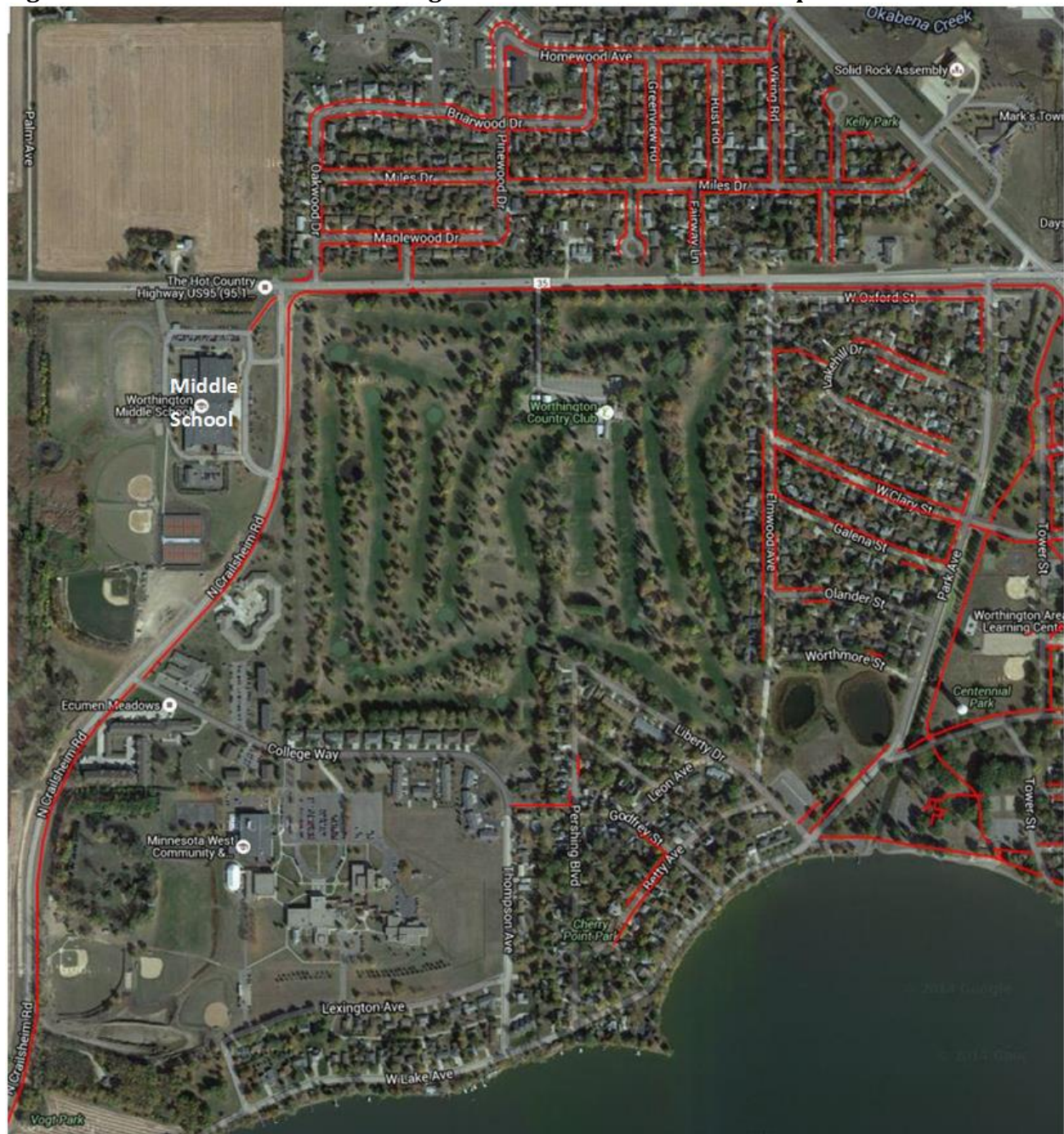
Prairie Elementary Sidewalk Map



Existing Sidewalk / Trail ———

Figure #4

Worthington Middle School Sidewalk Map



Existing Sidewalk / Trail ———

CHAPTER II: PLANNING PROCESS

Introduction

The SRTS planning process is a comprehensive approach designed to bring together the school and the community around a shared vision to improve pedestrian safety and promote an active lifestyle. This starts with bringing together the decision makers, students, parents, school staff, and community residents to identify their vision for the SRTS Plan. A SRTS Plan is the schools, cities, and communities plan, so their input is critical throughout the planning process.

The planning process uses the five E's to create a comprehensive approach. The five E's are evaluation, education, encouragement, engineering, and enforcement. The planning process starts and ends with a pre and post evaluation. You have to study, understand, and evaluate the current conditions, so you can create an effective strategy for addressing the current issues. After your plan has been implemented, a thorough evaluation should be included. The post evaluation provides evidence of the success or failure of the plan. The Worthington SRTS Team used "The Five E's" to formulate a strategy revolving around safety to analyze the issues and barriers in promoting a more active lifestyle in Worthington. A specific strategy may overlap and include more than one E.

Evaluation provides the backbone in creating a SRTS Plan. By evaluating the existing conditions and outlining possible options to address the problems, the Worthington SRTS Team, Worthington School District, and the City of Worthington will be better able to understand the entire situation. Bringing together all the quantitative and qualitative data from the Parent Surveys, Travel Tally surveys, Walking and Bike Audits, Walkability Survey, input from meetings, and WikiMapping will help the SRTS Team to look at the issues from different perspectives (refer to page 13 for more information regarding WikiMapping). Also, bringing together this information in one plan will make the data more useable for all the parties involved.

Education is a major component of a SRTS Plan. Education is not only for students but also for parents, school staff, and residents. The educational component can include: teaching students proper safety protocol when walking and bicycling; teaching children how to handle potentially dangerous situations; educating the public about right-of-way laws and sharing the road with bicyclists; educating children and the community about recommended routes in the community that are safer and pedestrian friendly; and educating residents about the benefits of walking and bicycling along with the risks.

Encouragement revolves around creating an environment where walking and bicycling is a convenient option. This means creating incentives for walking and bicycling and creating disincentives for driving. Making it more convenient may include: having a remote drop off, consolidating bus stops, or implementing a pedestrian development policy. Encouragement should also happen in the classroom and include challenges to see which class can have the highest number of walkers and bikers in a week. Encouragement can take a variety of forms and can target students, parents, school staff, and residents.

Engineering can consist of different techniques varying from physical improvements to operational improvements. Physical improvements include but are not limited to: installing bike racks and benches, traffic calming devices, building more sidewalks and trails, curb extensions, building roads that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly, ADA access, and establishing community gardens. Operational improvements include but are not limited to: New parking protocol (reverse angle parking), creating a drop-off and pick-up policy, school zone traffic separation policy (designating streets strictly for bus drop-off and pick-up), reducing traffic volumes and speeds around school zones, and creating a hands-free policy for cell phones while driving in a school zone.

Enforcement includes partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are enforced in school zones. Safety of children when they walk and bicycle to school starts with the community obeying traffic laws and watching out for pedestrians and bicyclists. Maintaining a safe environment is critical in promoting walking and bicycling to school and in the entire community.

Background

In 2014, MnDOT awarded Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning grants to 103 schools. From 2006 to 2013, MnDOT has awarded \$15 million plus to schools for planning grants and infrastructure projects. There has been over \$100 Million in project requested since 2006. More than 130,000 students have been reached by the Minnesota SRTS Program between 2006 and 2012.

In 2015-16, MnDOT awarded \$1.7 million to local SRTS infrastructure projects, \$350,000 to planning assistance, \$200,000 to Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum support and \$100,000 to the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center.¹³ Additional funding is planned for 2016-17. This funding includes but is not limited to: Walk! Bike! Fun! Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Curriculum, planning assistance, bicycle fleets and mini-grants, and infrastructure funding.

The Worthington School District received a planning grant in 2014. The main deliverable of the grant is a finalized SRTS Plan covering Prairie Elementary, the Worthington Middle School, and the surrounding neighborhoods. The time period of the grant occurs from the starting period in August 2014 through June 30, 2016. The planning process for the Worthington School District has been conducted by the Southwest Regional Development Commission (SRDC) and Worthington School Administration in accordance with current guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

Worthington School District Mission:

“Worthington ISD 518 wants to ensure students develop the skills and knowledge necessary to responsibly navigate this emerging modern world. ISD 518 is committed to prepare our students with the digital learning skills that they need to be self-directed learners. There is a critical need for learners, staff, students, and community to be able

¹³ MnDOT. Safe Routes to School History. Accessed: 12/26/14. Available: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/grants.html>

to access information, manipulate data, synthesize concepts and creatively express ideas to others using voice, visual, and print media.”¹⁴

Worthington School District Missions:

For All Learners to be Successful Citizens in the Future – ISD 518’s Mission Statement

Worthington Middle School prepares adolescents to be responsible citizens and life-long learners by supporting academic, physical, and social developments.

Worthington SRTS Program Vision:

Worthington School District, in collaboration with the City of Worthington and community partners, will work to create a safe and connected network of routes to and from school through evaluation, engineering, enforcement, education, and encouragement of walking or biking.

Participation in Plan Development

The Worthington School District Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan is a multiparty effort between the Worthington School District, City of Worthington, Worthington Police Department, Nobles County Highway Department, local residents, Cottonwood Jackson Nobles Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), and Southwest Regional Development Commission (SWRDC). Public participation plays a key role in the planning process. We also relied on the experience of elected and appointed volunteers. The Worthington School SRTS Planning Team (here after referred to as SRTS Team) members comprised a broad representation of the community and their feedback was immensely useful in the development of the plan update.

Worthington SRTS Planning Team:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ➤ John Landgaard | Superintendent |
| ➤ Dave Skog | Director of Management Services |
| ➤ Josh Noble | Prairie Elementary Principal (changed role – High School) |
| ➤ Heidi Meyer | Prairie Elementary Assistant Principal (became Head Principal) |
| ➤ Zack Dingmann* | Prairie Elementary Assistant Principal (Cory VanBriesen – replacement) |
| ➤ Jeff Luke | Middle School Principal |
| ➤ Tony Hastings | Middle School Assistant Principal (Changed role – High School) |
| ➤ Dwayne Hatfield | City Engineer |
| ➤ Stephen Schieder | County Engineer/School Board/Parent |
| ➤ Wendy Donkersloot | Prairie Elementary School Nurse |
| ➤ Joni Reitmeier | Middle School Nurse |

¹⁴ Worthington School District. Accessed: 12/26/14. Available: <http://www.isd518.net/vision>

- Mike Woll Parent/Community Representative
- Kenton Meier Community Representative
- Darlene Macklin Community Representative
- Jacki Bomgaards Worthington Police Department/School Resource Officer
- Kirk Honius Worthington Police Department Sub Officer
- Tom Johnson County Administrator
- DeTasha Place* SHIP/Public Health
- Craig Clark* City Administrator

* denotes – left position in the middle of planning process

Description of the Planning Process

Worthington SRTS Planning Process Timeline

- ▶ Kickoff Meeting – September 4, 2014
- ▶ WikiMapping – Continuous
- ▶ Middle School Walking Audit – September 15, 2014
- ▶ Prairie Elementary Walking Audit – September 23, 2014
- ▶ Middle School Walking Audit – September 29, 2014
- ▶ Prairie Elementary Existing Conditions Meeting – December 2, 2014
- ▶ Middle School Existing Conditions Meeting – December 8, 2014
- ▶ Middle School Action Plan Meeting – February 26, 2015
- ▶ Prairie Elementary Action Plan Meeting – March 2, 2015
- ▶ Prairie Elementary Draft Review Meeting – December 3rd, 2015
- ▶ Middle School Draft Review Meeting – December 3rd, 2015

Kickoff Meeting

The first SRTS meeting was held in the Prairie Elementary Cafeteria on September 4, 2014, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. The agenda for the meeting was to present an overview of SRTS; review the scope of work and deliverables; discuss community engagement; develop a vision statement; and schedule a walking audit at Prairie Elementary and at the Middle School. The outcomes of the first meeting were: a better understanding of SRTS and the planning process; scheduled walking audits; and a draft vision statement to be finalized at the next SRTS meeting.

WikiMapping

WikiMapping is an online public input tool community members can use to identify issues regarding walking and biking in the City of Worthington. Community members can provide input by adding a point or route on an interactive map or by commenting on existing posts. WikiMapping was an effective way of engaging community members who were not able to attend the community meetings or other community events.

Community members could add points on an interactive map regarding: barriers to walking and biking, bus and transit stops, existing bike parking, lighting is poor, need bike parking, places I go, problem intersection, school, driving issue, traffic and congestion, and trash is an issue. Community members could add a route on the interactive map regarding: existing on street bike route, high stress area (speed/traffic), no sidewalk, on street bike route needed, recreational route, routes I'd like to use, route to and from after school activity, route to and from school, shortcut I use (not a trail or road), or sidewalk in poor condition. When a community member clicks on a point the user can select one of these categories and a box will appear. The user can then write a description of the issue in the box. Other users can click on the point or route and agree, disagree, or abstain with the comment. Other users can also comment on the existing comment.

Walking Audits

Walking audits were conducted at the Middle School on September 15, 2014, and at Prairie Elementary on September 23, 2014. Walk audit participants were asked to observe arrival and departure and identify: walkers and bikers and issues that would discourage walking and biking to school; the bus system and conflicts between pedestrians and parents dropping off and picking up students; crossing guards; bike racks; trails, sidewalks, and paths; intersections, crosswalks, and other pedestrian infrastructure; traffic; and other community infrastructure around the schools. The walking audit was a great opportunity to observe arrival and departure and discuss safety concerns, sidewalk gaps, and other issues.

During the walking audit, participants were asked to quantify arrival and departure based on six categories. The six categories are outlined below. Each question had variables to look for that would help participants rank arrival and departure. General Atmosphere is an overall ranking of arrival and departure based on all of the other questions.

- Did you have room to walk?
- Was it easy to cross the street?
- Did drivers behave well?
- Could you follow safety rules?
- Was your walk pleasant?
- General atmosphere (summary of all the categories)

Existing Conditions Meeting

There were two existing conditions meetings, a separate meeting for both Prairie Elementary and the Middle School. The first existing condition meeting was held at Prairie Elementary on December 2, 2014, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. The second existing condition meeting was held at the Middle School on December 8, 2014, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. The agenda for the two meetings was to discuss the local issues and concerns that were identified via WikiMapping and conversations with community members. Community members were also able to identify additional issues and concerns that were not identified before the meeting. The first meeting was an opportunity to discuss the existing conditions and voice opinions and concerns regarding walking and biking to school and in the City of Worthington.

Action Plan Meeting

There were two action plan meetings, a separate meeting for both Prairie Elementary and the Middle School. The first action plan meeting was held at the Middle School on February 26, 2015, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. The second action plan meeting was held at Prairie Elementary on March 2, 2015, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. The agenda for the two meetings was to discuss potential goals and strategies regarding walking and biking to school and in the City of Worthington. There were a number of issues that were identified and discussed at the two existing conditions meetings. At the Action Plan Meeting, community members were still able to discuss existing conditions that were not identified at the previous meetings.

Draft Review Meeting

There were two draft review meetings, a joint meeting for both Prairie Elementary and the Middle School. The draft review meeting for Prairie Elementary was held at Prairie Elementary on December 2nd, 2015, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

The agenda for the meetings was to review the Worthington SRTS Plan and finalize the goals and strategies outlined in the plan. At the Draft Review Meetings, community members were still able to discuss existing conditions and issues that were not identified in the Worthington SRTS Plan. Changes could be made to the plan, but were subject to discussion by the planning team.

Public Involvement

Engaging the community through multiple avenues helped to gather effective public input. Public input was critical to the success of the Worthington SRTS Plan. Community members were able to provide input via WikiMapping, Parent Survey, community meetings, and conversations with school representatives and planning team members.

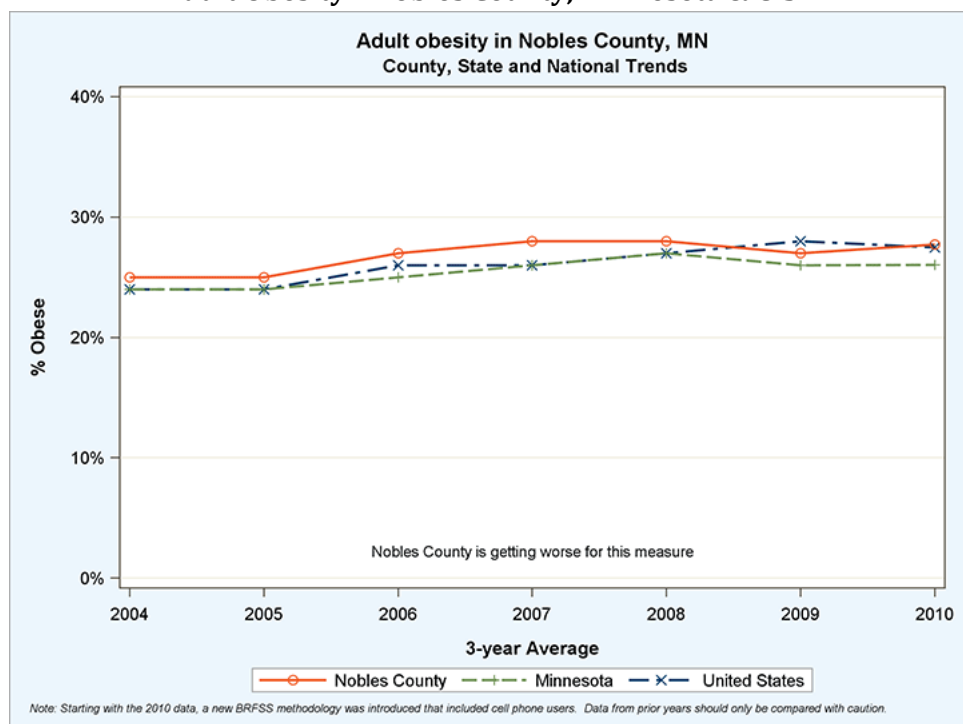
CHAPTER III: EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Health Issues

Research conducted by the USDA shows that one in three American children are overweight or obese, putting them at risk of preventable diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.¹⁵ In 2010, the obesity rate in Nobles County was 28 percent while the state average was 26 percent.

According to the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey, on a typical day 29 percent of Nobles County 5th graders reported that they spend zero hours going outside, taking a walk, or going for a bike ride. Only 41 percent of 5th graders reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day.¹⁶ In 2013, 32 percent of Nobles County 8th grade students reported being overweight or obese.¹⁷

Table #1 Adult Obesity – Nobles County, Minnesota & U.S.



18

Being overweight or obese not only increases the risk of premature death and many other diseases and health conditions, but there are substantial economic costs as well. There are both direct and indirect

¹⁵ Kuphal, Kyle and Fodness, Mavis. New school meal standards target obesity. Accessed 12/26/14. Available at: <http://www.pipestonestar.com/Stories/Story.cfm?SID=38130>

¹⁶ Minnesota Department of Health. Minnesota Student Survey. Accessed: 12/29/14. Available: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/countytables/nobles13.pdf>

¹⁷ Minnesota Department of Health. Minnesota Student Survey. Accessed: 12/29/14. Available: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/countytables/nobles13.pdf>

¹⁸ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. County Health Rankings. Accessed: 12/30/14. Available: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/minnesota/2014/rankings/jackson/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

costs associated with being overweight or obese. Direct costs are the higher medical costs associated with diagnosing, treating, and trying to prevent conditions related to being overweight or obese.

Indirect costs of being overweight and obese include morbidity and mortality costs such as lost productivity, absenteeism, and premature death. “Based on national estimates, the overall financial burden of obesity in Minnesota in 2006 was estimated at \$2.8 billion.”¹⁹ The medical costs associated with obesity nationally were estimated at \$147 billion in 2008. This translates into a \$1,429 higher yearly medical cost for people who are obese over those of normal weight.¹⁷

Since the late 1960’s, there has been a dramatic decline in the percentage of students who walk or bicycle to school. Nationally, only 13 percent of students grades Kindergarten through 8th grade reported usually walking or bicycling to school in 2009, while 48 percent of students’ kindergarten through 8th grade reported usually walking or bicycling to school in 1969. Distance is a strong indicator associated with how children get to school, but only 35 percent of kindergarten through 8th grade students nationally, who lived within a mile of school, reported usually walking or bicycling to school once a week. In 1969, 89 percent of kindergarten through 8th grade students, who lived within a mile of school, reported usually walking or bicycling to school once a week.²⁰

Table #2

Trends in Childhood Obesity & Overweight



CDC, Nation Center for Health Statistics

¹⁹ Minnesota Medicine. The Obesity Challenge. 12/26/14 Available at:

<http://www.minnesotamedicine.com/PastIssues/December2012/theobesitychallenge.aspx>

²⁰ The National Center for Safe Routes to School. How Children Get to School: School Travel Patterns from 1969 to 2009. Accessed: 12/26/2012. Available:

http://saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/NHTS_school_travel_report_2011_0.pdf

Just a decade or two ago, a large number of children were free-range children. These children walked or bicycled around the neighborhood and community being more independent. Increasingly children are dependent on their parents for transportation. Instead of walking or bicycling, children are getting rides. Five to seven percent of vehicle miles traveled and 10 to 14 percent of all personal vehicle trips made in high traffic times in the morning are personal vehicles taking Kindergarten through 8th grade students to school.²¹

Reducing the number of vehicle trips would create a more efficient, safe, and connected community. Getting children walking and bicycling again is one way to combat inactivity and the dramatic rise in obesity. Addressing obesity through Safe Routes to School and promoting an active lifestyle has a number of positive externalities.

Traffic Volumes

The SRTS Team analyzed traffic volumes from 2011 and 2013. On 1st Ave Southwest by Prairie Elementary the average daily traffic volumes were 2,050 vehicles for 2011 and 2013. An average daily traffic volume of 2,050 vehicles can be a potential barrier to walking and bicycling to school. There is a path along 1st Avenue by Prairie Elementary, but there are no sidewalks in the surrounding neighborhoods connecting to the path.

Figure #5 Traffic Volumes – Prairie Elementary



On North Crailsheim Road by the Worthington Middle School, the average daily traffic volumes were 3,850 vehicles for 2011 and 2013. An average daily traffic volume of 3,850 vehicles can be a potential barrier to walking and bicycling to school. There is a path along North Crailsheim Road and West Oxford Street, but there are a limited number of crosswalks along West Oxford Street. There are also a limited number of sidewalks leading to the path along North Crailsheim Road.

²¹ The National Center for Safe Routes to School. How Children Get to School. Accessed 12/31/2014. Available: http://saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/NHTS_school_travel_report_2011_0.pdf

Figure #6 Traffic Volumes – Middle School

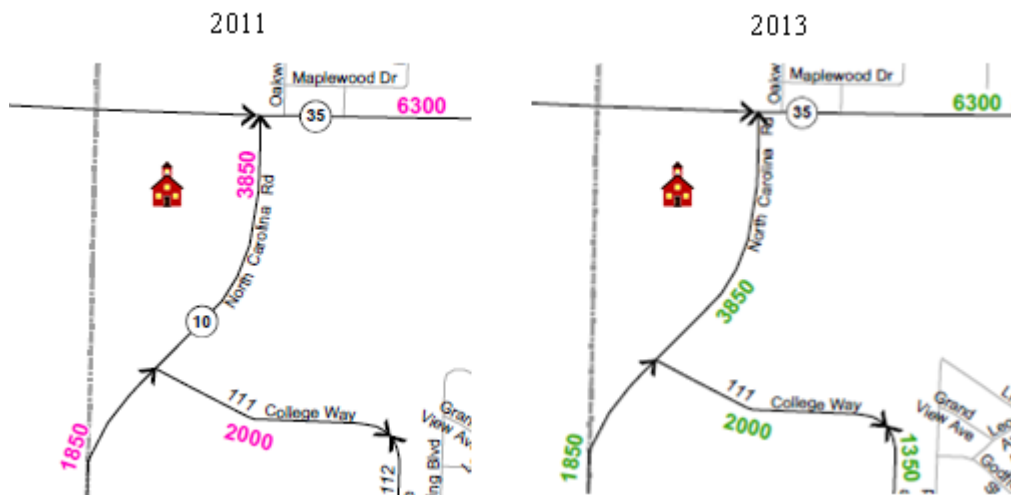
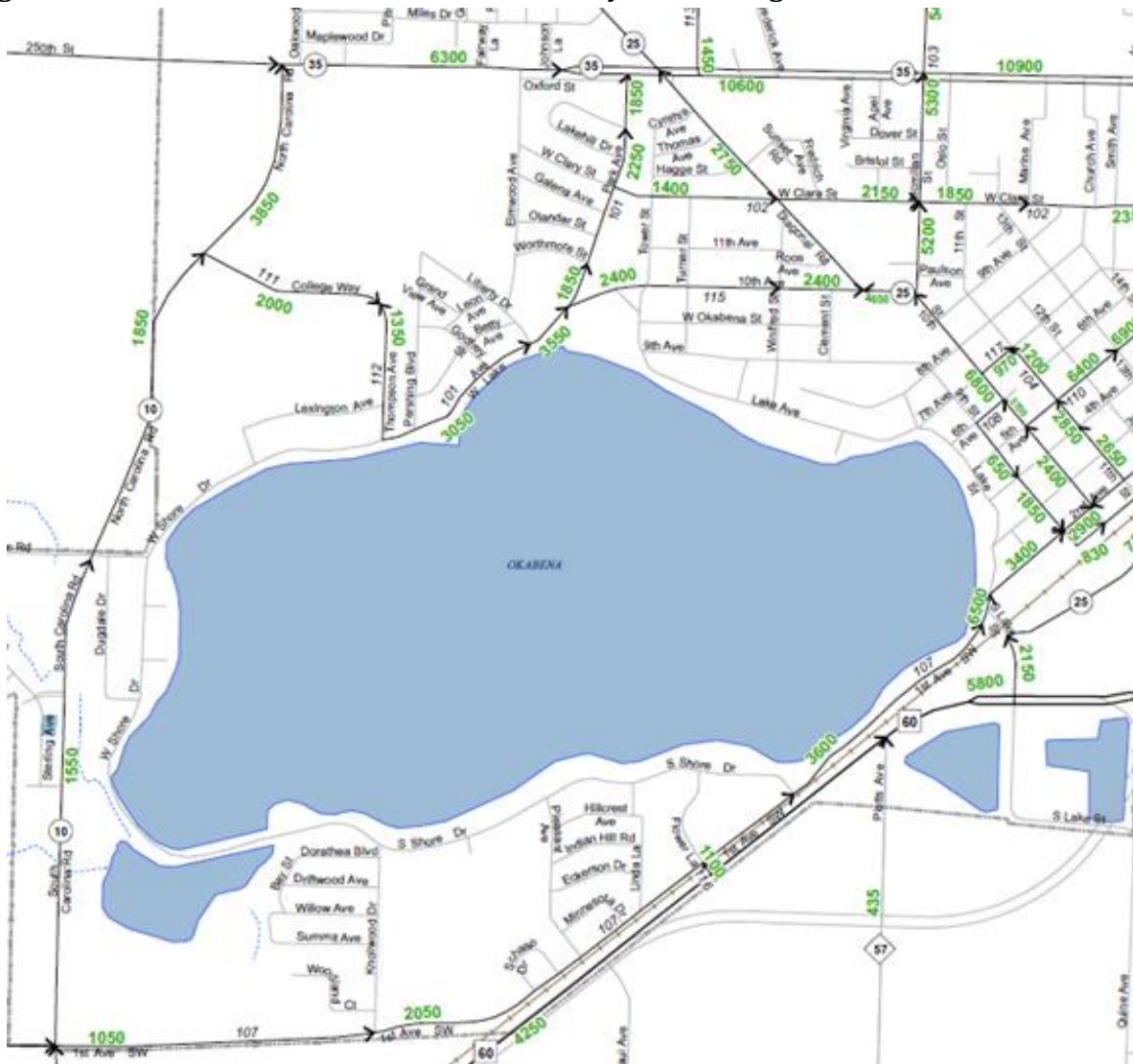


Figure #7 Traffic Volumes – City of Worthington

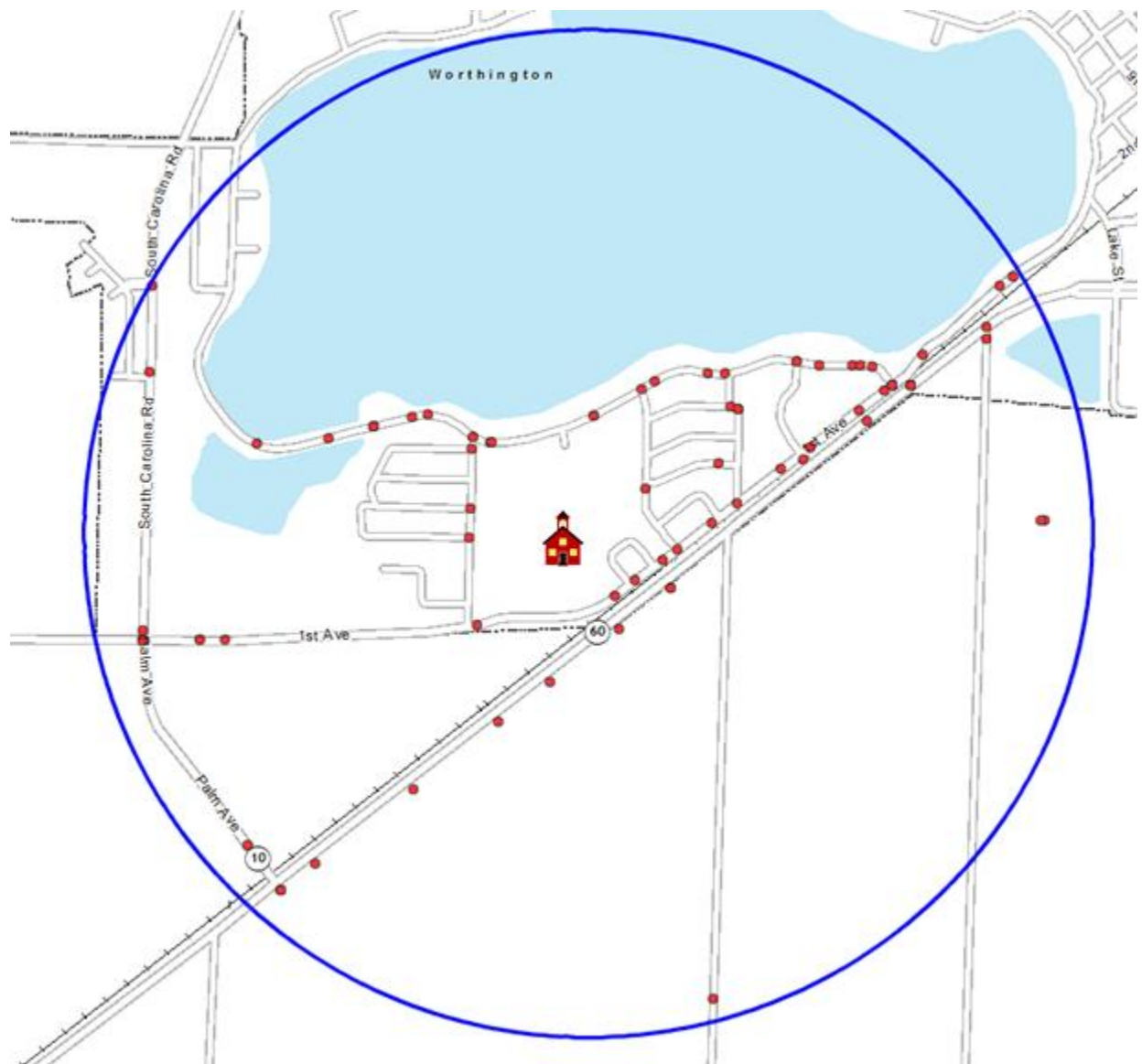


Crash Data

The SRTS Team analyzed crash data within a mile of the Prairie Elementary and the Worthington Middle School. Within one mile from the Prairie Elementary School there were 89 vehicle accident reports from February, 2004 through July, 2014. One of these crashes involved a school bus. This crash was caused by the other driver failing to yield to traffic.²²

There was one small collision in the drop-off lane during the 2013-14 school year. A car was rear-ended. There were no injuries reported, but this shows the risk to pedestrians around the drop-off lane.

Figure #8 **Crash Data – Prairie Elementary**



²² Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool. Accessed 12/31/14. Available: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/sa_crashmapping.html

Within one mile from the Worthington Middle School there were 256 vehicle accident reports from March, 2004 through March, 2014. There was a high density of crashes on College Way within a block of North Crailsheim Road. North Crailsheim Road is being identified in the plan as a higher risk area due to the high vehicle accident report density.

Within one mile from the Worthington Middle School, there were six vehicle accident reports involving pedestrians. Five of these crashes involved bicyclists. Two of these crashes were caused by the driver of the vehicle being distracted. One of the crashes was caused by the driver failing to yield while turning left. Three of the crashes involved no improper vehicle driving. One of the no improper vehicle driving cited the pedestrian was crossing improperly and not in a crosswalk.²³

Figure #9 **Crash Data –Middle School**



²³ Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool. Accessed 12/31/14. Available: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/sa_crashmapping.html

Existing Conditions Prairie Elementary

Arrival Prairie Elementary

Congestion and vehicle traffic during arrival and departure can be a serious safety concern. Over the past three or four decades there has been a dramatic shift in the number of students who walk or bike to school. Today the majority of students arrive and depart from school via a school bus or personal vehicle.

The Worthington SRTS Team conducted a walk audit at Prairie Elementary during arrival on September 10, 2014 and during departure on September 23, 2014. During arrival an estimated 190 cars dropped off an estimated 248 students. Traffic congestion is an issue that contributes to safety concerns at Prairie Elementary.

Parents start dropping off students as early as 7:10 a.m. The majority of students are being dropped off between 7:50 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. The drop-off policy at Prairie Elementary states that students should not arrive at school until 7:45 a.m. This policy helps to keep student numbers more manageable until additional school staff arrives. Students are not turned away before 7:45 a.m., but are asked to sit in the cafeteria.

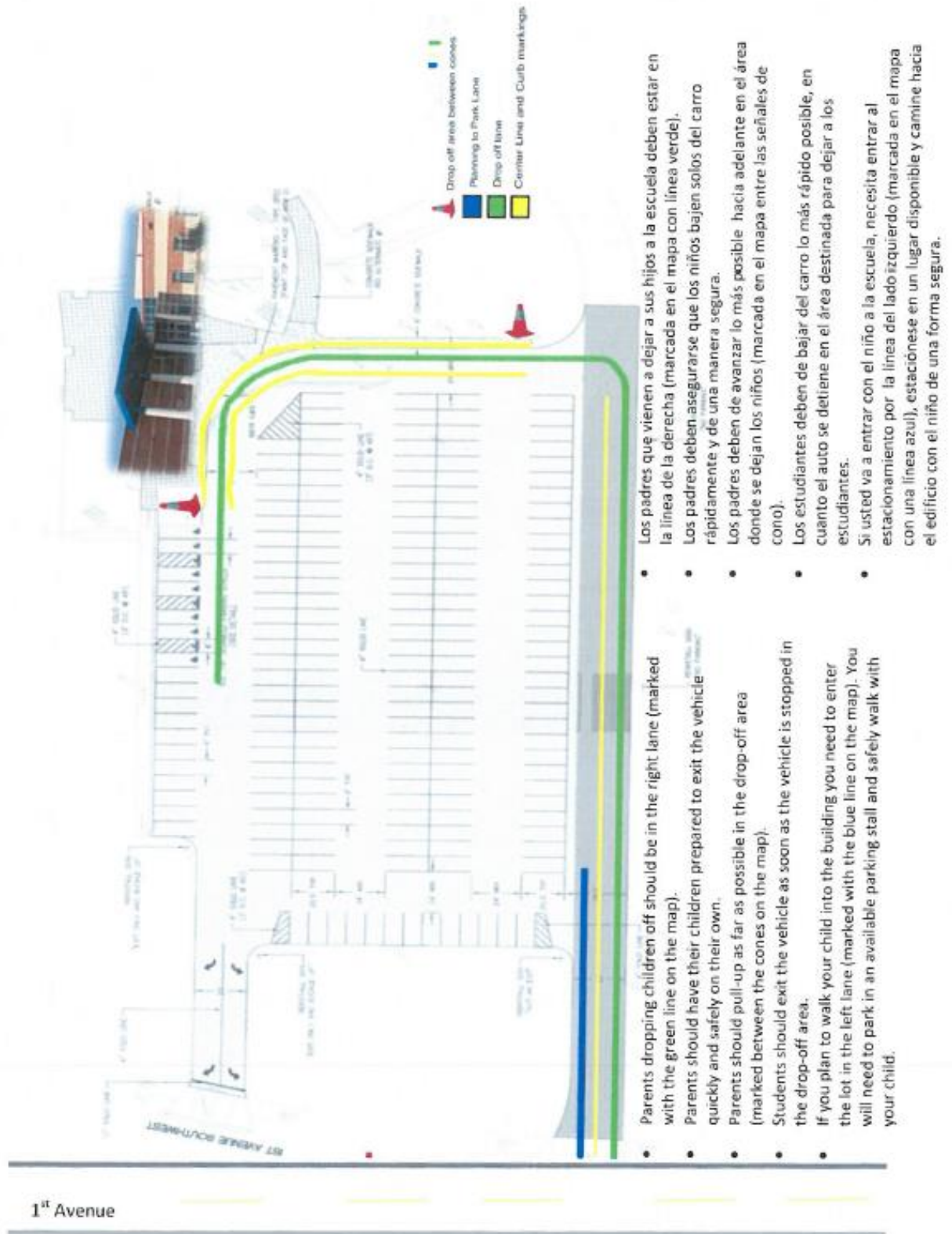
Students are dropped off by the main entrance, which faces the front parking lot. The drop-off loop works efficiently, but having such a high number of vehicles dropping off students creates safety concerns for potential walkers and bikers. Prairie Elementary currently does not allow students to walk or bike to school due to the lack of connectivity of pedestrian infrastructure to the school and other safety concerns. Allowing walking and biking to school could help to decrease congestion during arrival and departure.

The line of parents dropping off students during the walking audit reached 20 to 25 vehicles. There is effective striping and space, but even vehicles are backed up all the way to 1st Avenue Southwest. One of the main issues with arrival is some parents did not pull up all the way to the cones. Not pulling up all the way can create congestion and safety issues.

There are two lanes by the drop off area. One of the lanes is for parents dropping off students, and the other lane is for drivers accessing the parking lot. When a parent drops off early, before the cone is out, that parent often tries to pull out into the inside lane, which is for accessing the parking lot. This pulling out into the lane creates additional points of conflict between pedestrians walking from the parking lot to school and with people trying to park. The paraprofessional is also then not in position to assist students out of the car, which can increase safety issues and efficiency of arrival. Most of the parents know that they need to pull all the way up to the cones before dropping off students. Additional signage may be needed to educate parents on pulling up all the way to the cones before dropping off students.

Figure #10

Prairie Elementary Student Drop off Procedure Map



Traffic separation is effective at Prairie Elementary for parents dropping off or picking up students and buses. There is a separate area for buses on the southwest side of the school. Traffic separation in school zones refer to having designated areas for buses, parents dropping off or picking up students, walkers, bikers, and parking. Separating traffic flows more effectively will help to create a safer environment during arrival and departure, which are times of higher traffic volumes.

The bus company is asked to not have buses arrive until 7:45 a.m. The overwhelming majority of buses do drop-off students between 7:45 a.m. and 8:05 a.m. There are two or three buses that do drop off between 7:35 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. Having a number of students in the school before 7:45 a.m. can be an issue, since the majority of staff is not ready to help supervise students until 7:45 a.m.

All students that arrive at school before 7:45 a.m. go to the cafeteria whether they are eating breakfast or not. Students who do not want breakfast or are already finished eating are dismissed to their class's commons areas at 7:45 a.m. The commons areas are grade specific and are located outside of those grades' classrooms. Students sitting in the commons areas are supervised by paraprofessionals. These paraprofessionals read to the students, do math trivia with the students, or lead the students in song. Students will be in the commons area for a maximum of 20 to 30 minutes. As the population of Prairie Elementary grows, the commons areas are becoming increasingly crowded. An opportunity for physical activity is a possibility to reduce some of the crowding.

The Worthington SRTS Team ranked the existing conditions during arrival and departure on a scale of one to 10 (10 being best and 1 being the worst). The categories that were ranked include: general atmosphere, did you have room to walk, was it easy to cross streets, did drivers behave well, could you follow safety rules, and was your walk pleasant. Refer to Appendix D for the survey and the variables that impact each category. Below is a summary of the ranking for arrival and departure.

Table #3 Walkability Survey, Arrival – Prairie Elementary

General Atmosphere	Room to Walk	Easy to Cross	Drivers Behave Well	Follow Safety Rules	Walk Pleasant
8	6	8	6	8	9

Table #4 Walkability Survey, Departure – Prairie Elementary

General Atmosphere	Room to Walk	Easy to Cross	Drivers Behave Well	Follow Safety Rules	Walk Pleasant
6	4	3	8	8	8

Departure Prairie Elementary

The school day ends around 3:15 p.m. There is a bell, but Prairie Elementary Principals are considering shutting off the bells. Students are called out according to grades and buses. This has worked well for safety and flow. The last group is dismissed about 3:25 p.m. At times this causes very minimal conflict,

since fourth grade teachers sometimes are trying to get a few more things done at the end of the day.

In approximately 12 minutes there are 1200 students exiting school via the school bus or a personal vehicle. There are roughly 105 staff and roughly 50 paraprofessionals at Prairie Elementary. This all adds to the congestion during arrival and departure at Prairie Elementary.

Issues –Prairie Elementary

Drop-off Lane

- ▶ Some parents do not pull up all the way to the cones. Not pulling up all the way can create congestion and safety issues. The paraprofessional is also then not in position to assist students out of the car.

Figure #11

Drop off Loop – Prairie Elementary



Bus Drop-off and Pick-up Loop

- ▶ The striping around the busing drop-off and pick-up area can be improved. Currently the striping is all yellow. This is effective for experienced bus drivers, teachers, and students. It is not as clear for new bus drivers, teachers, and students. There are yellow lines outlining where the bus should pull up to and these yellow slots have numbers painted on them, so bus drivers know which slot to pull into. There are also boxes painted in yellow outlining where students should wait for the buses. The lines between the slots for the bus and the box for the students

are all yellow. All of these yellow lines can be confusing. Painting the yellow line that separates the buses and the students a different color (red), would help to create a more distinct barrier that students should not cross. Students would clearly know that they should not cross the red line.

Figure #12

Bus Loop Striping - Prairie Elementary



1st Ave SW Sidewalk Gap

- There is no connection from Prairie Elementary to the trail along 1st Ave SW. Not having a connection between 1st Avenue Southwest and the sidewalk that leads to the main entrance to Prairie Elementary creates a dangerous situation if students could walk and bike to school. Students would have to share the road and parking lot with vehicles and that would be very dangerous.

Table #13

1st Avenue Southwest Sidewalk Gap



Sidewalk Gap 

Crosswalks

- ▶ There are no crosswalks along the trail that is adjacent to 1st Avenue Southwest by Prairie Elementary. The SRTS Team has outlined a number of intersections where crosswalks should be painted to improve the safety of the crossing for students walking and biking to school. These crosswalks are within the walkable area around the school and this trail is the main route to and from Prairie Elementary. Below are the intersections that were identified by the SRTS Team.
- ▶ These crosswalks along 1st Avenue Southwest were painted during the summer of 2015. These crosswalks were identified during the SRTS Planning Process, and were funded with a SRTS Mini Grant from MNDOT.

Crosswalk Locations

- ▶ Knollwood Drive
- ▶ Schaap Drive
- ▶ Pleasant Street
- ▶ Minnesota Drive
- ▶ Linda Lane

School Patrol Locations

- ▶ School driveways
- ▶ Bus driveway

Table #14 **1st Avenue Crosswalks – Prairie Elementary**



Crosswalk Needed 

Neighborhood Connections

- ▶ There are no sidewalk or trail connections from Prairie Elementary to the neighborhoods to the north, west and east. All students have to walk or bike to the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest. This does not encourage walking and biking to school.

Table #15 **Neighborhood Connections – Prairie Elementary**



Potential Neighborhood Connections ○

School Zone Signage

- ▶ There are no school zone signs along 1st Avenue Southwest. First Avenue Southwest is the only road to and from Prairie Elementary and is adjacent to the southwest side of the school. Identifying a school zone provides important information to drivers about the vehicle speed limits, that there is increased pedestrian traffic, and that children are in the area. Children may not use proper crossing techniques, so increased driver awareness is critical.

Signage alone only helps to identify a school zone as a higher risk area. Enforcement also plays an important role. School Administrators need to work with law enforcement to ensure periodic sweeps are occurring during arrival and departure. This will help to ensure drivers are obeying laws in the school zone and are more aware. Effective signage along with law

enforcement monitoring arrival and departure will make the school zones around Prairie Elementary safer.

Table #16

School Zone Signage



Pick-up Lane

- ▶ Cars frequently cross the yellow line in the pick-up lane. The yellow line is the only barrier between the paraprofessionals and students and parents picking up their students. The yellow line helps to keep traffic flow in their designated area of the parking lot. Crossing the yellow line could result in an issue between a pedestrian and a vehicle.
- ▶ The line of parents picking up students can become stagnate when a paraprofessional has to wait longer than normal for a student to come out of the gym. Parents picking up students have a number in their car window, which corresponds to a student waiting to be picked up. When the vehicle pulls up, the paraprofessional radios into the gym to another paraprofessional for the student and checks to see who is driving the vehicle.

The flow of traffic becomes stagnate when a parent is picking up more than one student, a student is not ready, or other random issues. The vehicle waiting may pull forward to wait, so another car can be loaded. This creates an issue because the car pulling forward does not have an outlined area to pull into and other parents have to pull around this vehicle. There are a number of potential conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles when this happens.

Figure #17

Pick up Lane – Prairie Elementary



Bike Racks

- ▶ There are no bike racks at Prairie Elementary. Current, students are not allowed to walk or bike to school. School Administrators are working towards making improvements, so they feel it is safe to have students walking and biking to school.

Delivers

- ▶ Delivers during arrival and departure can create added congestion. During the SRTS Team arrival walking audit, there was a delivering that was just finishing. There was not any added congestion from this delivery, but if the truck was there for another 10 minutes, congestion could have been an issue.

Remote Drop-off

- ▶ There is no identified remote drop-off or pick-up at Prairie Elementary. A remote drop-off or pick-up would help to encourage physical activity before and after school. Increasing activity levels before school will help students arrive ready to learn. A remote drop-off or pick-up would also decrease congestion around the school.

Playground Utilization

- ▶ The outdoor playground could be utilized more as a community asset. There are a number of parks within the City of Worthington, but use of the playground at Prairie Elementary could be

increased. Some parents and residents of Worthington may not know the playground is open to the public. Encouraging the use of the playground during evenings and weekends may help to increase activity levels of children.

Figure #18

Playground – Prairie Elementary



Education

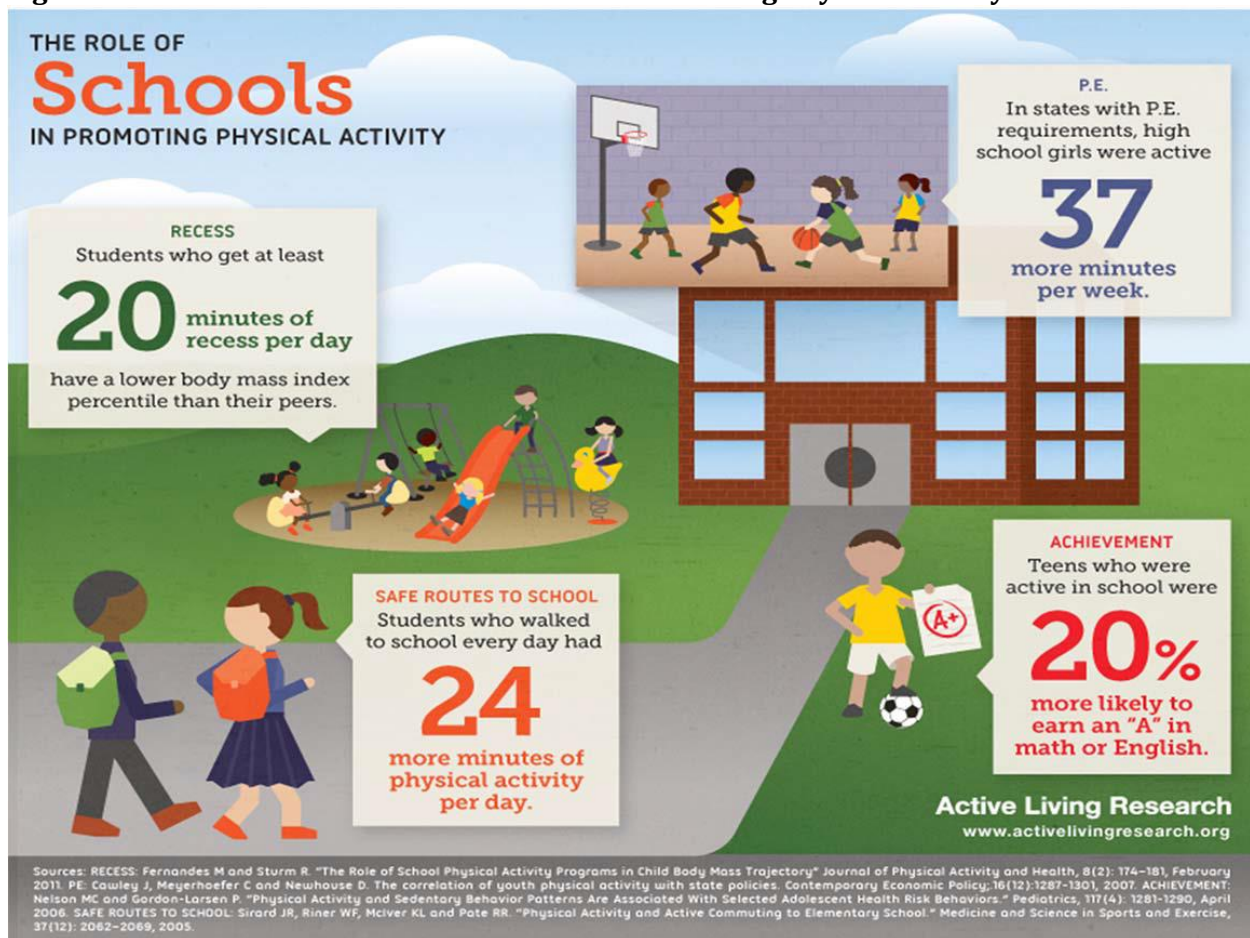
- ▶ Parents may know of the health benefits of being active, but may not know that children should get 60 or more minutes of physical activity each day which includes either moderate-intensity aerobic activity, such as brisk walking, or vigorous-intensity activity, such as running.²⁴ Approximately 84 percent of Nobles County 5th and 8th graders reported they were not physically active for at least 60 minutes per day over the past seven days.²⁵

²⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Importance of Regular Physical Activity for Children. Accessed 1/2/15. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/children.html>

²⁵ Minnesota Department of Health. 2013 Minnesota Student Survey. Accessed: 12/29/14. Available: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/mss/countytables/jackson13.pdf>

Figure #19

Role of Schools in Promoting Physical Activity



Bus Stops

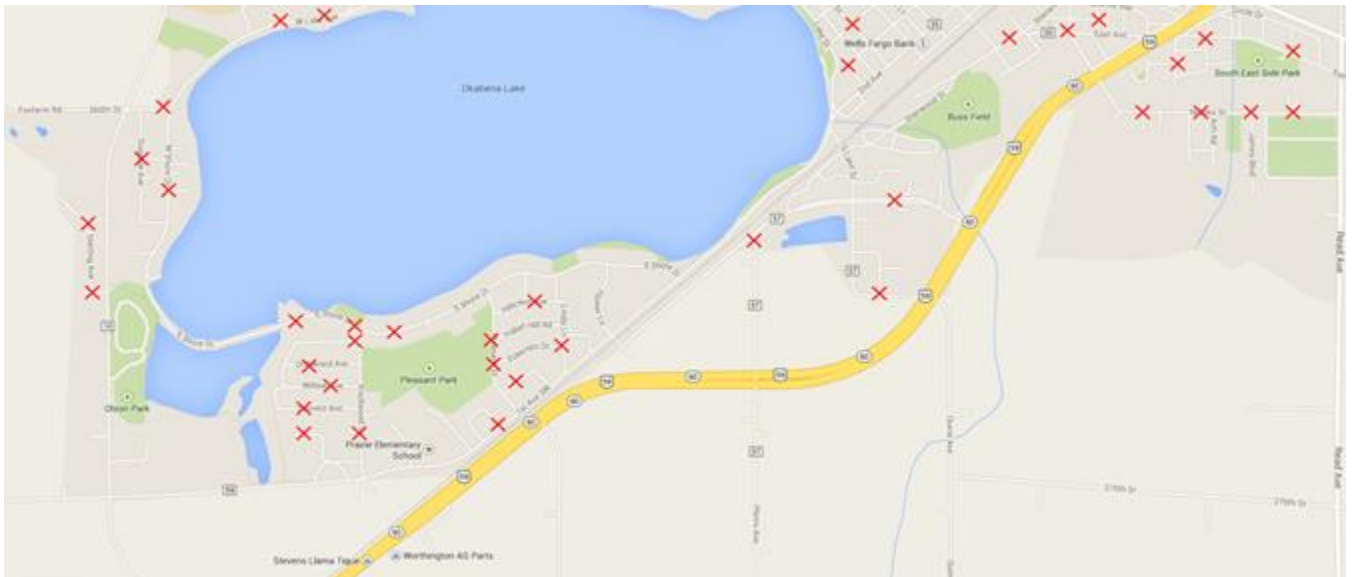
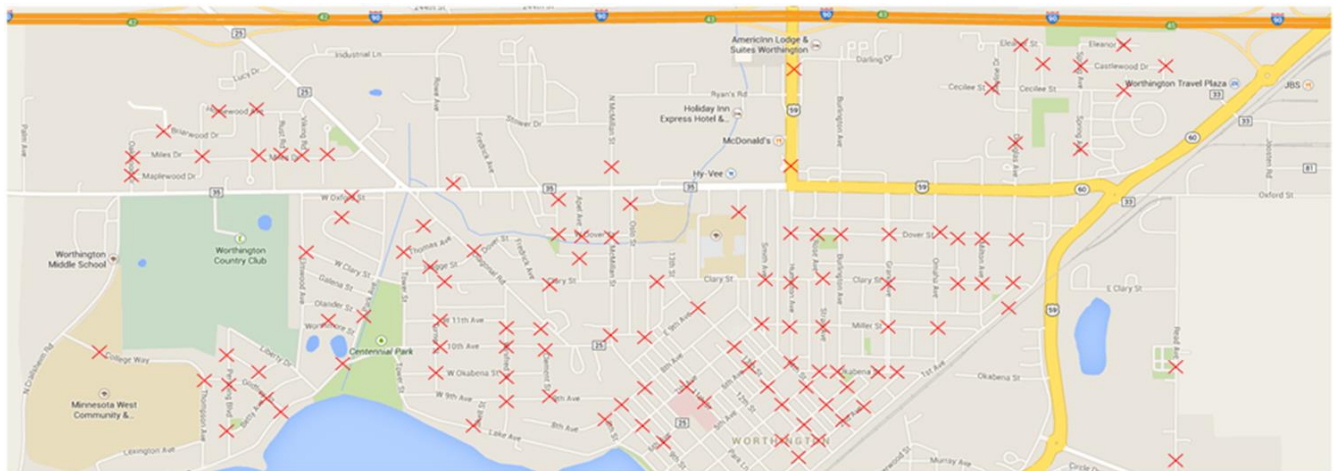
There are around 151 bus stops within the City of Worthington. There are a number of stops within a block of another stop. This does not encourage physical activity and having such a high number of bus stops is inefficient, unequitable, and increases the risk of an incident with a pedestrian. "Most school bus fatalities occur while school buses are stopped to load/unload children. More stops mean greater potential for school bus fatalities."²⁶

Managing the number of bus stops will help to keep the in town bus route more efficient and safer. By basing the busing routes on safety and efficiency, there will be no conflict based on favoring one child or family over another. Basing the busing routes on safety and efficiency will create a more equitable busing system. Also, having children walk to the bus stop will help them to reach their one hour or more goal of daily activity.

²⁶ National Center for Safe Routes to School. Selecting School Bus Stop Locations: A Guide for School Transportation Professionals. Accessed: 1/2/14. Available: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/search?q=selecting+school+bus+stops&x=0&y=0>

Figure #20

Bus Stop – City of Worthington



Bus Stop X

Existing Conditions Worthington Middle School

Arrival Middle School

The Worthington SRTS Team conducted a walk audit at the Worthington Middle School on September 15, 2014. Parents start dropping off students as early as 6:50 a.m. The majority of students get dropped off between 7:30 a.m. and 7:40 a.m. Students being dropped off can enter through door #6 on the west side of the building or door #14 on the Northeast corner of the building. Typically only 5th graders are dropped off on the west side.

Walkers and bikers enter using door #14 at the northeast corner and door #1 which is the front entrance. There are bike racks near doors #14 and #1. During our walking audit there were three

walkers and three bikers. Two of the bikers were teachers, so there are bike advocates at the Middle School. Typically, there are around a half dozen bikers according to Kirk Honius, the substitute safety patrol officer.

Student drop off occurs in the north parking lot. There are two entrances and exits to this parking lot. The primary entrance and exit is on West Oxford Street. The secondary exit is on North Crailsheim Road. West Oxford is the preferred entrance and exit, since it encourages traffic separation with the busing loop.

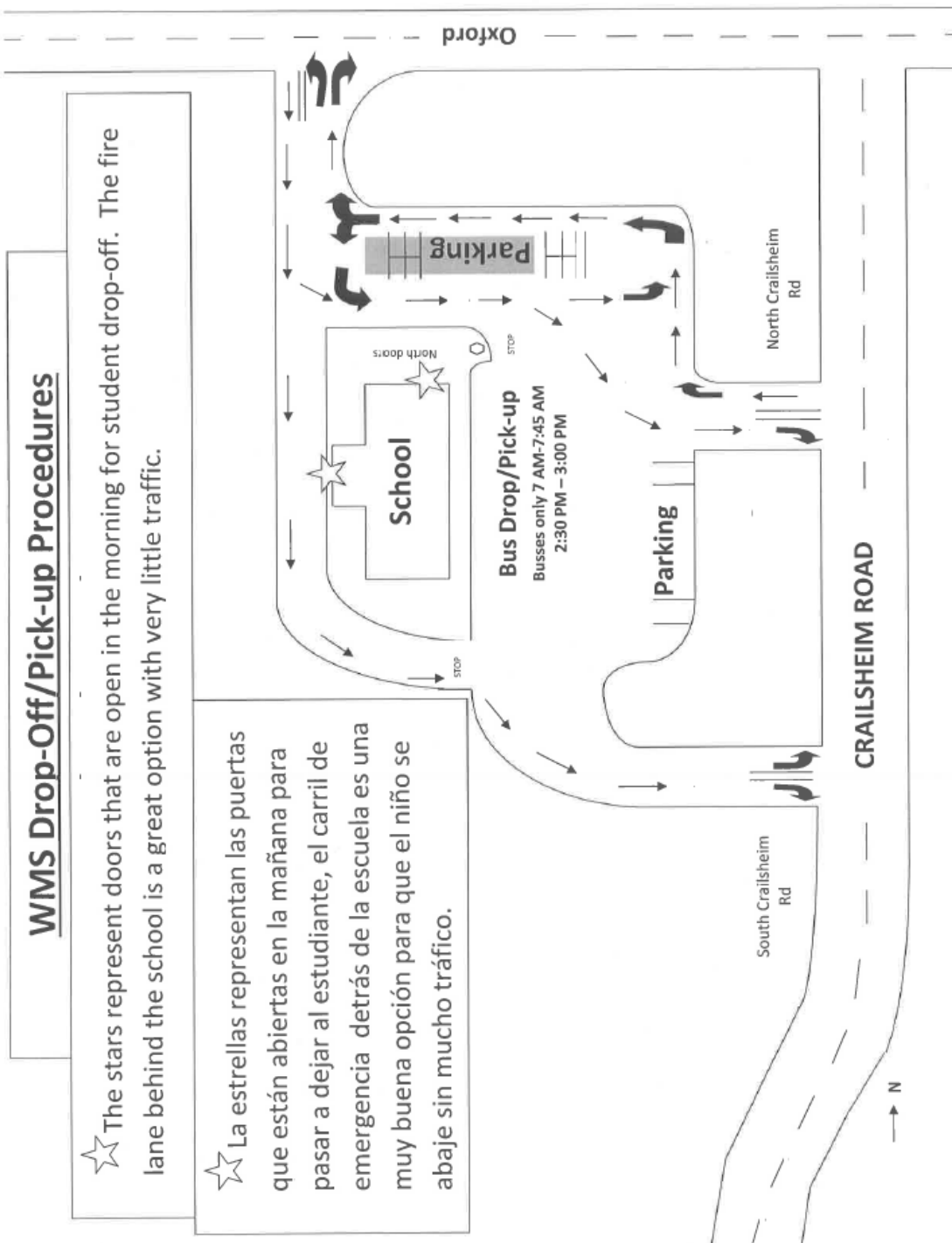
An estimated 147 parents used the drop off loop at the Middle School during our walking audit on September 15, 2014. The line of parents waiting to enter the north parking lot from West Oxford Street reached 10 cars during the walking audit. The line of cars in the north parking lot was constant for roughly 15 minutes. Teachers also park in the north parking lot, so this adds to the congestions.

Buses drop off and pick up students on the east side of the Middle School. There is effective traffic separation, except when parents exiting onto North Crailsheim Road try turning left. Cars exiting onto North Crailsheim Road are instructed to turn right, since left hand turns are prohibited. Below is the Middle School drop off and pick up procedure.

When students arrive at school they are directed to their lockers to put their things away and then have the option to eat breakfast. Fifth grade students that choose not to eat breakfast go to the gym, where they have the option to play or talk with friends. Sixth grade through eighth grade students that do not eat breakfast can go to the locker area or walk the hallways. All students have to stay in the building. Going outside is not an option before school starts. The first bell rings at 7:47 a.m. and the final bell rings at 7:50 a.m.

Figure #21

Middle School Student Drop-off & Pick-up Procedure Map



The Worthington SRTS Team ranked the existing conditions during arrival and departure on a scale of one to 10 (10 being best and 1 being the worst). The categories that were ranked include: general atmosphere, did you have room to walk, was it easy to cross streets, did drivers behave well, could you

follow safety rules, and was your walk pleasant. Refer to Appendix D for the survey and the variables that impact each category. Below is a summary of the ranking for arrival and departure.

Table #5 Walkability Survey, Arrival & Departure – Middle School

General Atmosphere	Room to Walk	Easy to Cross	Drivers Behave Well	Follow Safety Rules	Walk Pleasant
7	9	8	8	9	8

Departure Middle School

Departure starts at 2:40 p.m. with the fifth graders. Fifth graders are released first, so they can get ahead of the rush of the other grades. At 2:45 p.m. the bell rings releasing the rest of the students.

Parents pick up students at door #14 at the northeast corner. Walkers and bikers leave using door #14 at the northeast corner and door #1 which is the front entrance. There are bike racks near doors #14 and #1. Those who park by door #1 have been instructed to walk their bikes until they pass the busses and all of the student traffic.

The busses generally depart at 2:52 p.m. Departure is generally less congested than arrival, but there was still a line of parents waiting to pick up students. Congestion in the north parking lot is still an issue during departure.

Issues –Middle School

Pedestrian Connection – North Parking Lot

- ▶ There is no crosswalk or safe connection between the trail on the northeast corner of the north parking lot and the sidewalk around the Middle School.

Figure #22

Northeast Sidewalk/Trail Gap – Middle School



Sidewalk / Trail Gap 



View Looking Northeast



View Looking Southwest

Crossing Guards

- ▶ There are no crossing guards at the Middle School. Crossing guards could be useful at the intersection of West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road. This intersection is extremely busy during arrival and departure and has been identified as a top reason why parents do not allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Congestion –North Crailsheim Road Vehicle Exit

- ▶ Left hand turns onto North Crailsheim from the Middle School parking lot are prohibited. There are still some parents who turn left out of the parking lot. This creates added congestion and can disrupt the bus drop off. There is effective traffic separation at the Middle School, except when a number of parents exit the north parking lot drop off and pick up loop onto North Crailsheim. This can back up traffic in the east parking lot, so buses are unable to pull up to drop off or pick up students. Only having the painted right turn symbol on the road surface may not be adequate.

Figure #23

Right Hand Turn Only Arrow – Middle School

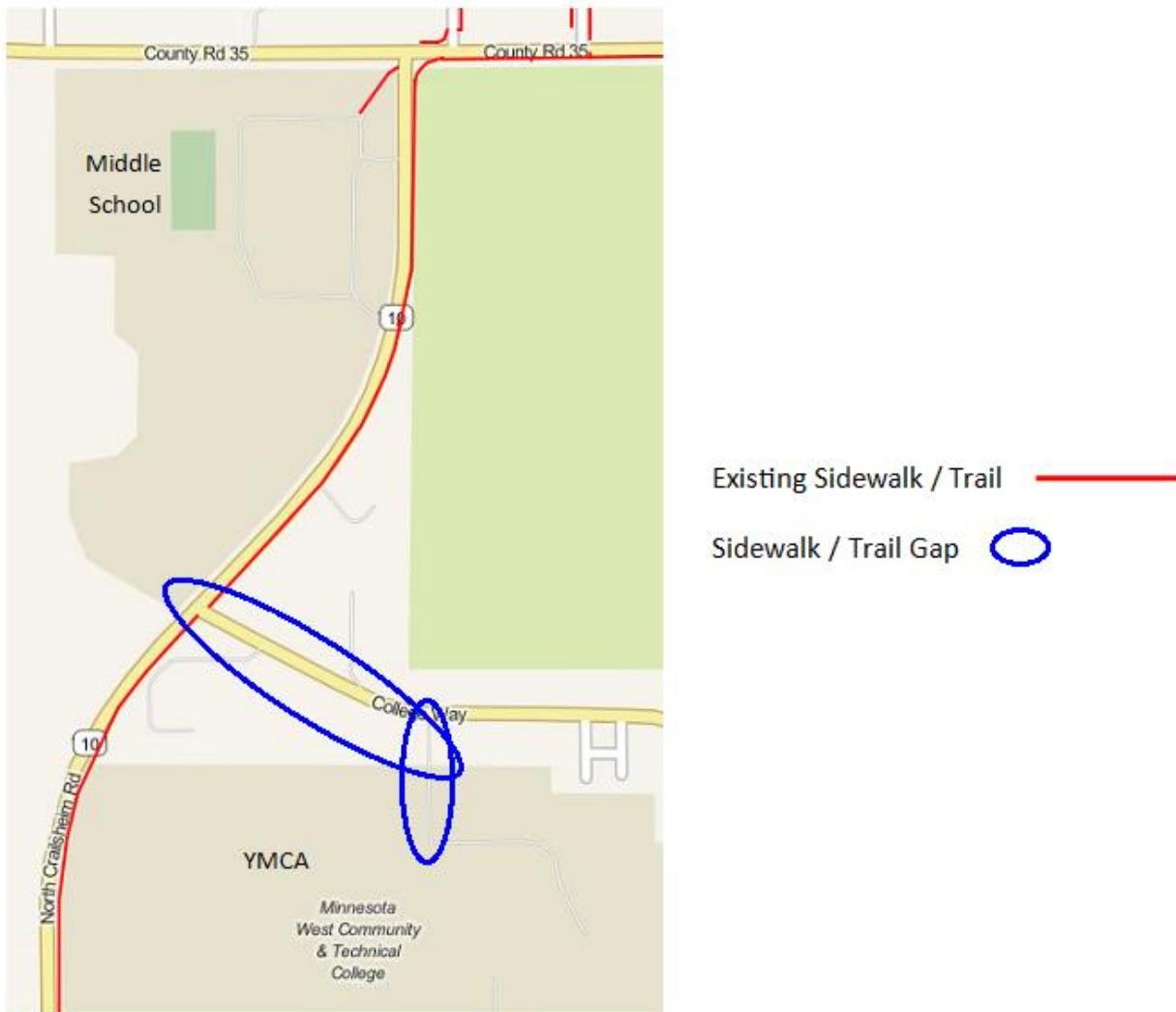


Middle School and YMCA Connection

- ▶ The YMCA is roughly a quarter mile from the Middle School. The YMCA is an after school destination for a number of students. There is a trail along North Crailsheim Road, but it does not connect all the way to the YMCA. The YMCA is adjacent to Minnesota West Community and Technical College, so there are higher traffic volumes along College Way. It is not safe to walk or bike on College Way, so a safe connection is needed between the trail along North Crailsheim Road and the YMCA.

Figure #24

Middle School and YMCA Sidewalk/Trail Gap



Middle School Sidewalk

- There is a gap in the sidewalk around the Middle School. The sidewalk gap is on the northeast corner of the school. There are also no curb cuts on the sidewalk on the northeast side of the school.

Figure #25

Middle School Sidewalk Gap



Sidewalk Gap



Figure #26

Middle School Sidewalk Gap – ADA Access



West Oxford Street

- ▶ During arrival traffic often backs up on West Oxford Street. Congestion is caused by parents waiting to turn left into the north parking lot.

School Speed Limit

- ▶ The speed limit around the Middle School is 40 mph. According to the Worthington SRTS Team and parent feedback, the 40 mph speed limit is a barrier to walking and biking to school. A speed study was conducted by MnDOT, but the study showed that a lower speed limit is not warranted.

Intersection – West Oxford Street & North Crailsheim Road

- ▶ The Middle School is located at the intersection of West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road. This is a very busy intersection. There are rectangle rapid flashing beacons at this intersection, but parent feedback still identified this intersection as a major barrier to walking and biking to school.

“You are never sure if vehicles are going to stop on West Oxford Street.” Parent Survey

“The intersection West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road is terribly dangerous since changing the flow of traffic heading East/West. The bypass lane heading west allows cars to continue to travel at 40 mph while increasing speed as they pass Crailsheim Road.” Parent Survey

No Parking Signage/Paint

- ▶ No parking around the Middle School is denoted by painting the curbs yellow. Painting the curbs yellow helps to notify drivers of parking restrictions. The northeast corner of the school has a curb that is not painted. Parking in this area can increase congestion and decrease driver visibility. There were two parents that parked and dropped off students during the walking audit.

School Zone

- ▶ There is no school zone signage around the Middle School. Identifying a school zone provides important information to drivers regarding the likelihood of increased pedestrian traffic and that additional precautions should be made to ensure drivers are observant. Children may not use proper crossing techniques, so this higher risk area needs to be identified to help increase awareness and safety within the school zone. Effective signage along with law enforcement helps to make the school zone safer.

Drop off & Pick up Loop Painting

- ▶ There are arrows directing parents in the north parking lot, which is used for dropping off and picking up students. There are no painted travel lanes. Lanes would help to direct traffic and increase safety in the loop. Below is a picture of a van bypassing the drop off lane. That inside lane should be used by parents and teachers parking in the lot and not as a bypass lane to get out of the lot quicker.

Figure #27

Congestion - North Parking Lot



Maintain School Crossings

- Crossings around the Middle School are generally maintained at a high level. There are pedestrian crossing signs, crosswalks, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons. These signs and safety improvements help to make the school zone safe and encourage walking and biking to school.

Figure #28

Crosswalks - Sally's Alley & West Oxford Street



Existing SRTS Programs

Worthington School District Administration has become involved with working toward improving pedestrian safety surrounding their schools: Prairie Elementary, Worthington Middle School, and Worthington High School. The High School was not included in the planning process for the Worthington School District SRTS Plan due to funding limitations. The Worthington Middle School and High School partnered with SHIP in November, 2013, creating a district wellness committee.

The district wellness committee has worked with SHIP to conduct a healthy school assessment. Access to opportunities for physical activity before and after school were identified as a priority issue.

Worthington School District hosted a two day SRTS workshop in May, 2014. Blue Cross Blue Shield brought in Mark Fenton, a national speaker on SRTS and Active Living, to lead the workshop. The SRTS workshop launched the Worthington SRTS Team. This group applied for and received a MnDOT SRTS Planning Grant to start the Worthington SRTS Program.

The SRTS Workshop also gave direction to the Active Living Group in Worthington. This group existed before the SRTS workshop, but the SRTS workshop helped to outline plans for improving pedestrian safety, walkability, and bikeability in Worthington. The Active Living Group works with the YMCA, the schools, and the City of Worthington to advance pedestrian programs and projects in the community.

Prairie Elementary has a policy that prohibits walking and biking to school. The current administration at Prairie Elementary is willing to work towards removing this policy. Prairie Elementary has been working with SHIP to make the school zone safer for pedestrians. School administration and the Worthington SRTS Team has identified a Walk to School Day event as a great way to show parents, community residents, school administrators, and city administrators that walking and biking to Prairie Elementary can happen safely.

Other Programs—Health Services

- Physical & Health Education
- Wellness Policy



Goal: Physical & Health Education Department - is to help students improve upon their emotional and academic excellence through a wide variety of activities, games, and fitness tests.

Physical education encourages students to participate in lifetime sports activities and to assess their personal performance in those activities, and works with students on developing self-control, showing respect for others, and demonstrating sound moral and ethical behavior.

Elementary (K - 4):

In this area, the students are in the exploration stages of development. Basic loco- and non-locomotive skills are being developed in this age-group. Simply put, students at this level will work between spatial

awareness and develop up to the level of integrating their newly developed skills with other aspects of teamwork and so-forth.

Middle School (5-8):

At this level, students will be using their new “foundation” as a base for developing individual preferences. It is at the middle portion of the developmental model that students will experience a wide-variety of activities. In Middle School PE, we intend to give students many options throughout the school-year.

High School (9-12):

The diamond has begun to narrow and students are becoming more individualized and figuring out what works for them. No more “testing of the waters”, students here should have a good grasp on the skills they use and skills that work best for them.

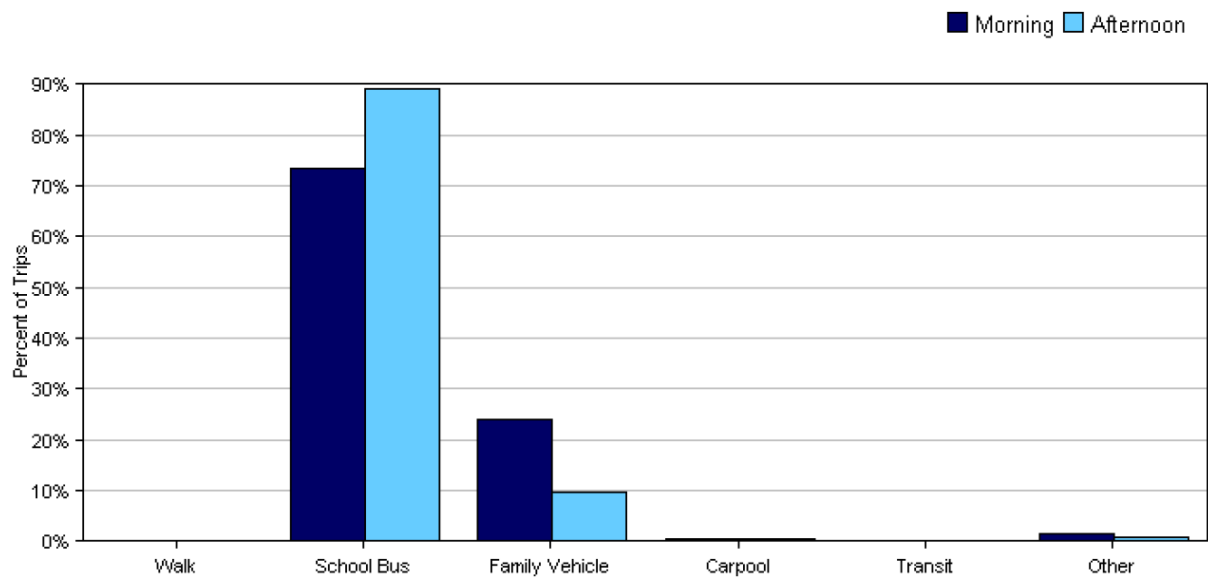
Student Travel Tally Survey Results

The classroom tallies asked students how they traveled to and from school for three consecutive days. The tallies provide another quantitative analysis tool to study travel modes to and from school. Travel tally survey tables can be found in Appendix A.

Prairie Elementary September, 2014

In September of 2014, 49 classrooms at Prairie Elementary participated in a classroom SRTS Travel Tally Survey. There were 3,135 total trips to school and 3,101 total trips home from school that were part of the analysis. Seventy-three percent of students rode the bus to school and 89 percent rode the bus home from school. Twenty-four percent of students got a ride to school in a family vehicle while only 10 percent got a ride home from school in a family vehicle. Less than one percent of students carpooled to and from school. The percentage of students walking and bicycling to and from school was zero percent.

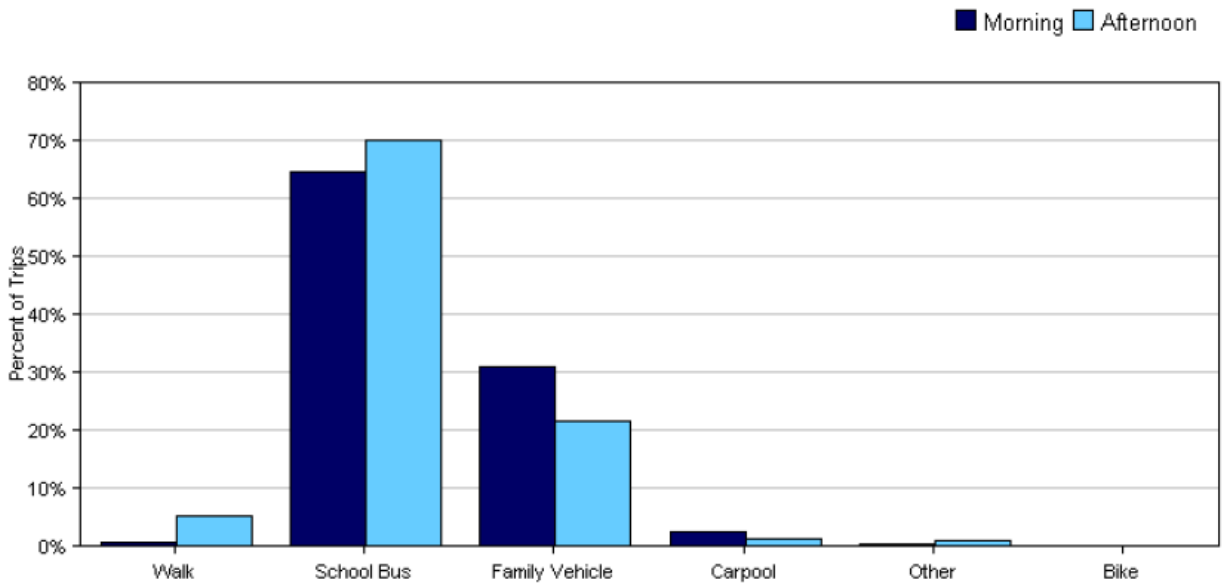
When analyzing the weather conditions and the mode of transportation to and from school, there was not a significant difference in travel mode when comparing sunny days to overcast days. There were no students who walked or biked to school, so weather was not a variable.

Table #6**Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison***Middle School September, 2012*

In September of 2012, 2 classrooms at the Worthington Middle School participated in a classroom SRTS Travel Tally Survey. There were 343 total trips to school and 349 total trips home from school that were part of the analysis. Sixty-five percent of students rode the bus to school and seventy percent rode the bus home from school. Thirty-one percent of students got a ride to school in a family vehicle while 22 percent got a ride home from school in a family vehicle. Three percent of students carpooled to school and one percent carpooled home from school.

The percentage of students walking and bicycling to school was less than one percent. The percentage of students walking and bicycling home from school was 5.3 percent.

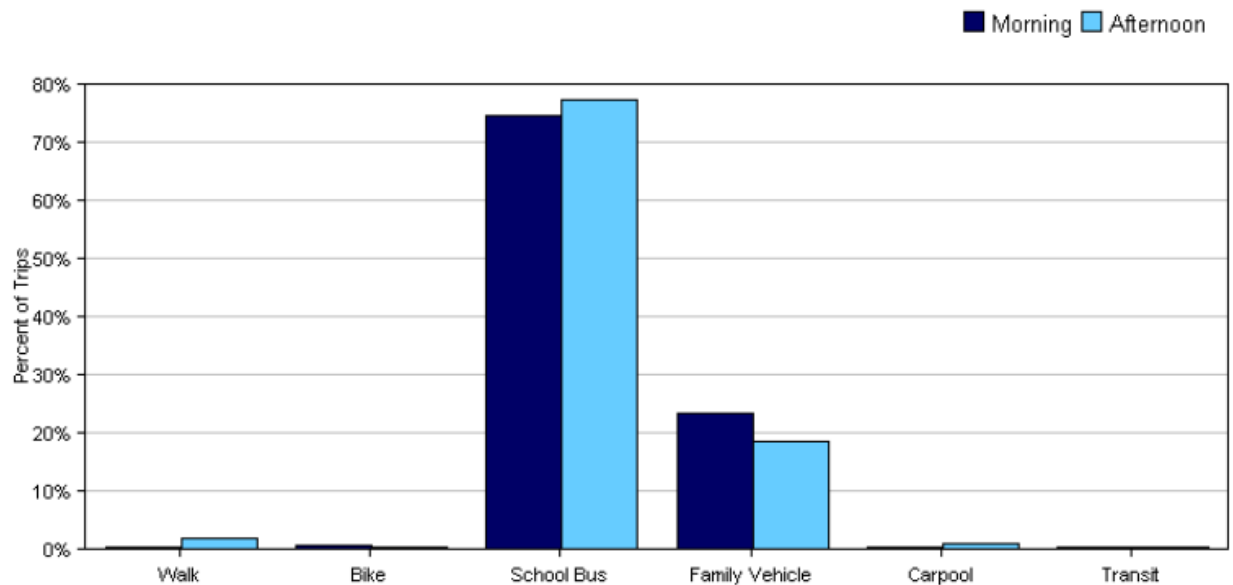
When analyzing the weather conditions and the mode of transportation to and from school, all trips were made during sunny weather conditions.

Table #7**Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison***Middle School September, 2014*

In September of 2014, 54 classrooms at the Worthington Middle School participated in a classroom SRTS Travel Tally Survey. There were 2,256 total trips to school and 2,251 total trips home from school that were part of the analysis. Seventy-five percent of students rode the bus to school and 77 percent rode the bus home from school. Twenty-three percent of students got a ride to school in a family vehicle while 19 percent got a ride home from school in a family vehicle. Less than one percent of students carpoled to school and one percent carpoled home from school.

The percentage of students walking and bicycling to school was only 1.2 percent. The percentage of students walking and bicycling home from school was 2.5 percent.

When analyzing the weather conditions and the mode of transportation to and from school, there was not a significant difference in travel mode when comparing sunny days to overcast and rainy days. The main reason for this is the number of students who walked or biked to school was not significant.

Table #8**Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison****Parent Survey Results**

The parent survey consisted of 16 questions regarding current travel mode, behavior, and safety perceptions. The report reflected parents' perceptions regarding whether walking and bicycling to school is appropriate for their child. The Parent Survey was administered at Prairie Elementary and the Worthington Middle School in fall of 2014. Survey tables and open ended responses from can be found in Appendix B.

Prairie Elementary September, 2014

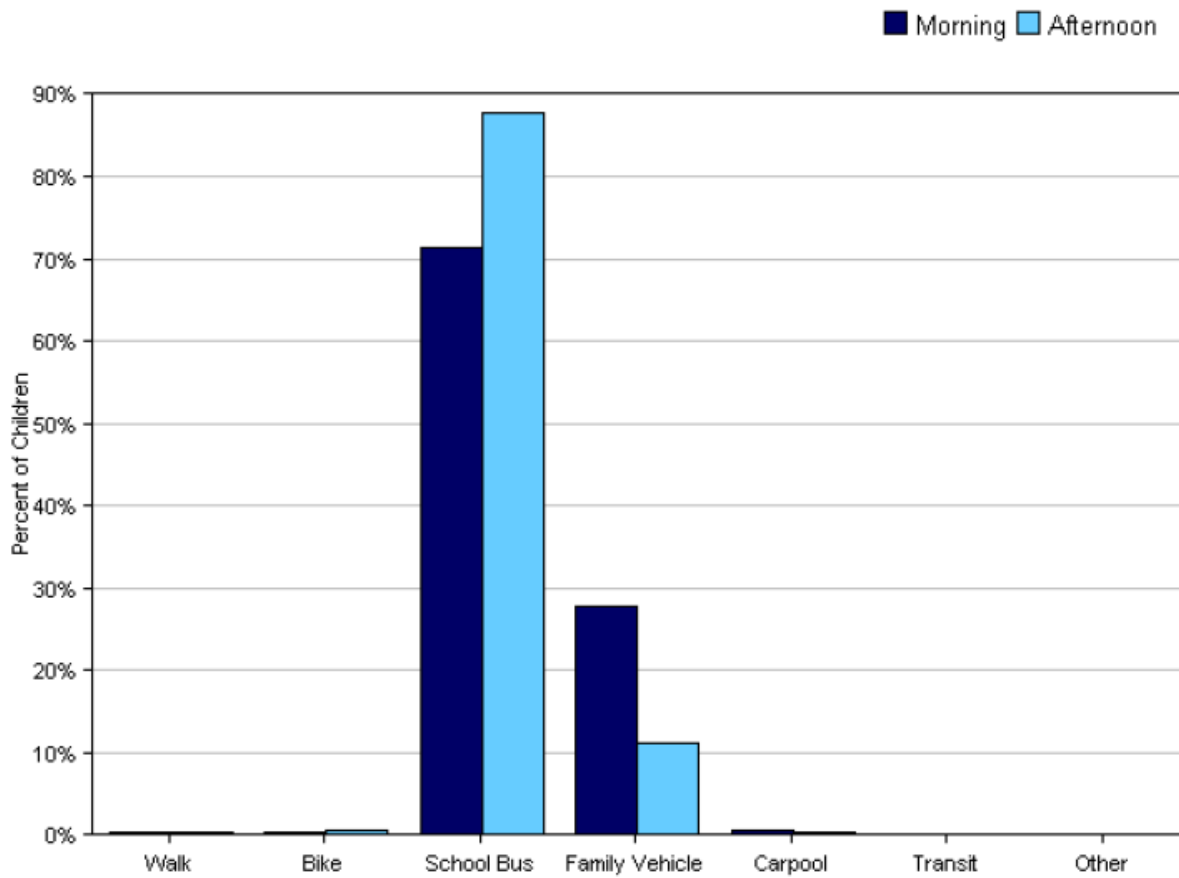
In September of 2014, the parent survey was administered to the parents at the Prairie Elementary School. There were 840 surveys distributed to Kindergarten through fourth grade and 421 of those surveys were returned and analyzed. The gender of the children for parents that provided information was 58 percent female and 42 percent male.

Eighty-nine percent of the parents surveyed reported living more than a mile away. Having such a high percentage of the students living more than a mile away makes walking or biking to school not a feasible option.

Only five percent of the survey respondents lived within a 1/2 mile of the school and only 11 percent lived with one mile of the school. These students who live within a walkable and bikeable distance to school could be getting physical activity before and after school, if the students were allowed to walk and bike to school.

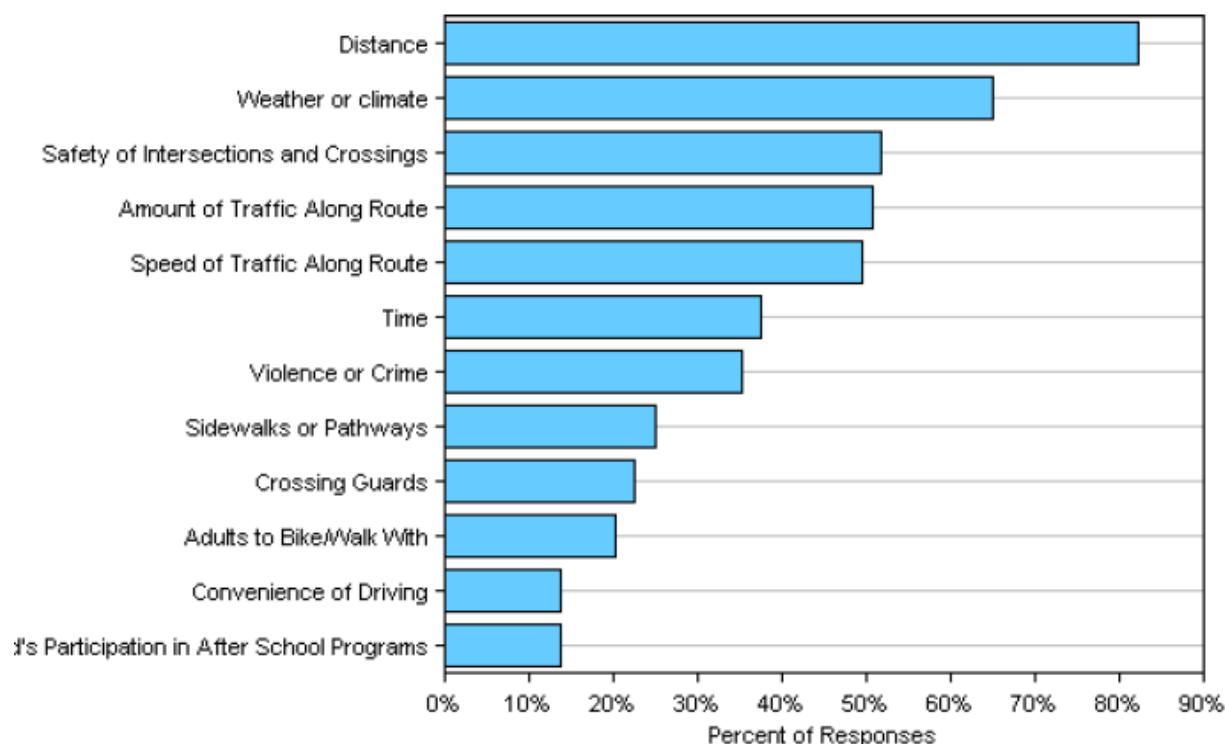
Table #9 A

Typical Mode of Arrival and Departure from School



When parents were asked why they do not let their child walk or bicycle to school, 82 percent of survey respondents said distance was the number one issue. The top five answers were: distance, weather or climate, safety of intersections and crossing, amount of traffic along the route and speed of traffic along the route.

**Table #9 B Issues why parents do NOT allow child to walk or bike to school
Prairie Elementary**



Open Ended Responses – Prairie Elementary

The majority of open ended responses pertained to living too far away that it is not practical to walk and safety related to abduction. There were other comments related to students being too young, would not allow my child to walk to school, weather, and would love to see my child be able to walk and bike to school. Below are a few of the open ended responses.

“I would love to see the opportunity for walking and biking to school.”

“In this day and age I don’t let my child out of my sight just to play in our neighborhood! It’s just not safe anymore.”

“The parking lot at Prairie Elementary would not be safe for walkers/bikers during, before, and after school because of vehicle traffic.”

“My children are active in the evenings and weekends. They do not need to walk to school for health reasons.”

“I would not feel safe having my child walk in this town. I have had numerous times where I have felt uncomfortable walking around town myself due to individuals in my neighborhood and around town yelling/staring/following me. I would not want my daughters put in this situation, which is why we will be leaving Worthington next spring.”

“Option would be good for the health of children but me worry violence and trafficking.”

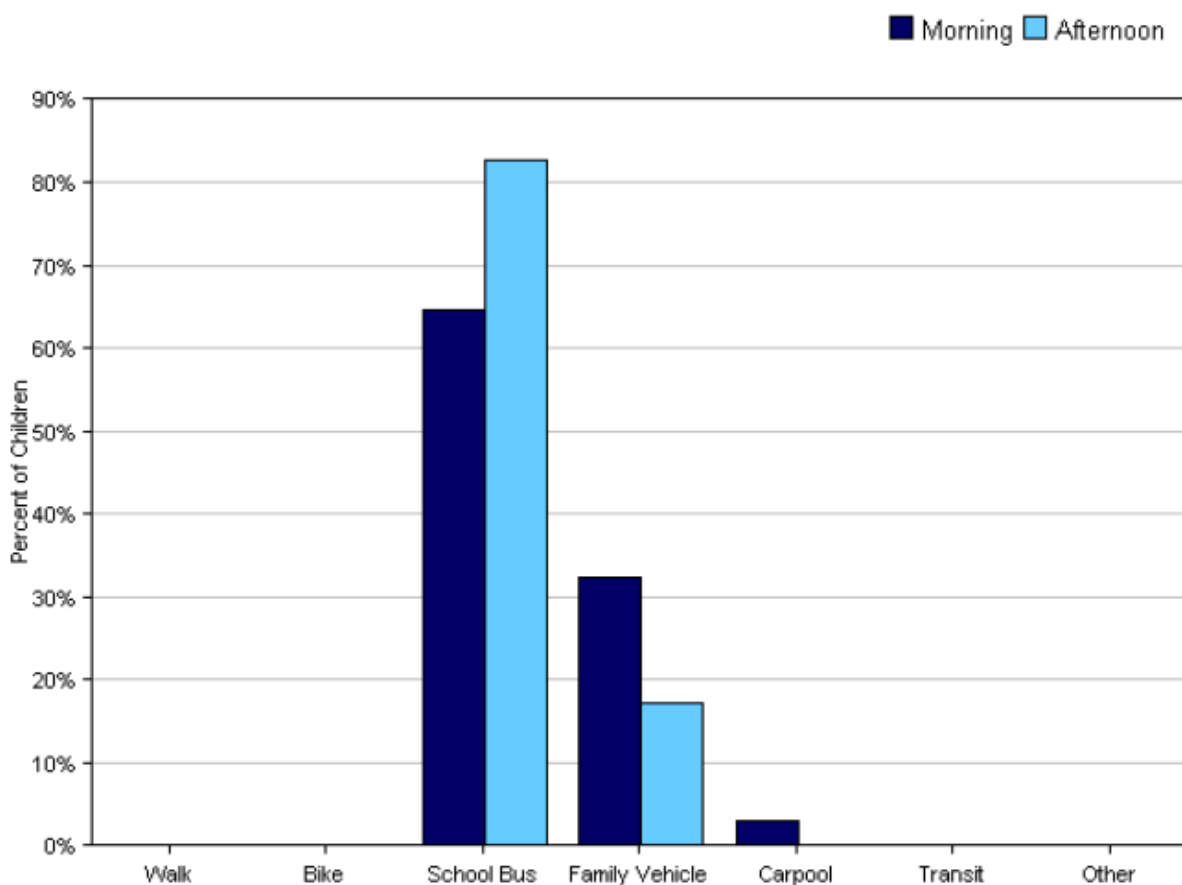
Middle School September, 2014

In September of 2014, a parent survey was administered to the parents at the Worthington Middle School. There were 840 surveys distributed to grades fifth through eighth and 67 of those surveys were returned and analyzed. The gender of the children for parents that provided information was 51 percent female and 49 percent male.

Seventy percent of the parents surveyed reported living more than a mile away. Having such a high percentage of the students living more than a mile away makes walking or biking to school not a feasible option. This is part of the reason for the small number of walkers and bicyclists.

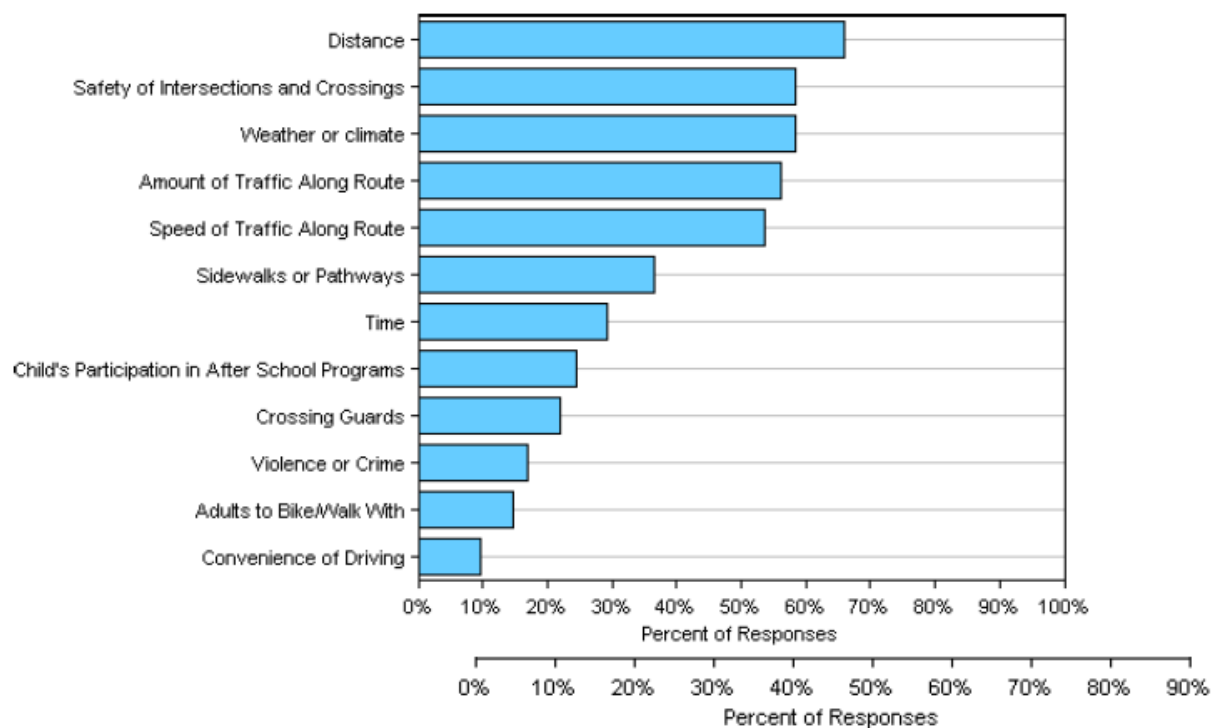
In contrast, 10 percent of the survey respondents live within a 1/4 mile of the school and a total of 17 percent live less than a 1/2 mile from school. This leads to the question of why there are not more students walking and bicycling to school. Zero percent of parents surveyed reported that their child walks or bikes to school.

Table #10 A Typical Mode of Arrival and Departure from School



When parents were asked why they do not let their child walk or bicycle to school, 66 percent of survey respondents said distance was the number one issue. The top five answers were: distance, safety of intersections and crossing, weather or climate, amount of traffic along the route and speed of traffic along the route.

**Table #10 B Issues why parents do NOT allow child to walk or bike to school
Prairie Elementary**



Open Ended Responses – Middle School

The majority of open ended responses pertained to the safety of students walking and biking to school. Vehicle traffic and traffic speeds were two main variables impacting safety. The safety of children crossing at the intersection of West Oxford and North Crailsheim Road was cited as a safety issue. Living too far away that it is not practical to walk and safety related to abduction were also identified issues. Below are a few of the open ended responses.

"The Middle School is close. They need crossing guards."

"The intersection of West Oxford and North Crailsheim Road is very dangerous with the bypass lane heading west. Sun in the A.M. blinds drivers coming off the highway – someone is going to die there."

"I see a lot of vehicles not stopping for kids in the crosswalk."

"I see a lot avoiding the speed limit."

Public Transportation

Buffalo Ridge Regional Transit serves the counties of Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, and Rock. Public transit buses are lift accessible and available for residents of Nobles County. Prairieland Transit System and Nobles County Heartland Express are other transit options in Nobles County. The transit service does what it can to provide rides or to connect you to someone who may be able to help you. Cab services are also for trips in and around Worthington.

CHAPTER IV: Goals & Strategies

Introduction

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the Worthington SRTS Team wants to achieve. Strategies narrow the general guidelines and define in more detail what the Worthington SRTS Team wants to achieve. Strategies are the actual steps to be taken to achieve the goals. A strategy may just be the first step, but the general need for the project is outlined.

The identified Goals and Strategies were created through a joint effort between the Planning Team, parents, city representatives, and community residents. A qualitative approach was used by the planning team to judge and prioritize the mitigation strategies based on perceived costs and benefits. Refer to the Planning Process Chapter for more information relating to the prioritization process.

It should be noted that not every existing issue identified within the Existing Conditions Chapter has a goal outlined below. Goals were combined for certain existing conditions and some issues did not have a definite solution. Identifying the existing condition is the first step in working towards a solution.

The main benefits of the strategies listed below are to improve health, safety, and community connectedness through the five E's. The Planning Team ranked the projects. This ranking or prioritization will help with directing time and money.

This prioritization does not mean that the first goal has to be accomplished before moving onto another goal. The purpose of the prioritization is to show that the SRTS Team talked about possible options and with unlimited resources, this is what they chose to accomplish first. Due to scarce resources, it may be necessary to start with a goal that has less upfront costs and is relatively easier to implement. The goals and strategies outlined in the Worthington SRTS Plan are recommendations, so during implementation modifications may be necessary. Additional engineering work may also be needed before implementation can take place.

Vision

Worthington SRTS Program Vision:

“Worthington School District, in collaboration with the City of Worthington and community partners, will work to create a safe and connected network of routes to and from school through evaluation, engineering, enforcement, education, and encouragement of walking or biking.”



Prairie Elementary Infrastructure Goals & Strategies

Drop off/Pick up Loop - Prairie Elementary

Goal: Improve safety for all users in the drop off and pick up loop at Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Improve signage and striping in the drop off loop and pick up loops at Prairie Elementary.

5 E(s): Engineering, Encouragement, and Education

Existing Conditions:

Student drop-off occurs in the southeast parking lot at Prairie Elementary. Student pick-up occurs in the northeast parking lot at Prairie Elementary. These parking lots are very congested during arrival and departure.

Part of the congestion issues during arrival and departure is caused by the high number of parents dropping off and picking up students and not being able to walk or bike to Prairie Elementary. An estimated 248 students were dropped off by 190 parents in the drop off at Prairie Elementary during our walking audit on September 23, 2014. Walking and biking to school is prohibited at Prairie Elementary, due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure.

There is effective traffic separation at Prairie Elementary. Buses have a separate loop and during arrival there is a through traffic lane for teacher and parent parking. Driver behavior was one of the main issues to address during arrival and departure.

The SRTS Team scored driver behavior as 6 out of 10. Some issues that were discussed by the SRTS Team include:

- Some drivers in the drop off lane were not staying in the designated lane
- Traffic flows – some parents drove around other cars in the drop off lane
- Most parents do not pull up all the way before dropping of their children

The SRTS Team recommends adding signage and striping to the drop off and pick up loop. These improvements will help to direct traffic and improve safety for all users. A new drop off and pick up handout will also help to direct traffic and improve safety.

These changes will help to make the school zone safer and encourage students to walk and bike to school. When these changes are implemented, it is important to educate parents, teachers, and other drivers entering the school drop off loop of the new procedures.

Figure #29

Drop off Loop Proposed - Prairie Elementary

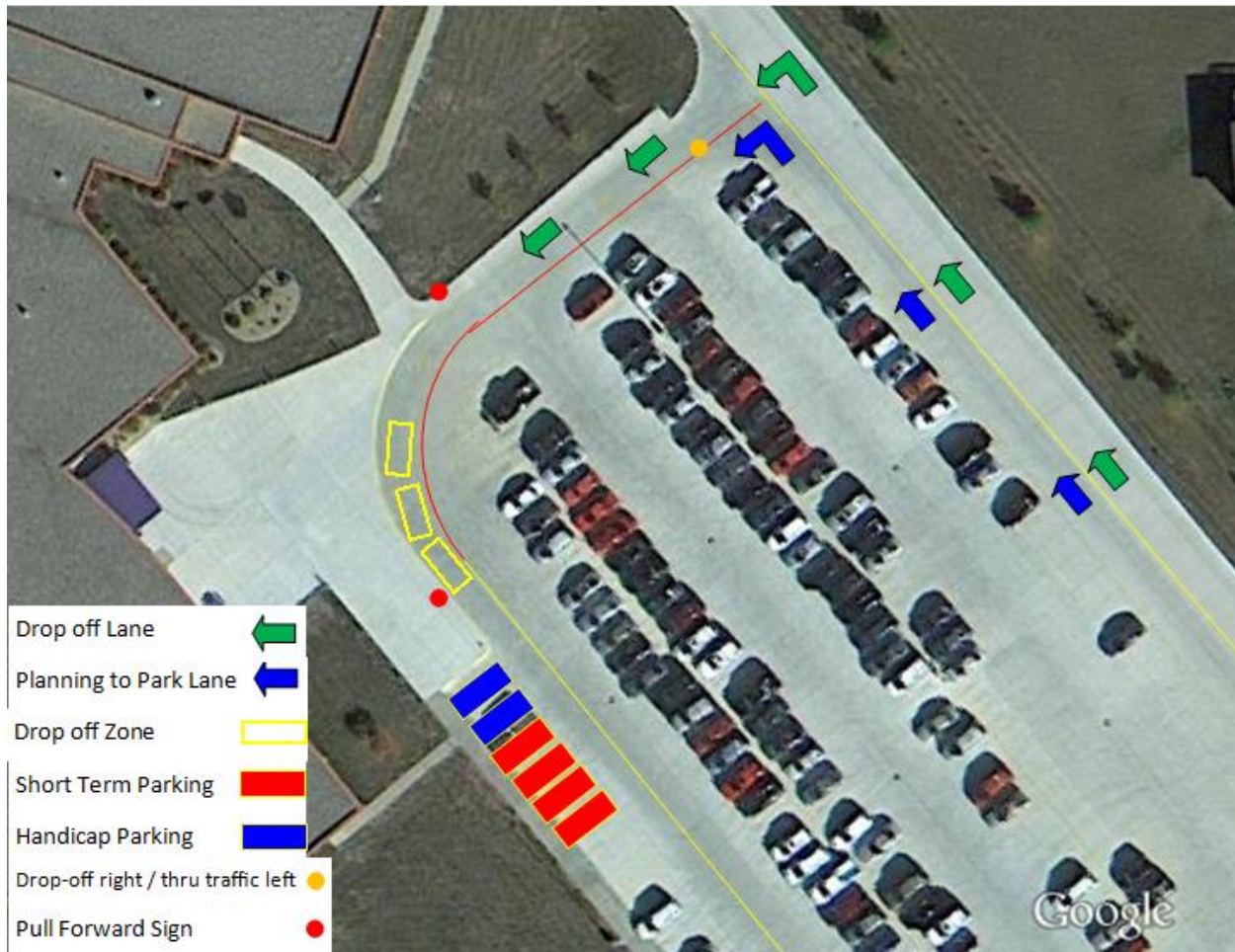


Figure #30

Drop off Lane Examples – Traffic Separation



- Parents dropping children off should be in the right lane (marked with the green arrows on the map).
- Parents should pull up as far as possible in the drop off area (marked by drop off zone on map)
- Students should exit the vehicle as soon as the vehicle is stopped in the drop off area.
- Parents should have their children prepared to exit the vehicle quickly and safely on their own.
- If you plan to walk your child into the building you need to enter the lot in the left lane (marked with blue arrows on the map). Use the designated short term parking spots (marked on map).

Departure is less congested than arrival, but congestion is still an issue. Parents were lined up all the way to 1st Avenue waiting to pick up students during the walking audit. Having 40 plus cars all wanting to pick up can create safety issues for pedestrians.

Departure is usually less chaotic than arrival. Parents picking up students have a number in their car window, which corresponds to a student waiting to be picked up. When the vehicle pulls up, the paraprofessional radios into the gym to another paraprofessional for the student and checks to see who is driving the vehicle.

Radioing in for the next student works well, but it can be logistically challenging when two or more students are being picked up at once. One or two of the students may be ready, but the third student is not ready. This can back up traffic and add to the congestion in the pick up loop.

Parents may try and pull around the waiting car. There needs to be a separate short term parking zone, so the vehicle can pull over to the side and allow for pick up to continue. The planning team recommends establishing a short term parking zone. This zone can be outlined by a sign and is a painted area to pull into.

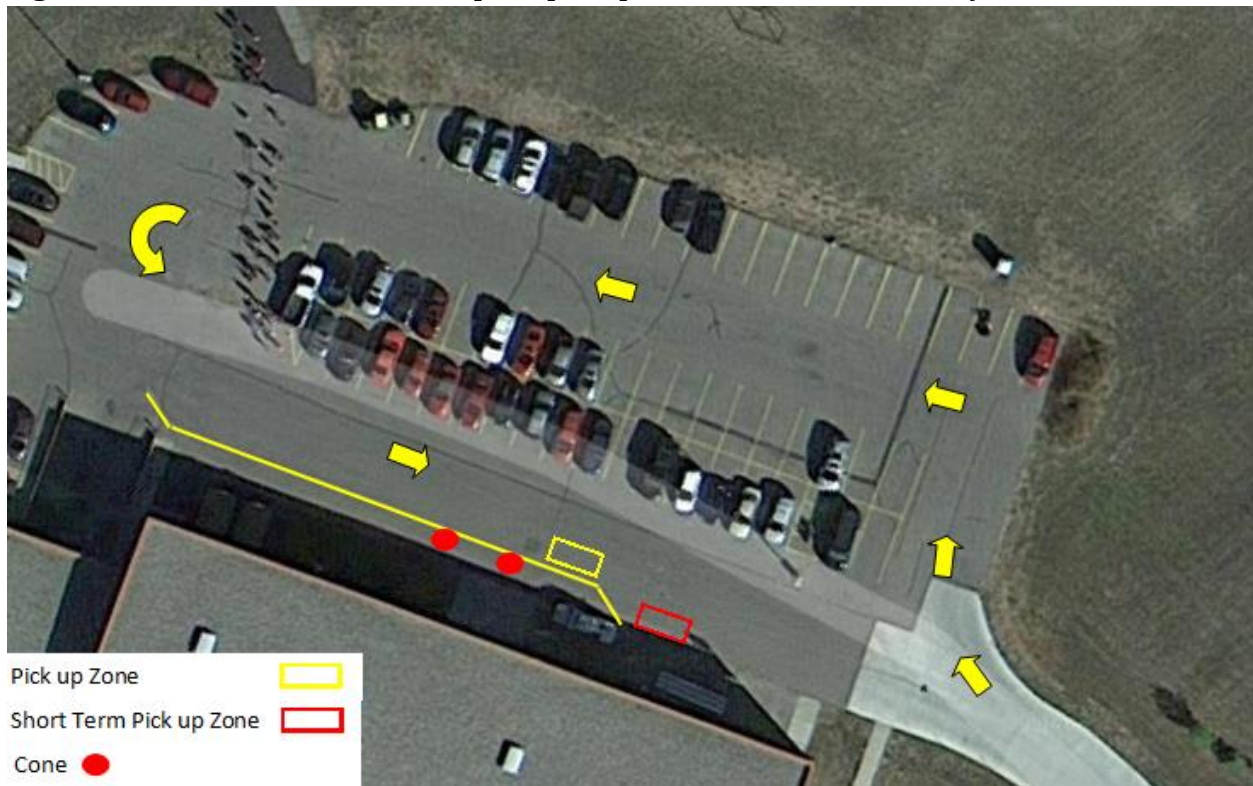
Another issue during departure is parents crossing the yellow painted line that helps to guide drivers. This line was frequently crossed during the walking audit. The yellow painted line helps to separate students who are waiting to get picked up and vehicles. .

The SRTS Team recommends adding cones along the yellow painted line in the pick up zone area. Cones will act as a barrier. Having effective traffic separation is critical for pedestrian safety and to help decrease congestion.

Once pedestrian infrastructure is added, school administrators will address walking and biking to Prairie Elementary. Effective traffic separation is critical in creating a safe school zone for walkers and bikers. Improved signage and striping in the drop off and pick up loops should be part of the larger pedestrian infrastructure improvements to make walking and biking an option at Prairie Elementary.

Figure #31

Pick up Loop Proposed - Prairie Elementary



Prairie Elementary Sidewalk & Trail Connections

Goal: Improve pedestrian connectivity to Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Establish a sidewalk or trail connection between the trails along 1st Avenue Southwest with the sidewalk that leads to the main entrance to Prairie Elementary.

Establish a sidewalk along Knollwood Drive and Pleasant Street.

Establish a sidewalk or trail connection between Knollwood Drive and Prairie Elementary.

Establish a sidewalk or trail connection between Pleasant Street and Prairie Elementary.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

As of the 2015-2016 school year, students at Prairie Elementary were not allowed to walk or bike to school. This informal policy was established due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure around the school. School Administrators are working towards making improvements. This was part of the reason for undergoing the SRTS Planning Process.

Since this informal policy was enacted, a trail along 1st Avenue Southwest has been constructed. The trail provides a safe place for students to walk and bike to school, who live along or within a convenient

distance to 1st Avenue Southwest. Connectivity between the trail and Prairie Elementary is still an issue. There is no sidewalk or trail that connects the main entrance to the school and the trail.

Improving pedestrian infrastructure around Prairie Elementary is critical in creating a safe place for walkers and bikers. There are key connections that need to be established to create a safer school zone for pedestrians. Once these connections are made, school administrators will address walking and biking to school at Prairie Elementary.

Figure #32 Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure - Prairie Elementary



1st Avenue Safe Route to School Connection

There is no connection from Prairie Elementary to the trail along 1st Ave Southwest. Not having a connection between 1st Avenue Southwest and the sidewalk that leads to the main entrance to Prairie Elementary creates a dangerous situation if students could walk and bike to school. Students would have to share the road and parking lot with vehicles and that would be very dangerous.

Figure #33

1st Avenue Southwest Sidewalk Gap



Knollwood Drive Safe Route to School Connection

Ridgewood Apartments are an affordable rental housing community located just to the west of Prairie Elementary. This higher density housing complex has a number of elementary age children that could walk or bike to school. Knollwood Apartments and the surrounding neighborhoods along Knollwood should have safe and convenient connections to Prairie Elementary.

Knollwood Drive functions as a Neighborhood Connector, since there is through traffic, residential traffic, and a higher traffic volume street. It is generally not safe to walk and bike on the road due to vehicle traffic and traffic speeds. Below is a description of a Neighborhood Connector, which is part of the three-tier Pedestrian Functional Classification System the City of Worthington is in the process of implementing. For more information regarding the Pedestrian Functional Classification System, refer to the goal to support the Pedestrian Functional Classification system on page 107. Figure 34 below is a map of the Neighborhood Connectors around Prairie Elementary.

► **Neighborhood Connector Streets**

- Connects Residential Streets to Connector Streets
- Medium level traffic volume streets
- Require some pedestrian amenities – A sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is required or a trail conveniently located that connects the neighborhood to key locations. The sidewalk needs to have continuity throughout, so the route is not jumping back and forth from one side of the street to the other.

A sidewalk should be constructed along Knollwood Avenue. This would create a safe connection to the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest that leads to Prairie Elementary. A more convenient connection should also be constructed between the sidewalk along Knollwood Drive and Prairie Elementary.

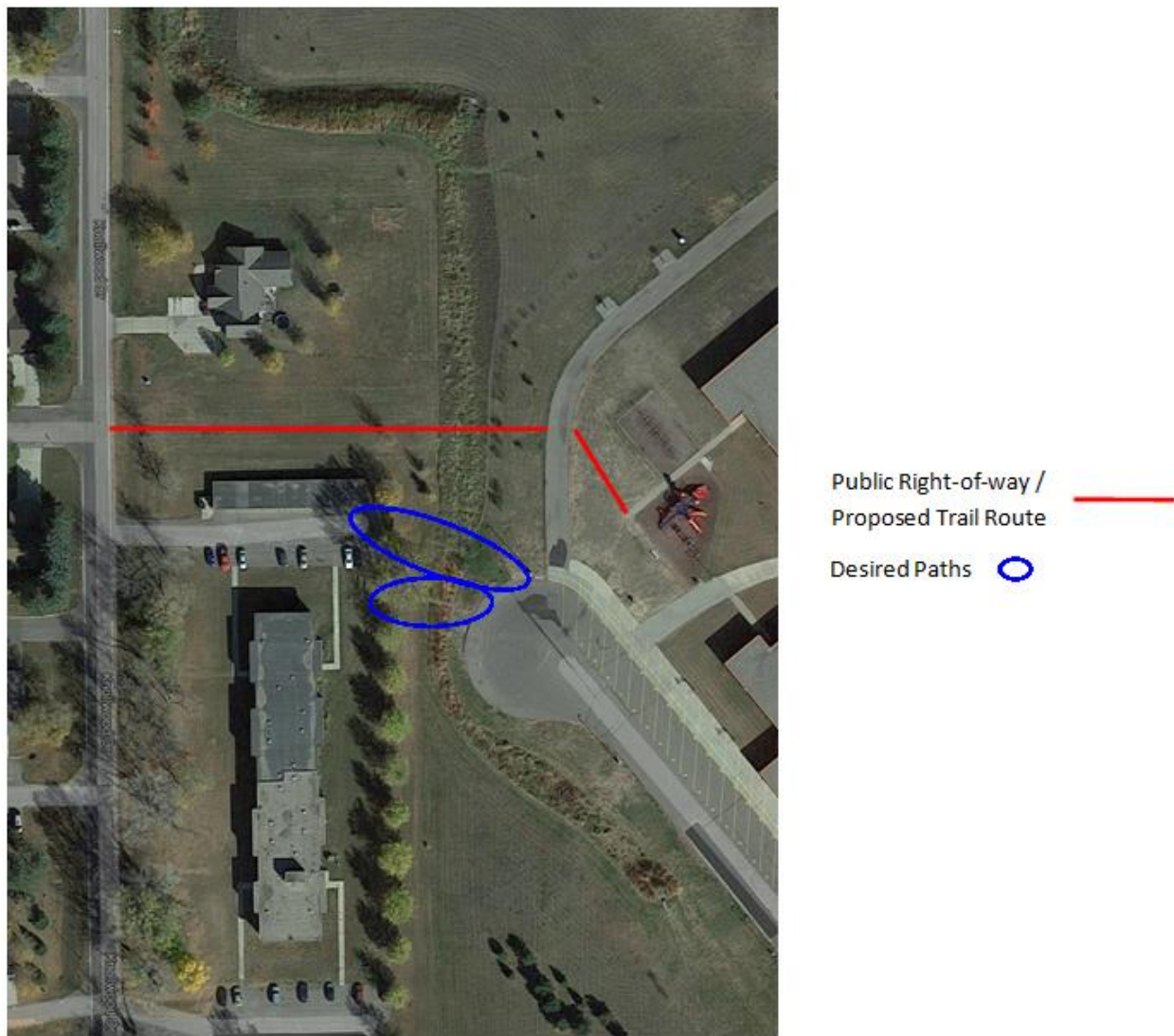
There are worn trails in the grass between Ridgewood Avenue and Prairie Elementary. These trails could be the result of students walking to the playground or school during the summer or students walking to school. These worn trails show the desire path students would like to take. Constructing a trail along a desire path would create a convenient and safe connection between Knollwood Drive and Prairie Elementary.

There is public right-of-way east of Knollwood Drive off of Summit Avenue. A trail connection in the public right-of-way would also create a convenient and safe connection between Knollwood Drive and Prairie Elementary. Locating the trail in public right-of-way would help to ensure the trail is connected. Access to the trail will be increased by placing the trail on public right-of-way. Figures 35, 36, and 37 outline desired paths and the proposed trail routes around Prairie Elementary.

Figure #34 **Neighborhood Connector Map – Prairie Elementary**



Figure 35 Knollwood Drive Safe Routes to School Connection



Pleasant Street Safe Route to School Connection

Pleasant Street neighborhood has a higher density of family homes. There are a number of elementary students who could be walking or biking to school. A safe connection along Pleasant Street is needed.

Pleasant Street functions as a Neighborhood Connector, since there is through traffic, residential traffic, and a higher traffic volume street. It is generally not safe to walk and bike on the road due to vehicle traffic and traffic speeds. Refer to page 61 for a description of a Neighborhood Connector.

Adding a sidewalk to one side of Pleasant Street would create a safe connection to the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest that leads to Prairie Elementary. A more convenient connection should also be constructed. A trail leading directly from Pleasant Street would create a more convenient and safe route to Prairie Elementary and would encourage walking and biking to school. Below is an outline of the proposed trail connection between Pleasant Street and Prairie Elementary.

Figure #36

Pleasant Street Safe Routes to School Connection



Environmental Learning Trail

Goal: Improve connectivity and environmental learning at Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Construct a nature trail around Pleasant Park.

5 E(s): Engineering, Education, and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Pleasant Park is directly to the north of Prairie Elementary. Part of Pleasant Park is low lying ground that is a natural drainage system. This slows the flow of storm water into Lake Okabena. It also allows the water to soak into the ground, filter and reduce pollution using the natural processes of soil and plants. Below is an outline of the natural drainage system.

A natural trail along the natural drainage system would provide a convenient place to teach about the importance of slowing down storm water and allowing for natural drainage to occur. A nature trail would also allow for a safe and scenic walking loop.

The Worthington SRTS Team recommends constructing a paved nature trail along the natural drainage system that loops around Pleasant Park. The loop within the park would make the park more of a

Having a paved nature trail would increase use. The paved trail would also be a safe off road route to school. Pleasant Park borders several neighborhoods and Prairie Elementary. The nature trail would be a connection between these neighborhoods and Prairie Elementary. The nature trail could also be an extension of the proposed Safe Routes to School (SRTS) trail.

This aerial map illustrates the layout of Pleasant Park, a large open area situated between Slater Park to the north and a residential neighborhood to the south. The map features several streets: Slater Dr, Pleasant St, and Hillcrest Ave to the north; Pleasant St, Schamp Dr, and Slater SW to the south; and Redwood Dr, Redwood Dr, and Redwood Dr to the west. A legend at the bottom identifies three key features: Proposed SRTS Trails (indicated by a red line), Natural Trail (indicated by a cyan line), and Nature Drain System (indicated by a blue circle). The map shows a network of trails and a drain system that traverse the park area, connecting it to the surrounding urban environment.

Bus Loop Striping

Strategy: Paint the yellow line separating the bus zone from the student zone red.

5 E(s): Education

Existing Conditions:

All of the striping in the buses only zone is yellow. This is effective for experienced bus drivers, teachers, and students. There are yellow lines outlining where the bus should pull up to and these yellow slots have numbers painted on them, so bus drivers know which slot to pull into. There are also slots outlined in yellow outlining where students should wait for the bus. With all of the painting being yellow, the line between the yellow slot for the bus and the yellow box for the students could be crossed without knowing the danger.

The SRTS Team recommends painting the existing yellow line that separates the bus zone from the student zone the color red. This will help to create more of a barrier that should not be crossed. Less experienced drivers, teachers, and students will be able to easily distinguish the bus zone from the student zone.

Figure #38

Existing Bus Loop – Prairie Elementary



Figure #39

Proposed Bus Loop - Prairie Elementary



Bike Racks

Goal: Make it convenient to bike to Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Install bike racks at Prairie Elementary, once students are allowed to bike to school.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

As of the 2015-2016 school year, students at Prairie Elementary were not allowed to walk or bike to school. This informal policy was established due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure around the school. School Administrators are working towards making improvements. This was part of the reason for undergoing the SRTS Planning Process.

Bike racks make it convenient and safe to ride, store, and lock your bike. Not having bike racks in convenient locations discourages biking and leads potential bikers not to ride their bike. During the Worthington SRTS Planning Process, the need for bike racks was discussed, once students are allowed to bike to school.

The bike racks could be unique and double as art in the community at the other identified locations. Having unique bike racks will increase the community feel and promote biking. Bike rack use may increase, since children may be more likely to use a bike rack shaped like a fish than a plain metal bike

rack. The Planning Team did not choose a specific bike rack. Below are a few examples of larger bike racks and the bike rack the City of Worthington has been installing around the community.

Figure #40 A

Bike Rack Examples – Nautical



Figure #40 B

Bike Rack – City of Worthington



Walk to School Day Event/Remote Drop off

Goal: Encourage walking and biking to school.

Strategy: Use the remote drop off at Lakeside Church for Walk to School Day Events.

Encourage parents to use the remote drop off at Lakeside Church throughout the school year.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Being active before and after school will help child achieve the recommended 60 or more minutes of physical activity each day. Students who are active before school arrive more focused and ready to learn. A Danish study analyzed the link between physical activity and student concentration. The study looked at nearly 20,000 students between the ages of 5 and 19. "It found that kids who cycled or walked to school, rather than traveling by car or public transportation, performed measurably better on tasks demanding concentration, such as solving puzzles, and that the effects lasted for up to four hours after they got to school."²⁷

Lakeside Church is roughly a half mile from Prairie Elementary. Lakeside Church was identified by the SRTS Team as an excellent remote drop off and could be used for Walk to School Day Events. There is a trail along 1st Avenue Southwest that connects the church and school. Crosswalks have been painted along the route. The only barrier is getting from the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest to the sidewalk that leads to the main entrance to Prairie Elementary.

A sidewalk or trail connection is part of the Prairie Elementary Sidewalk & Trail Connections Goal on page 59. Lakeside Church can be used during a Walk to School Day Event, since adults will be escorting students from the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest across the parking lot to the main entrance to the school. Once this sidewalk or trail connection is established, a permanent remote drop off can be encouraged at Lakeside Church. Below is a map outlining the route and the drop off procedure at Lakeside Church.

²⁷ The Link Between Kids Who Walk or Bike to School and Concentration. City Lab. Accessed: 10/8/15. Available: <http://www.citylab.com/commute/2013/02/kids-who-walk-or-bike-school-concentrate-better-study-shows/4585/>

Figure #41

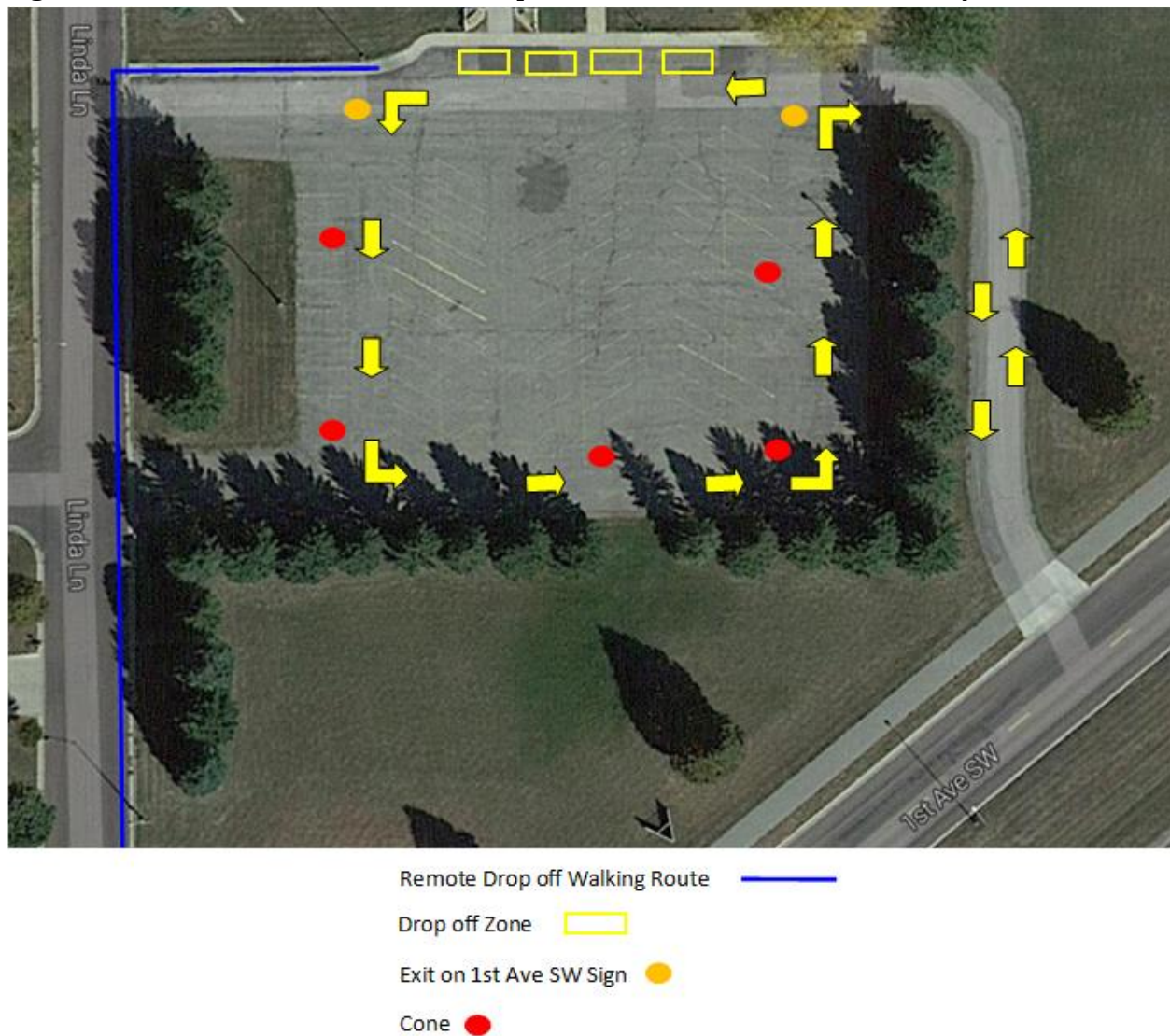
Remote Drop off/Walking Route - Prairie Elementary



Remote Drop off Walking Route —————

Figure #42

Remote Drop off Procedure – Prairie Elementary



Playground Promotion – Prairie Elementary

Goal: Encourage playground use during non-school hours.

Strategy: Install welcoming playground signage.

Add the Prairie Elementary playground to the list of parks on the City of Worthington's webpage.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Public school property is public property, but some community members may not be aware of this. Promoting the playground as a community asset will help to increase use. It is important to market the

playground for public use during non-school hours. The school does use the playground during school hours, so this time restriction needs to be noted on the welcoming playground signage and on the City of Worthington's webpage.

The Planning Team recommends having a natural wood sign by the playground. This sign would say welcome in multiple languages. Welcome can be painted on the wood sign or on a metal sign. There would also be a sign stating that playground is open to the public during non-school hours and other playground rules.

Figure #43

Playground Promotion Sign Example



Walking Encouragement Program – SRTS Mileage Club Prairie Elementary

Goal: Increase walking and biking to the Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Create a frequent walker and biker program at Prairie Elementary.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

To create an effective walking and biking program at Prairie Elementary, a pilot walking and biking program for the 3rd and 4th graders is going to be developed first. This mileage club can be implemented once the informal policy to not allow walking and biking to school is removed. Removing this informal policy is dependent upon the establishment of pedestrian infrastructure around the school.

Creating a pilot project for 3rd and 4th graders will help to make the program more manageable as the program develops. Students that participate as a 3rd and 4th grader can also continue being active in the program the following year at the Middle School. A similar program is being proposed for 5th graders at the Middle School.

The SRTS Mileage Club will record the number of students walking and biking to school. Grades at the Middle School are broken into sections (A, B, C...). These sections can be the teams for the SRTS Mileage Club. A daily classroom tally will be conducted in the fall, winter, and spring.

Students who are not able to walk or bike to school can participate by walking around the school. At the end of the year the student section that has the most miles will be given a party or other prizes. This three week competition over the course of the year will help to encourage students to walk and bike to school.

Figure #44

SRTS Mileage Club – Daily Classroom Tally Sheet

SRTS Mileage Club – Daily Classroom Tally Sheet

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Activity							
Fall							
Week1							
Winter							
Week1							
Spring							
Week1							
Average							

Activity: w=walk b=bike s=sport

Conduct a hand count of how many students were active during a week. By doing so, we can raise awareness of the benefits of being active. This sheet also allows us to conduct a competition between classrooms (homerooms).

Parent: _____
 Teacher: _____
 Grade: _____
 Dates (week): _____



Road Art Campaign – Prairie Elementary

Goal: Increase safety of pedestrians in the Prairie Elementary zone.

Strategy: Implement a road art campaign at Prairie Elementary.

Maintain striping around Prairie Elementary.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

The majority of striping around the Prairie Elementary happens annually or when it is needed. Crosswalks along 1st Avenue Southwest were painted during the summer of 2015. These crosswalks were identified during the SRTS Planning Process, and were funded with a SRTS Mini Grant from MnDOT.

It is important to maintain the pedestrian infrastructure around the school. Having clearly identified crosswalks, pedestrian lanes, and no parking areas will help to make the school zone safer for all users.

The road art campaign at Prairie Elementary will consist of filling in existing crosswalks with road art along 1st Avenue Southwest. Road art is one way of making crosswalks more visible and increasing the neighborhood charm of your community. Road art can be unique and may include painting school mascots, handprints, footprints, or other approved images in the crosswalk.

This road art campaign will encourage students to use crosswalks since they are taking part in the creation of the road art in the crosswalks. There will also be an educational component. While the students are creating the road art, teachers can educate students about proper crossing protocol. This campaign will also educate the public on yielding to pedestrians and slowing down in school zones. Students will create drawings and flyers about what they have learned regarding proper crossing protocol, slowing down in school zones, and vehicles yielding to pedestrians. These drawings and flyers can then be displayed in the windows of different businesses in the community. Below are examples of existing road art in other communities.

Figure #45


Crosswalk Road Art Examples



Figure #46

Crosswalks to be Painted with Road Art – Prairie Elementary



Crosswalks that were painted as part of the SRTS mini-grant 

Walking School Bus – Prairie Elementary

Goal: Increase walking and biking to Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Work with A.C.E., senior volunteer program, to implement a walking school bus.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

As of the 2015-2016 school year, students at Prairie Elementary were not allowed to walk or bike to school. This informal policy was established due to the lack of pedestrian infrastructure around the school. School Administrators are working towards making improvements and then allowing students to walk and bike to school. Once walking and biking to school is allowed, a walking school bus should be implemented with senior volunteers.

A walking school bus is a group of students who walk to school together. The group can be led by an adult or by older students. You want to run the walking school bus like a real bus, so you should establish a route, meeting points, meeting times, and a regular schedule. The walking school bus can start small with a couple families and can easily grow when visibility of the route increases.

Parents often cite safety issues as one of the primary reasons they are reluctant to allow their children to walk or bike to school. Having an adult or older student may help reduce those worries for families who live within walking or bicycling distance to school. A group of students is also more visible than students walking alone, so safety is increased with numbers.

In Worthington a walking school bus could be established from neighborhoods adjacent to Prairie Elementary. Students who live between the gathering points and Prairie Elementary could join the walking school bus. A walking school bus encourages students to walk to school, since they are in a group with their friends.



No Cell Phone Use While in the School Driving Zones

Goal: Increase safety in the Prairie Elementary School Zone.

Strategy: Prohibit cell phone use while driving in the Prairie Elementary drop off and pick up loops.

5 E(s): Education and Enforcement

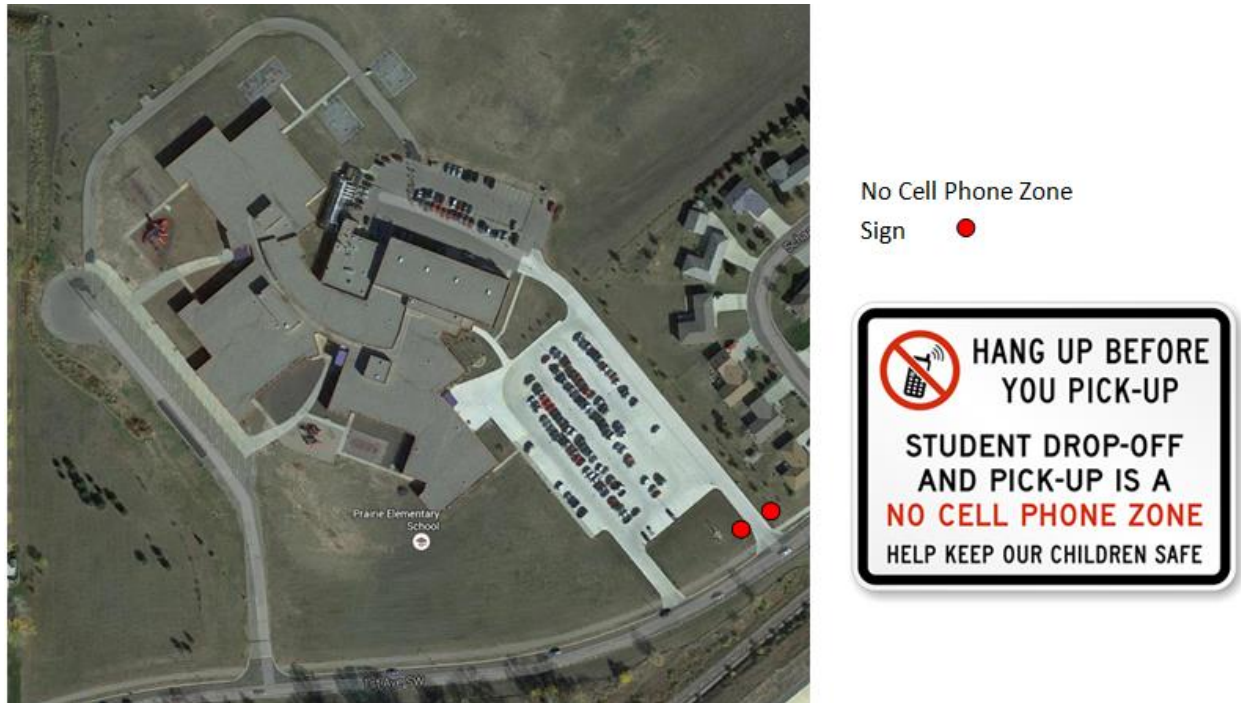
Existing Conditions:

School zones are increasingly becoming areas that have a high density of traffic during arrival and departure. Congestion is an issue in the drop off and pick up loops at Prairie Elementary. During arrival and departure, there are higher traffic volumes. The drop off and pick up loop has been described by parents as chaotic.

School staff and other parents have observed parents dropping off and picking up students while talking on their cell phone. Distracted driving is a threat to the safety of other drivers and pedestrians.

Prohibiting cell phone use in the drop off and pick up loop will help to increase the safety of the loop for all users. "Text messaging requires visual, manual, and cognitive attention from the driver, so it is by far the most alarming distraction."²⁸ A sign prohibiting cell phone use will be placed at the entrance to the drop off and pick up loop. Refer to the map below for sign location and an example sign.

Figure #47 **No Cell Phone Use While Driving Zone**



Breakfast Walking Program – The Morning Mile

Goal: Increase physical activity before school at Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Research the Morning Mile walking/running program.

Launch a walking program during the breakfast time period at Prairie Elementary.

5 E(s): Enforcement

Existing Conditions:

Being active before and after school will help child achieve the recommended 60 or more minutes of physical activity each day. Students who are active before school arrive more focused and ready to learn. The Morning Mile has been successfully implemented in over 150 schools. "Principals, teachers, and parents rave about the benefits of implementing this daily before school walking/running program."²⁹ They say:

²⁸ Distraction.gov. What is Distracted Driving. Accessed: 1/5/15. Available: <http://www.distraction.gov/content/get-the-facts/facts-and-statistics.html>

²⁹ The Morning Mile. Accessed: 10/8//15. Available: <http://morningmile.com/apply-for-a-free-starter-kit/>

- Kids arrive early to participate, so tardies have decreased.
- Expending youthful energy during the Morning Mile before the school day begins, allows students to arrive at class calm, focused and ready to learn.
- Significant improvement in behavior has been observed in students who run before class.
- Enthusiasm for school in general has increased, since children are so excited about this program.
- Quality changes in body weight have been noticed in many students
- Some students have reportedly being taken off of medicines for ADHD.
- Parents note a rise in their children's self-esteem.
- Parents also observe a new interest in healthy eating habits (even though we're not preaching about eating at all!)
- Students enjoy the quality social time with friends before school and ability to earn rewards.
- Student athletes improve at their sport because of increased endurance.
- Children dropped off early have something productive to do.

If students arrive at Prairie Elementary before 7:45 a.m. they go to the cafeteria whether they are eating breakfast or not. Students who do not want breakfast or are already finished eating are dismissed to their class's commons areas at 7:45 a.m. The commons areas are grade specific and are located outside of those grade's classrooms. Students sitting in the commons areas are supervised by paraprofessionals. These paraprofessionals read to the students, do math trivia with the students, or lead the students in song. Students will be in the commons area for a maximum of 20 to 30 minutes.

A morning walking program would be a great opportunity for students to be active before school. As the population of Prairie Elementary grows, a walking program in the gym will also help to decrease congestion and crowding in the commons areas. Walking in the gym may not work every morning, since physical education staff sometimes has to setup during this time. Creating a schedule and providing access for walking or running in the gym will help to encourage physical activity on days the gym is available.

Delivery Policy Prairie Elementary

Goal: Decrease congestion during arrival and departure at Prairie Elementary.

Strategy: Create a written delivery policy that restricts deliveries during arrival and departure.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

A delivery policy was updated as part of the Worthington SRTS Planning Process. The deliver policy is below. The policy outlines times that deliveries will not be accepted. The policy also outlined the door deliveries are accepted at.

Figure #48

Prairie Elementary School Delivery Policy

Prairie Elementary School Delivery Policy

(1) Time of delivery

Delivery is prohibited during arrival and departure when school is in session. Arrival is from 7:30AM to 8:30 AM. Departure is from 2:30PM to 3:30PM. Deliveries will not be accepted during these times.

It is the responsibility of the distributor to research when school is in session. Exceptions to this policy have to be discussed with the school administrators listed below.

(2) Location of delivery

Deliveries will be accepted at the northeast entrance of the Prairie Elementary School in Worthington. Distributors are cleared to park in the no parking zone by the northeast entrance.

(3) Problems

Problems associated with the delivery of products are to be discussed with the school administrators listed below. Agreements made with other school staff have to be approved by the school administrators listed below.



Distributors use Northwest entrance ●



School Administrators:

Heidi Meyer
Prairie Elementary Principal
507-727-1250

Cory Vanbriesen
Assistant Principal
507-727-1250

Toni Baartman
Assistant Principal
507-727-1250



Worthington SRTS Program Vision:

"Worthington School District, in collaboration with the City of Worthington and community partners, will work to create a safe and connected network of routes to and from school through evaluation, engineering, enforcement, education, and encouragement of walking or biking."

SRTS Awareness Campaign

Goal: Increase awareness of Safe Routes to School in the City of Worthington.

Strategy: Develop a student art campaign to increase pedestrian safety within the City of Worthington.

Work with the Regional Towards Zero Death coordinator to implement the art campaign.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Education is a critical component of pedestrian safety. A pedestrian related art campaign is one way to help increase the awareness of laws that help to protect pedestrians. The Regional Towards Zero Death coordinator can help provide ideas to the Prairie Elementary art teachers. Paintings and other informational drawings can be posted around Worthington.

The public service announcement side of the campaign should be done in the spring and fall. A biannual campaign to raise the awareness of walking and biking can be tailored to Worthington. This will help to educate residents and encourage walking and biking throughout Worthington.

The Minnesota Crosswalk Law

- ▶ Drivers **MUST** stop for crossing pedestrians at marked crosswalks and at all intersections without crosswalks or stop lights.
- ▶ Pedestrians **MUST** obey traffic signs and signals at all intersections that have them.
- ▶ Vehicles stopped for pedestrians can proceed once the pedestrian has completely crossed the lane in front of the stopped vehicle.
- ▶ Pedestrians **MUST NOT** enter a crosswalk if a vehicle is approaching and it is impossible for the driver to stop. There is no defined distance that a pedestrian must abide by before entering the crosswalk; use common sense.
- ▶ When a vehicle is stopped at an intersection to allow pedestrians to cross the roadway, drivers of other vehicles approaching from the rear **MUST NOT** pass the stopped vehicle. Failure to obey the law is a misdemeanor. A second violation within one year is a gross misdemeanor.³⁰



³⁰ Minnesota Safety Council. Accessed: 4/17/15. Available:
<http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/facts/factsheet.cfm?qs=BD3BE1A6DFA3335E>

1st Avenue Southwest Pedestrian Infrastructure

Goal: Maintain pedestrian infrastructure along the trail on 1st Avenue Southwest around Prairie Elementary and other safe routes to school.

Strategy: Maintain the crosswalks on the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest around Prairie Elementary that were painted as part of the Minnesota Department of Transportation Mini-grant program.

Maintain the trail along 1st Avenue Southwest.

Maintain pedestrian infrastructure along safe routes to school.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Education

Existing Conditions:

The Prairie Elementary SRTS Team has identified a remote drop-off that can be used for the Walk to School Day event. This drop-off is roughly five blocks from Prairie Elementary at the Lakeside Church. There are five intersections that require crosswalks to make this walk route safer for students. There are also two school driveways that require crossing guards and crosswalks. The driveways are the major entrance and exit points to the school.

Prairie Elementary submitted a non-infrastructure grant application to MnDOT during the spring of 2015 requesting paint for crosswalks and crossing guard supplies. Prairie Elementary received this grant and the crosswalks were painted during the summer of 2015. The crosswalks and driveways are identified below.

Prairie Elementary is also requesting incentives for the Walk to School Day event. Funding for incentives was also part of the non-infrastructure grant. These incentives will help to make walk to school day events more successful by increasing participation.

► Crosswalks Locations

- Knollwood Drive
- Schaap Drive (two crosswalks)
- Pleasant Street
- Minnesota Drive
- Linda Lane

► School Patrol Locations


- Entrance driveway
- Exit driveway
- Bus driveway

It is critical to maintain the crosswalks along the trail leading to Prairie Elementary. Since the crosswalks were painted along the trail by Prairie Elementary, the City of Worthington painted crosswalks along the entirety of the trail. The City of Worthington wanted crosswalk painting along the trail to be consistent, so crosswalks along the trail will be maintained at a similar level to other crosswalks in Worthington.

Figure #49

Critical Crosswalks to Maintain – Prairie Elementary



Crosswalks that were painted as part of the SRTS mini-grant 

The trail along 1st Avenue Southwest is also a critical safe route to school. This trail should be maintained to ensure students have a safe and convenient route to Prairie Elementary. Snow removal is part of regular maintenance and the trail should be a priority when clearing snow.

When other safe routes to school are established around Prairie Elementary, these routes should be maintained to ensure safe and convenient routes to Prairie Elementary. Refer to Prairie Elementary Infrastructure Goals and Strategies for outlined routes that are needed around Prairie Elementary.

Worthington Middle School Infrastructure Goals & Strategies

Drop off/Pick up Loop – Middle School

Goal: Improve safety for all users in the drop off and pick up loop at the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Add pedestrian safety improvements to the drop off and pick up loop.

Reconfigure the drop off and pick up loop and improve signage.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Student drop-off and pick-up occurs in the north parking lot at the Worthington Middle School. It is very dangerous for students to cross the north parking lot during arrival and departure. There is no connection from the trail on the northeast corner of the north parking lot to the sidewalk around the school. Currently, students have to cross the parking lot to get to school.

Figure #50 North Parking Lot Sidewalk/Trail Gap



Sidewalk / Trail Gap



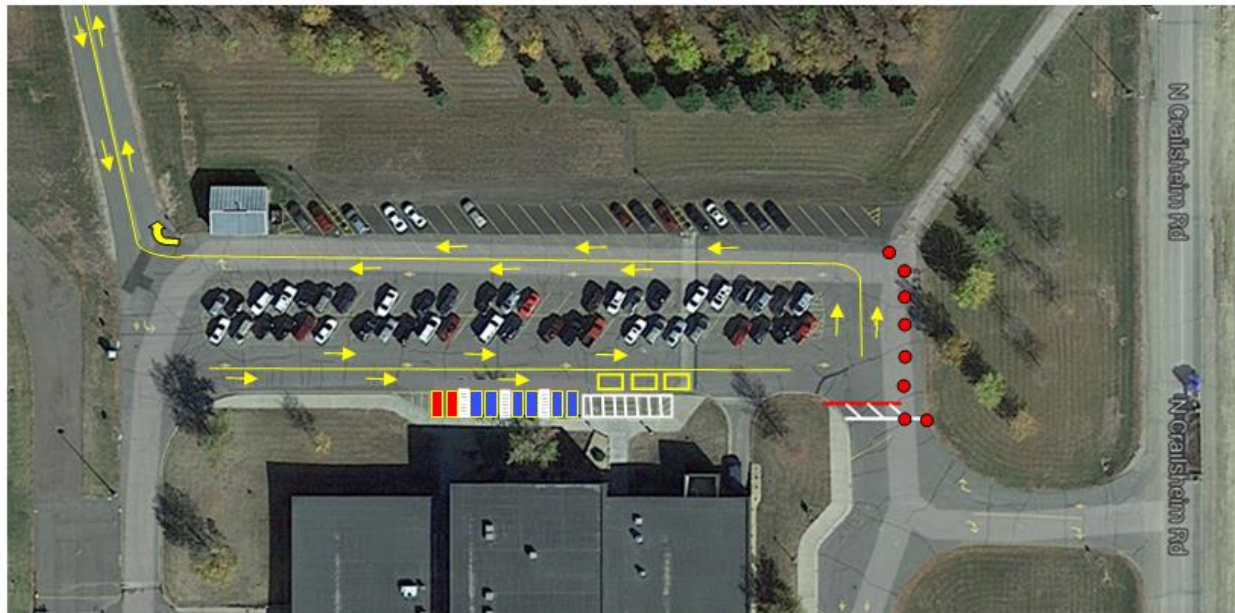
Congestion is also an issue in the drop off and pick up loop. Parents that are familiar with the loop help to keep the flow of traffic defined to the correct area. Parents that are not familiar with the loop impede traffic flows, drop off students before they reach the drop off zone, and pull out of the parent drop off lane and pass parents who are waiting. The drop off and pick up loop has been described by parents as problematic.

Pilot Solution - Add pedestrian safety improvements to the drop off and pick up loop

Install a speed bump with a painted crosswalk across the parking lot. Along the east side of the parking lot, establish a pedestrian lane. This lane will be outlined with fixed barrier posts.

Figure #51

Pilot Solution – North Parking Lot



Fixed Barrier Post	●	Handicap Parking	■
Directional Striping	—	Short Term Parking	■
One-way Parent Drop-off Sign	●	Drop off Zone	■
Speed Bump	—	No Parking	■



Speed Bump



Fixed Barrier Post

Permanent Solution - Reconfigure the drop off and pick up loop and improve signage.

Add permanent curb extensions to direct traffic around the drop off and pick up loop. There will be a one-way entrance to the loop from the east. To direct traffic there will be a combination of paint and signage. A crosswalk will also be striped between the curb extension and the pedestrian lane.

Figure #52

Permanent Solution – North Parking Lot



As part of the Pilot Solution and Permanent Solution, additional safety measures will be added to improve traffic flow, visibility, and safety for all users. Traffic lanes will be painted to help direct parent and teacher traffic. Arrows will be painted in these traffic lanes to help direct traffic. All of the parking along the north side of the Middle School will be converted to handicap and short term parking. These improvements will all help to make the drop off and pick up loop safer for all users and will encourage students to walk and bike to school.

Middle School Sidewalk Gap

Goal: Improve safety for all pedestrians around the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Complete the sidewalk network around the school.

5 E(s): Encouragement, and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

There is a gap in the sidewalk that runs around the school. At the Middle School bus drop off and pick up is on the east side, and parent drop off and pick up is on the north side. Not having a continuous sidewalk connecting the main entrance on the east side with the park/drop-off and pick-up entrance on the north side discourages walking to school.

During the winter, students walking to school either have to walk across the snow or walk along the side of the parking lot. During the rest of the year, students have to walk across the grass or walk along the side of the parking lot. This is not ADA compliant, so students with disabilities are not able to walk around the northeast corner of the Middle School. The northeast corner of the Middle School is a direct route to the Woodland Hills Neighborhood.

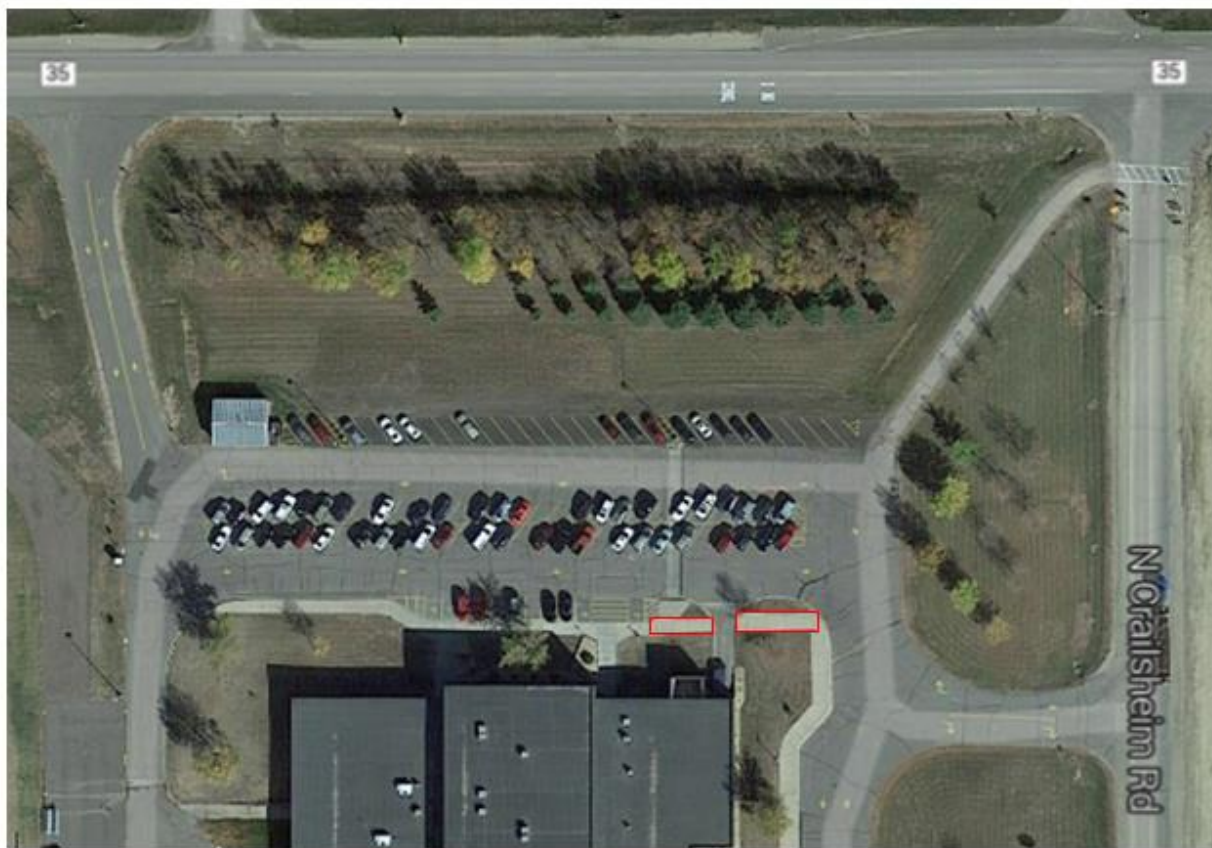
Having a continuous sidewalk network around the Middle School would encourage students to walk and bike to school. A continuous sidewalk network would make it safer for students walking and biking to school. Below is a map outlining the gap in the sidewalk network and ADA accessibility issues.

Figure #53 **Middle School Sidewalk Gap**



Sidewalk Gap





New Sidewalk 

Neighborhood Connection Campaign

Goal: Increase connectivity between walkable neighborhoods around the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Fill in sidewalk gaps in the Homewood Hills Neighborhood that serve as a Residential Collector to the Worthington Middle School.

Fill in sidewalk gaps in the Elmwood Avenue/Park Avenue Neighborhood that serve as a Residential Collector to the Worthington Middle School.

Fill in sidewalk gaps in the College Way/Thompson Avenue Neighborhood that serve as a Residential Collector to **the** Worthington Middle School.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Different streets require different pedestrian amenities. A Complete Street does not have a singular definition. A Complete Street is any street you feel safe walking or biking on. A Complete Street does not have to have a sidewalk on both sides of the street, but you have to consider all users when deciding if it is safe for pedestrians.

Younger children may need a sidewalk to separate them from vehicle traffic. Younger children may be learning how to ride a bike, so it is not safe for them to share the road with vehicle traffic. When making a decision whether a street needs sidewalks or not, the function of the street needs to be considered.

The City of Worthington adopted a Complete Streets Policy on March 25, 2013. During the planning process for the Worthington Active Living Plan, the Complete Streets Policy was discussed. The discussion centered on how to implement the Complete Streets Policy.

A Pedestrian Functional Classification System was discussed and proposed as one way to implement Worthington's Complete Streets Policy. A Pedestrian Functional Classification System would provide direction regarding consistent implementation of pedestrian infrastructure. Pedestrian infrastructure would be based on the function of the street, traffic volumes, and traffic speeds. Pedestrian infrastructure decisions will no longer be on a case by case basis.

During the fall of 2015, the City of Worthington was in the process of classifying the streets in regards to the Pedestrian Classification System. Streets around the Middle School that are classified as a Connector Street or Neighborhood Connector Street should have sidewalks or trails established. Below are three classifications that can be used to identify the pedestrian amenities a street needs.

► Connector Streets

- Connects primary destinations
- Highest traffic volumes streets
- Require the highest level of pedestrian amenities - Sidewalks on both sides of the street or a trail conveniently located along the corridor that connects key locations.

► Neighborhood Connector Streets

- Connects Residential Streets to Connector Streets

- Medium level traffic volume streets
 - Require some pedestrian amenities – A sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is required or a trail conveniently located that connects the neighborhood to key locations. The sidewalk needs to have continuity throughout, so the route is not jumping back and forth from one side of the street to the other.
- Residential Streets
- All other streets
 - Lower traffic speeds
 - Lower traffic volumes
 - Sidewalks are encouraged but there is no sidewalk requirement

Worthington Middle School Non-infrastructure Goals & Strategies

Right Turn Only – onto Crailsheim Road

Goal: Decrease congestion in the Middle School parking leading to Crailsheim Road.

Strategy: Prohibit left hand turns onto Crailsheim Road from the Middle School parking lot.

5 E(s): Encouragement, and Engineering

Existing Conditions:

Congestion around the Worthington Middle School is an issue during arrival and departure. Congestion becomes more of an issue when parents exiting the drop off and pick up loop try to turn left out of the east exit onto North Crailsheim. School administrators are working to create more of a defined drop off and pick up loop that encourages entering and exiting onto West Oxford Street.

Adding a right turn only sign along with a no left turn sign will help to manage congestion during arrival and departure. The Planning Team recommends having a right turn only sign as positive reinforcement. Visual signs are also recommended, so signs can be easily interpreted by non-English speaking drivers. Below are signs the Planning Team recommends.

Figure #54

Right Turn Only Signage



Crossing Flags

Goal: Improve the safety of crossings around the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Add crossing flags to the following intersections:

- On West Oxford Street with the intersection of North Crailsheim Road
- On North Crailsheim Road with the intersection of West Oxford Street
- On West Oxford Street with the intersection of Sally's Alley
- On North Crailsheim Road by the southeast exit to the Middle School

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

The crossings identified above are the primary crossings for students walking and biking to school. There are painted crosswalks and crossing signage at all of these intersections. There is also 'Rapid Flashing Beacons' at the intersection of West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim. Planning Team still has identified these intersections as dangerous intersections due to traffic speeds and traffic volumes.

Adding crossing flags can help to increase the visibility of students crossing around the Middle School. Crossing flags can be purchased relatively cheaply and can be stored on each side of the intersections. The flags can be stored in a holder that can be fixed to a street sign or utility pole. Periodically, school staff will have to check the flags and distribute the flags equally on each side of the crossing.

Figure #55

Crossing Flag Examples



Walking School Bus – Middle School

Goal: Increase walking and biking to the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Work with A.C.E., senior volunteer program, to implement a walking school bus.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

A walking school bus is a group of students who are walking to school together. The group can be led by an adult or by older students. You want to run the walking school bus like a real bus, so you should establish a route, meetings points, meeting times, and a regular schedule. The walking school bus can start small with a couple families and can easily grow when visibility of the route increases.

Parents often cite safety issues as one of the primary reasons they are reluctant to allow their children to walk or bike to school. Having an adult or older student may help reduce those worries for families who live within walking or bicycling distance to school. A group of students is also more visible than students walking alone, so safety is increased with numbers.

In Worthington a walking school bus could be established from the Homewood Hills neighborhood, the Elmwood Avenue/Park Avenue neighborhood and other neighborhoods around the Middle School. Students who live between the gathering points and the Middle School could join the walking school bus. A walking school bus encourages students to walk to school, since they are in a group with their friends.



No Parking Striping

Goal: Increase no parking compliance along the northeast corner of the Middle School.

Strategy: Paint the curb yellow along the northeast corner of the Middle School.

Add no parking signage along the northeast corner of the Middle School.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

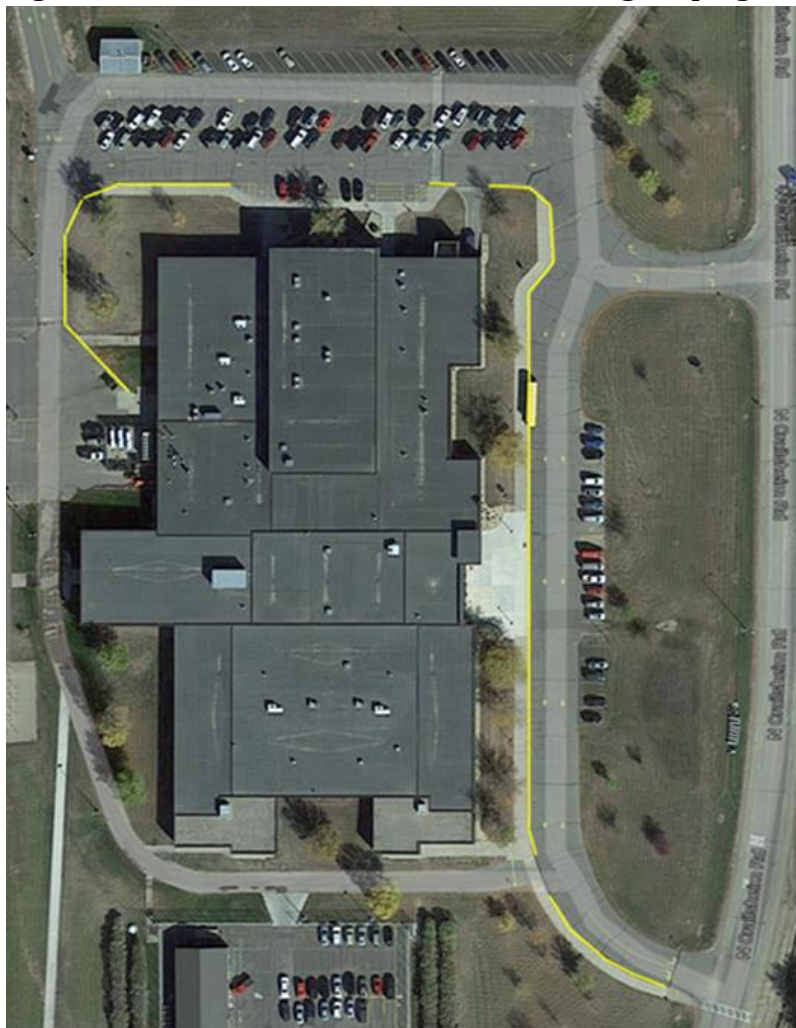
During our walking audit at the Worthington Middle School, parents parked by the northeast corner of the sidewalk that runs along the Middle School. This can add to the congestion during arrival and departure. A parked vehicle can block the flow of traffic and decrease visibility for students crossing the parking lot that connects to the trail.

Painting the curbs and adding no parking signage to the northeast corner of the Middle School will help to decrease congestion and make it safer for pedestrians. Parents will be more aware that they should

not park along the curb in this area. Enforcement may have to be part of this strategy to ensure compliance.

Figure #56

No Parking Striping – Middle School



Striping



Playground Promotion – Middle School

Goal: Encourage playground use during non-school hours.

Strategy: Install welcoming playground signage.

Add the Middle School playground to the list of parks on the City of Worthington's webpage.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Public school property is public property, but some community members may not be aware of this. Promoting the playground as a community asset will help to increase use. It is important to market the

playground for public use during non-school hours. The school does use the playground during school hours, so this time restriction needs to be noted on the welcoming playground signage and on the City of Worthington's webpage.

The Planning Team recommends having a natural wood sign by the playground. This sign would say welcome in multiple languages. Welcome can be painted on the wood sign or on a metal sign. There would also be a sign stating that playground is open to the public during non-school hours and other playground rules.

Figure # 43

Playground Promotion Sign Example



Walking Encouragement Program – Middle School Mileage Club

Goal: Increase walking and biking to the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Create a frequent walker and biker program at the Worthington Middle School.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

To create an effective walking and biking program at the Middle School, a pilot walking and biking program for the 5th graders is going to be developed first. Working with one grade will help to make the program more manageable as Middle School staff develops the program. Students that participate as 5th graders can also continue being active in the program the following year.

The SRTS Mileage Club will record the number of students walking and biking to school. Grades at the Middle School are broken into sections (A,B,C...). These sections can be the teams for the SRTS Mileage Club. A daily classroom tally will be conducted in the fall, winter, and spring.

Students who are not able to walk or bike to school can participate by walking on the track. At the end of the year the student section that has the most miles will be given a party or other prizes. This three week competition over the course of the year will help to encourage students to walk and bike to school.

Figure #44 SRTS Mileage Club – Daily Classroom Tally Sheet

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Activity							
Fall							
Week1							
Winter							
Week1							
Spring							
Week1							
Average							

Activity: w=walk b=bike s=sport

Conduct a hand count of how many students were active during a week. By doing so, we can raise awareness of the benefits of being active. This sheet also allows us to conduct a competition between classrooms (homerooms).

Parent: _____
Teacher: _____
Grade: _____
Dates (week): _____



Road Art Campaign – Middle School

Goal: Increase the safety of pedestrians around the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Implement a wide road art campaign at the Worthington Middle School.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

The majority of striping around the Worthington Middle School happens annually. It is important to maintain the pedestrian infrastructure around the school. Highly visible crosswalks, pedestrian lanes, and no parking areas help to make the school zone safer for all users.

The road art campaign at the Middle School will consist of filling in existing crosswalks with road art. Road art is one way of making crosswalks more visible and increasing the neighborhood charm of your community. Road art can be unique and may include painting school mascots, handprints, footprints, or other approved images in the crosswalk.

This road art campaign will encourage students to use crosswalks since they are taking part in the creation of the road art in the crosswalks. There will also be an educational component. While the students are creating the road art, teachers can educate students about proper crossing protocol. This campaign will also educate the public on yielding to pedestrians and slowing down in school zones. Students will create drawings and flyers about what they have learned regarding proper crossing protocol, slowing down in school zones, and vehicles yielding to pedestrians. These drawings and flyers can then be displayed in the windows of different businesses in the community. Below are examples of existing road art in other communities.

Figure #57

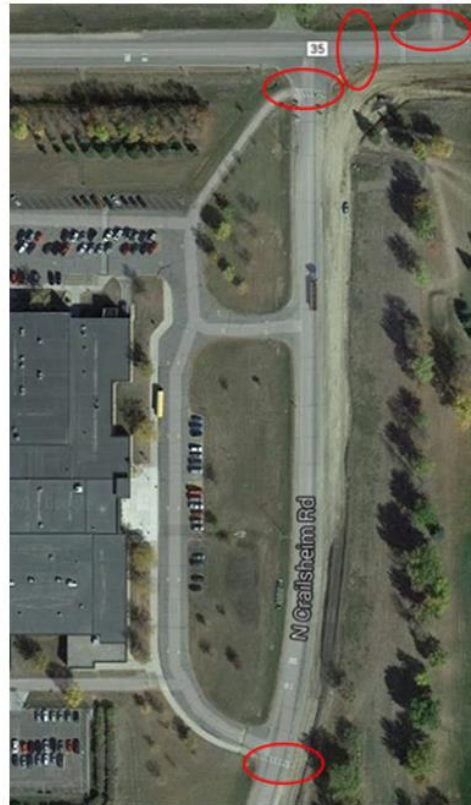
Crosswalk Road Art Examples



Figure #58

Crosswalks to be Painted with Road Art – Middle School

- ▶ Crosswalks Locations
 - Oakwood Drive
 - W Oxford St & N Crailsheim Rd
 - N Crailsheim Rd & W Oxford St
 - Southern School Crossing
- Crosswalk Locations 



School Zone Speed Limit

Goal: Establish a School Zone Speed Limit around the Worthington Middle School on West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road.

Strategy: Work with Nobles County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation to establish a school zone speed limit around the Worthington Middle School on West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Traffic speeds and traffic volumes along West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road have been identified by multiple parents as a barrier to walking and biking to school. In response to these concerns, Nobles County Public Works has requested MnDOT to conduct a speed study. Two speed studies have been conducted by MnDOT in recent years. Both of the speed studies show that a lower speed limit is not warranted. Since a speed study was conducted, MnDOT is resisting a school zone speed limit. The speed study sites good visibility along West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road, but pedestrian safety is still a concern for parents and Worthington SRTS Team members.

The existing speed limit along West Oxford Street and North Crailsheim Road by the Middle School is 40 mph. The effects of vehicle speeds on reaction time and pedestrian fatalities are significant.

Establishing a 20 mph speed limit from a 40 mph speed limit dramatically reduces the odds of pedestrian death from being struck by a motor vehicle. A vehicle traveling 20 mph compared to 40 mph can stop much faster.

The Worthington SRTS Team recommends a 20 mph speed limit. The speed limit will only be in place from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. or when children are present. Nobles County Public Works is going to continue to work with MnDOT to establish a school zone speed limit.

Table #11 Effects of Vehicle Speed on Pedestrian Fatalities

Vehicle Speed	Odds of Pedestrian Death, (Source 1)	Odds of Pedestrian Death, (Source 2)
20 mph	5%	5%
30 mph	45%	37%
40 mph	85%	83%

NHMRC Road Accident Research Unit³¹

Figure #59 Radar Speed Sign – West Oxford Street (east bound)



During the Middle School Walking Audit, a speed of 50 mph was captured by the radar speed sign on West Oxford Street by the Middle School. The vehicle was east bound by the entrance to the north parking lot before you reach the intersection with North Crailsheim.

Delivery Policy – Middle School

Goal: Decrease congestion during arrival and departure at the Middle School.

Strategy: Create a written delivery policy that restricts deliveries during arrival and departure.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

A delivery policy was updated as part of the Worthington SRTS Planning Process. The delivery policy is below. The policy outlined times that deliveries will not be accepted. The policy also outlined the doors deliveries are accepted at.

³¹ NHMRC Road Accident Research Unit. Effects of Vehicle Speed on Pedestrian Fatalities. Accessed: 1/5/15.
Available: <http://humantransport.org/sidewalks/SpeedKills.htm>

Figure #60

Worthington Middle School Delivery Policy

Worthington Middle School Delivery Policy

(1) Time of delivery

Delivery is prohibited during arrival, lunch time, and departure when school is in session. Arrival is from 7:00AM to 8:00AM. Lunch time is from 10:30AM to 1:00PM. Departure is from 2:00PM to 3:00PM. Deliveries will not be accepted during these times.

It is the responsibility of the distributor to research when school is in session. Exceptions to this policy have to be discussed with the school administrator listed below.

(2) Location of delivery

Deliveries will be accepted at the west entrance of the Middle School in Worthington. Distributors are cleared to park in the no parking zone by the west entrance.

(3) Problems

Problems associated with the delivery of products are to be discussed with the school administrators listed below. Agreements made with other school staff have to be approved by the school administrators listed below.



Distributors use west entrance ●



School Administrators:

Jeff Luke
Middle School Principal
507-376-4174



Worthington SRTS Program Vision:

“Worthington School District, in collaboration with the City of Worthington and community partners, will work to create a safe and connected network of routes to and from school through evaluation, engineering, enforcement, education, and encouragement of walking or biking.”

Baseball Field Remote Drop-off

Goal: Increase physical activity before school.

Strategy: Develop a remote drop off and pick up in the baseball diamond parking lot.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Figure #61 Remote Drop off – Middle School

Existing Conditions:

Traffic separation is needed at the Worthington Middle School to address congestion in the north parking lot. The drop off and pick up loop is currently in the north parking lot. This lot becomes congested during arrival and departure. There are parents dropping off and picking up students, teachers parking, and space is limited.

Traffic separation is often used to address the safety of pedestrians in school zones. Traffic separation in school zones refers to having designated areas for buses, parents dropping off or picking up students, walkers, bikers, and parking. Separating traffic flows more effectively will help to create a safer environment during arrival and departure, which are times of higher traffic volumes.

Buses are currently separated from the parent drop off and pick up loop, walkers, bikers, and parking. To decrease congestion and separate parent traffic from teacher traffic and parking, a remote drop off should be developed. The remote drop off and pick up could be constructed in the baseball diamond parking lot. There is a paved trail connecting the baseball diamond parking lot and the Middle School.

The remote drop off and pick up would encourage students to walk a block to and from the entrance to the Middle School. Being more active before and after school will help child achieve the recommended 60 or more minutes of physical activity each day. Students will arrive more focused and ready to learn. Above is a map depicting the remote drop off and pick up.



Drop off & Pick up for Individuals with Disabilities

Goal: Improve safety and decrease congestion in the drop off and pick up loop on the north side of the Worthington Middle School.

Strategy: Establish back angle parking along the north side of the Worthington Middle School.

5 E(s): Engineering and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

The special needs bus currently drops off and picks up students in the north parking lot. There are handicap parking spots by door #14 on the northeast corner of the Middle School that are used by the special needs bus. The north parking lot is very busy during arrival and departure. There are parents dropping off and picking up students by door #14.

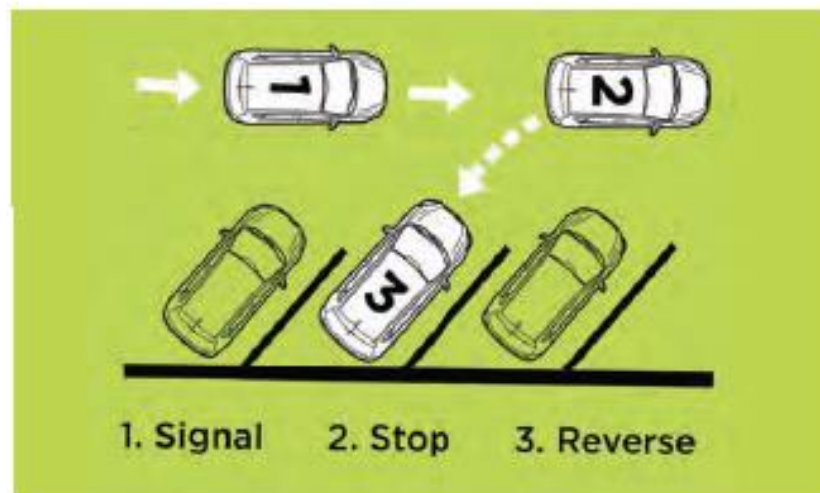
To decrease congestion and increase safety, the SRTS Team recommends establishing back angle parking on the north side of the Middle School. The special bus would not have to back into a line of waiting parents and it would be safer for unloading and loading special needs students. There are also handicap parking spots on the north side of the school along with regular parking. Establishing back angle parking would make it safer and will help to decrease congestion when the special needs bus is trying to enter and exit the parking lot.

Quick Facts regarding Back Angle Parking

- Parking maneuver is similar to but easier than parallel parking
- Vehicle doors and trunk are more readily accessible from sidewalk
- Improved visibility of traffic, especially when leaving the stall

Figure #62

How Back Angle Parking Works



Worthington School District Goals & Strategies

The Goals and Strategies outlined under this section are not specific to an individual school, but cover the entire Worthington School District.

Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum

Goal: Improve pedestrian safety within the Worthington School District.

Strategy: Support the Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum.

Integrate the Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum into the Worthington School District Curriculum.

5 E(s): Education and Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Walk! Bike! Fun! is a pedestrian and bike safety curriculum that was developed specifically for Minnesota. “WALK! BIKE! FUN! is a comprehensive curriculum that teaches safe traffic behavior through classroom activities and on-the-bike skills practice. The goals of the extensive lesson plans teach skills to children to walk and bicycle safely — building confidence and helping them stay safe, active, and healthy.”³²

Six benefits to walking or biking to school:

- To increase academic achievement — research shows that students who exercise before school concentrate better in class.
- To increase happiness — children that engage in physical activity are more likely to be happy.
- To lower your carbon footprint — a whole school committed to walking and biking can make an enormous impact on reducing carbon dioxide emissions and harmful pollutants.
- To help reduce traffic accidents — the benefit of schools that teach walking and bicycling skills result in up to a forty-nine percent decrease in childhood pedestrian and bicycle collision rates.
- To foster independence — children who walk or bike to school are more likely to walk to other destinations in the neighborhood.



³² Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum. Accessed: 4/29/15. Available: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/pdf/toolkit/walk-bike-fun-curriculum.pdf>

- To increase physical activity — the CDC recommends that children get sixty minutes of physical activity every day.

Active Living Support

Goal: Increase walking and biking within the City of Worthington

Strategy: Support the creation of a separate Active Living tab on City of Worthington’s website under Parks & Campground.

Support projects and campaigns that encourage Active Living in the City of Worthington.

5 E(s): Encouragement and Education

Existing Conditions:

Marketing is a critical role in getting people active. Visibility plays a big role in promoting walking and biking and increasing safety along primary routes. As more people walk a route, the visibility and culture changes. Drivers become more aware of walkers and bikers and safety improves. This process takes time, but it starts with promoting existing routes.

The City of Worthington does have a trail and a well-developed network of sidewalks. There are some sidewalk gaps, but hopefully over time the critical sidewalk gaps will be filled. Outlining routes and ways to be active will help to increase walking and biking and the health of the community.

Being active does not only affect physical health, but it also affects emotional health, community safety, and community health. Community members that walk and bike interact with other community members. This helps to increase cooperation and safety in the community. Community members are eyes and ears for law enforcement, so routes can become safer for all users.

Having an Active Living tab under Parks and Campground can be used to highlight:

- Trails
- Bike Routes (distance of the routes)
- Walking Routes (distance of the route)
- Community Events (ways to be active)
- Trail Etiquette
- Worthington Active Living Plan
- Worthington Safe Routes to School Plan

New Busing Policy

Goal: Make busing safer, more efficient, and more equitable while promoting a more active lifestyle

Strategy: Implement a new busing policy based on safety, efficiency, equity, and promoting an active lifestyle.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

There are around 151 bus stops within the City of Worthington. There are a number of stops within a block of another stop. This does not encourage physical activity and having such a high number of bus stops is inefficient, unequitable, and increases the risk of an incident with a pedestrian. Below is a map of bus stops within Worthington.

Safety: “Most school bus fatalities occur while school buses are stopped to load/unload children. More stops mean greater potential for school bus fatalities.”³³ In the city limits of Lakefield there is an efficient bus route in place that promotes walking to the bus stops to keep the number of stops down.

Efficiency: Managing the number of bus stops will help to keep the in town bus route efficient. It is important to annually review the stops, so efficiency can be maintained.

Equity: By basing the busing routes on safety and efficiency, there will be no conflict based on favoring one child or family over another. Students that do not require any special assistance will be required to walk to the bus stop, which will not exceed 3 blocks. Free bussing will not be available to students who live within a 1/2 mile from school, unless special assistance is required. Basing the busing routes on safety and efficiency will create a more equitable busing system.

Active Lifestyle: It is recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention that children and adolescents should get one hour or more of physical activity every day.³⁴ Children today are less active and may need to be encouraged more often. Having children walk to the bus stop will help them to reach their one hour or more goal of daily activity.

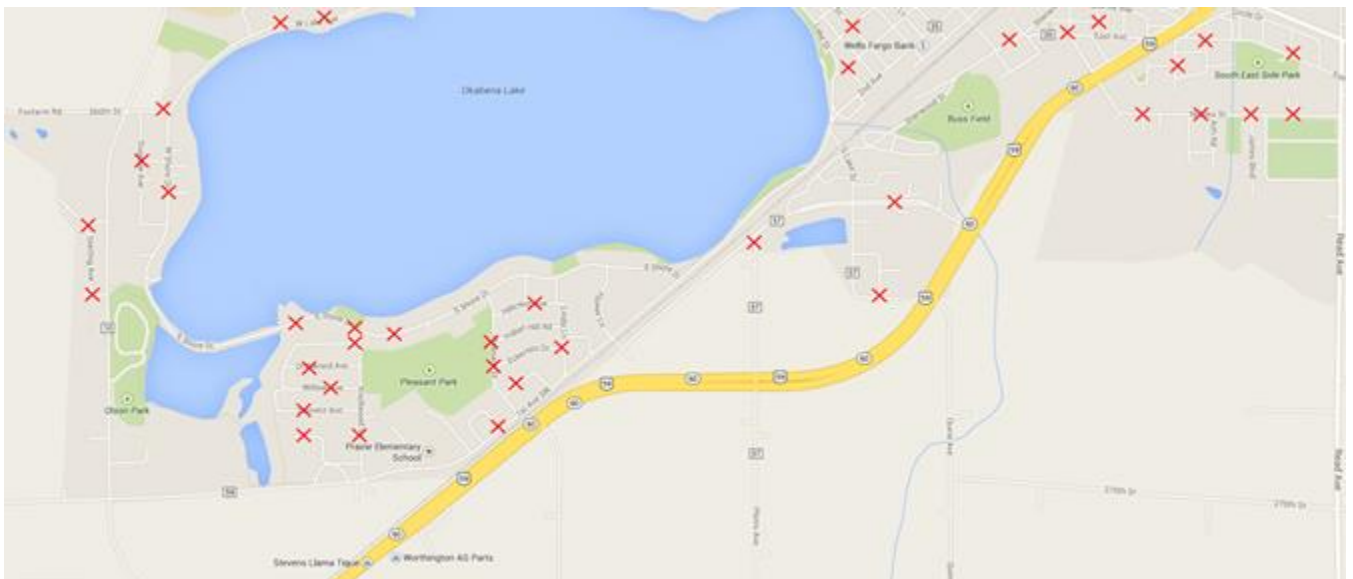
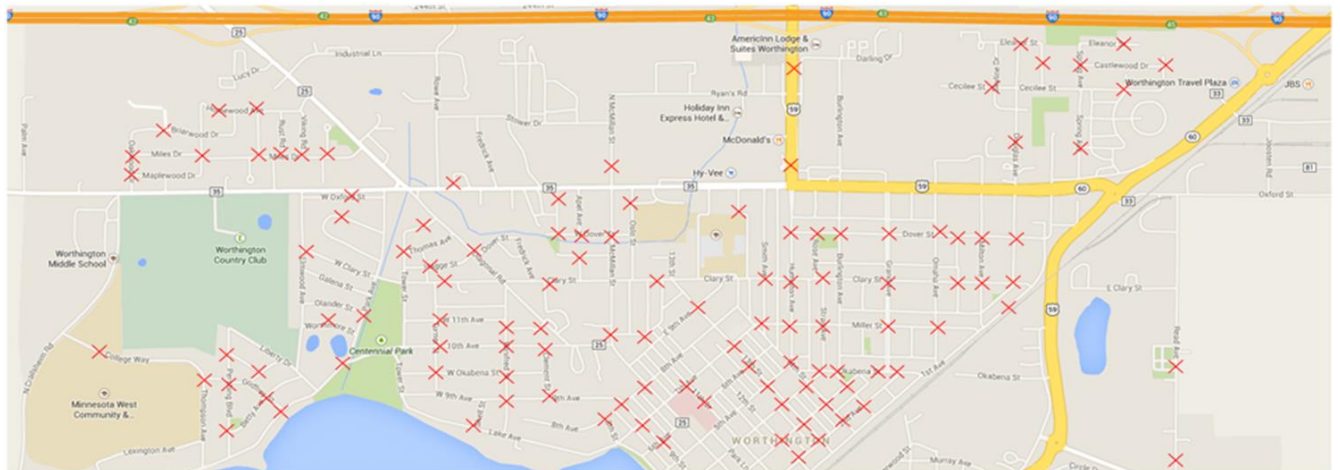
To evaluate the effectiveness of the busing policy, the number of bus stops will be analyzed yearly. This analysis will allow administrators to discuss stops and see if changes should be made based on safety, efficiency, equity, and promoting an active lifestyle.

³³ Selecting School Bus Stop Locations: A Guide for School Transportation Professionals. Accessed: 1/25/15. Available: file:///C:/Users/drew/Downloads/SelectingSchoolBusStopLocations.pdf

³⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Importance of Regular Physical Activity for Children. Accessed 10/8/15. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/children.html>

Figure #63

Bus Stops – City of Worthington



Bus Stop X

Pedestrian Functional Classification System

Goal: Improve pedestrian safety throughout the City of Worthington.

Strategy: Support the Pedestrian Functional Classification System the City of Worthington is currently implementing.

5 E(s): Encouragement

Existing Conditions:

Different streets require different pedestrian amenities. A Complete Street does not have a singular definition. A Complete Street is any street you feel safe walking or biking on. A Complete Street does

not have to have sidewalks on both sides of the street, but you have to consider all users when deciding if it is safe for pedestrians.

Younger children may need a sidewalk to separate them from vehicle traffic. Younger children may be learning how to ride a bike, so it is not safe for them to share the road with vehicle traffic. When making a decision whether a street needs sidewalks or not, the function of the street needs to be considered.

Some community members may not have access to a motor vehicle, so walking, biking, and transit are their primary transportation modes. Sidewalks and trails along Connector Streets and Neighborhood Connector Streets have a community benefit by providing safe off road pedestrian infrastructure and increasing connectivity within the community. If there are gaps in the sidewalk and trail network or there is a complete lack of pedestrian infrastructure, it is not safe and convenient to walk and bike.

The City of Worthington adopted a Complete Streets Policy on March 25, 2013. During the planning process for the Worthington Active Living Plan, the Complete Streets Policy was discussed. The discussion centered on how to implement the Complete Streets Policy.

A Pedestrian Functional Classification System was discussed and proposed as one way to implement Worthington's Complete Streets Policy. A Pedestrian Functional Classification System would provide direction regarding consistence implementation of pedestrian infrastructure. Pedestrian infrastructure would be based on the function of the street, traffic volumes, and traffic speeds. Pedestrian infrastructure decisions will no longer be on a case by case basis.

The Worthington City Council should classify streets in Worthington, so a discussion will occur around the function of the street. Below are three classifications that can be used to identify the pedestrian amenities a street needs.

► Connector Streets

- Connects primary destinations
- Highest traffic volumes streets
- Require the highest level of pedestrian amenities - Sidewalks on both sides of the street or a trail conveniently located along the corridor that connects key locations.

► Neighborhood Connector Streets

- Connects Residential Streets to Connector Streets
- Medium level traffic volume streets
- Require some pedestrian amenities – A sidewalk on one side of the street or the other is required or a trail conveniently located that connects the neighborhood to key locations. The sidewalk needs to have continuity throughout, so the route is not jumping back and forth from one side of the street to the other.

► Residential Streets

- All other streets
- Lower traffic speeds
- Lower traffic volumes
- Sidewalks are encouraged but there is no sidewalk requirement

New Developments

For new developments, the developer should have to get an exemption from the Worthington City Council for why a sidewalk is not needed (street is wide, low traffic volumes, it is reasonable to walk on the street, etc.).

Existing Sidewalks

To remove an existing section of sidewalk the landowner should be required to get approval from the Worthington City Council. This will help to prevent gaps in the sidewalk and trail network.

There was support at the Worthington Active Living Community Meetings for the Pedestrian Functional Classification System. This Pedestrian Functional Classification System was also discussed at the Worthington Traffic and Safety Committee Meeting on April 28, 2015. The Traffic and Safety Committee officially approved to move forward with the Pedestrian Functional Classification System.

It is recommended that City of Worthington Engineering and Planning staff finalize the Pedestrian Functional Classification Map with the Planning and Zoning Committee. This map will serve as a vision of sidewalk and trail implementation in the City of Worthington. Once the Pedestrian Functional Classification Map is finalized, the Pedestrian Functional Classification System will be presented to the Worthington City Council. The Pedestrian Functional Classification System will go through the adoption process and will be added as part of the Worthington Comprehensive Plan.

It is recommended that the Worthington Pedestrian Functional Classification System be implemented by need and project basis. There are Connector Streets and Residential Connector Streets within the City of Worthington that have no pedestrian infrastructure. It is not safe to walk or bike along these streets.

A community survey was conducted as part of the Worthington Active Living Plan. The survey asked community members to rank the existing conditions of different sections of the city in regards to walking and biking on a scale of one to 10 (10 being best and 1 being the worst). The categories that were ranked include: general atmosphere, did you have room to walk, was it easy to cross streets, did drivers behave well, could you follow safety rules, and was your walk pleasant. Below is the map identifying the different areas of the city and survey results.

Figure #64

Neighborhood Sections Map - City of Worthington

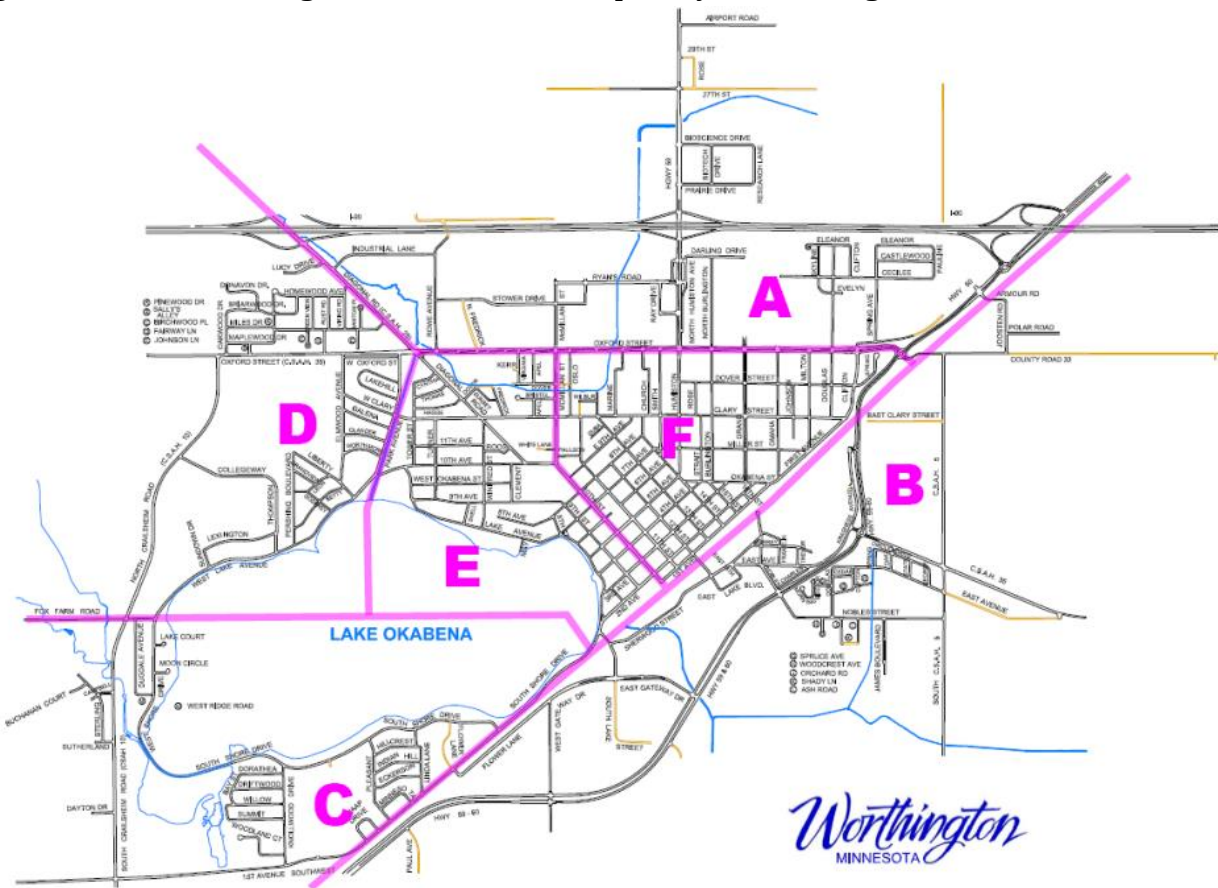


Table #12

Neighborhood Survey Summary

Section of City	1. General Atmosphere	2. Room to walk	3. Easy to cross street	4. Drivers behave well	5. Follow safety rules	Average 1,2,3
A	4	3	3	4	5	3
B	6	4	5	6	7	5
C	8	8	8	7	8	8
D	7	6	7	7	8	7
E	8	7	7	7	8	7
F	7	6	7	6	9	7
Average	7	6	6	6	8	

CHAPTER V: PLAN MAINTENANCE

Plan Maintenance

The Worthington SRTS Plan is a working document. The Worthington SRTS Plan is a joint document between the Worthington School District and the City of Worthington. The school will maintain the plan, but the city will provide input to the school regarding possible updates. The Worthington SRTS Team will continue to make updates to the plan with assistance and recommendations from local organizations and groups.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Updating the Plan

As community planning occurs, additional goals and strategies will be added in Chapter IV: Additional Goals and Strategies. It is critical to allow for public input regarding additional goals and strategies. Community residents and the Worthington School Board should be asked to provide input regarding infrastructure projects.

Continued Public Involvement

Future trails and pedestrian projects will be discussed at Worthington SRTS meetings, Worthington School Board meetings, and at Worthington City Council meetings.

The Nobles County Highway Department will also help to develop infrastructure projects. The county engineer's knowledge is critical when developing infrastructure projects and pursuing funding for projects. The Nobles Highway Department does have staff that participated in the development of the Worthington SRTS Plan, so the Highway Department has been involved with project development throughout the process.

Additional Goals & Strategies

The Worthington SRTS Plan is a working document. The Worthington SRTS Team and school administrators will continue to make updates to the Worthington SRTS Plan. As planning continues, additional recommendations should be made to the Additional Goals and Strategies section of this plan.

Conclusion

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that children have one hour of physical activity every day.³⁵ Walking and bicycling to school will help contribute to children reaching their recommended daily activity levels. SRTS not only promotes walking and bicycling to school, but SRTS tries to create a safe environment so parents feel comfortable letting their children walk and bicycle throughout the community.

There are a number of potential benefits of regular physical activity for children that include: builds and maintains healthy bones, muscles, and joints; helps control weight, build lean muscle and reduce fat; improves sense of self-image and autonomy; and fosters healthy social and emotional development.²⁶

³⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Importance of Regular Physical Activity for Children. Accessed 9/28/15. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/children.html>

Research conducted by James B. Grissom has shown a positive relationship between overall fitness and academic achievement; as fitness scores improved, achievement scores also improved.³⁶

Being active and walking and bicycling have a variety of health benefits as well as social benefits. These social health benefits include a higher degree of community coherence, increased social support, reduced local crime and violence, reduced traffic congestion, and improved environmental health.³⁷ Designing our neighborhoods and cities to match the needs of pedestrians, not just motor vehicles, is critical in promoting an active lifestyle and a sustainable community. This starts with access to safe infrastructure for walking and bicycling to school.

For this SRTS Plan to be effective, the entire team of teachers, school administrators, parents, community members, and city representatives need to come together to implement the plan. The goals vary by how demanding they are to implement, so this may dictate which goals are pursued first. Assigning groups to specific goals will help make the plan more manageable to implement.

Built Environment – Decision Makers Checklist

When making a land use decision and an investment in the future, it is critical to consider all the costs, not just the construction costs. There are costs associated with sprawl, inactivity and negative health outcomes, and the loss of community. Decision makers need to consider the function of every street, road, and plot of land to determine the pedestrian infrastructure needs and connectivity for walking and biking.

Figure #65 Decision Makers Checklist: Built Environment

Ask Yourself and the Decision Making Group

- How will my decision impact health?
- How will my decision impact connectivity?
 - Compact efficient development vs. sprawl (which decreases connectivity)
- Will my decision make the community more inviting (more walkable and bikeable)?
- Were all users considered when making the decision?

³⁶ Grissom JB. Physical Fitness And Academic Achievement. Journal of Exercise Physiology online. Volume 8 number 1. Accessed 9/28/15. Available: <http://www.sfgov3.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=414>

³⁷ Injury Prevention, Reducing Childhood Pedestrian Injuries. Volume No. 8 Supplement I June 2002. Accessed: 9/28/15. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/MotorVehicleSafety/images/ip-v8s1-a.pdf>

Appendix A

Student Travel Tallies

September 2014 – Prairie Elementary

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	3135	0.0%	0%	73%	24%	0.6%	0.2%	2%
Afternoon	3101	0%	0%	89%	10%	0.4%	0.1%	0.9%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tuesday AM	1033	0.1%	0%	73%	24%	0.9%	0.1%	2%
Tuesday PM	1033	0%	0%	89%	10%	0.3%	0.1%	0.7%
Wednesday AM	1064	0%	0%	73%	25%	0.5%	0.1%	2%
Wednesday PM	1053	0%	0%	88%	10%	0.4%	0.1%	1%
Thursday AM	1038	0%	0%	74%	23%	0.5%	0.4%	1%
Thursday PM	1015	0%	0%	90%	9%	0.6%	0.1%	0.6%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Travel Mode by Weather Condition

Weather Condition	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Sunny	5484	0.0%	0%	81%	17%	0.5%	0.1%	1%
Rainy	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Overcast	176	0%	0%	79%	19%	0%	0%	2%
Snow	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

September 2012 – Worthington Middle School

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	343	0.9%	0%	65%	31%	3%	0%	0.6%
Afternoon	349	5%	0.3%	70%	22%	1%	0%	1%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tuesday AM	178	1%	0%	65%	30%	3%	0%	0.6%
Tuesday PM	178	5%	0.6%	69%	22%	1%	0%	2%
Wednesday AM		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Wednesday PM		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Thursday AM	165	0.6%	0%	64%	32%	2%	0%	0.6%
Thursday PM	171	5%	0%	71%	21%	2%	0%	0.6%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Travel Mode by Weather Condition

Weather Condition	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Sunny	692	3%	0.1%	67%	26%	2%	0%	0.9%
Rainy	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Overcast	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Snow	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

September 2014 – Worthington Middle School

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	2256	0.5%	0.7%	75%	23%	0.4%	0.4%	0%
Afternoon	2251	2%	0.5%	77%	19%	1%	0.4%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tuesday AM	757	0.4%	0.7%	73%	24%	0.5%	1%	0%
Tuesday PM	763	2%	0.4%	75%	20%	1%	1%	0%
Wednesday AM	774	0.5%	0.9%	75%	23%	0.1%	0%	0%
Wednesday PM	772	2%	0.8%	78%	19%	1%	0%	0%
Thursday AM	725	0.6%	0.4%	75%	24%	0.4%	0%	0%
Thursday PM	716	2%	0.4%	80%	17%	1%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Travel Mode by Weather Condition

Weather Condition	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Sunny	294	0.3%	0.3%	80%	19%	0%	0%	0%
Rainy	265	0.4%	0%	71%	28%	0%	0%	0%
Overcast	3709	1%	0.7%	75%	21%	0.9%	0.5%	0%
Snow	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Appendix B

Parent Survey

September 2014 – Prairie Elementary School

Grade levels of children represented in survey

Grade in School	Responses per grade	
	Number	Percent
Kindergarten	59	15%
1	95	24%
2	100	25%
3	74	18%
4	74	18%

No response: 0

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

Distance between home and school	Number of children	Percent
Less than 1/4 mile	9	3%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	5	2%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	21	6%
1 mile up to 2 miles	62	19%
More than 2 miles	227	70%

Don't know or No response: 97

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

Time of Trip	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	411	0.2%	0.2%	71%	28%	0.5%	0%	0%
Afternoon	401	0.2%	0.5%	88%	11%	0.2%	0%	0%

No Response Morning: 10

No Response Afternoon: 20

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

School Arrival

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	9	0%	0%	56%	44%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	5	20%	0%	20%	60%	0%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	19	0%	0%	84%	16%	0%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	62	0%	2%	63%	34%	2%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	222	0%	0%	65%	35%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 104

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

School Departure

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	9	0%	0%	89%	11%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	5	20%	0%	60%	20%	0%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	19	0%	0%	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	61	0%	2%	84%	13%	2%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	215	0%	0%	85%	15%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 112

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

Asked Permission?	Number of Children	Less than 1/4 mile	1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1/2 mile up to 1 mile	1 mile up to 2 miles	More than 2 miles
Yes	26	88%	50%	19%	13%	2%
No	282	13%	50%	81%	87%	98%

Don't know or No response: 113

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by
parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

Issue	Child does not walk/bike to school	Child walks/bikes to school
Distance	82%	0
Weather or climate	65%	0
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	52%	0
Amount of Traffic Along Route	51%	0
Speed of Traffic Along Route	50%	0
Time	38%	0
Violence or Crime	35%	0
Sidewalks or Pathways	25%	0
Crossing Guards	23%	0
Adults to Bike/Walk With	20%	0
Convenience of Driving	14%	0
Child's Participation in After School Programs	14%	0
Number of Respondents per Category	266	0

No response: 155

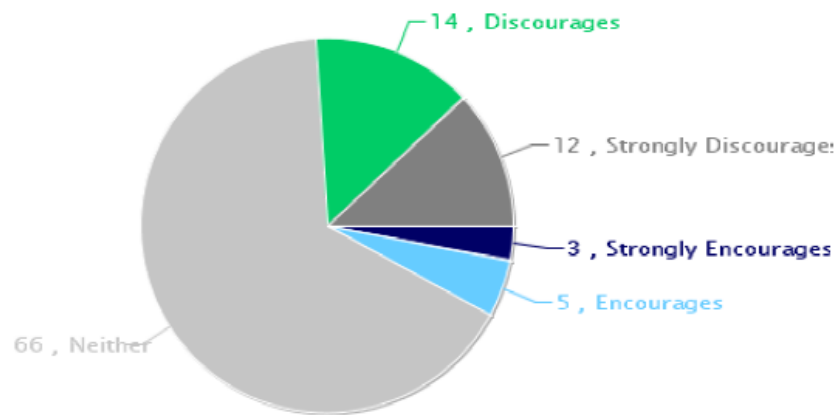
Note:

--Factors are listed from most to least influential for the 'Child does not walk/bike to school' group.

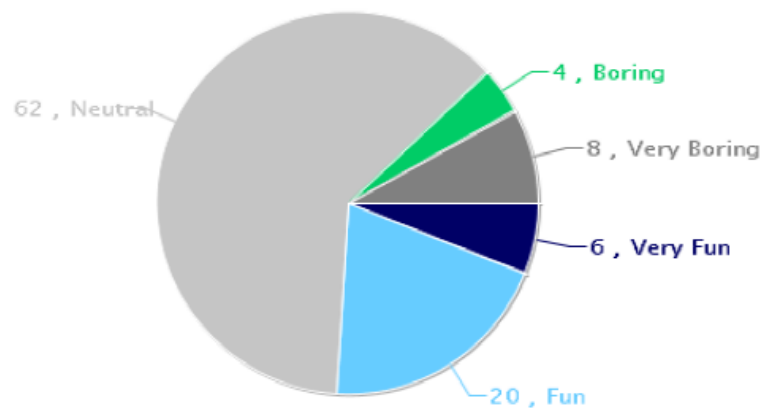
--Each column may sum to > 100% because respondent could select more than Issue

--The calculation used to determine the percentage for each issue is based on the 'Number of Respondents per Category' within the respective columns (Child does not walk/bike to school and Child walks/bikes to school.) If comparing percentages between the two columns, please pay particular attention to each column's number of respondents because the two numbers can differ dramatically.

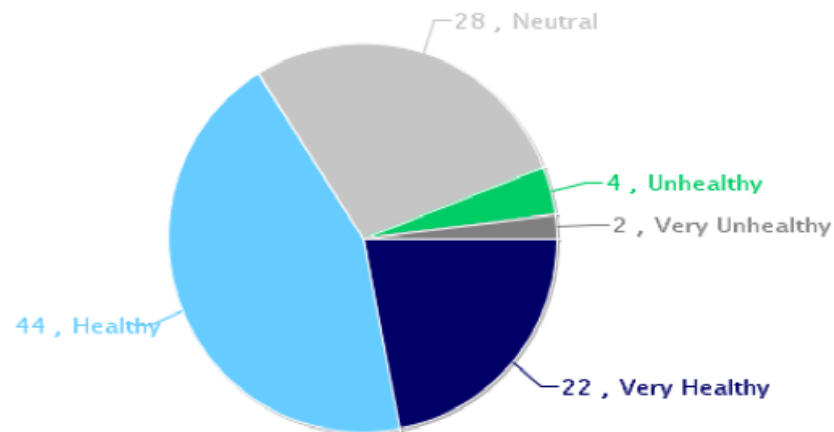
Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school



Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to/from school is for their child



Parents' opinions about how healthy walking and biking to/from school is for their child



Comments Section

There were a number of open-ended comments as part of the Parent Survey. These comments were discussed as part of the Worthington SRTS Planning Process. For a complete list of comments email the Southwest Regional Development Commission: srdc@swrdc.org

I WOULD LOVE TO SEE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR WALKING/BIKING TO SCHOOL - WE JUST LIVE TOO FAR AWAY (3 1/2 MILES) FROM PRAIRIE BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE GREAT FOR FAMILIES IN THAT AREA.

IN THIS DAY AND AGE I DON'T LET MY CHILD OUT OF MY SIGHT JUST TO PLAY IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD! IT'S JUST NOT SAFE ANYMORE

BUSSING OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS SHOULD BE NO EXPENSES INSIDE LIMITS THERE SHOULD BE A FEE IF THIS SURVEY IS REGARDING COST OF BUSSING.

IF WE LIVED CLOSER TO PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY I WOULD BIKE AND OR WALK TO SCHOOL WITH HER.

I ENJOY OUR DRIVE TO SCHOOL IN THE MORNINGS. WE USE THAT TIME TO TALK ABOUT THE UPCOMING DAY. IF WE LIVED CLOSER I WOULD CONSIDER WALKING OR BIKING MORE. IT ISN'T PRACTICAL FOR US.

THE PARKING LOT AT PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY WOULD NOT BE SAFE FOR WALKERS/BIKERS DURING BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL BECAUSE OF VEHICLE TRAFFIC.

September 2014 – Worthington Middle School

Grade levels of children represented in survey

Grade in School	Responses per grade
	Number
7	2
10	1
11	1
12	1

No response: 0

Numbers rather than percents are displayed because the number of respondents for this question was less than 30.

Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

Distance between home and school	Number of children
Less than 1/4 mile	2
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	0
1 mile up to 2 miles	0
More than 2 miles	2

Don't know or No response: 0

Numbers rather than percents are displayed because the number of respondents for this question was less than 30.

Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

Time of Trip	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	4	1	0	1	2	0	0	0
Afternoon	5	1	0	1	3	0	0	0

No Response Morning: 1

No Response Afternoon: 0

Numbers rather than percents are displayed because the number of respondents for this question was less than 30.

Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school

School Arrival

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1 mile up to 2 miles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
More than 2 miles	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0

Don't know or No response: 1

Numbers rather than percents are displayed because the number of respondents for this question was less than 30.

School Departure

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1 mile up to 2 miles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
More than 2 miles	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0

Don't know or No response: 0

Numbers rather than percents are displayed because the number of respondents for this question was less than 30.

Number of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

Asked Permission?	Number of Children	Less than 1/4 mile	1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1/2 mile up to 1 mile	1 mile up to 2 miles	More than 2 miles
Yes	2	1	1	0	0	0
No	3	1	0	0	0	2

Don't know or No response: 0

Numbers rather than percents are displayed because the number of respondents for this question was less than 30.

Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

Issue	Child does not walk/bike to school	Child walks/bikes to school
Weather or climate	2	0
Convenience of Driving	2	0
Crossing Guards	1	0
Distance	1	1
Time	1	0
Violence or Crime	0	0
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	0	0
Sidewalks or Pathways	0	0
Adults to Bike/Walk With	0	0
Speed of Traffic Along Route	0	0
Child's Participation in After School Programs	0	0
Amount of Traffic Along Route	0	0
Number of Respondents per Category	2	1

No response: 2

Note:

--Factors are listed from most to least influential for the 'Child does not walk/bike to school' group.

Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school

Level of support	Number of children
Strongly Encourages	0
Encourages	0
Neither	5
Discourages	0
Strongly Discourages	0

Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to/from school is for their child

Level of fun	Number of children
Very Fun	0
Fun	2
Neutral	3
Boring	0
Very Boring	0

Parents' opinions about how healthy walking and biking to/from school is for their child

How healthy	Number of children
Very Healthy	2
Healthy	3
Neutral	0
Unhealthy	0
Very Unhealthy	0

Comments Section

None

Appendix C

Work Plan Progress Table

Worthington School Administrators have an editable version of the Work Plan Progress Table below.

Work Plan Progress Tracker					
Strategy	Timeline		Status		Progress Notes/Follow Up:
	Short Term / Long Term		No Progress / Started / Completed		

Appendix D

Walking Audit Survey

1. Did you have room to walk?

Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
Sidewalks broken or cracked
Sidewalks blocked
No sidewalks, paths or shoulders
Too much traffic



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

2. Was it easy to cross streets?

Road too wide
Traffic signals made us wait too long or did not give us enough time to cross
Crosswalks/traffic signals needed
View of traffic blocked by parked cars, trees, or plants
Needed curb ramps or ramps needed repair



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

3. Did drivers behave well?

Backed without looking
Did not yield
Turned into walkers
Drove too fast
Sped up to make traffic lights or drove through red lights



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

4. Could you follow safety rules?

Cross at crosswalks or where you could see and be seen
Stop and look left, right, left before crossing
Walk on sidewalks or shoulders facing traffic
Cross with the light



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

5. Was your walk pleasant?

Needs grass, flowers, trees
Scary dogs
Scary people
Not well lit
Dirty, litter
Lots of traffic



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments....

Walking and Bicycle Audit:

Document factors that help or hinder safe walking and biking

Factors to look for: sidewalk width and condition, are kids using sidewalks, traffic volume, bike lanes, terrain, threatening features (dogs, Highway, intersections), trash, general safety...

We also want to think about the community as a whole. Write down comments about the direction that kids go what they make encounter.

Identify areas where changes are needed

Are drivers on cell phones?

What are traffic speeds like (safety concern?)

See if students are using good techniques when crossing the street

Are students using crosswalks or crossing midblock?

If there are no sidewalks, is the road safe to walk on?

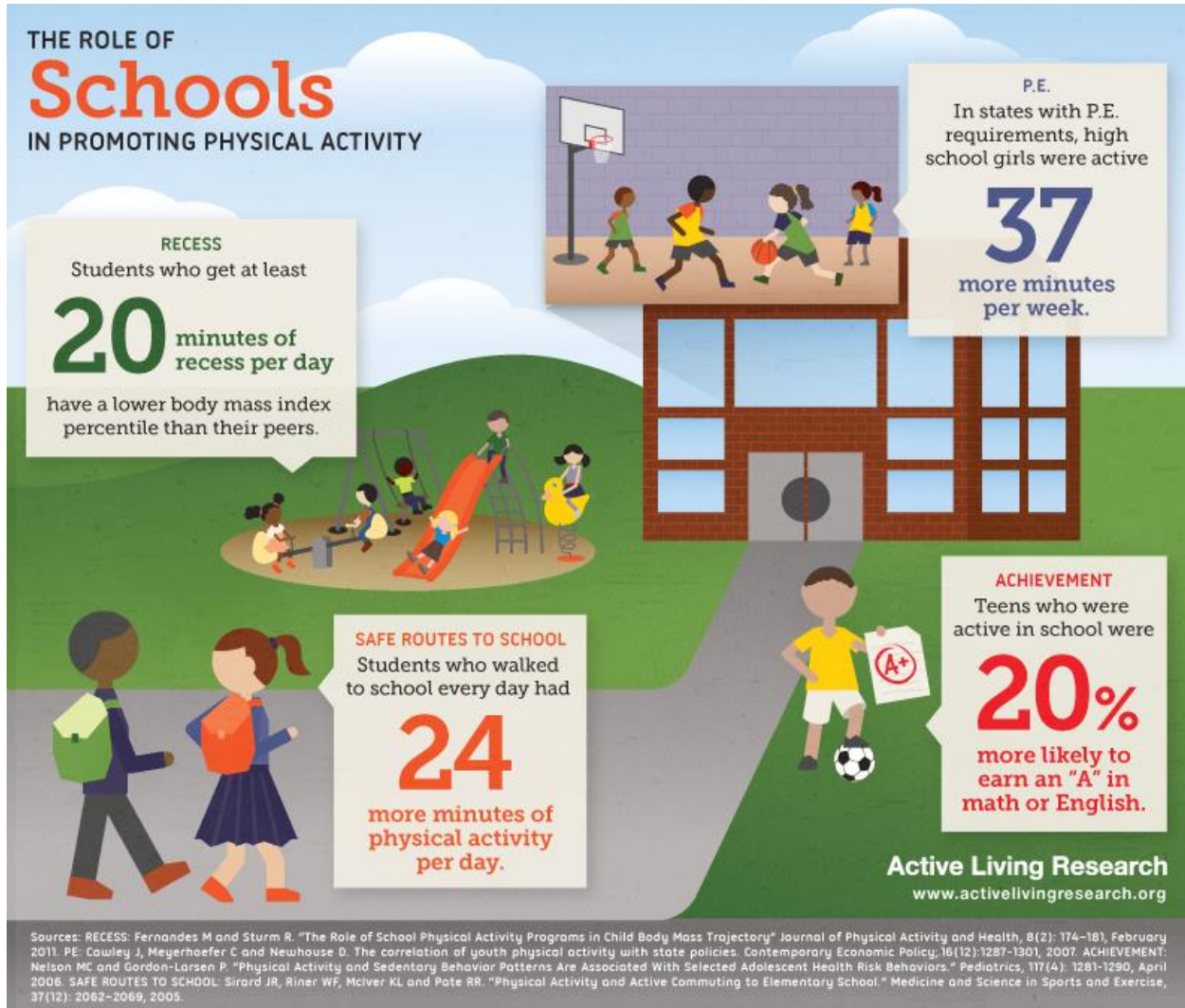
Feedback regarding traffic control devices

General atmosphere (safe being a 10.....1 being dangerous) and why

Appendix E

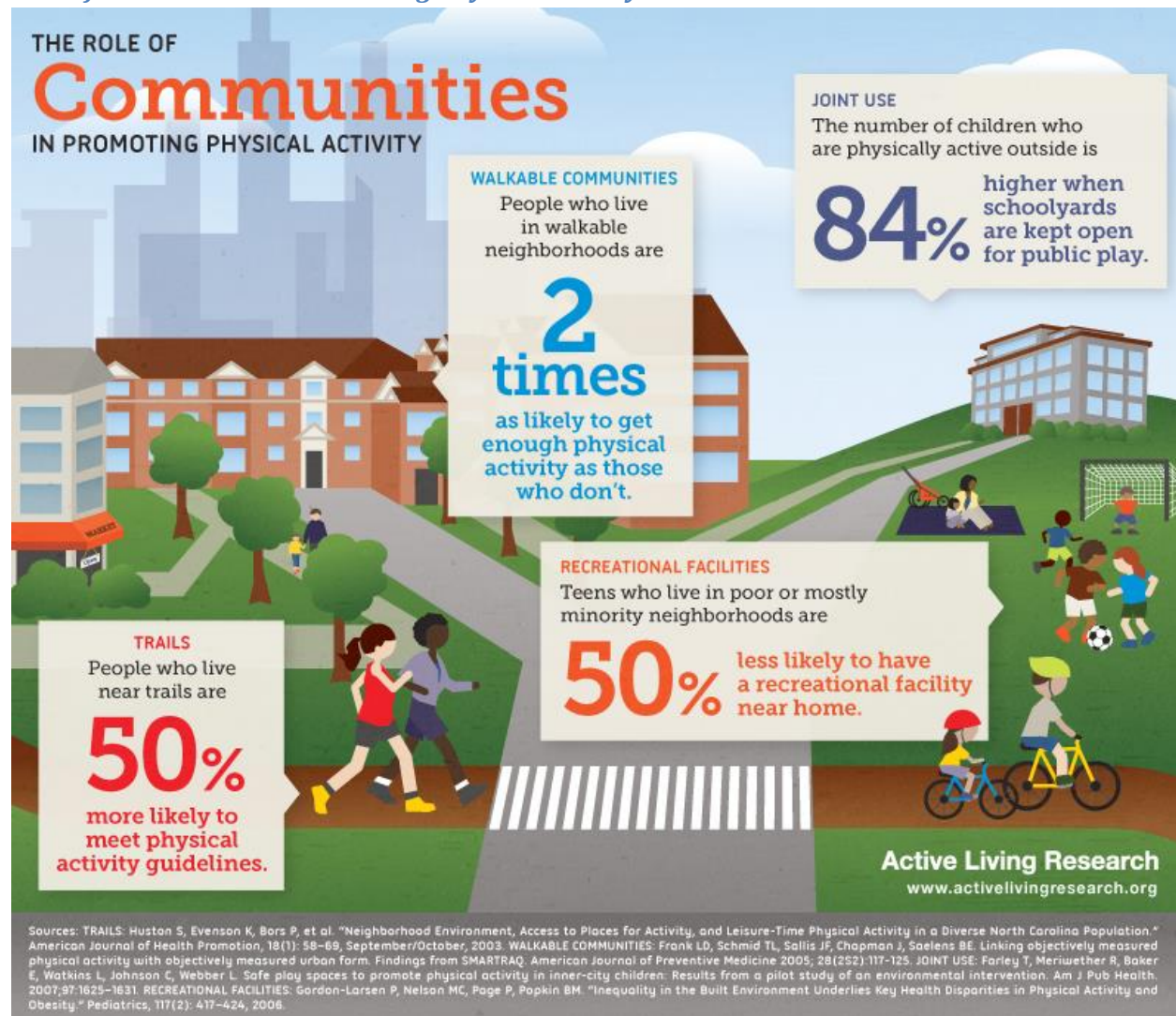
Handouts

Role of Schools In Promoting Physical Activity



http://activelivingresearch.org/sites/default/files/ALR_Infographic_Schools_April2012.jpg

Role of Communities In Promoting Physical Activity

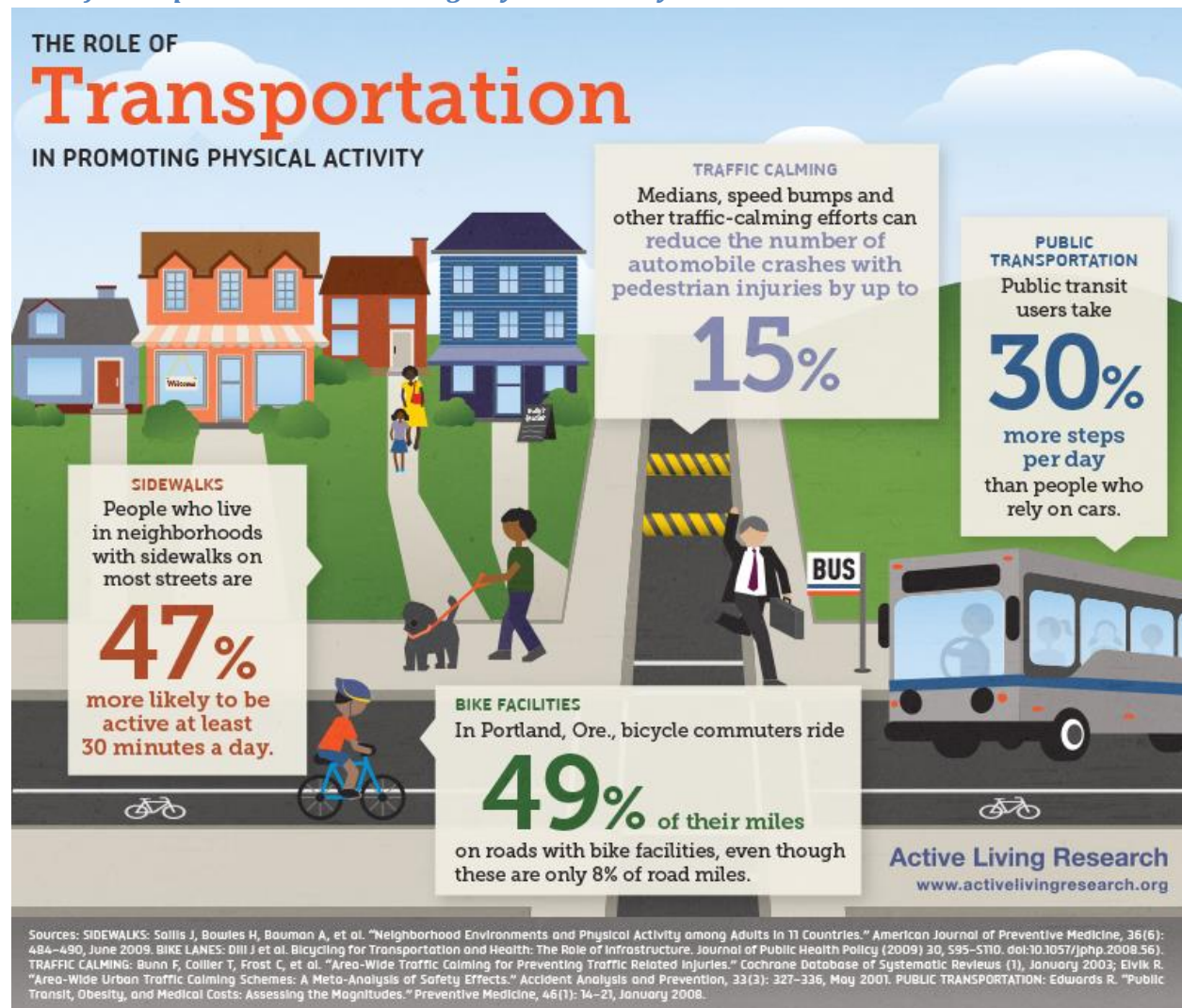


<http://activelivingresearch.org/blog/2012/06/infographic-role-communities-promoting-physical-activity>

Role of Parks & Recreation In Promoting Physical Activity



<http://activelivingresearch.org/blog/2012/10/infographic-role-parks-and-recreation-promoting-physical-activity>



<http://activelivingresearch.org/blog/2012/07/infographic-role-transportation-promoting-physical-activity>

Tips for Parents and Other Adults For Teaching Pedestrian Safety to Children

SafeRoutes
National Center for Safe Routes to School



TIP SHEET

Walking is a fun and healthy way to spend time with your children while teaching them skills that can serve them well throughout life. The walk to school is a great time to use these safety tips.

Be a walking role model

Children learn through experience. Walking with parents or another caregiver is an important way for children to practice crossing real streets and picking safe places to walk. There is no magic age when children are old enough to walk without an adult. But, as a parent, you should decide when your child has the skills and experience to deal with traffic safely without you.

As you walk with your child, remember these safety tips:

- Wear bright-colored clothes, and carry flashlights or wear reflective gear if it is dark or hard to see.
- Look for traffic at every driveway and intersection. Be aware of drivers in parked cars that may be getting ready to move.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Cross the street safely:
 1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
 2. Look left, right, left and behind you and in front of you for traffic.
 3. Wait until no traffic is coming and begin crossing.
 4. Keep looking for traffic until you have finished crossing.
 5. Walk, don't run across the street.



Choose the safest route to school

Select a walking route with less traffic and intersections.

- Pick places where there are sidewalks or paths separated from traffic. If there are no sidewalks or paths, walk as far from the motor vehicles as possible and, if possible, on the side of the street facing traffic.
- Limit the number of street crossings. When available, cross at a location with an adult school crossing guard.
- Avoid crossing busy or high-speed streets.

Understand your child's limitations

Children are not small adults. It will take time and practice for a child to develop the ability to deal with lots of traffic. Over time, children develop the ability to accurately judge the speed and distance of oncoming traffic. Young children may think that a car is able to stop, when in fact, it is not. Also, children may think that if they can see a driver, the driver can see them. But, children are smaller and harder for drivers to see. Get down to a child's height to experience their perspective and see what they see.

For more resources and information on Safe Routes to School, please visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School Web site at www.saferoutesinfo.org.

Tips for Walking Safely to School

Walking is fun, but you need to be safe while doing it. Follow these tips to make sure you get to and from school without any problems.

Walk together

Younger children should always walk with an adult. Tell your parents that walking is great exercise and a nice way to spend time together.

If your parents say that you can walk to school on your own, remember these tips:

- Walk with a friend when possible.
- Ask your parents to help you pick a safe route to school; one that avoids dangers.
- Stick to the route you picked with your parents. Don't let friends talk you into shortcuts that are more dangerous.
- When you are near the street, don't push, shove, or chase each other.
- Never hitchhike or take rides from people not arranged by your parents.
- Talk to your parents and teacher about any bullying that may happen during your walk.

Be seen

Remember, drivers may not be able to see you well. Always wear bright-colored clothes and if it is dark or hard to see, carry flashlights or wear reflective gear.

Look for traffic

Watch out for cars and trucks at every driveway and intersection on your walk to school. Look for drivers in parked cars. They may be getting ready to move.

Cross the street safely

1. Stop at the curb or edge of the street.
2. Look left, right, left and behind you and in front of you for traffic.
3. Wait until no traffic is coming and begin crossing.
4. Keep looking for traffic until you have finished crossing.
5. Walk, don't run across the street.

Obey traffic signs, signals and adult school crossing guards

For more resources and information on Safe Routes to School, please visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School Web site at www.saferoutesinfo.org.