



# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW RICHMOND SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

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## **New Richmond Safe Routes to School Task Force**

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement that promotes walking and biking to school. SRTS began in the 1970's in Denmark, which had an alarming number of child fatalities due to crashes on roadways. SRTS reached the United States in 1997, when The Bronx received local funds to implement a SRTS program to reduce the large number of student injuries and fatalities due to crashes around schools. The success of the program convinced other communities to adopt similar measures. By 2000, SRTS programs were nationwide. In 2005, Congress saw the importance of these programs and consequently signed into law a federally funded SRTS program. The new law facilitated the allocation of money to all 50 states and the District of Columbia to create, implement, and administer SRTS programs. Federal SRTS funds can be used for projects within two miles of an elementary or middle school (K-8). In 2014, the School District of New Richmond and City of New Richmond were awarded a SRTS planning grant to develop this plan.

### New Richmond's SRTS Vision

The School District of New Richmond and the City of New Richmond will work together and collaborate with other community stakeholders to create a safe and encouraging environment for walking and biking to and from school.

The SRTS program has its roots in both health and transportation safety. The major program goals are to make the school trip safe for walking and biking and to encourage children to walk and bike to and from school. SRTS strives to reduce congestion around schools, improve the health of school-aged children through increased physical activity, reduce vehicle emissions and fuel consumption, increase community security, enhance community accessibility, increase community involvement, and improve partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community groups.

The New Richmond SRTS Task Force consists of representatives from the School District of New Richmond, City of New Richmond, and the public. The Task Force worked together to identify issues and opportunities in the City, and developed strategies to make walking and biking to and from school safer for students.



New Richmond Middle School.

**Key findings include:**

- Several streets in the City are barriers due to traffic volume and speed.
- New development should be designed to accommodate walking/biking to school.
- SRTS corridors have limited sidewalk infrastructure, crosswalk paint, and/or pedestrian signage.

**Existing Conditions**

As part of the planning process, collecting existing conditions and data are important. The Task Force members discussed existing conditions in the City. In addition, an after-school student release was observed and detailed notes were taken. Key findings from the task force and observation are shown in the colored box.

**Strategies**

The SRTS framework recommends using five categories when looking at issues and strategies. These are called the *Five E's*. Recommendations in the plan were developed using all five E's (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation). For a full listing, see pages 16-19.

Safe pedestrian systems for New Richmond were planned. This includes sidewalks, intersection and crossing improvements, and signage improvements. In addition to the sidewalk system (shown in Figure 4) some of the improvement recommendations include:

- An educational program is needed at all levels.
- Newspaper articles and correspondence from the schools will help to inform parents of the SRTS plan and progress.
- Training to be a lawful and safe pedestrian, cyclist, and driver.
- As dangerous traffic corridors and intersections are prevalent, infrastructure projects are key items in the SRTS program.

**Funding**

Funding sources vary widely in their eligibility and magnitude. Federal Transportation Alternatives Program funding is a primary source for those projects that specifically address the SRTS focus on biking and walking safety and encouragement, both infrastructure and non-infrastructure. However, other grants may be appropriate for funding smaller projects. Other funding sources from both health and transportation sources are listed and described on pages 22-25.

## Introduction

### **Safe Routes To School**

An active SRTS program will help New Richmond create safer, easier, and more enjoyable walking and biking routes to school so more students choose walking and biking as their main mode of transportation. There are a number of benefits to the entire community when walking and biking conditions are improved.

#### *Safer routes*

One of the reasons parents do not allow their children to walk and bike to school is because the routes to school are too dangerous. Problems such as incomplete, poorly maintained, or missing sidewalks and trails, congested streets, and lack of traffic calming devices in the vicinity of schools discourage walking and biking to school. SRTS programs help communities identify and fix these problems making it safer for all residents and visitors to the area.

#### *Healthier children*

In the past few decades, the number of active children in the United States has decreased and the number of overweight children has almost doubled. Recent data shows that  $\frac{2}{3}$  of Wisconsin adults are overweight or obese. In addition, kids are spending more and more time indoors not being active. The American Heart Association recommends that children participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity every day. One of the ways to achieve a large portion of this goal is to walk or bike to school. SRTS programs encourage children to be more active by walking and biking to school.

#### *Cleaner environment*

Emissions from vehicles pollute the air our children breathe and can cause serious health problems such as asthma and bronchitis. Motor vehicle use is now generally recognized as the source of more air pollution than any other single human activity. In order to decrease air pollution, communities should look to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads especially in the vicinity of schools. Fewer cars emitting pollutants will improve the air quality, thus decreasing health problems in children. SRTS programs aim to decrease the number of cars in the vicinity of schools thereby creating a cleaner environment.

#### *Other desired outcomes of Safe Routes to School:*

- Increased community involvement
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Increased community security
- Improved partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community groups.

#### *5 E's*

In order to accomplish the goals of SRTS programs, the School District of New Richmond and City of New Richmond must focus on the 5 E's: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation. This comprehensive approach allows communities to maximize the number of students walking and biking to school.

#### *Engineering*

Problems with the physical environment around schools such as damaged or missing sidewalks, lack of traffic calming measures, or unsafe crosswalks prevent children from walking and biking safely and easily to and from school. These problems can be dangerous enough to cause pedestrian injuries and fatalities, often to children. Clearly, a safe physical environment is necessary for enabling children to walk and bike to school. Therefore, SRTS funds can be used to make infrastructure improvements that will fix these problems and make the physical

environment safer for children. Improving the physical environment near schools is necessary for a successful SRTS program. In addition, other measures are needed, in tandem with those improvements, to get students walking and biking to school.

#### Encouragement

Another key component to the SRTS program is encouraging children to walk and bike to school. Convincing children, as well as parents and guardians, that walking and biking to school is safe, fun, and healthy can be a difficult task, especially since SRTS may interfere with a parent's already busy schedule or established routine of driving their child to school. That is why a comprehensive SRTS program offers activities and events that promote walking and biking to school that are fun, safe, and easy. This will help to ease the safety concerns of parents and guardians in their decision to allow their children to walk and bike to school.

#### Education

Educating children and parents is an important part of SRTS. Children as well as parents need to learn about biking and walking safety and about the benefits of walking and biking to school. Equally important is educating drivers about safe driving around schools. These programs will help ensure that walkers, bikers, and drivers think about safety first.

#### Enforcement

Driver education and safety campaigns do not ensure the elimination of unsafe driving behaviors. Therefore, SRTS programs should partner with local law enforcement to make sure traffic laws are obeyed (including enforcement of speed limits, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and biking behaviors), and to initiate or strengthen community enforcement such as crossing guard programs. Enforcement programs also keep an eye on any criminal or threatening behavior, which could possibly discourage walking and biking, especially around schools. Each of these approaches is necessary for a successful program. By tackling the project from multiple angles, communities can maximize the safety of the routes to school and increase the number of students that use the routes.

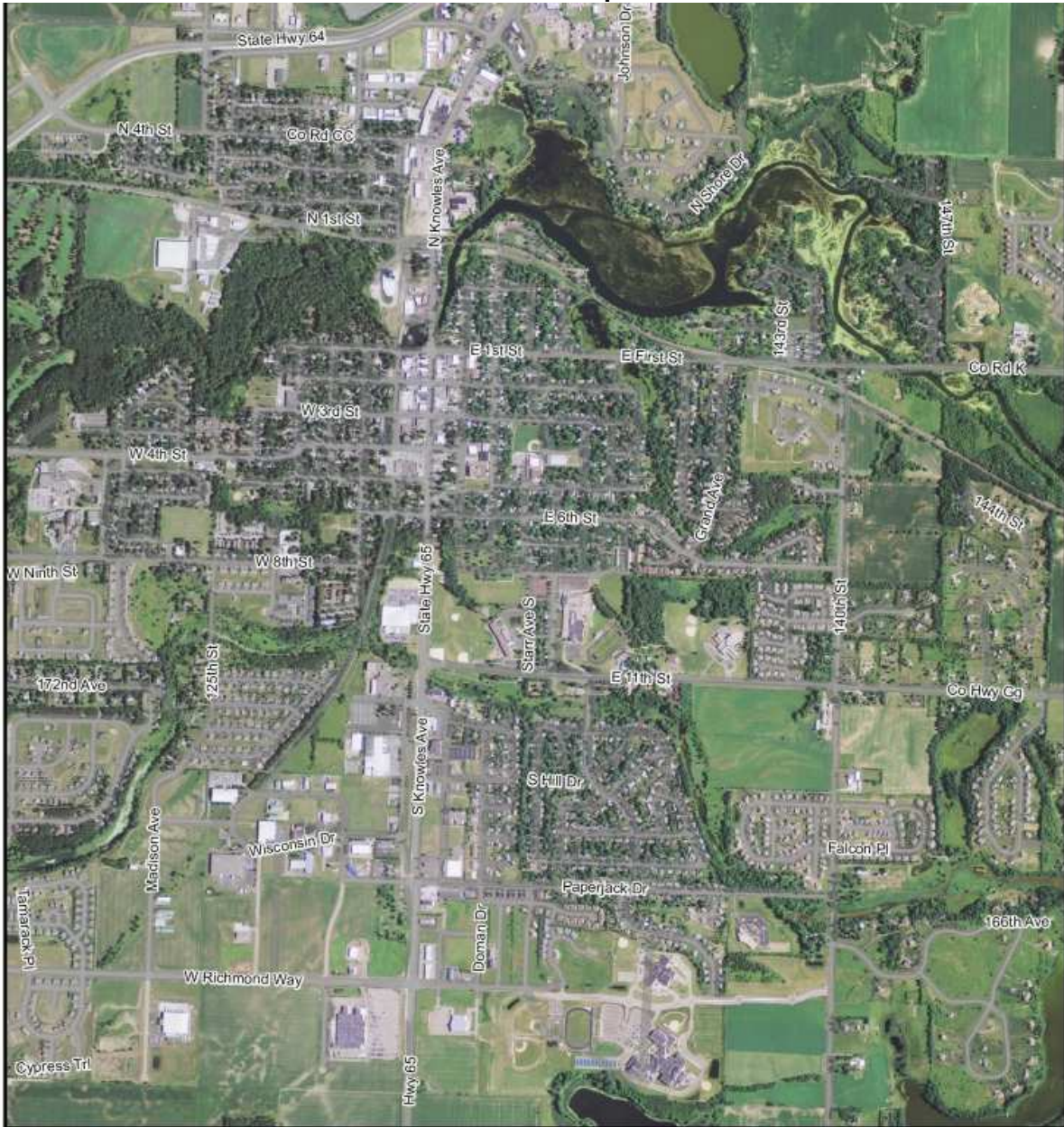
#### Evaluation and Sustaining a Program

Understanding the barriers and obstacles that prevent children from walking and biking to school are essential in implementing an effective SRTS plan. Evaluation techniques such as surveys will help communities see the current walking and biking behaviors and understand the attitudes that parents and children have towards walking and biking. With this information, communities can make the necessary adjustments (through Engineering, Education, Encouragement, and Enforcement techniques) to change behaviors and attitudes. Also, evaluation of the program will be vital to continuing SRTS, as being able to show improvements by comparing before and after data is very helpful in maintaining local commitment to the program. Even more, evaluation can show what techniques did not work so that adjustments can be made in the future. A successful SRTS program is dependent on the use of all 5 E's.

#### **School District of New Richmond**

The School District of New Richmond has a total enrollment of 3,265 students. The City is home to the District's three elementary schools, middle school, and high school. New Richmond's 2010 population was 8,375. Regionally speaking, the area that the School District serves is in an area that has experienced significant growth over the past two decades. The City and surrounding area are expected to continue to experience an increase in population in the future.

**Figure 1  
Location Map**





In order to specifically consider the economic standing of students attending the elementary and middle schools, a commonly used and carefully tracked index is commonly used. An "economically disadvantaged" student is a member of a household that meets the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced-price meals (less than or equal to 185% of Federal Poverty Guidelines) under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). In the School District, the percentage of students that meet this income eligibility is 34 percent.

### **Safe Routes To School Task Force**

A SRTS Task Force is a group of people who represent all facets of the SRTS program in the community (transportation, health, fitness, safety, etc.), and work together to develop and implement a plan to increase the number of students walking and biking to school.





New Richmond's SRTS Task Force developed a vision and goals for their SRTS program, considered relevant issues, conducted a parent survey, and discussed strategies to overcome the barriers to walking and biking. They have the opportunity to conduct a teacher classroom tally sheet and coordinate a walking and biking audit. The tally sheet and audit will collect additional data to better understand the challenges of walking and biking to school.

### **Previous Safe Routes to School Work**

At this time, the School District and City are not active in any projects or programs that are specific to SRTS.

### **Vision and Goals**

A vision and two goals were developed to bring the SRTS program's direction into focus and to make it fit the specific needs and desires of the school district and the three communities. It is important to revisit this vision and the goals throughout the planning and implementation stages of the program to ensure that projects are heading in the intended direction, in a coordinated manner. There may be times when the vision and goals need to be updated to meet changing needs in the local environment, but kept current, they will help to lead toward a unified implementation and an eventual realization of the vision.

#### *Vision:*

The School District of New Richmond and the City of New Richmond will work together and collaborate with other community stakeholders to create a safe and encouraging environment for walking and biking to and from school.

#### *Goals:*

- Make walking and bicycling safe ways to get to school.
- Encourage more children to walk or bike to school.

## Existing Conditions

### Task Force Discussion

The New Richmond Safe Routes To School Task Force met on October 14. There were a variety of issues and opportunities that were brought up during the meeting. Most issues stemmed from the lack of sidewalks in certain parts of the City and traffic volume and speed along specific corridors. There was discussion regarding connectivity from the schools to the residential areas east of 140<sup>th</sup> St. and west of State Highway 65. In addition, there was discussion about how to create walking and biking options from the future development locations on the southern portion of the City.

Due to the location of the schools in the City and elementary school boundaries, the plan focuses primarily on all areas south of the railroad. Through discussion and observations, one of the most pressing issues is to make safer crossings across the major east/west streets (Paperjack Dr., 11<sup>th</sup> St., 6<sup>th</sup> St., and 1<sup>st</sup> St.) and State Highway 65 and 140<sup>th</sup> St.

### Existing Conditions/PM Release Observations (October 14)

#### *Paperjack Dr.*

Paperjack Dr. travels one block north of Hillside Elementary School. The school's boundaries include the majority of the residential area south of 11<sup>th</sup> St. west of the creek. Therefore, all the students in the residential area north of the school are required to cross Paperjack Dr. The only access point to Paperjack Dr. from the residential area is Bilmar Ave., which has a sidewalk on the west side of the street.

After crossing Paperjack Dr., students need to travel along Hallewood Blvd. and take a path to the school. The path is not lighted. Due to residential development design, students that live west of the school need to travel to Richmond Way or Paperjack Dr. to get to the school

#### *11<sup>th</sup> St.*

Starr Elementary, Paperjack Elementary, and the Middle School are all accessible from 11<sup>th</sup> St. There is no sidewalk along 11<sup>th</sup> St. west of Starr Elementary School. The existing path on the south side of 11<sup>th</sup> St. from STH 65 to Starr Elementary has portions that are not visible from 11<sup>th</sup> St. Due to the school boundaries, no Starr Elementary students should have to access the school from 11<sup>th</sup> St.

All Middle School students south of 11<sup>th</sup> St. have to cross 11<sup>th</sup> St. to get to the Middle School. There is an adult crossing guard at the Bilmar Ave. and 11<sup>th</sup> St. intersection. There are crosswalks at Bilmar Ave., Riley Ave., and Starr Ave. Riley Ave. and Starr Ave. also both have a pedestrian crossing light. Along 11<sup>th</sup> St., Starr Elementary has a school zone speed of 15mph and Paperjack Elementary has a school zone speed of 25mph.

There are a few properties on the south side of 11<sup>th</sup> St., east of Bilmar Ave. that have to cross 11<sup>th</sup> St. to get to get to Paperjack Elementary.

#### *6<sup>th</sup> St.*

6<sup>th</sup> St. is a major corridor that connects STH 65 and 140<sup>th</sup> St. Starr Elementary, Paperjack Elementary, and the Middle School are located roughly two blocks south of 6<sup>th</sup> St., and all three schools serve areas north of 6<sup>th</sup> St.

There is a paved path from 6<sup>th</sup> St. to Paperjack Elementary. This paved path is the only access students from the north have to the school, unless they walk/bike to 11<sup>th</sup> St., via Highview Dr. or Riley Ave., both of which are significantly out of the way for most students. The majority of the trail is out of site from the school and houses and is not lighted.

Starr Ave. and Grand Ave. have painted crosswalks crossing 6<sup>th</sup> St. Riley Ave. is the eastern most intersection with 6<sup>th</sup> St. for the neighborhood directly east of downtown. This can add up to six additional blocks of walking/biking for Paperjack Elementary students.

### *1<sup>st</sup> St.*

The area north of 1<sup>st</sup> St. is served by Starr Elementary and the Middle School. It is located approximately 3/4 mile from the two schools. This distance is acceptable for middle school students but is in the range which becomes a barrier for younger students. Like 6<sup>th</sup> St., 1<sup>st</sup> St. is a major corridor from STH 65 and 140<sup>th</sup> St. Green Ave. has the only crosswalk along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave.

### *State Highway 65*

State Highway 65 is four lanes and travels north and south through the City. STH 65 has a high volume of traffic, which consists of a significant number of trucks. In addition, traffic speed has been an ongoing problem on STH 65. The STH 65 and 6<sup>th</sup> St. intersection is the only realistic crossing for students from west of STH 65 to east of STH 65.



### *140<sup>th</sup> St.*

The City has experienced recent growth east of 140<sup>th</sup> St. over the past couple decades. Many of these developments are within walking/biking distance to the Middle School and Paperjack Elementary, which serves all the areas east of 140<sup>th</sup> St.

140<sup>th</sup> St. has a multi-use trail along the west side of the street from Paperjack Ave. to 1<sup>st</sup> St. Due to traffic speeds, 140<sup>th</sup> St. is a barrier to walking/biking to and from school.

As new development occurs along 140<sup>th</sup> St., attention to development design should be given to students walking/biking to school.

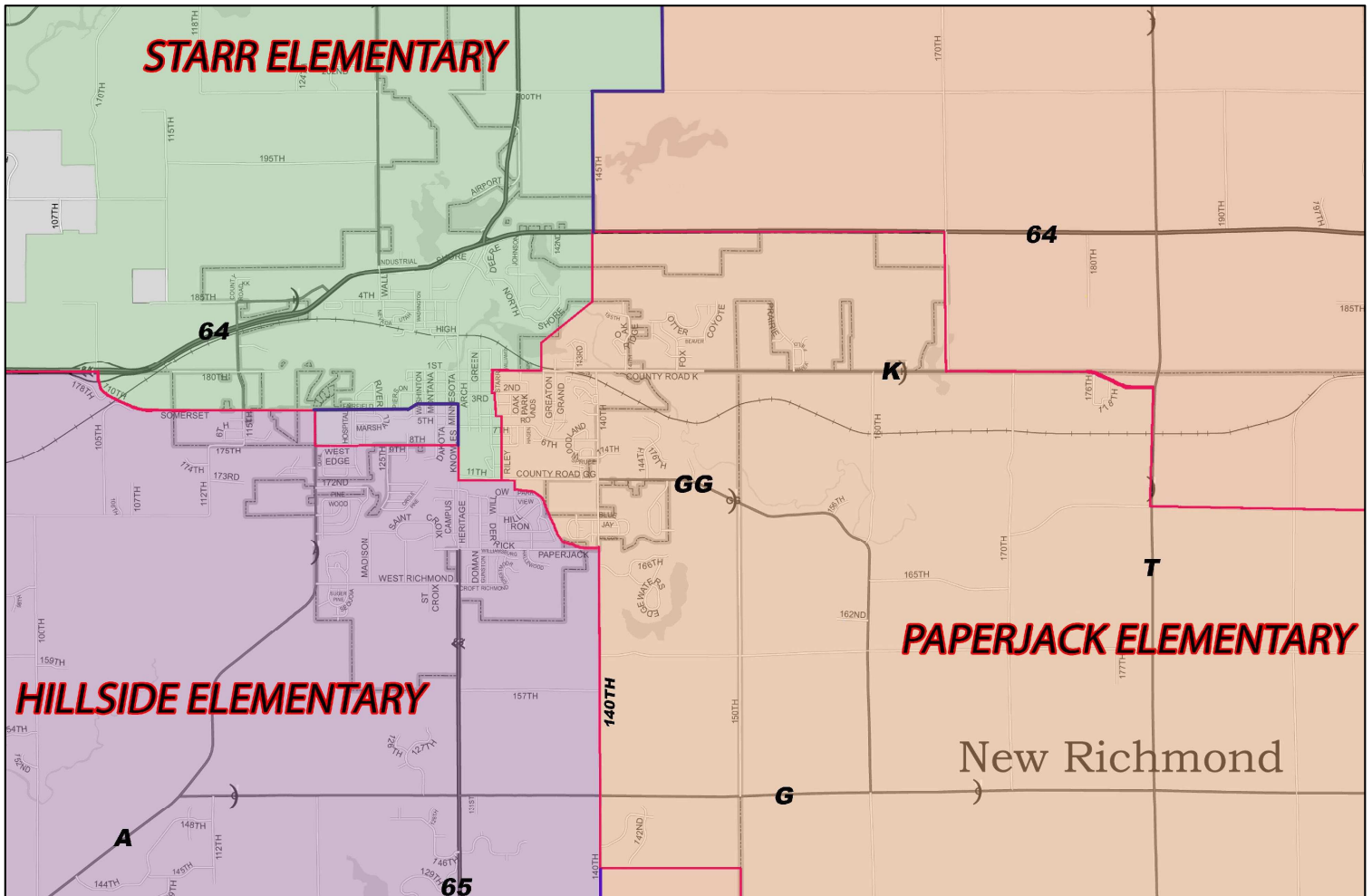
*Additional items*

- Pesticides are used along the path in front of Hillside Elementary and on school grounds. These pesticides have severe warnings that children should not be in contact with them.
- Each of the three elementary schools has different school zone speed limits.
- Many painted crosswalks in school zones and/or in areas where students are traveling are significantly weathered and/or the older standard design. Some key locations do not have painted crosswalks.
- Some pedestrian and school zone signs are the older yellow/orange color.
- Due to street width and/or lack of street paint, some streets operate with faster speeds than the posted speed limits.
- As is common in all communities, walking and biking on the wrong side of the street was observed.



11<sup>th</sup> St. east of Bilmar Ave., travelling west.

**Figure 2**  
**School District of New Richmond Elementary School Boundaries**



**Existing Policies and Practices**

Both the School District and the City have various policies and practices that directly or indirectly affect how students get to and from school. For New Richmond, the most impactful policy is the school district’s busing policy, which allows all students in the City limits to ride the school bus. In addition, the City does not require that sidewalks be provided in the construction of all developments.

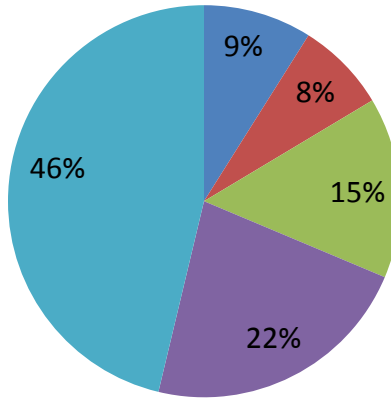
**Survey**

The School District distributed a survey to parents of students in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The survey asked questions about several different topics regarding walking and biking to and from school. The School District received 68 responses.

The survey showed that among responses, significantly more students walk home from school than walk to school. Among the parents that were surveyed, at least 39 percent of them allow their children to walk and/or bike on the route to the school. It is interesting to note that among those surveyed, 32 percent answered that they lived within one mile of the school. The amount of traffic, speed of traffic, lack of sidewalks, and safety of intersections all scored high regarding improvements that could change a parent’s decision. It is important to note that 45 percent of those surveyed stated that the school encourages or strongly encourages walking/biking. These percentages are higher than many school districts.

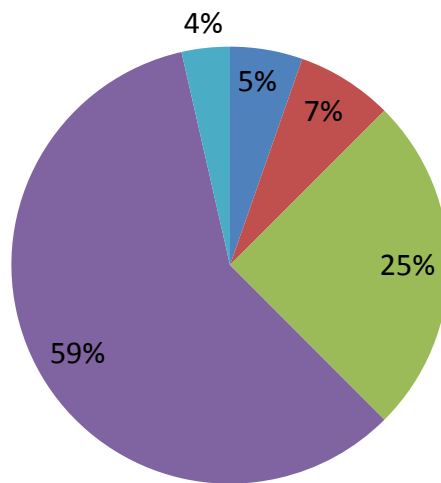
## Distance From School

- Less than 1/4 mile
- 1/4 mile to 1/2 mile
- 1/2 mile to 1 mile
- 1 mile to 2 miles
- More than 2 miles



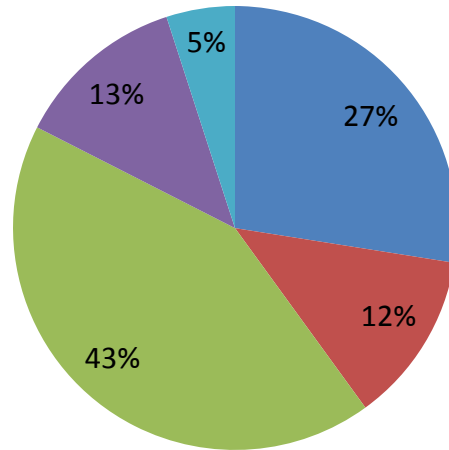
## How Does Child Arrive To School

- walk
- bike
- school bus
- family vehicle
- carpool

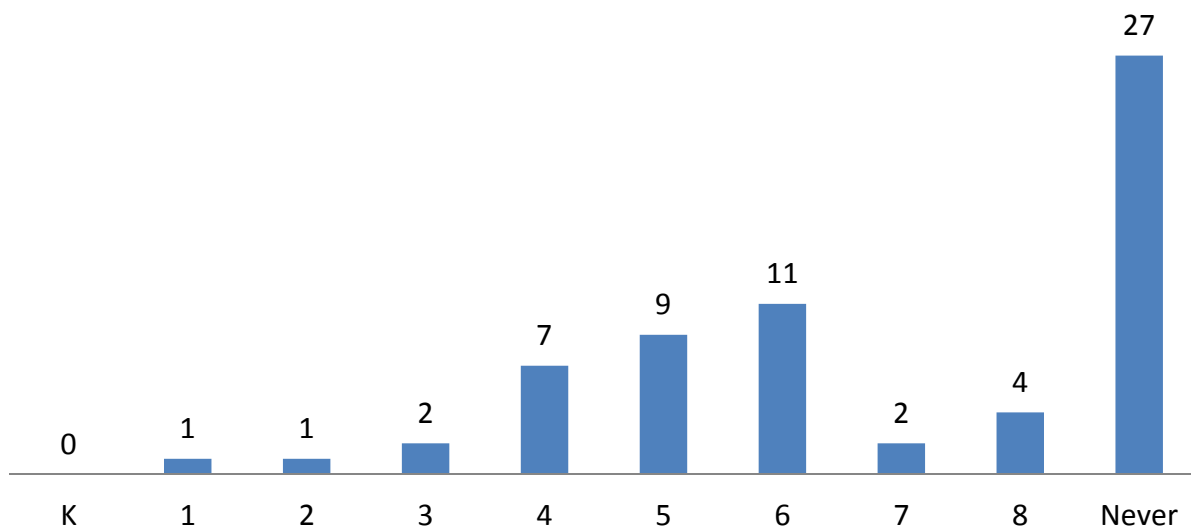


## How Does Child Get Home

■ walk ■ bike ■ school bus ■ family vehicle ■ carpool

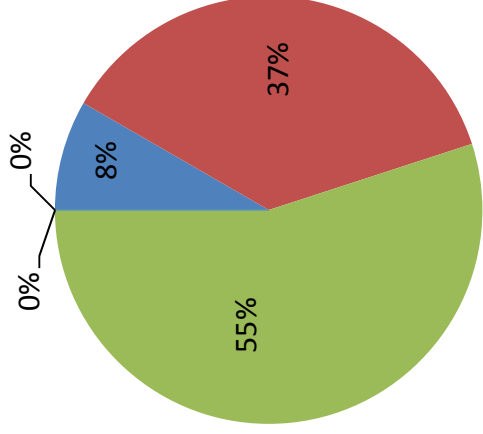


## What grade would you allow your child to walk without adult/older student

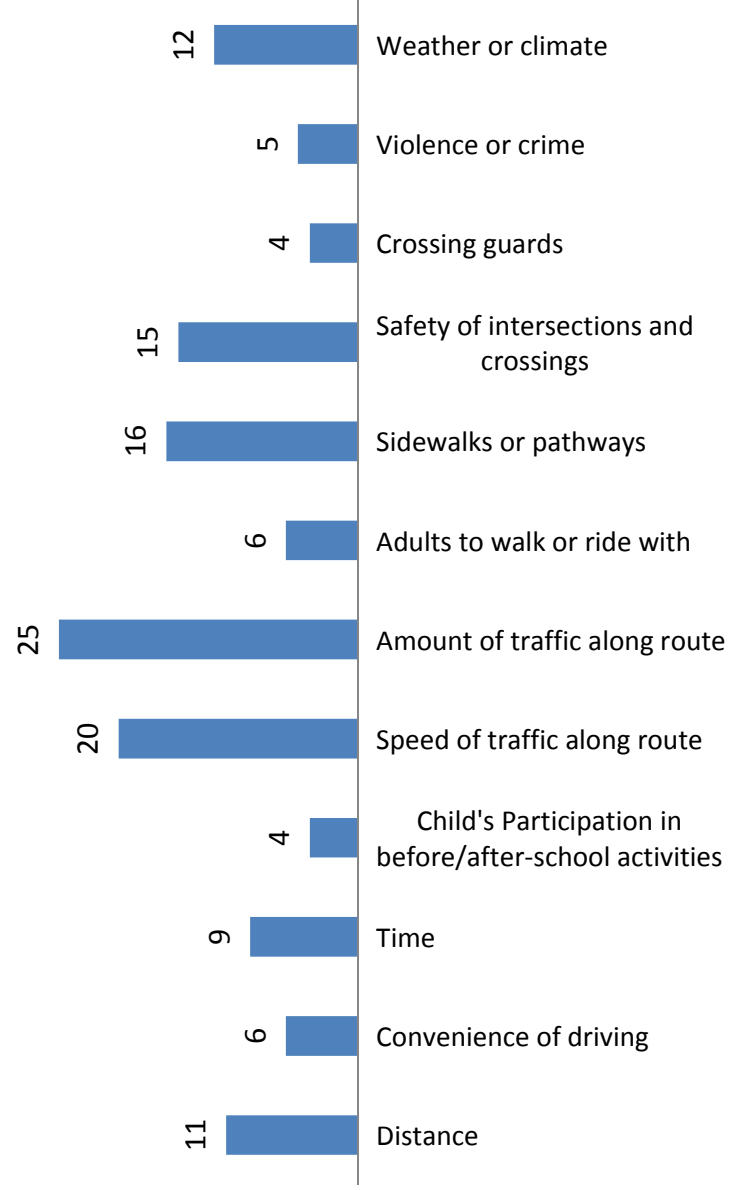


## Does the school encourage walking/biking

■ Strongly encourage  
 ■ Encourage  
 ■ Neither  
 ■ Discourage  
 ■ Strongly discourage

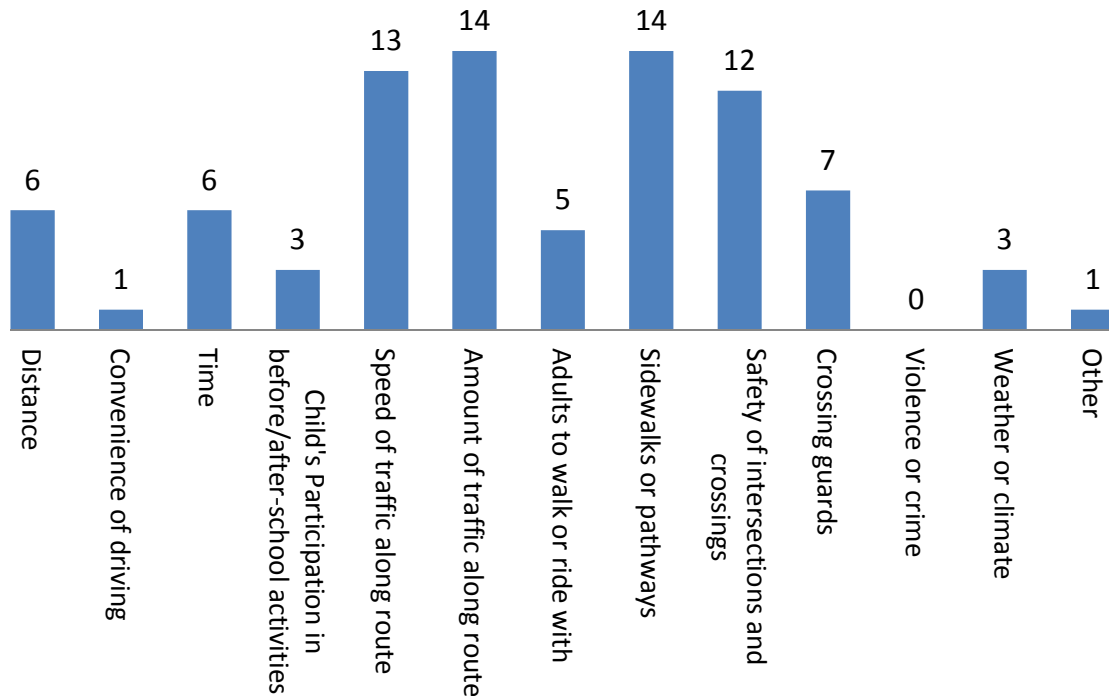


## What issues have affected your decision for your child to walk/bike or not





## Would you let your child walk/bike if these were changed/improved



### Traffic

Traffic volumes are relatively high on several streets that students have to walk along and/or cross to get to school.

- 1<sup>st</sup> St. east of STH 65 – 3,000 ADT (05/2012)
- 6<sup>th</sup> St. east of STH 65 – 4,600 ADT (06/2009)
- 11<sup>th</sup> St.: east of STH 65 – 4,300 ADT, west of Bilmar Ave – 3,900 ADT; west of Paperjack Elementary – 2,400 ADT (06/2009)
- STH 65 between 6<sup>th</sup> St. and 11<sup>th</sup> St. – 15,300 ADT (05/2012)
- STH 65 north of Paperjack Dr. – 11,700 ADT (05/2012)

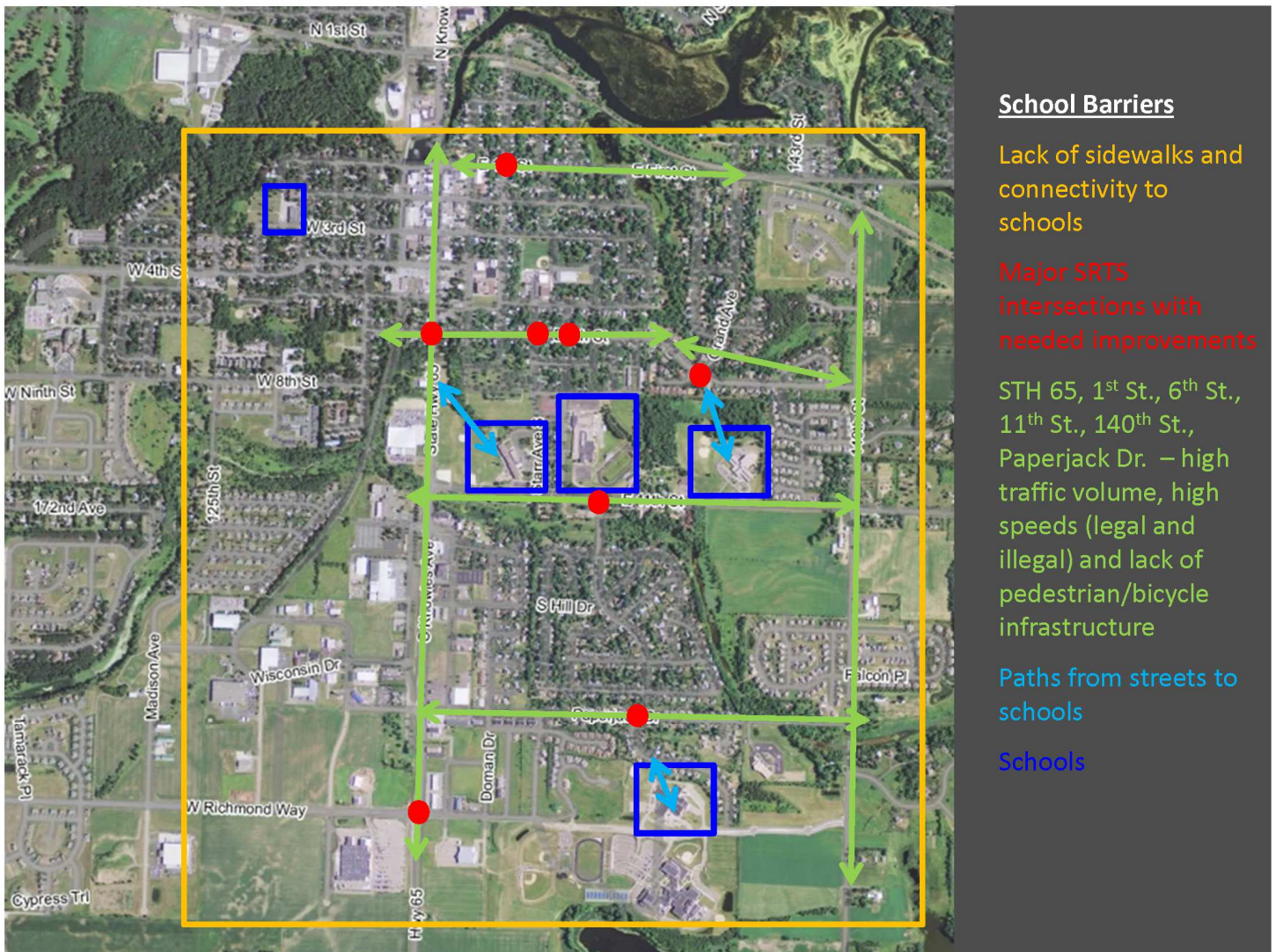
### Other Plans

In the City's 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Chapter lists that pedestrian/bicycle safety, traffic speeds in residential neighborhoods, and road paths from schools to residential areas are issues/concerns. There is no specific discussion on Safe Routes To School in the plan. However, there is discussion and goals, objectives, and policies that do reference the importance of a safe transportation system for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The City adopted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Comprehensive Plan in 2003. The plan states that schools are the strongest bicycle trip generators in New Richmond. Data was gathered in October, March and May at bicycle parking racks revealed that the middle school in particular, has a very high rate of bicycling activity. The plan also notes that police reports showed this age group as having 100 percent involvement in bike crashes. The plan recommends teaching bike safety in schools and to implement a pilot education program.

The Multi-Purpose Pathway Study and Comprehensive Plan from 2003 shows several proposed off-street paths around the schools. A major path is a proposed path from 6<sup>th</sup> St. and STH 65 to Starr Elementary School. There is also a proposed path west of Paperjack Elementary School and an 11<sup>th</sup> St. crossing in front of Paperjack Elementary School. There is also a proposed street bike lane on Green Street from the railroad to 6<sup>th</sup> St. As part of the implementation of the SRTS Plan and the Multi-Purpose Pathway Study, both plans should be used together when looking at future pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure construction.

**Figure 3**  
**Walking and Biking Barriers**



## Recommended Strategies

Numerous strategies are recommended for the City of New Richmond and the School District of New Richmond. It is important to remember that a community that is safe for students to walk and bike to school is also a walkable and livable community for everyone. New Richmond faces some challenges to safe walking and biking to school, specifically lack of sidewalks throughout the majority of the City. The community is of a size that virtually all students who live within a mile of their school should be able to walk and bike to school, and at one time the vast majority did so. For the strategies, there are three different timeframes recommended for implementation: ongoing, short-term (2016), and medium-term (2017-2019).

### Education

#### City

- Locate a sign along City entrances that says New Richmond is a SRTS community. (short-term)

#### School District

- Host fitness speakers that promote walking/biking (athlete/coach from High School, members of the community, etc.). (short-term)
- Distribute an annual letter at the beginning of the school year with a brief description stating that the community has completed a SRTS plan and where designated SRTS corridors are located. (short-term)
- Start a P.E. bike unit for elementary school students. (medium-term)
- Include vehicle/bike/pedestrian law education in school newsletters. (short-term)

#### City/School District

- Promote SRTS on the website and social media. (short-term)
- Work with local media in promoting SRTS. (ongoing)



Starr Ave. crossing.

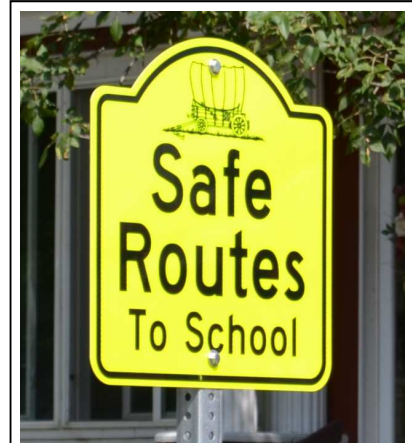
## Encouragement

### City

- Create a map that shows distances by walking, calories burned, and designated safe routes. Distribute annually. (short-term)
- Locate signage around town that shows designated safe routes, distance, and calories burned. Possibly incorporate this with a community based theme. (short-term)

### School District

- Start a Walk to School Day event/activities. (ongoing)
- Organize a walking school bus from strategic locations along SRTS routes, specifically crossing 1<sup>st</sup> St., 6<sup>th</sup> St. and State Highway 65 and along path to Paperjack Elementary. (short-term)
- Work with the school bus department to determine if reducing the number of stops in the City would be economically beneficial and/or increase the number of students that walk/bike to and from school. (short-term)
- Eliminate the use of pesticides on school grounds, specifically along areas designated for pedestrians and bicyclists. (short-term)



A SRTS street sign in De Smet, SD. The sign uses De Smet's theme of a covered wagon with the Laura Ingalls Wilder "Little Town On The Prairie" theme.

### City/School District

- Distribute reflectors for backpacks. (short-term)
- Locate crossing guards (with safety green vests and flags) at Bilmar Ave./11<sup>th</sup> St., Bilmar Ave./Paperjack Dr./Hallewood Blvd., and Starr Ave./6<sup>th</sup> St. (ongoing/short-term)
- Collaborate with community organizations (outdoor groups, health organizations, etc.) to help promote walking and biking to/from school. (short-term)

## Enforcement

### City

- Enforce speed limits. (ongoing)
  - State Highway 65
  - 140<sup>th</sup> St.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> St.
  - 6<sup>th</sup> St.
  - 11<sup>th</sup> St.
  - Paperjack Dr.
- Investigate activity that is currently deterring walking and biking to/from school. (ongoing)
- Investigate reducing regular hour speed limits along SRTS corridors. (short-term)
- Locate safety-green in-street pedestrian signs: (short-term)
  - All crossings at school entrances
  - Blimar Ave./11<sup>th</sup> St.
  - Paperjack Dr./Hallewood Blvd.
  - Paperjack Dr./Bilmar Ave.
  - STH 65/6<sup>th</sup> St.
  - Green Ave./1<sup>st</sup> St.
  - Starr Ave./8<sup>th</sup> St.
  - Grand Ave./6<sup>th</sup> St.



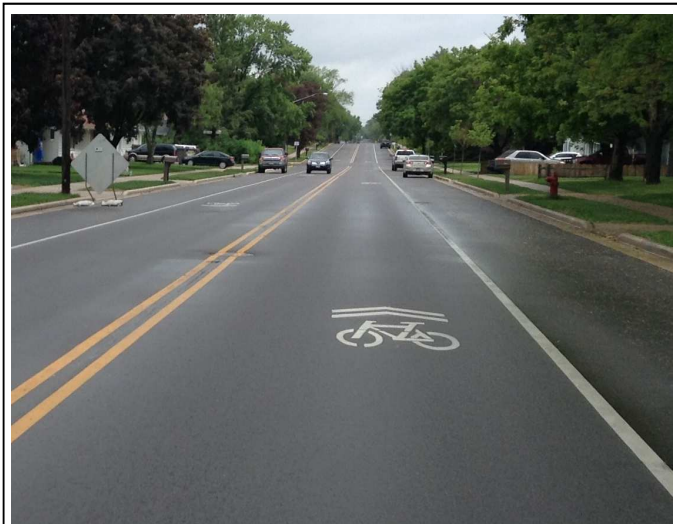
Path from Hallewood Blvd to Hillside Elementary.

## Engineering

- Require all future development to meet pedestrian, bicycle, and SRTS policies and needs. (short-term)
- Require all future surrounding development to have adequate pedestrian/bicycle trail, sidewalks, and feeder system to the school. (short-term)
- Where they do not currently exist, construct sidewalks along all SRTS routes, as shown on the maps. (short-term/medium-term)
- If sidewalks are not feasible along certain SRTS

routes, create a designated painted walking lane on the pavement. (short-term)

- Locate safety-green colored pedestrian crossing signs with arrows on both sides of the street in both directions and painted crosswalks at all Improved Intersections labeled on the map. (short-term)
- Replace all old yellow/orange pedestrian signs with safety-green colored pedestrian crossing signs, along SRTS corridors. (short-term)
- Implement school zone speeds of 15mph in all school zones. Replace all non-15mph school zone signs with 15mph school zone signs. (short-term)
- Install/update school zone signs: (short-term)
  - Along 11<sup>th</sup> Street at each school
  - Richmond Way – east and west of school entrances
  - 6<sup>th</sup> St. – east and west of Starr Ave.
  - 6<sup>th</sup> St. – west of Grand Ave. and east of path entrance to Paperjack Elementary
  - Paperjack Dr. – west of Hallewood Blvd. and east of Bilmar Ave.
- Investigate feasibility of bumpouts at all Improved Intersections labeled on the map. If feasible at specific locations, construct bumpouts at those locations. (short-term)
- Paint centerlines and parking lanes and sharrows and/or bike lanes along the SRTS corridors. (short-term)
- Paint hatched areas in parking lane area where no parking is allowed along the SRTS corridors. (short-term)



Example of a roadway with centerline, parking lines, and sharrows. Eau Claire, WI.

### School District

- Review parent drop-off areas and bus areas. See if they are working well and if they are negatively impacting students walking/biking to and from school. (short-term)
- Improve bicycle parking areas/facilities with covered bike parking and student art. (medium-term)
- Construct a paved path from STH 65 just south of 6<sup>th</sup> St. to Starr Elementary. (medium-term)



Covered bicycle parking in Tomelilla, Sweden.

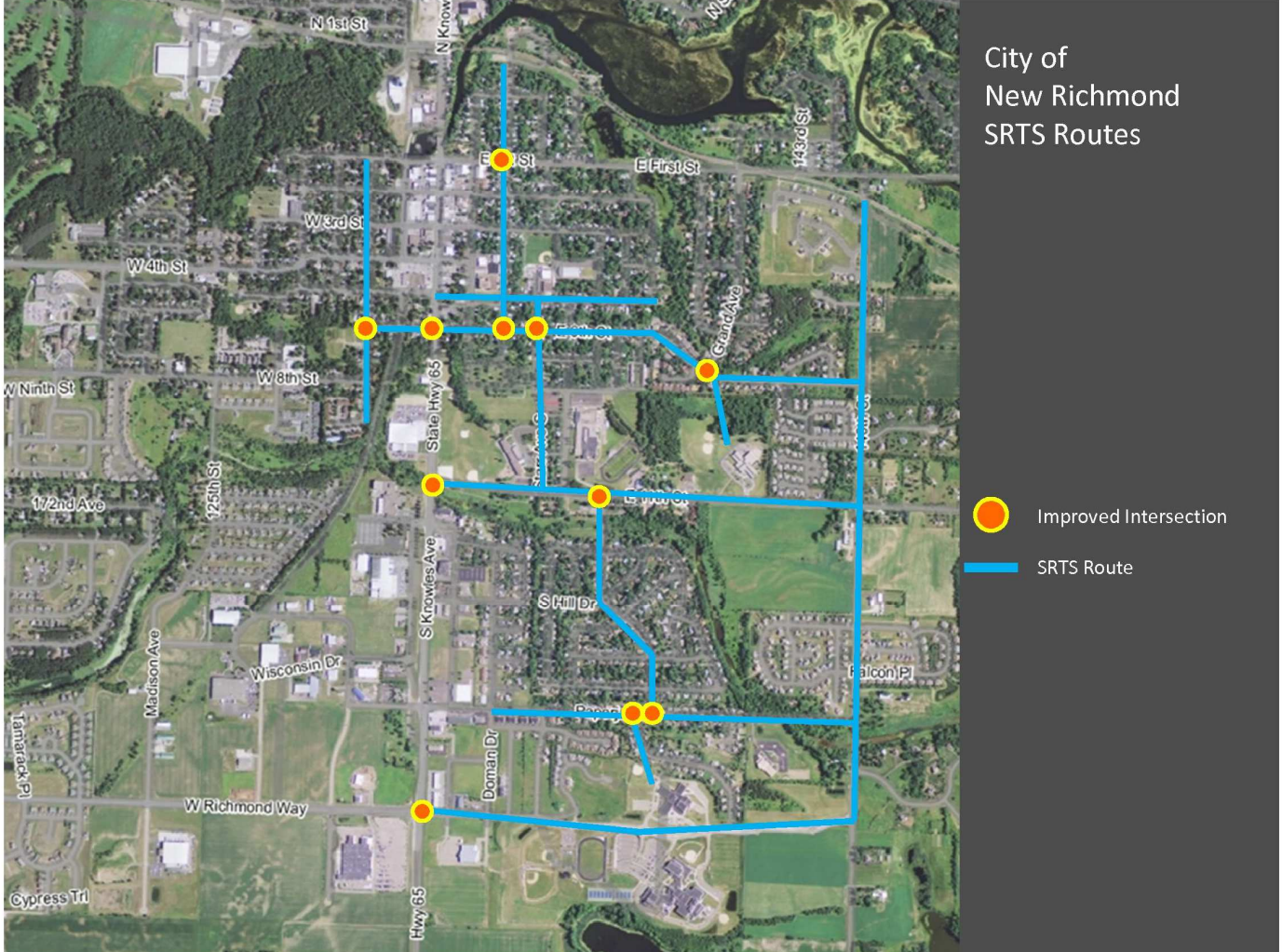
### City/School District

- Locate SRTS signs that have a specific theme along SRTS corridors. This could include community theme and/or school age interests. An example is something with the District mascot. (short-term)
- Improve lighting along SRTS corridors, where needed. (short-term)
- Locate lighting along the paths to Paperjack Elementary and Hillside Elementary schools. (short-term)
- Locate overhead pedestrian flashing light at Bilmar Ave. and 11<sup>th</sup> St. (short-term)

### **Evaluation**

- Nominate a chairperson for the SRTS Task Force (ongoing)
- Continue to meet as a SRTS Task Force (at least twice a year) (ongoing)
- Complete a teacher tally sheet in Spring 2016 and Spring 2018 (medium-term)
- Complete a parent survey in Spring 2018 (medium-term)

**Figure 4**  
**Proposed Safe Routes To School System**



## Implementation

In order for the recommendations included in this SRTS plan to become reality, it is important that the SRTS Task Force remain active. The group's role will be to coordinate, track, and evaluate projects, programs, and grant applications. They will serve as the champion of SRTS in the City.

In the list of recommendations, the strategies all have a stated timeframe. There are three different timeframes for starting implementation: ongoing, short-term (2016), and medium-term (2017-2019). The ongoing projects are those that can be implemented without the need for specific grant funds or large coordinative efforts. The short-term category includes those projects that may require some planning to include in school curriculum during 2016 or would be eligible for upcoming grant cycles, such as applications to Wisconsin Department of Transportation TAP grant program. Projects included in the medium-term are longer term projects that either require more coordinative effort, design time, or may need more complex funding schemes. With the correct planning and coordinated effort, some of these could start sooner.

The following is a list of criteria that could be used by the SRTS Task Force. During the planning process, it was discussed that several strategies were of high priority. It is planned that over the coming months and years, the SRTS Task Force will update the strategies that are to be at highest priority levels. In addition, it should be noted that some strategies can be accomplished easily and that even though they are not the highest priority, these can and should be implemented when the resources are available.

1. Safety
2. Ease of Implementation
3. Usage
4. Cost
5. Healthy Outcomes
6. Time Required

The engineering strategies of highest priority include:

- Bilmar Ave. and 11<sup>th</sup> St. intersection (painted crosswalks, overhead pedestrian lights)
- 1<sup>st</sup> St., 6<sup>th</sup> St., 11<sup>th</sup> St., and Paperjack Dr. mitigation (options include: reduce mph, painted centerlines, painted parking lanes, hatched areas where no parking is permitted, painted sharrows, pedestrian crossing signage, and bike lanes)
- Enhance paths that lead to Paperjack Elementary and Hillside Elementary to make them safer (lighting and cameras)
- 6<sup>th</sup> St. and STH 65 intersection (signage, painted crosswalks, reduced speed limits)

Funding programs and abbreviations are described in the following pages. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list, as new programs concerning the health and safety of children are being established every year, but gives a starting point for some of the major programs that are currently available. It is important to partner with local service groups, as well as organizations with children's health and safety as their mission.

The best means of implementation is an organized and diligent task force working to bring the City and School District together and guide them toward the goal of becoming a Safe Routes to School community.



## Funding and Resources

### Additional funding

#### Bicycle Safety – Rodeo (BS-R)

This grant is intended to provide one-time funding that will contribute to a community's ability to set-up a bicycle-training rodeo or similar hands-on event. The purpose of this event is to teach safe bicycling operation, skill and judgment to elementary and middle school children and their parents. Many of the skills and attitudes developed in this training are precursors for skills and attitudes necessary for safe driving. For more information, contact: Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

#### Community Academic Partnership Fund

For information about this funding source: <http://www.med.wisc.edu/wisconsin-partnership-program/community-academic-partnership-fund/634>

#### Driven to Better Health

Physical activity involves the development, implementation, and evaluation of school - based, school - linked efforts to increase exercise among students, staff, and community. There are a number of ways the Department of Public Instruction is addressing this important issue. Driven to Better Health is one such program that addresses this issue. It is a DPI sponsored program to engage families in physical activity and healthy eating by having students and their families count moving miles based on the amount of physical activity they complete, and the food choices a person makes. To find out more about how your school can begin a Driven to Better Health program contact: Eileen Hare at 608.267.9234 [www.sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw\\_driventohealth](http://www.sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_driventohealth)

#### General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids

In partnership with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation, the General Mills Foundation developed the Champions for Healthy Kids grant program in 2002. Each year, the Foundation awards 50 grants of \$20,000 each to nonprofit organizations working to improve nutrition and physical fitness behaviors for youth. Web: [www.eatrightfoundation.org/foundation/championgrants/](http://www.eatrightfoundation.org/foundation/championgrants/) for more information.

#### Green & Healthy Schools Program (GHSP)

Green & Healthy Schools is a Web-based, voluntary program available to all public and private elementary, middle and high schools across Wisconsin. The program encourages teachers, staff, students and parents to work together to use the school, its grounds and the whole community as learning tools to teach, promote and apply healthy, safe and environmentally sound practices. Green & Healthy Schools is an integrated program that addresses many of the same issues as Safe Routes to School such as transportation alternatives, improved air quality, a safe transportation environment and community involvement. Small grants are available for schools that show a commitment towards these goals. For more information, visit:

[www.dnr.wi.gov/education/educatorresources/ghs/](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/education/educatorresources/ghs/) or contact DNR staff at: [DNRGHSchools@Wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRGHSchools@Wisconsin.gov)

#### Local Transportation Enhancements (TE) (part of the Transportation Alternatives Program-TAP)

The Transportation Enhancements program funds projects that increase multi-modal transportation alternatives and enhance communities and the environment. Federal funds administered through this program provide up to 80% of costs for a wide variety of projects including "provision of facilities for bicycles or pedestrians" and "provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists." Projects must meet federal and state requirements. Local governments with taxing authority, state agencies and Indian tribes are eligible for funding. A project sponsor must pay for a project and then seek reimbursement for the project from the state. Federal funds will provide up to 80% of project costs, while the sponsor must provide at least the other 20%. For more information, contact: Tanya Iverson, Department of Transportation, Phone: 608.266.2574, email: [tanya2.iverson@dot.wi.gov](mailto:tanya2.iverson@dot.wi.gov)

#### Pedestrian Road Show-Walking Workshop (PRSWW)

*The Pedestrian Road Show-Walking Workshop* provides funding to communities that are working on local expertise and on-going commitment to increase public safety by reducing pedestrian related traffic crashes and injuries while improving the community's Walkability. The grantee will arrange a Pedestrian Road Show/Walking Workshop with a trained facilitator from a Bureau of Transportation Safety list. The Pedestrian Road Show/Walking Workshop is the initial event to a pedestrian improvement commitment by this community. The invitation of community leaders encourages the formation of a local group of pedestrian advocates and experts to focus on identifying and solving potential problems that affect pedestrian safety and walkability in the local community. They also identify good pedestrian environments and determine how those can be replicated in the less desirable locations for pedestrians.

For more information, contact: Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

### People For Bikes

The People For Bikes Community Grant Program provides funding for important and influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the U.S. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. Visit [www.peopleforbikes.org/](http://www.peopleforbikes.org/) for more information.

### Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Funding for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is provided through federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used by off - highway vehicles. Towns, cities, counties, tribal governing bodies, school districts, state agencies, federal agencies and incorporated organizations are eligible to receive reimbursement for development and maintenance of recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. Eligible sponsors may be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the total project costs. [www.dnr.wi.gov/aid/rta.html](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/aid/rta.html)

### Safe Routes to School (SRTS) — (part of the Transportation Alternatives Program-TAP)

The Wisconsin Safe Routes to School Program provides funding for planning, infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects within two miles of an elementary or middle school (kindergarten through eighth grade). For information about the guidelines and funding cycles, contact the program coordinator: Wisconsin Safe Routes to School Coordinator, email: [srts@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:srts@dot.state.wi.us)

### Teaching Safe Bicycling (TSB)

This training is normally scheduled in April and designed to work with teachers, YMCA staff, summer program instructors, law enforcement officers, programs and organizations putting on bike rodeos and people interested in teaching safe bicycling to children. This is a one - day course at no cost to the participants. The course teaches attendees how and why children are different from adults when it comes to bicycling and what the most common child bicycle crashes are. It also provides useful information that can be used at future training sessions, hands on training for participants and strategies for developing better ideas and methods for teaching children. Sponsors will also receive useful safety materials for children. For more information, contact : Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

### U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Program of the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment promotes bicycle and pedestrian transportation use, safety, and accessibility. There are many funding opportunities under this department. For more information:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/funding/funding\\_opportunities.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.cfm)

### Wisconsin Medical Society Community Grant

The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation focuses on providing support for physician-led, community-based or statewide programs to improve health through education and outreach. We seek to support primarily high impact, high visibility programs that support the Foundation's mission. More information is online at: [www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/about-us/foundation/grants-and-awards/grant-program/](http://www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org/about-us/foundation/grants-and-awards/grant-program/)

### Wisconsin Pedestrian and Bicycle Law Enforcement Training Course

This two-day course provides Wisconsin law enforcement officers with the training and information that they need to manage traffic for pedestrian and bicycle safety and enjoyment in their communities. It will explain the causes of crashes and the chief countermeasures for preventing these crashes, teach Wisconsin laws and statutes relating to pedestrians and bicyclists and provide hands on training.

For more information, contact: Larry Corsi, Wisconsin Bureau of Transportation Safety, Phone: 608.709.0081, email: [larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov](mailto:larry.corsi@dot.wi.gov)

## Related Programs

### Comprehensive School Health

Healthy kids make better students and better students make healthy communities! This belief is the cornerstone to coordinated school health and the reason why organizations and agencies representing public health, higher education, school districts, parents, and other groups have joined the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in

supporting CSH initiatives. DPI incorporates a variety of strategies to address these critical health behaviors and they include funding opportunities; technical assistance; free resources through printed publications, internet, and media resources; and professional development events. [http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw\\_cshp](http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_cshp)

### National SAFE KIDS Campaign

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign is a national nonprofit organization dedicated exclusively to the prevention of unintentional childhood injuries (motor vehicle crashes, fires and other injuries), which is the number one cause of death of children under the age of 14. The Campaign's aim is to stimulate changes in attitudes, behavior and the environment. Since its inception in 1998, the Campaign has focused on developing injury prevention strategies—conducting public outreach and awareness campaigns, stimulating hands-on grassroots activity and working to make injury prevention a public policy priority. The National SAFE KIDS Campaign and program sponsor FedEx Express developed SAFE KIDS Walk this Way in 2000 to bring national and local attention to pedestrian safety issues. The SAFE KIDS Walk This Way program involves *Walk to School Day* events, data collection, school pedestrian safety committees and community pedestrian safety task forces. The Campaign relies on the support of more than 400 grassroots coalitions in 49 states and the District of Columbia to reach out to local communities. For more information, visit: <http://www.safekids.org/united-states-0>

### Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Program

The Nutrition and Physical Activity Program provides statewide leadership to decrease overweight and obesity, increase physical activity and improve nutrition. Located in the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the Program and its partners have developed and are implementing the Wisconsin Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity State Plan to accomplish the overall goal of preventing obesity and chronic disease. For more information, visit <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/physical-activity/index.htm>

### School Wellness Policy

With the passing of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, school districts participating in federally subsidized child nutrition programs (e.g., National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program and After School Snack Program) will be required to establish a local school wellness policy by the beginning of the 2006-07 school year. In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and added new provisions for local school wellness policies related to implementation, evaluation, and publicly reporting on progress of local school wellness policies. Part of Wisconsin's School Wellness Policy requires schools to set goals for physical activity for their students. Safe Routes to School Programs will help meet these goals. For more information visit: [http://fns.dpi.wi.gov/fns\\_wellnessplcy](http://fns.dpi.wi.gov/fns_wellnessplcy)

### Wisconsin School Health Award

State Superintendent Evers supports the Wisconsin School Health Award as a way to recognize and celebrate schools with policies, programs, and the infrastructure to support and promote healthy eating; physical activity; parental and community involvement; and staff wellness. The goal of this award is to motivate and empower Wisconsin schools as they create and maintain healthy school environments. For more information on how your school can apply for the award, visit [http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw\\_wischoolhealthaward](http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_wischoolhealthaward)

### Other Resources


#### Active Living by Design

Since 2002, Active Living By Design (ALBD) has supported community-led change to create healthier environments in rural, suburban and urban communities across the United States. By working in more than 30 states and with more than 160 local partnerships, dozens of national collaborators and many philanthropic organizations, we are helping to build a culture of active living and healthy eating for all. For more information, visit [www.activelivingbydesign.org](http://www.activelivingbydesign.org)

#### Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW)

The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW) is a statewide, nonprofit, bicycle advocacy organization working to make Wisconsin a better place to bicycle. The BFW is actively involved with Safe Routes To School Programs. For more information, visit [www.bfw.org/](http://www.bfw.org/)

### Girls on the Run



Girls on the Run is a non - profit prevention program that encourages preteen girls to develop self – respect and healthy lifestyles through running. Girls on the Run International (GOTRI) is the parent organization of more than 225 Girls on the Run councils across the United States and Canada. GOTRI establishes, trains and supports a network of community - level councils with local volunteers. The volunteers serve as role models to the girls through coaching the 12 - week, 24 lesson curricula. The curriculum is delivered in these areas through after - school programs, recreation centers and other non-profit settings. For more information, visit [www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org)

#### Kid Power

Kid Power is a global non-profit leader dedicated to providing empowering and effective child protection, positive communication, and personal safety skills for all ages and abilities. For more information, visit [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org)

## Parent Survey – Additional Comments

Questions 6 and 7 do not allow you to pick the same choice (i.e. Family Vehicle) for each column.

We are landlocked by the county and there are no sidewalks for our route unless they cross through unimproved territory first. Then they still have to cross the busy intersection.

I feel that a major reason children don't walk to the high school or hillside elementary is because the trail along 140th street from Paperjack Drive to the Waters Edge Development has not been completed.

We live in the Fox Run subdivision and would need to walk on Cty K to get to school. There is a narrow bridge that we have to cross and the speed limit is 55mph.

Where does parenting come in? Reality - people take their kids to school so that they are safe, fed and well/better rested. Today's schedules are tough on kids. My kids probably get 30-40 minutes of extra sleep if I bring them to school versus the bus or bike riding... Most kids are going to emulate their parents (both good and bad). Their activity level and attitudes/opinions of exercise come from there. Maybe the child can help to influence the parent on positive changes... Where does most bullying take place? on bus or before/after school in less supervised areas. Can parents help protect their kids from this negative experience? yes, bring them to/from school. Every show on TV is murder, abduction, molestation, etc. Today's parents are convinced daily that there are "creepies" on every street corner. Can parents help protect their kids from this negative experience. yes, bring them to/from school. In reality, everyone agrees with kids should adopt a healthy lifestyle early and it would be great for them and for society as a whole. Spend a bunch of money on creating "safe corridors" if you deem that is money well spent... same kids will be using it that are biking/walking today. In my opinion, the other issues will prevail and the percentage of students walk/bike will not change. How much time, energy and money is being spent on this type of social engineering? I believe you should collect that financial data on these types of projects. I challenge you to look at this project five years from now - I hope I am wrong and we didn't just waste \$1,000's of dollars on this project for one report to the school board.

My daughters who are allowed to walk, and are only allowed to walk home from school because they are with a group of 2 or more. Their walk is typically down Riley Ave. to GG, along GG to Bilmar Ave., then to Paperjack Drive. All of these routes are very busy with other walkers, bikers and drivers...many of these drivers are busy texting or talking on their phone, speeding and paying little attention to our walkers. A fair amount of these drivers are also teenagers from the HS. As a parent, I have become more concerned with my daughters walking home due to the increased traffic, the lack of sidewalks down Paperjack Drive and the increase in violence and crime within the area surrounding our home. As the weather hints at getting colder, my daughters are struggling with the idea of walking home in the cold months. We are searching for a consistent alternative over the cold months that would allow them to work on their homework, volunteer to help a teacher in their classroom or even take the transfer bus that would allow them access to me without infringing on the schools and staff on the days that they are not involved in an after school activity. We try to stay aware of what safe options are available for our kids within our schools/community. Thank you for your care, concern and time invested here.

My child bikes daily. The only time I drive him is when it's extremely cold or we are running late.

We live within city limits (GG) however the route to school includes traveling on a county rd. There are no sidewalks or walking paths on this stretch of road and is very dangerous for anyone walking/biking.

We live way too far (Somerset Township) for our children to ever bike or walk to school.

I would love for my child to have the ability to ride his bike to school if he chose. However, we live east of the schools out off of Cty K and the lack of shoulder/sidewalks does not make me as a parent to feel safe for him to ride alone.

We live over 5 miles from the school. ..in the country and there are no safe trails for my children can use to get to school. Also, the road is mainly 55mph with fairly heavy traffic.

I live along a major road (highway 65), which would be almost the entire route for my child. This is the main reason I would not allow my child to walk or ride his bike to school. There is too much traffic and it moves too fast.

How dark it is. How early school starts. How dangerous it is with drivers and because of how dark it is in morning

We live in the Woodland Development off of County Road A, and the only route to get to the school by bike or walk is by going on County Road A (which has no walking or biking option). We would love a bridge/path from our development to the walking paths in the development just to the north east of us. Then our children and others in our development would have safe pathway to walk or bike all the way to the school.

We live in the Fox Run neighborhood that has many families with school aged children. We are within a short enough distance to walk or bike to school, however there is not a bike/walking path along first street that connects our neighborhood. We have biked the route as a family many times but it is dangerous and not enough shoulder on the road. Cars going 45MPH have to cross into the oncoming lane to move around us. There is only about a half mile length that needs a side walk. Please please please consider!

We live outside of city limits so my child would not be able to safely ride her bike to school.

We have one stretch of road that is only about 100 yards or so without a sidewalk on a busy road, but in the valley of two hills on a road that many travel to get to three of the schools. The road is very narrow there to get over a bridge. If this small portion of path added a walking path, I would love to let my children walk/bike to school.