



CITY OF OAK CREEK
**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
ACTION PLAN** 

Forest Ridge Elementary School



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN



Forest Ridge Elementary School

Why Safe Routes to School?

SafeRoutes to School (“SRTS”) is a set of programs and investments that make it safer, more convenient, inviting, and fun for children and their families to walk and bike to school.

SRTS initiatives contribute to our children’s social and academic success, and provide a foundation for life-long healthful habits.

What’s included in this action plan?

This Safe Routes to School Action Plan is one of nine school-level SRTS plans prepared for the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District. The plan includes an inventory and evaluation of **Existing Conditions** for walking and biking around the school, as well as **Recommendations** for both programming and infrastructure improvements.

Programming Recommendations include fun and engaging programs for students and families to increase walking and biking to school. Programs can be relatively easy and inexpensive to implement, and can produce significant results even in the near-term.

Infrastructure Recommendations include a range of physical improvements to a school and its surroundings to improve the safety, comfort, and convenience of walking and biking. This may include upgrading sidewalks or crossings, repairing facilities, filling network gaps, or adding paint, signage, and signals.

The 6 Es of SRTS

Safe Routes to School planning is based on a framework known as the Six Es, which provides a way of thinking about and organizing improvements in and around a school. The 6Es include:



EDUCATION

Education programs and initiatives provide information to children, parents, and community member on safe walking and biking practices.



ENCOURAGEMENT

Encouragement programs inspire families to try walking or biking through fun and inviting activities such as friendly competitions and incentive programs.



ENGINEERING

Engineering includes upgrades to and upkeep of the physical landscape in and around the school such as sidewalks, bikeways, intersections and signs.



ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement programs often include participation from police with a focus on enforcing traffic safety laws, like speed limits, in the vicinity of a school.



EVALUATION

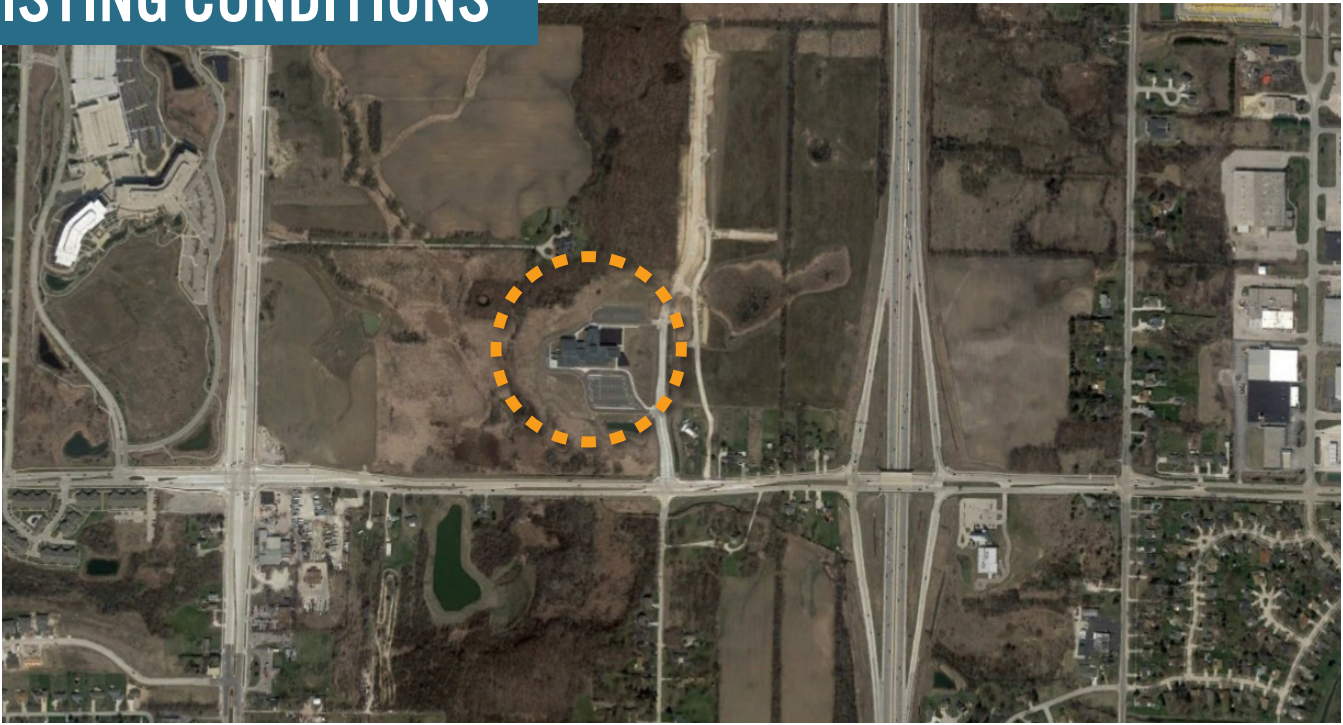
Evaluation measures conditions before, during, and after implementation, helping guide priorities and goals and ensuring efficient use of resources.



EQUITY

Equity focuses on distributing resources fairly throughout a community to ensure all students have equal access to high quality infrastructure and programming.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



CONTEXT

Forest Ridge Elementary School is a new campus located on Drexel Avenue and Oak Leaf Trail, about a mile northwest of Oak Creek West Middle School. Interstate 94 is located a quarter mile to the east and multifamily developments are located about a mile to the southeast, across I-94. Single family residential developments are located along 20th Street to the south and there are several developments along Drexel Avenue. Clusters of single family homes can

also be found a half-mile to the southwest and southeast. The nearest public library is 1.25 miles to the southeast.

A strip mall with commercial development is located one mile to the northwest, including several big box stores. Currently the land directly around the campus is undeveloped.

Forest Ridge Elementary Quick Facts:



Principal
Ed Mittag



Number of Students
386



Health and Physical Education
Daniel Knoernschild & Terry Nachtigall



Arrival Time
8:00 a.m.



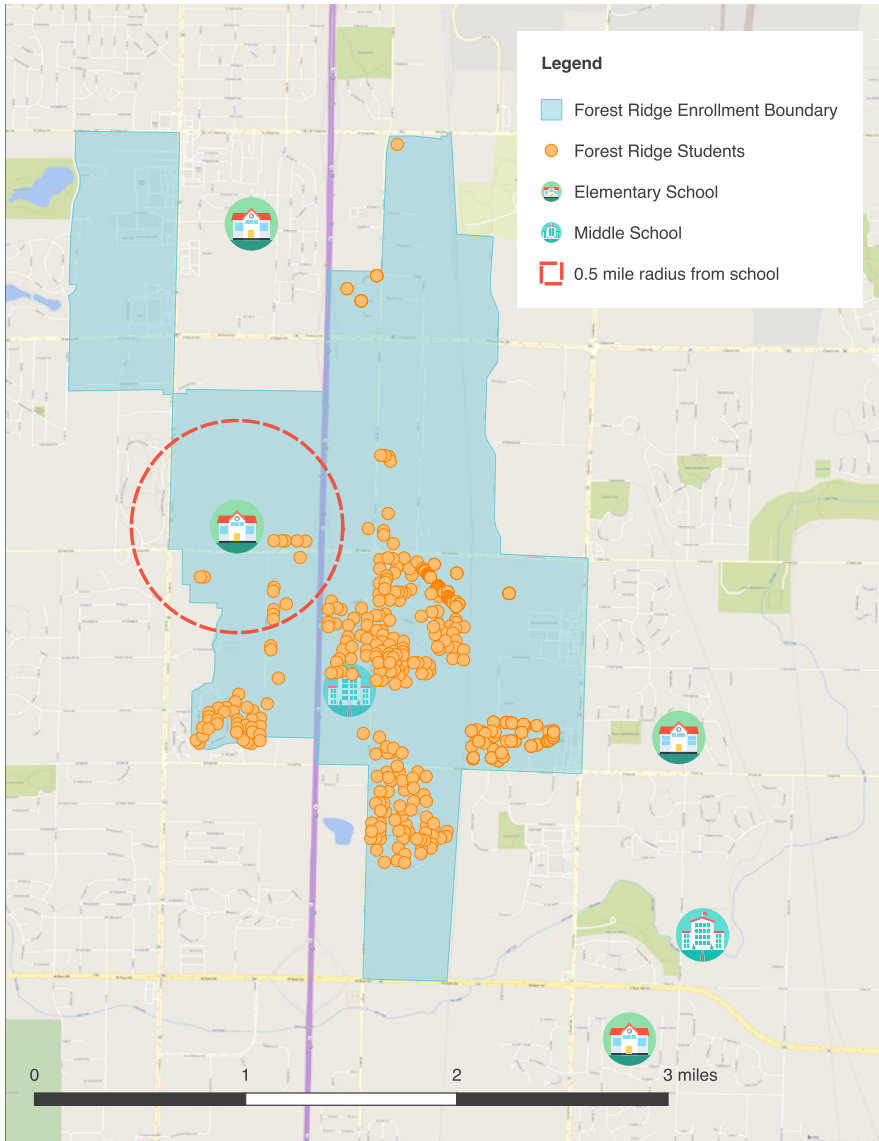
Grades
PK-5



Dismissal Time
3:05 p.m.

ENROLLMENT DENSITY

Residential locations for enrolled students cluster throughout the central and southern portions of the Forest Ridge Elementary School attendance area. Most of the students live further than a half-mile from the school.



WALKING/BIKING POTENTIAL:

Approximately **five percent** of all students live within a walkable or bikeable distance from school (that is, one half-mile), but only **one percent** of students walk or bike today.

How might we grow this number?



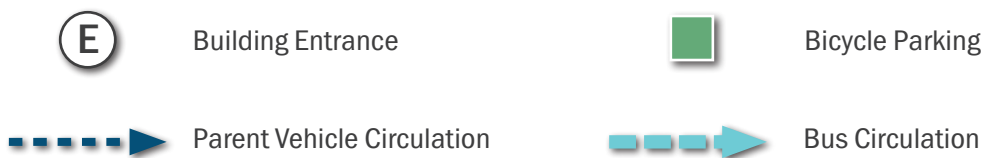
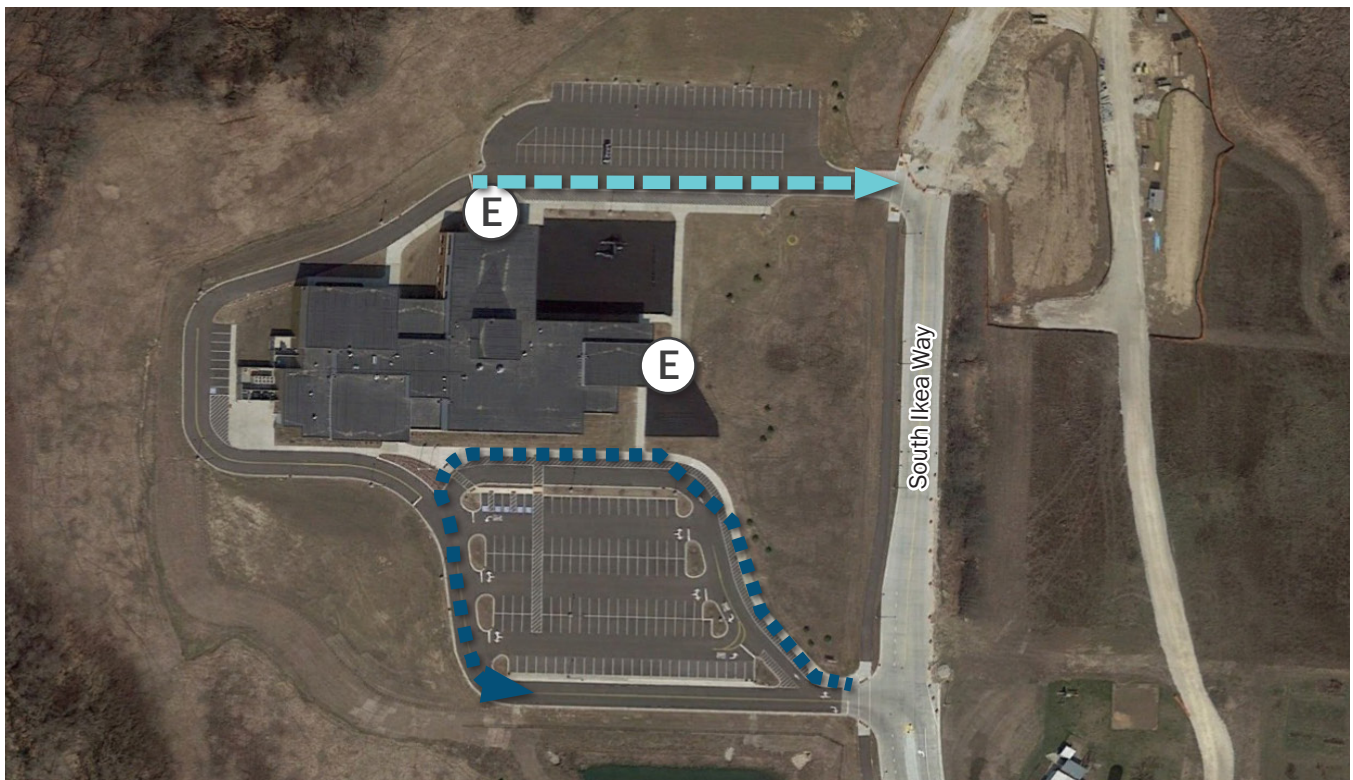
ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Forest Ridge Elementary School's main entrance is on the south side of the building, facing the main parking lot and parent drop-off area. Students departing by bus exit from the north entrance.

Parent vehicles pick-up and drop-off at the main entrance of the school. Each family is assigned a number that they display in their vehicle. When dropping students off, parents and guardians can access the student drop-off zone at 7:50am. The student drop-off lane is clearly marked with

cones to facilitate procedures. Parents are asked to remain in their cars as staff assist in escorting students from the vehicles to the entrance. If students are arriving after school has started, parents and guardians are asked to park and walk their children inside.

There are no bicycle parking racks. Students who choose to walk may exit from the main entrance on the south side of the building.



EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE



Sidewalks are present in most residential neighborhoods to the southeast on at least one side of the street.



The paved **Oak Leaf Trail** runs along Drexel Avenue bordering the campus. This trail connects to many other parks and destinations in Oak Creek.



Crosswalks are located at both adjacent intersections as well as on the intersections near the I-94 access ramps.



Parking lot striping is highly visible and vehicular travel lanes are clearly defined.

EXISTING PROGRAMMING

Crossings are supervised at the main entrance. No other walk/bike related programs occur at the school, or information was not provided to the project team.

OTHER DATA

Student Travel Tallies

The school submitted travel tallies for the week of November 15, 2016. From the numbers submitted, it was determined that 4 students walked and zero students biked to school. Based on current enrollment, approximately 1% of Edgewood Elementary School students walk to school.

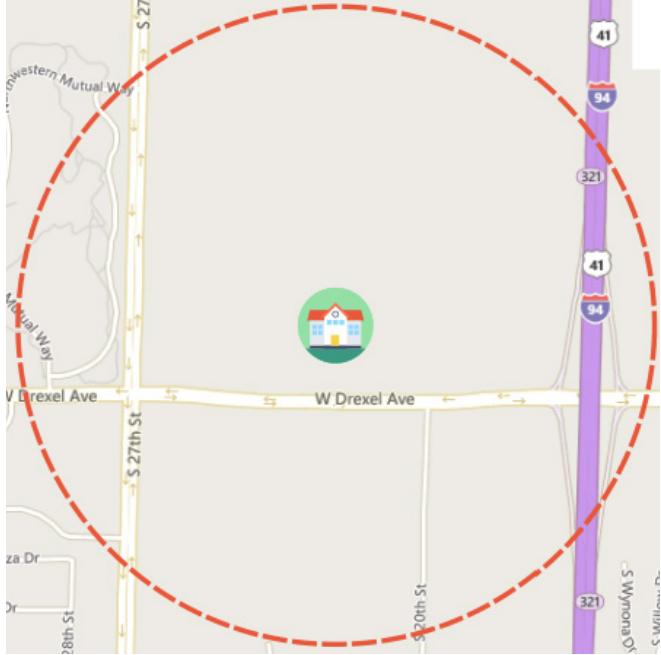
Parent Survey Summary

No data collected.

Crash History

Crash data obtained from the City of Oak Creek was mapped by the location of each incident. The data was analyzed by collision type, including crashes between motor vehicles and bicycles and crashes between motor vehicles and pedestrians. Between 2006 and 2015, there were no reported collisions within a half-mile radius from Forest Ridge Elementary School.

CRASH DATA (2006-2015):



- Legend**
- Forest Ridge Elementary School
- Bicycle Crashes
- Pedestrian Crashes
- 0.5 mile radius from school

WALK AUDIT

On 11/18/16 a walk audit and arrival/dismissal observation were completed by the audit team. No students were observed biking to school and the students observed walking were traveling from residences adjacent to campus on West Drexel Avenue.

Six buses arrived to the rear of the school building and students were departed at 7:50 a.m. to enter specific doors according to their grade level. Parents dropping off students used the front driveway loop or parked in the adjacent lot to walk students to the main entrance.

Students walking home were released first with teacher escorts. Bused students were held inside the school building until their specific bus arrived and were organized within waiting areas by bus lines designated with color-coded cones. Parents picked up students from the front driveway loop; rearview mirror hangers communicated their student's name.

WALK AUDIT CONDITIONS:

Date: 11/18/2016

Day of the Week: Friday

Time: 7:20-8:10 am / 2:30 pm

Weather: Clear/Cloudy, Sunny, Warm, Windy

Audit Team: Rudy Uumbs, David Maier, Matt Sullivan



ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Several assets and challenges in and around the school site were identified. These assets and challenges include both programming and infrastructure and are listed below. Specific programming and infrastructure recommendations are detailed in the following section of this report.

- ### Assets
- > Proximity to trails to connect to other destinations within the city
 - > Well-organized bus departure procedure
 - > Well-defined parent vehicle identification system

- ### Challenges
- > Campus is located at the far western side of the school enrollment boundary area with noncontiguous enrollment areas
 - > Bicycle parking is not provided
 - > Few existing residences within walk boundary
 - > High-speed and high-traffic adjacent roads
 - > Parent pick-up line and traffic congestion on S 20th Street create potentially unsafe conditions



Parent pickup area is marked with paint



Cars queue near student sidewalk

RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERVIEW

Effective Safe Routes to School initiatives include both programming and infrastructure components.

The recommendations listed here offer a selection of location-specific ideas that can be implemented in and near the vicinity of the school - please refer to the table below and to the map on the facing page for more details.

ID	TYPE	RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY
PROGRAMMING			
A	Programming	Add a bike rack	High
B	Programming	Accessibility improvements for the playground	Medium
C	Programming	Improve queuing in Ikea Way by creating a traffic lane around the school. Look into possible remote drop-off locations	Low

MAP OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOREST RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:



Route Identified for improvement



Intersection Improvement



Programming Improvement



Walk Boundary

PROGRAMMING

This plan includes a variety of programming recommendations to grow walking and biking to school and promote the safety of all students arriving and departing from Forest Ridge Elementary School.

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOREST RIDGE ELEMENTARY:

Crossing Guard Training

Park and walk programs are designed to encourage families to park several blocks from school and walk the rest of the way. Not all students are able to walk or bike the whole distance to their school, as they may live too far away or their route may include hazardous traffic. The program allows students who are unable to walk or bike a chance to participate in the Safe Routes to School program. It also helps reduce traffic congestion at the school as fewer parent vehicles will be circulating in the campus area.

Bike Train Programs

A Bike Train is a group of students accompanied by one or more adults who bicycle together on a pre-planned route to school. Routes can originate from a particular neighborhood or from another meeting place to include children who may live too far to bike the entire way. Bike trains address parents' safety concerns while providing a chance for students and their families to be active together.

There are some significant challenges facing Forest Ridge Elementary School students who might prefer to walk or bike to school, including having to cross Drexel Avenue and I-94. Additionally, very few students live within a one-quarter mile walk boundary of the school.

However, the majority of students enrolled at Forest Ridge Elementary School reside within a one mile radius of campus, primarily south and southeast in the neighborhood adjacent to West Middle School. A distance of one mile is considered bikeable for elementary school-aged children. Additionally, the Oak Leaf Trail and Howell Avenue provide bicycling connections to where most of these students reside.



INFRASTRUCTURE

This plan recommends several infrastructure improvements to intersections, sidewalks and signage. Intersection enhancements will make street crossings safer for students, improve ADA-compliance, and resurface and repaint crosswalks that need maintenance and repair.

For a full description of each of these improvement recommendations, please see the **Infrastructure Reference Guide** in Appendix E.

INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOREST RIDGE ELEMENTARY:



High-Visibility Crosswalks



Curb Radii Reduction



Curb Extensions



Raised Crosswalks



Painted Stop Bars



Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFB)

Photos 2 and 4 courtesy of Dan Burden from pedbikeimages.org, photo 3 courtesy of emersongarfield.org.

IMPLEMENTATION + NEXT STEPS

Sometimes starting a new project within a busy school can seem like a daunting task. Implementing your Safe Routes to School Action Plan doesn't have to be hard. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Organize

Find your school's champions for Safe Routes - including teachers, parents and students. Start with the teachers who are already helping with departure and arrivals at the school, and bring others who are excited about more kids walking or biking to school. Bring the parents in: work with the school's parents' association to help coordinate support for walking school buses, for volunteer adult crossing guards and other ideas. Work with your city's Public Works and Planning to coordinate and prioritize improvements at your school.

Prioritize + Plan

This one is done already (it's the plan in your hands) - Congratulations! Now all you have to do is work with your team and select a couple of ideas to implement!



Share + Celebrate Success

Success is the best foundation for future success! Don't forget to review your accomplishments every year, and to note the goals you achieved, the people who helped you get there, and the tasks that remain for the coming year!

Start Small

Commit to implementing just one program or initiative in your first year (if you want to do two or more that's great also, but give yourself time and space to organize your team, to identify common priorities, and to get the help and resources that you need to succeed).

Some great ideas for starting small include:

- › Develop a map showing the best routes from surrounding neighborhoods to your school, and distribute it to parents a couple of times in the fall of the school year, and again during spring. Make sure to note the location of crossing guards, traffic signals, and sidewalks and trails.
- › Celebrate international walk and bike to school day - in 2019, it'll be on May 8 - learn more and start planning here: www.walkbiketoschool.org
- › Start a student safety patrol at your school - it's a great way to develop students' leadership skills and build a culture of walking and biking at your school. You can find more resources in the Action Plans' Appendix.
- › Work with your PTA or other involved parents to start a walking school bus route: www.walkingschoolbus.org
- › Establish a yearly school-wide tally of student travel to and from school. This will help provide the baseline of information you will need to determine which programs are yielding the best results for your school, and can help focus your efforts and priorities. They also show potential funders that your school is already making gains and is well-prepared to benefit from more expensive infrastructure improvements. Find out more in the Appendix and here: www.saferoutesdata.org
- › Work with your school's safety officer and other police partners to host a bike rodeo where students learn and practice how to safely ride and interact with traffic.
- › Get your students involved in planning for Safe Routes - ask them for their preferred routes and ideas for making walking and biking to school easier for them!

This Safe Routes to School Action Plan was prepared by Community Design Group for the City of Oak Creek, the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District, and the Carollton Elementary School community. For more information about Safe Routes to School planning and programming efforts, please contact Matthew Sullivan at the City of Oak Creek or Andrew Chromy at the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District.