



CITY OF OAK CREEK
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL
ACTION PLAN



Cedar Hills Elementary School



OAKCREEK
— WISCONSIN —

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN



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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

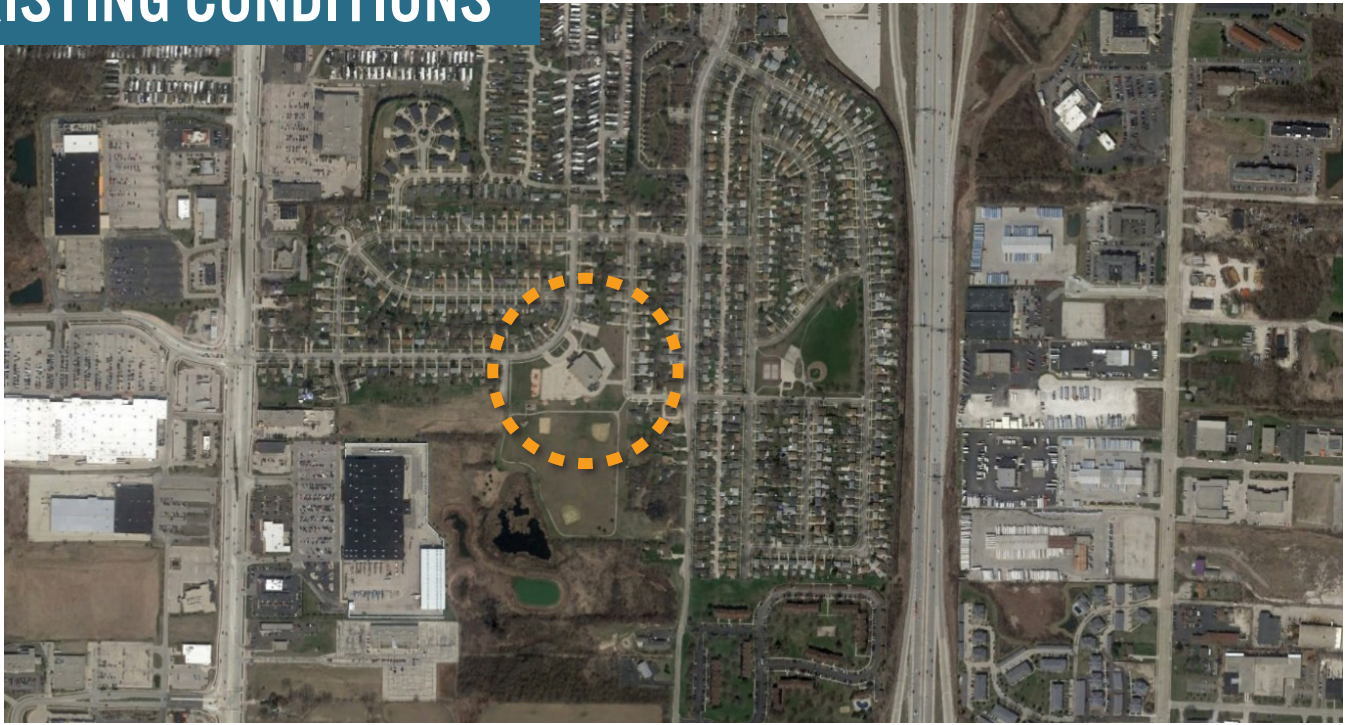
Evaluation measures conditions before, during, and after implementation, helping guide priorities and goals and ensuring efficient use of resources.



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

Cedar Hills Elementary School is bounded by West Sycamore Avenue on the northwest and South 21st Street on the east. A small dead-end street (South 24th Street) provides the school's western boundary. Johnstone Park (immediately adjacent) forms the school's southern boundary. The school is located about one mile south of Victory & Italian Immersion School and 1.5 miles southeast of St. Charles Borromeo School and Garland Elementary School. Interstate 94 is located a quarter-mile east of the school.

Multifamily housing is located three blocks north and also one block south of campus. Single family residential development is located along the north and east of the school campus. A public library is 2 miles southeast of the school campus. Commercial development is located to the west of the campus, including a movie theater, a Walmart, and other large retailers. Fast food restaurants and convenience stores are located along the commercial strip along S 27th Street, within walking distance of the school.

Cedar Hills Elementary Quick Facts:



Principal
Keith Ruffalo



Number of Students
315



Health and Physical Education
Shannon Miller



Arrival Time
7:45 a.m.



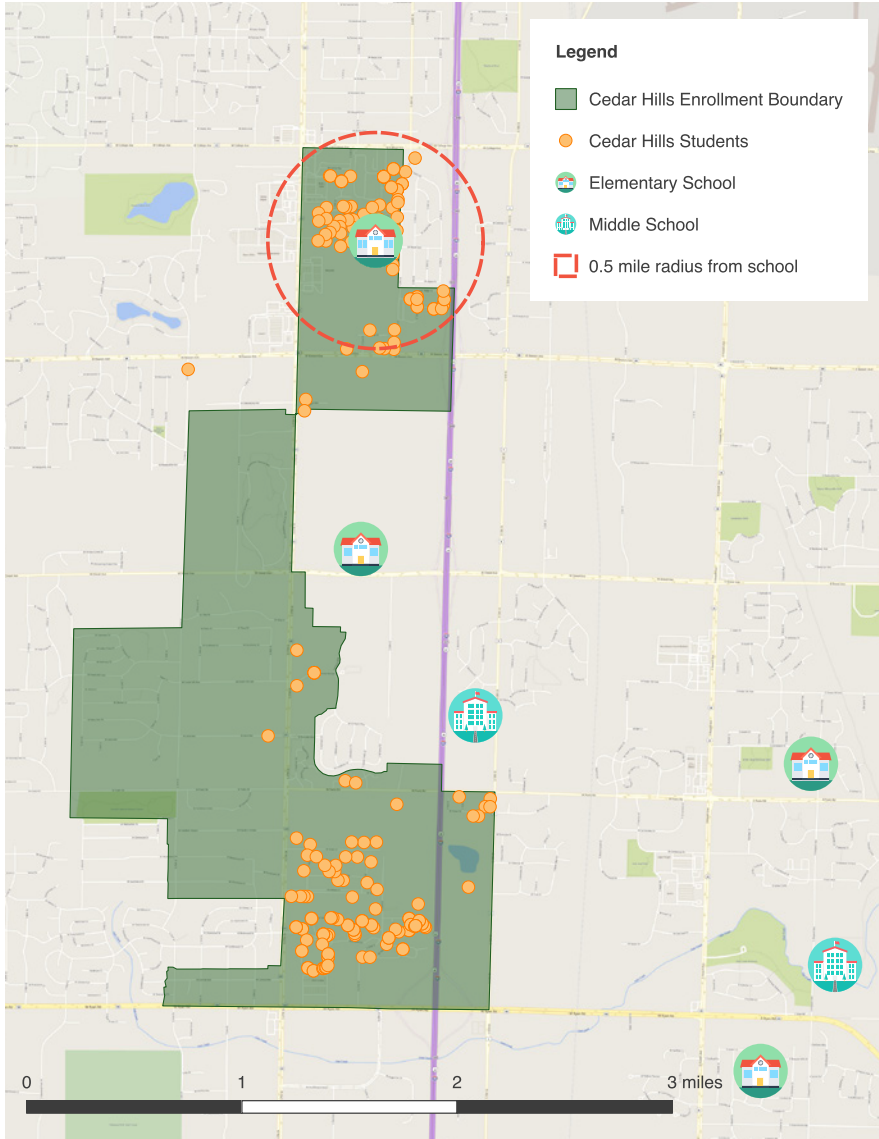
Grades
PK-5



Dismissal Time
3:05 p.m.

ENROLLMENT DENSITY

Residential locations for enrolled students cluster in the northern and southern areas of the enrollment boundary. Students residing in the northern portion of the enrollment boundary are generally within walking distance to school, while students in the southern area of the boundary are 3+ miles away from school. Approximately one-half of Cedar Hills students live within a half-mile of the school. There are large portions of the enrollment boundary where no students reside.



WALKING/BIKING POTENTIAL:

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

How might we grow this number?



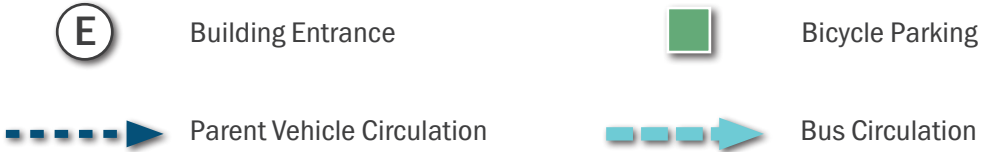
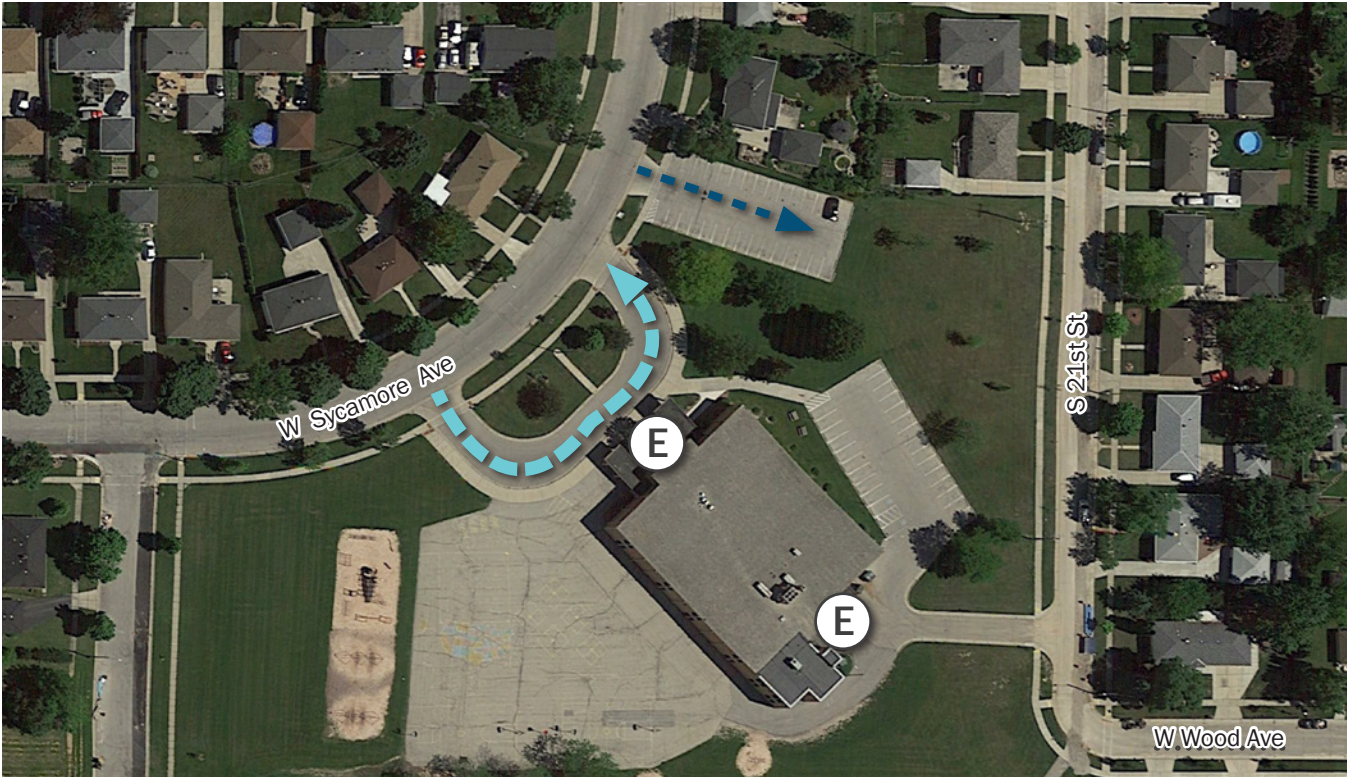
ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Cedar Hills Elementary School's main entrance is on the northwest side of the building, facing the bus loop. Students who depart by bus exit from the north side of the building. Buses queue up in the bus loop to the north of the school and exit onto Sycamore Avenue.

Parents park in the north parking lot and come inside the building to pick up their children through the main entrance. Vehicles enter and exit this parking lot through one entrance

along West Sycamore Avenue. In the mornings, parents can also drop students off at the south side of Sycamore Avenue. From here, students use the sidewalks to enter at the main entrance.

Bicycle parking is not currently provided at the school; walkers and bikers may exit from the north or east side of the building, choosing the most convenient route.



EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE



Sidewalks are present on both sides of Sycamore Avenue and 21st Street as well as on the east side of 20th Street. They are present on most neighboring residential streets to the north and east of the school.



A **paved path** runs along the south side of the school around Johnstone Park. Sidewalks connect to this path on both the north and east side of the park.



Crosswalks are located at the corners of Wood Avenue and 21st Street, Lindenwood Avenue and Sycamore Avenue, and at Sycamore Avenue and 24th Street. These crosswalks include school crossing signs.



School crossing signage exists along 21st Street and Sycamore Avenue, with the posted school speed zone limit of 15 miles per hour when children are present.

WALK AUDIT

On 11/21/16 a walk audit and arrival/dismissal observation were completed by the audit team. Parents were observed walking their children to school; no students were observed biking. Arrival buses held students until just before the start of classes when all students were unloaded simultaneously. For parents who drove, students were dropped off further away from campus or in one of the school's parking lots. Students arriving early waited outside the school doors until 7:50 a.m. unless they ate campus breakfast at 7:40 a.m.

Students walking home left campus within ten minutes of class dismissal and departed in all directions. Buses arrived to campus after most walkers had departed. Buses did not appear to have designated lines and were distinguished for students by color coded cones to aid in loading. The circle driveway on campus was mixed traffic for buses and family vehicles, which is prohibited during morning arrival procedures.

WALK AUDIT CONDITIONS:

Date: 11/21/2016

Day of the Week: Monday

Time: 7:25-8:05 am / 2:40 pm

Weather: Clear, Sunny, Cold

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

- › Defined bus departure procedures
- › Engaged parents observed walking with students
- › Paved pedestrian paths
- › Space available for potential circulation and parking lot improvements

Challenges

- › Non-ADA compliant ramps and access
- › Mixed car and bus traffic in circle driveway
- › Restricted parking along Sycamore Avenue
- › Insufficient signage posted near campus
- › No indoor waiting area for students
- › Lack of bicycle facilities and parking



Bus departure procedures are organized



Many sidewalks lack pedestrian ramps and are unsafe for people using wheelchairs

RECOMMENDATIONS

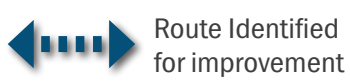
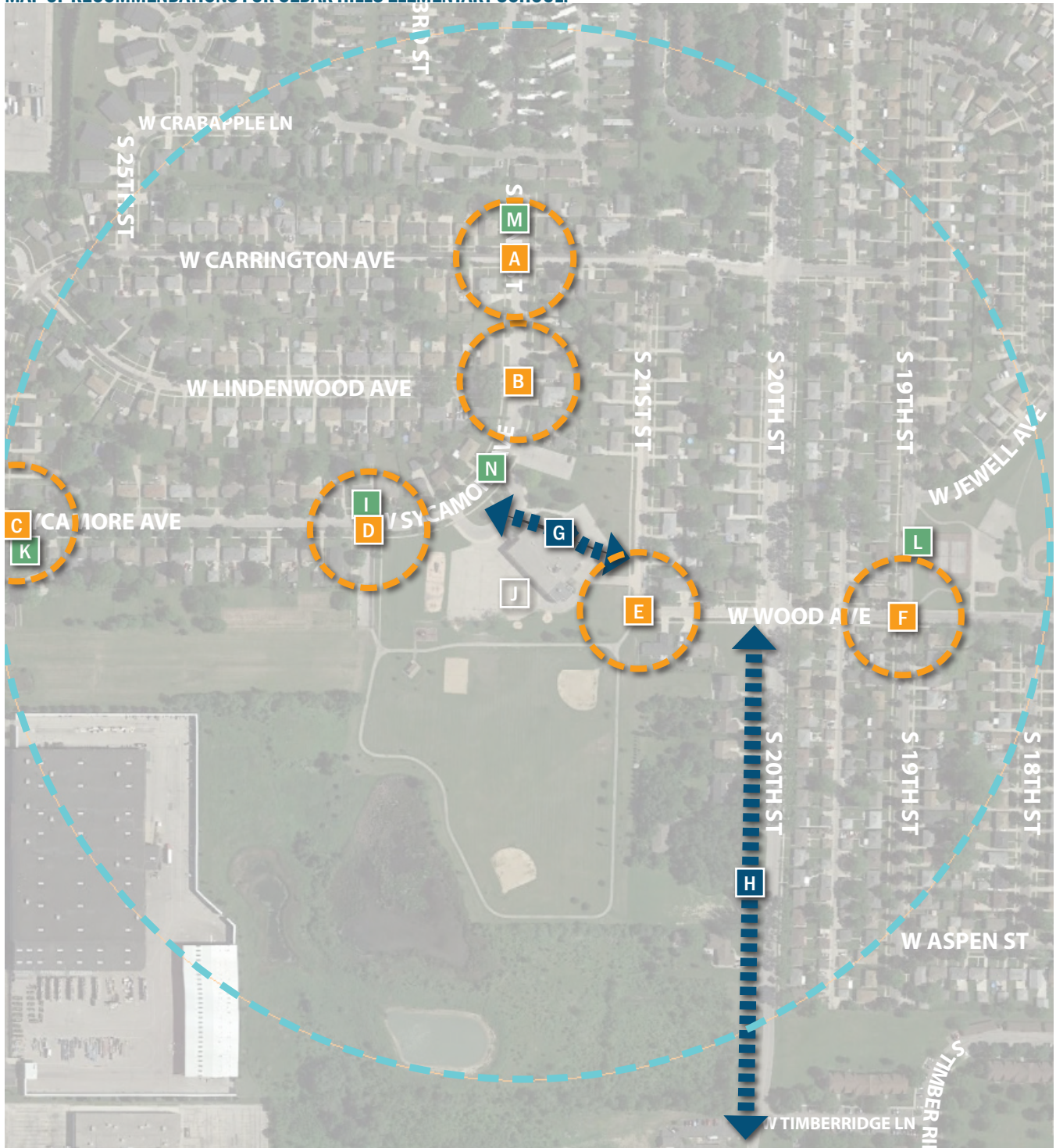
OVERVIEW

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
INFRASTRUCTURE			
A	Intersection	Add high-visibility crosswalks on all four legs of the intersection; East-West travel is the priority	High
B	Intersection	Install ADA ramps, high-visibility crosswalks, and stop bars on all four legs of the intersection	High
C	Intersection	Install ADA ramp improvements on all four intersection legs	High
D	Intersection	Add raised crosswalk along East-West direction and ADA ramp improvements on all four legs of the intersection	High
E	Intersection	Install ADA ramp improvements on all intersection legs	High
F	Intersection	Add stop bars and high-visibility crosswalks on all four crosswalks	High
G	Sidewalk	Connect the sidewalk network east of the school to the school's front entrance	Low
H	Sidewalk	Install a sidewalk along the west side of S 20th Street connecting to existing sidewalk network	Low
PROGRAMMING			
I	Programming	Add crossing guards along West Sycamore Avenue; Guards should be wearing reflective vests	High
J	Programming	Move the bike rack to the front of the school	High
K	Programming	Potential Park and Walk location for parents to drop students, who will engage in a 1/2 mile walk	Medium
L	Programming	Potential Park and Walk locations for parents to drop students, who will engage in a 1/2 mile walk	Medium
M	Programming	Potential Park and Walk location for parents to drop students, who will engage in a 1/2 mile walk	Medium
N	Programming	Implement a new parent loop that drops students off at the back of the school; signage to direct traffic should also be implemented	Low

MAP OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CEDAR HILLS 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 Cedar Hills Elementary School.

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CEDAR HILLS ELEMENTARY:

Park and Walk Programs

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.

Pick-up/Drop-off Procedures

Refinements to the morning bus drop-off procedures include allowing students to be dismissed when they arrive to the playground or gym for playtime. Students who engage in physical activity in the morning are generally able to focus better during the school day. The morning parent drop-off procedure may be refined by establishing a designated student drop-off area on the southeast corner of campus to avoid traffic conflicts with buses. Parents may drop students off earlier if there is a designated indoor waiting area, such as the school gym. Afternoon parent pick-up procedures may be refined by disallowing parent vehicles in the circle driveway. Instead, parents should pick up their students from the same area where students are dropped off in the morning.

Bike Parking Safety Campaign

Bike parking should be provided on the campus. The introduction of racks could be paired with a safety campaign and bike rodeo day for new riders.



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 CEDAR HILLS 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.