



CITY OF OAK CREEK SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

West Middle School



**Oak Creek-Franklin
Joint School District**
BUILDING SUCCESSFUL FUTURES TOGETHER



OAKCREEK
— WISCONSIN —

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL ACTION PLAN



West Middle School

Why Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes 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

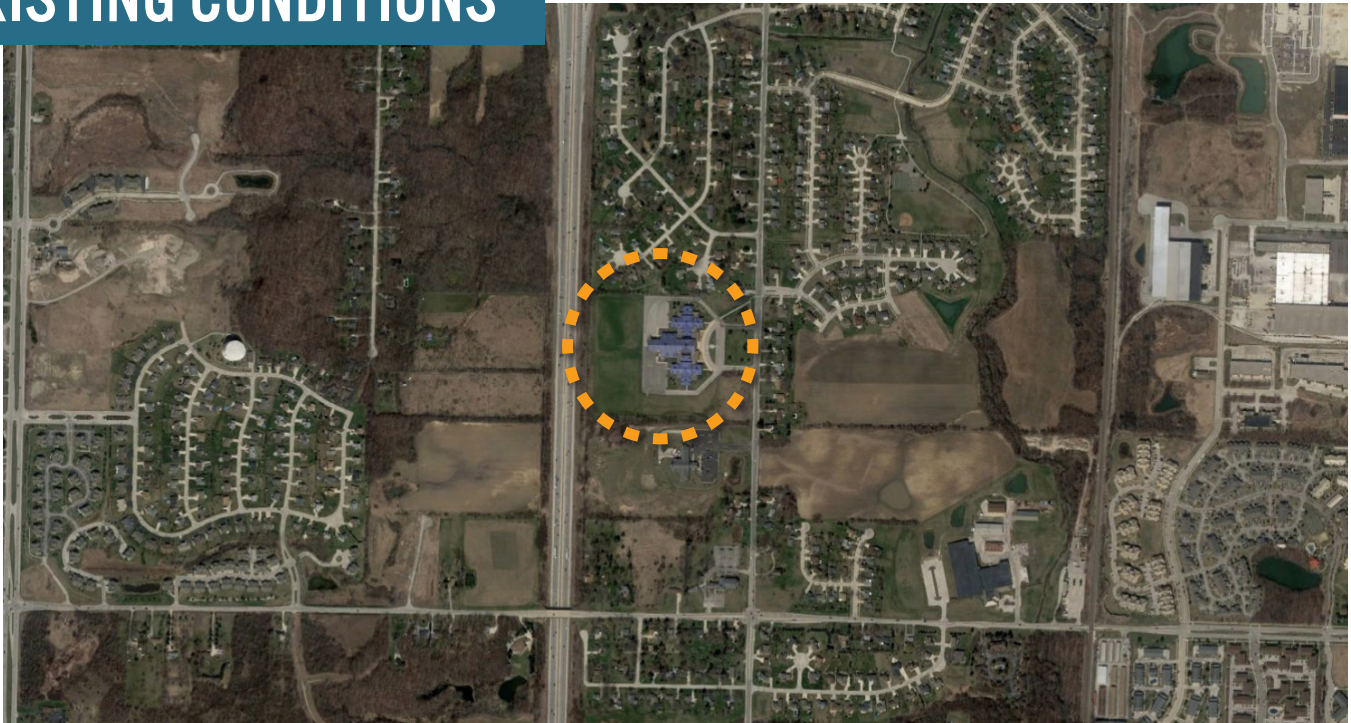
Evaluation measures conditions before, during, and after implementation, helping guide priorities and goals and ensuring efficient use of resources.



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

West Middle School is bounded by S 13th Street to the east, a residential neighborhood to the north, and Faith Baptist Church to the south. One mile to the northwest is Forest Ridge Elementary school and one and a quarter miles east is Oak Creek High School. Interstate 94 is located immediately west of the school and a rail line running north-south is a half-mile east of the campus.

Several multifamily housing complexes are located a half-mile to the east of campus and single family residential development is located along Wynona Drive to the north and directly across South 13th Street. A public library is located one mile to the northeast and a commercial development is located one mile to the southeast, including a Target and a Panera Bread.

West Middle School Quick Facts:



Principal
Megan Arens



Number of Students
484



Health and Physical Education
Katherine Eaton + Crystal Heritage



Arrival Time
8:00 a.m.



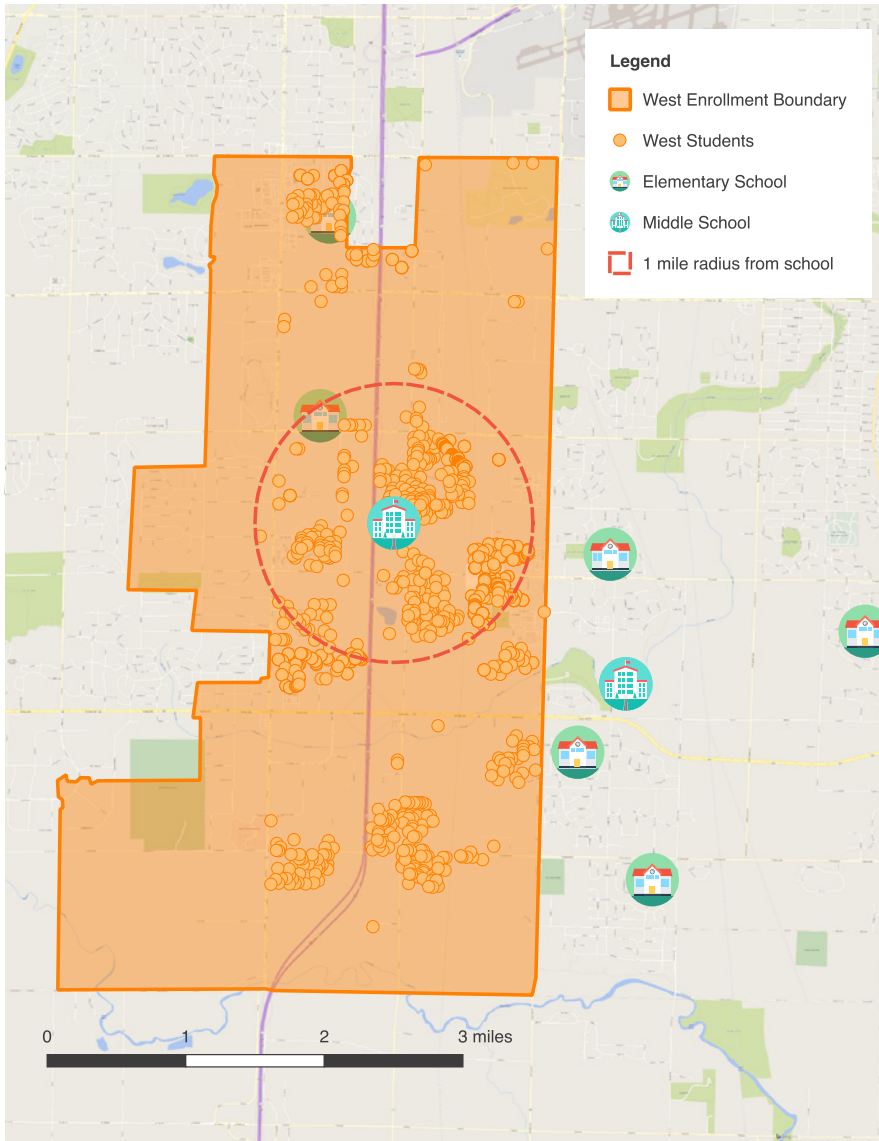
Grades
6-8



Dismissal Time
3:45 p.m.

ENROLLMENT DENSITY

Residential locations for enrolled students cluster throughout the central and eastern portions of the West Middle School attendance area. Approximately half of the students live within a half-mile of the school.



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 **eight percent** of students walk or bike today.

How might we grow this number?

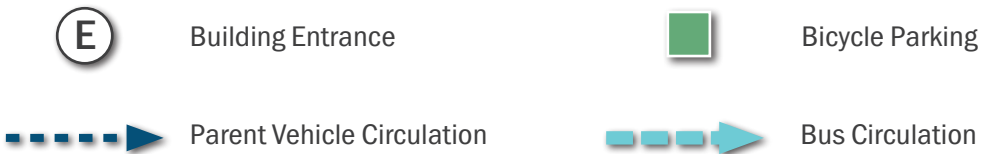
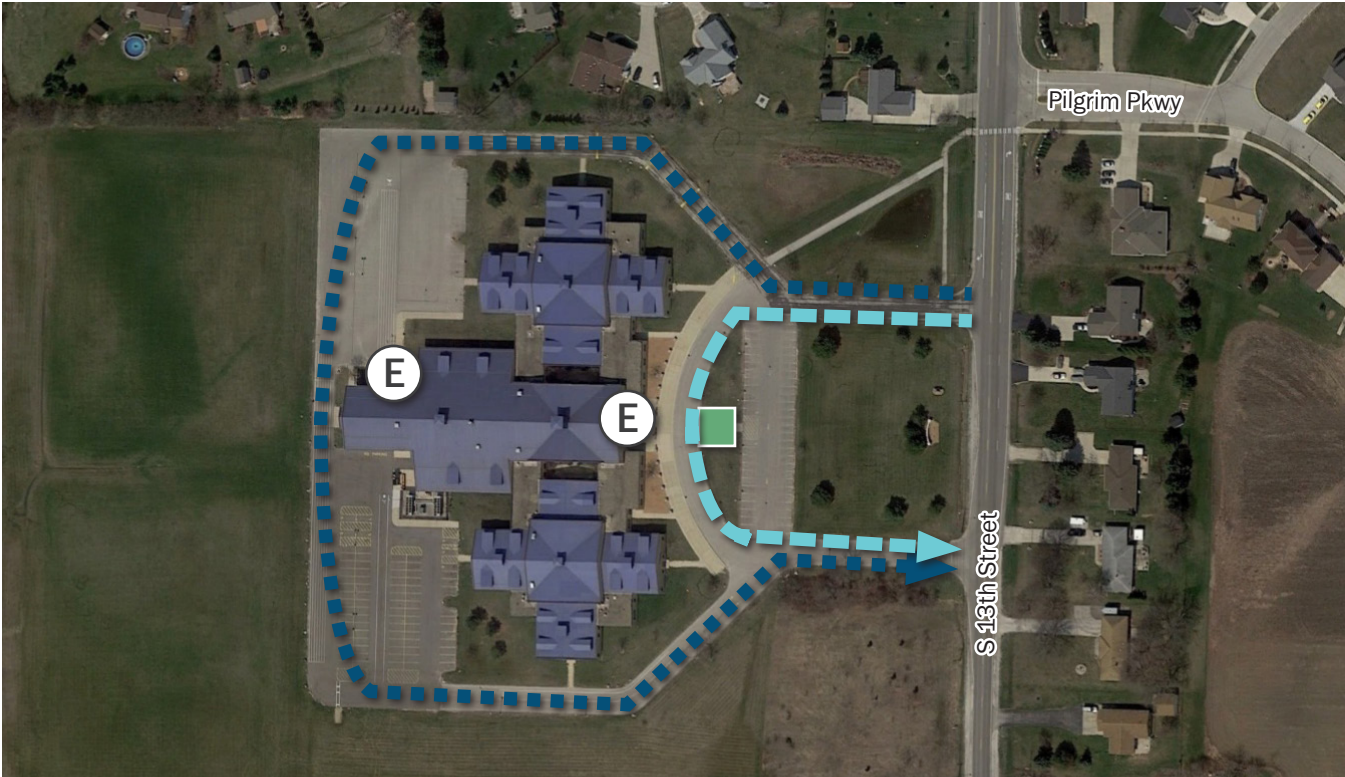


ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

West Middle School's main entrance is on the east side of the building, facing the bus loop. Fourteen buses queue up within the loop and wait for the school bell to release all the students at once. The buses enter and exit the loop along S 13th Street.

Bicycle parking is located at the eastern entrance of the school. Students who walk may exit from the east entrance onto S 13th Street.

Parent vehicles pick up and drop off at the west entrance of the school. Cars enter from S 13th Street and continue past the bus loop and wrap around the building in a one-directional loop to exit back onto S 13th Street.



EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE



Sidewalks are present on at least one side of every street in the neighborhood to the east of the school.



A **paved path** connects Pilgrim Parkway to the school, allowing pedestrians to avoid crossing through the campus parking lot.



A **high-visibility pedestrian crosswalk** with school crossing sign is provided at Pilgrims Parkway.



School Speed Zone signs indicate that the speed limit is 15 miles per hour when children are present.

EXISTING PROGRAMMING

There are no supervised crossing locations, however, one staff member is stationed in the rear of the campus along the bus drop-off. No other walk/bike related programs occur at the school, or information was not provided to the project team.

OTHER DATA

Student Travel Tallies

Eighteen out of thirty-five classrooms submitted travel tallies for the weeks of November 15 and November 21, 2016. From the numbers submitted by participating classrooms, it was determined that 25 students walked and one student biked to school. Based on enrollment at the time of the study, approximately 8% of West Middle School students walk and less than 1% of students bike to school.

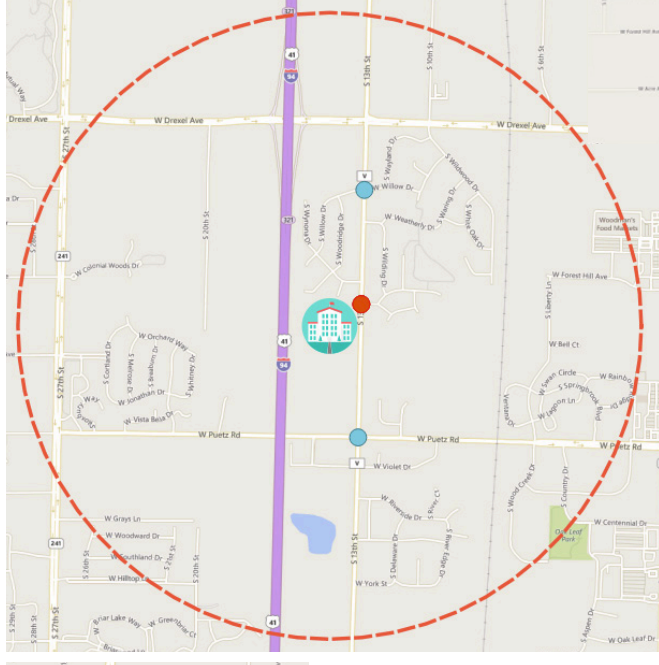
Parent Survey Summary

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 two reported collisions between bicycles and vehicles within a one mile radius of the school and one between a pedestrian and vehicle. The two bicycle collisions were along S 13th Street and the pedestrian collision was along the same road, directly in front of the school.

CRASH DATA (2006-2015):



- Legend**
- West Middle School
 - Bicycle Crashes
 - Pedestrian Crashes
 - 1 mile radius from school

WALK AUDIT

On 11/29/16 a walk audit and arrival/dismissal observation were completed by the audit team. No students were observed biking to school while 20 students were observed walking from east of campus and another 8 students were observed walking from north of campus through a residential side yard. Buses arrived in the front driveway loop and released students at the first bell. Students in family vehicles were dropped off by parents to the rear of the school.

Bus riders used a chart inside the school to locate their buses, then were escorted by staff to their bus in the front driveway loop. Parents in personal vehicles entered campus through the north entrance and drove around the building counterclockwise. Sixth grade students were picked up from the north side, eighth grade students were picked up from the west side, and seventh grade students were picked up from the south side of the building. Students from multiple grades being picked up in one vehicle met at the pickup location for the eldest student.

WALK AUDIT CONDITIONS:

Date: 11/29/2016

Day of the Week: Tuesday

Time: 7:45-9:05 am / 3:00 pm

Weather: Clear, Cool, Sunny

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 Oak Leaf Trail system provides additional connections throughout much of the enrollment boundary area west of I-94
- › Well-defined parent drop-off and pick-up procedures with illustrated diagrams available online for families

Challenges

- › Enrollment area is bisected by I-94
- › Railroad tracks located approximately a half -mile east of campus run north-south through the enrollment boundary area, reducing opportunities for safe and legal crossing of tracks by walking or biking
- › Several existing sidewalks are in deteriorated condition



Parent pick-up is separated by grade



Existing sidewalk connecting South 13th Street to campus

RECOMMENDATIONS

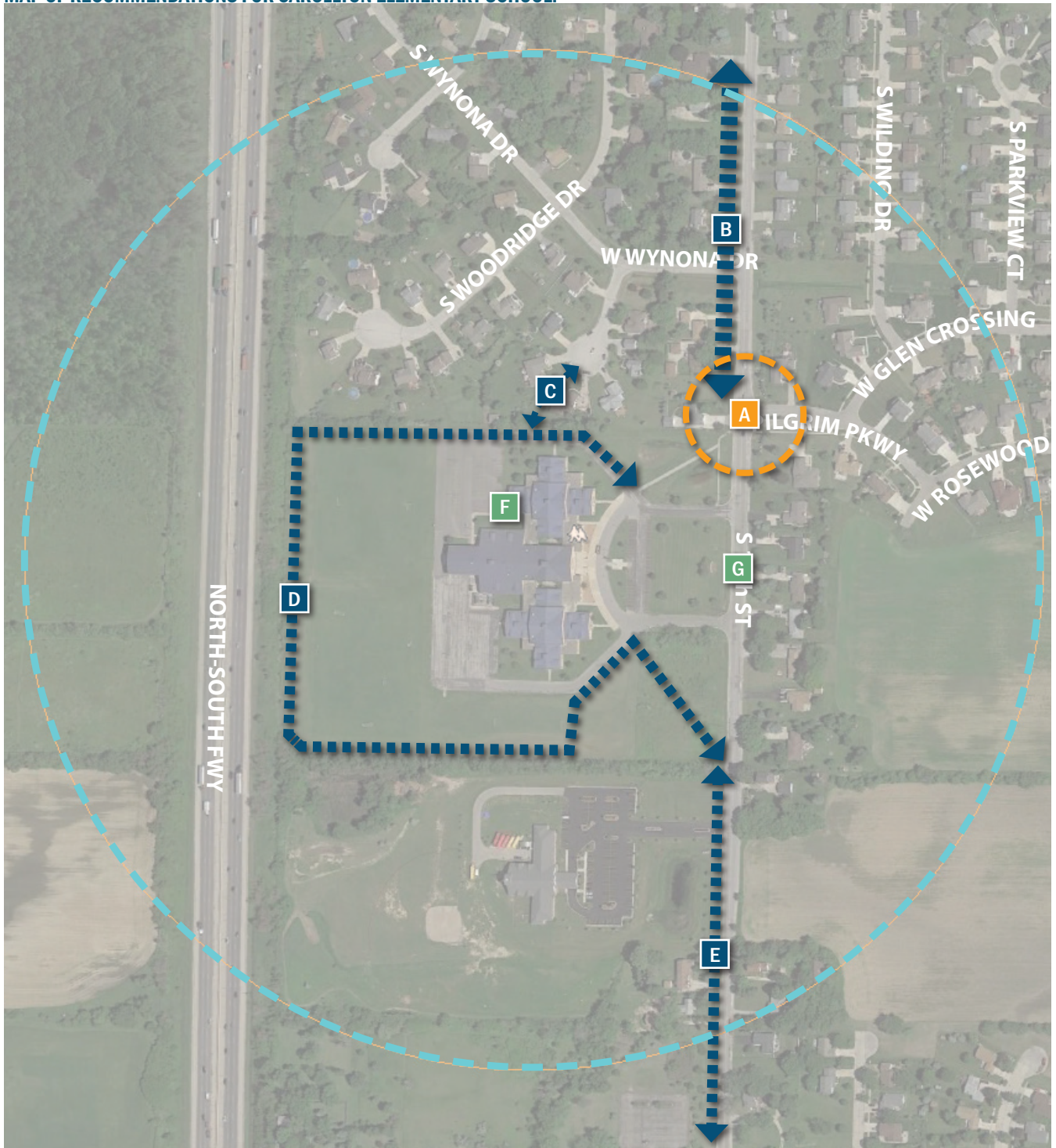
OVERVIEW

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	Install curb extensions and HAWK signal	High
B	Sidewalk	Install sidewalks on the west side of S 13th Street for access to the campus from the north	Low
C	Sidewalk	Add a connection to the cul-de-sac to the north of campus	Low
D	Sidewalk	Add a walking path along the campus green space for student programmed walking activities	Low
E	Sidewalk	Install sidewalks on the west side of S 13th Street for access to campus from the south	Low
PROGRAMMING			
F	Programming	Add cones, markings or curbs to more clearly define parents' expected travel paths while in the parking lot (to avoid "cutting through" in unexpected places) - this will calm driving speeds through campus, improve safety and facilitate better traffic flow	High
G	Programming	Add times for no parking instead of "when flashing"	High

MAP OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAROLLTON 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 West Middle School.

PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL:

Refine Parent Pick-up

Clear delineation of desired parent travel paths in the parking lot (to avoid “cutting through” in unexpected places) is recommended to calm driving speeds through campus, improve safety and facilitate better traffic flow.

Crossing Guard Training

The crossing guard patrol should be equipped with safety equipment, including paddles, vests, and high-visibility gear for all weather and/or seasons. Members of the patrol should also be trained on where to be stationed each day and when to allow students to cross.

In-School Walk/Bike Programs

Generally, a half-mile walking distance and a two mile biking distance are considered appropriate for middle school-aged children. However, opportunities for programming approaches for the travel from home to school are limited due to the absence of walking and bicycling infrastructure within the West Middle School enrollment boundary. Nevertheless, programs that support physical activity and walking (around the schools grounds once students arrive at school, for example) may be instituted to begin supporting increased levels of physical activity as part of the school day.



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 WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL:



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 Carrollton 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.