

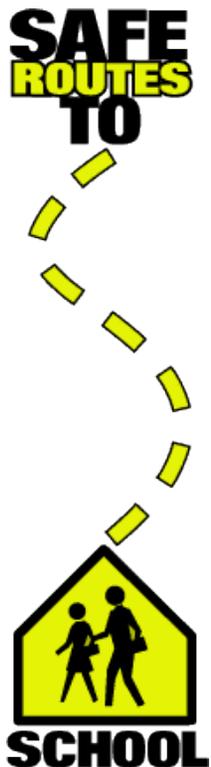
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

Roosevelt Elementary School

June, 2013

Willmar Public Schools District 347

Willmar, Minnesota



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Roosevelt Elementary
Safe Routes To School Plan
June 2013



Prepared for
Willmar Public Schools District 347

Prepared by
Mid-Minnesota Development Commission



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Safe Routes to School Plan

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SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) assisted the Willmar School District in successfully applying for funding to undertake Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plans for both elementary schools (Kennedy and Roosevelt) and the Willmar Middle School. Only school grades K-8 are eligible for program funding. The MMDC has continued to assist the Willmar School District in helping to prepare separate SRTS Plans for the three schools.

Purpose of Plan

The Purpose of this Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan is to provide a long range plan for providing both improved safety for children who walk or bike to school, and to encourage more parents and students that walking and bicycling can be a beneficial alternative to being driven to school. The top priority of this plan is working on improving safety through needed infrastructure improvements, educating students and adults, and through better enforcement measures. The plan is designed under the National SRTS Program that utilizes “The Five E’s” of SRTS planning: engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation. This plan includes recommendations from each of these five core areas.

The plan is a fluid document that should be reviewed yearly and revised when needed. Both the Willmar School District and the City of Willmar will need to work together with the help of various community partners to make progress on plan implementation. The SRTS Team that was formed in preparing this plan will need to stay active, and take the lead role for the plan’s oversight to see that progress is being made on the Action Plan components found in Section 4 of this plan. The SRTS Team will need to work with the School District’s other two SRTS Teams to implement those action steps that are best implemented through a citywide scope. The three SRTS teams also need to work together in determining overall priorities on what projects should be pursued first in seeking funding to achieve needed improvements.

What Is Safe Routes to School (SRTS)?

The Safe Routes to School Planning process purpose is to help create and implement a plan that will increase the number of children, who live within a reasonable distance, walk and bike to/from school. The implementation strategy will focus on infrastructure improvements, education, and enforcement activities to increase the safety level of students walking and biking to/from school. The strategy will also discuss promotional types of activities that will instill life-long habits that support physical activity and health. The SRTS plan is based upon the “5 E’s” of the National Safe Routes to School program, which include:

Education – providing the necessary materials to parents, educators, transportation providers, policy makers, and others regarding the benefits of students walking or bicycling to school;

Encouragement – providing opportunities to promote safe walking or biking through school and community level programs and incentives;

Engineering – identifying and correcting physical design deficiencies where children walk and bike to/from school, including pedestrian facilities, bike lanes, and street crossings;

Enforcement – ensuring that existing regulations regarding such issues as vehicular speeds and the clearing of walkways are enforced by the appropriate authorities;

Evaluation – reviewing the goals and initiatives of this SRTS program to benchmark progress over time and make adjustments that are necessary.

This plan will not require that students walk or bike to school, but rather will increase the desirability of choosing the walking and biking option as the plan’s implementation improves the physical, policy, and perceptual barriers that currently prevent students who are within a reasonable distance from the school.

SRTS is a federally funded program through legislation passed in 2005 as part of the past federal transportation bill, SAFETEA-LU. The program is administered on the state level by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The new federal transportation bill passed in 2012 (MAP-21) did not fund a separate category of funding for the SRTS program, however, SRTS funding has been included in a new program called the Transportation Alternatives Program.

The SRTS program not only funds community efforts to prepare SRTS Plans, but also helps to fund implementation projects for those who have gone through the planning process in a competitive application process.

The Three Primary Purposes of the National SRTS Program:

- “To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
- To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.”

National Health and Physical Activity Trends

According to the National Centers for Disease Control (CDC), obesity now affects seventeen percent of all children and adolescents in the United States. “Since 1980, obesity prevalence among children and adolescents has almost tripled.” There is a need to focus attention on both promoting healthy eating and increased physical activity to fight these trends. The CDC in 2007 reported that nearly half of children aged 12 – 21 years are not vigorously active on a regular basis, and 14 percent of these young people report no regular physical activity at all.

Information from the US Department of Transportation shows that in 1969, approximately half of all the nation’s school aged children walked or biked to or from school, and almost ninety percent of students living within one mile of their school walked or rode their bikes to school. By 2001, these numbers dropped to where only seventeen percent of children walked or biked to school, and only 56 percent that lived within one mile. The 2012 SRTS survey of parents of Willmar School District children, K-8, demonstrated that only 13.8 percent of grade school children walk or bike to/from school, while Middle School students walk or bike to school at a 17.3 percent rate.

The CDC’s website (www.cdc.gov//childhoobesityod/basics.html) discusses the basics about childhood obesity and the consequences of childhood obesity. The CDC states the following:

Health Risks Now

- “Childhood obesity can have a harmful effect on the body in a variety of ways. Obese children are more likely to have –
 - High blood pressure and high cholesterol, which are risk factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD). In one study, 70% of obese children had at least one CVD risk factor, and 39% had two or more.
 - Increased risk of impaired glucose tolerance, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes.
 - Breathing problems, such as sleep apnea, and asthma.
 - Joint problems and musculoskeletal discomfort.
 - Fatty liver disease, gallstones, and gastro-esophageal reflux (i.e., heartburn).
 - Obese children and adolescents have a greater risk of social and psychological problems, such as discrimination and poor self-esteem, which can continue into adulthood.

Health Risks Later

- Obese children are more likely to become obese adults. Adult obesity is associated with a number of serious health conditions including heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers.
- If children are overweight, obesity in adulthood is likely to be more severe.”

The benefits of regular physical activity, including walking and biking to school are numerous. Children build and maintain a healthy lifestyle, while directly helping to control weight, build lean muscle, reduce fat, and foster positive social, emotional, educational, and personal development. Research shows that starting an active lifestyle at an early age is crucial for children for their health now and into adulthood.

SECTION TWO: WILLMAR SCHOOL DISTRICT'S SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL VISION AND GOALS

The Safe Routes to School Teams from Kennedy Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary, and the Middle School all met together at the beginning of the planning process to craft a Vision Statement that would guide the development of all three SRTS Plans.

Willmar SRTS Vision Statement

The Willmar School District and the City of Willmar will offer a dynamic long-term strategy to create a safe and enjoyable environment for children to walk and bike to and from school, while increasing driver awareness, and educating and encouraging children and their parents to develop a more healthy and independent lifestyle.

Goals for the Safe Routes to School Programs:

To help achieve the Vision Statement the three SRTS teams also discuss various goals for the Safe Routes to School Program. The primary goals that were discussed are as follows:

- Help foster physical activity of the students and take steps to improve their health and wellness.
- Overcome the notion that walking and biking are not viable options for travel to and from school.
- Learn what corrective measures are needed to establish safe walking and bicycling accommodations within all three of the schools' walk and bike zones, and work toward resolving these issues.
- Provide peace of mind to parents of students in the School District of Willmar by:
 - developing a safe network of bike and pedestrian routes in the City of Willmar;
 - educating and encouraging students to use these routes for their safety, health, and enjoyment, and
 - provide the necessary monitoring and enforcement of these routes to ensure safe and lawful practices and behaviors of all users.
- Provide a continuing process to evaluate, adjust plans as needed, and move forward to make progress on meeting the SRTS Vision Statement.
- Unify the School District, City of Willmar, and all other stake holders to work together to make progress on meeting the SRTS Vision Statement.

SECTION THREE: EXISTING CONDITIONS, CHALLENGES, & OPPORTUNITIES

(Description of the School, City, and the Travel Environment)

Willmar Public School District

Roosevelt Elementary School is one of two elementary schools in the Willmar School District, ISD 347. All schools in the district are located in Willmar, Minnesota. The school district's population estimate in 2011 was 25,941, which has risen 5.7 percent since 2000. The 2011 household count for the district is 9,893, which has declined by 2.9 percent since 2000. In recent years, the district has seen a large increase in its minority population, particularly with persons of Hispanic/Latino and Somali decent. The 2011 estimate shows 4,645 persons of Hispanic or Latino origin lived in the district. Medium Household income in 2011 was estimated to be \$46,687.

The school district's territory takes in the City of Willmar, surrounding townships, and also includes the small cities of Pennock, Blomkest, and Kandiyohi. A school district map is shown in the Appendix.

Student enrollment in the Willmar Public School District is 4,079 students. Student ethnicity breakdown is as follows:

<u>Student Ethnicity</u>	<u># of Students</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
American Indian	22	0.5%
Asian	30	0.7%
Hispanic	1,246	30.5%
Black	279	6.8%
White	2,438	60.0%
Other	64	2.0%

The following is the school district's Mission Statement: "Preparing all students for a successful tomorrow." The district's goals are to:

- Improve student lives
- Achievement for ALL students
- Fiscally responsible stewardship
- Strengthen school/community relationships to improve learning for ALL students.

Willmar Public Schools Wellness Policy

The Willmar Public Schools Wellness Policy is a district wide policy. The Policy was first adopted in 2006, with last revisions in 2012. The purpose of the policy is “to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students’ health, wellbeing, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.” The first part of the policy is primarily devoted to healthy eating. This summary of the policy will focus on physical activity. The Wellness Policy is posted on the School District’s web site.

Physical activity is first accomplished through Physical Education (P.E.) for all students K-12. All students include students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings. Students receive regular physical education that meets or exceeds state requirements. The physical education curriculum is coordinated with health education curriculum. The policy states that students should spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

The policy also discusses the integration of physical activity into the classroom setting. “Classroom health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television.” The policy discusses physical activity in classrooms, recess, and before and after school programs and interscholastic sports programs.

The policy also discusses communications with parents. The School District will provide information to families about the importance of healthy eating and daily physical activity. At this time, the Wellness Policy does not discuss Safe Routes to School, and does not promote walking or bicycling to and from school.

Willmar School District’s Policy on Transportation of Public School Students

The school District’s transportation (bussing) eligibility of resident students will be highlighted in this section. Upon the request of the parent or guardian, the school district shall provide transportation to and from school, at the expense of the school district, for all resident students who reside two miles or more from the school, “except for students whose transportation privileges have been revoked or have been voluntarily surrendered by the student’s parent or guardian.” The school district reserves the right to provide transportation to students within the two-mile zone where they think the purpose to do so is appropriate. Within the two-mile zone, if space is available, students can be picked up along bus routes for a fee.

City of Willmar

The City of Willmar serves as a regional center for a large geographic area in west central Minnesota. The community is located near the center of Kandiyohi County and shares borders with Willmar, Dovre, Green Lake, and Kandiyohi Townships. U.S. Highways 12, 71, and State

Highway 23 are the three major roadways. Willmar is situated near numerous lakes, with Foot, Willmar, and Swan Lakes all being located inside the City's corporate limits. The city encompasses 13.52 square miles.

According to the 2010 Census, the City of Willmar had 19,610 residents, which was approximately a 6.4 percent increase from the 2000 Census. The most recent population estimate shows 22,126 persons. The median household income in the community is \$36,961, which is less than the state's \$48,695 figure. The 2009 American Community Survey shows an estimate of 3,118 children between 5 to 17 years of age living in the city, and an estimated population of 1,315 residents 80 years old and older. The 2009 American Community Survey also shows that an estimated 16.14 percent of Willmar's population had incomes below the poverty level. In addition, 2,414 of the community's 7,458 households had incomes below \$25,000.

In 2011, the City of Willmar adopted a City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. This plan was reviewed and utilized as part of the SRTS planning process. There are needs presented in that plan that are also addressed in this document. The one City policy worth discussing in this plan is the Snow Removal Policy. The City has a policy that all public sidewalks must be cleared of snow and ice 24 hours after a snowfall ends. The policy goes into more detail than stated here. The enforcement of this policy has not been very strong at this time. If complaints are sent in, action by the City will occur however.

The City of Willmar added a new section to their Comprehensive Plan in 2012 when it completed a Trails and Pedestrian Plan Addendum. The plan laid out priorities for both off road trails and on road bikeways. The Plan also set priorities for pedestrian improvements within the community.

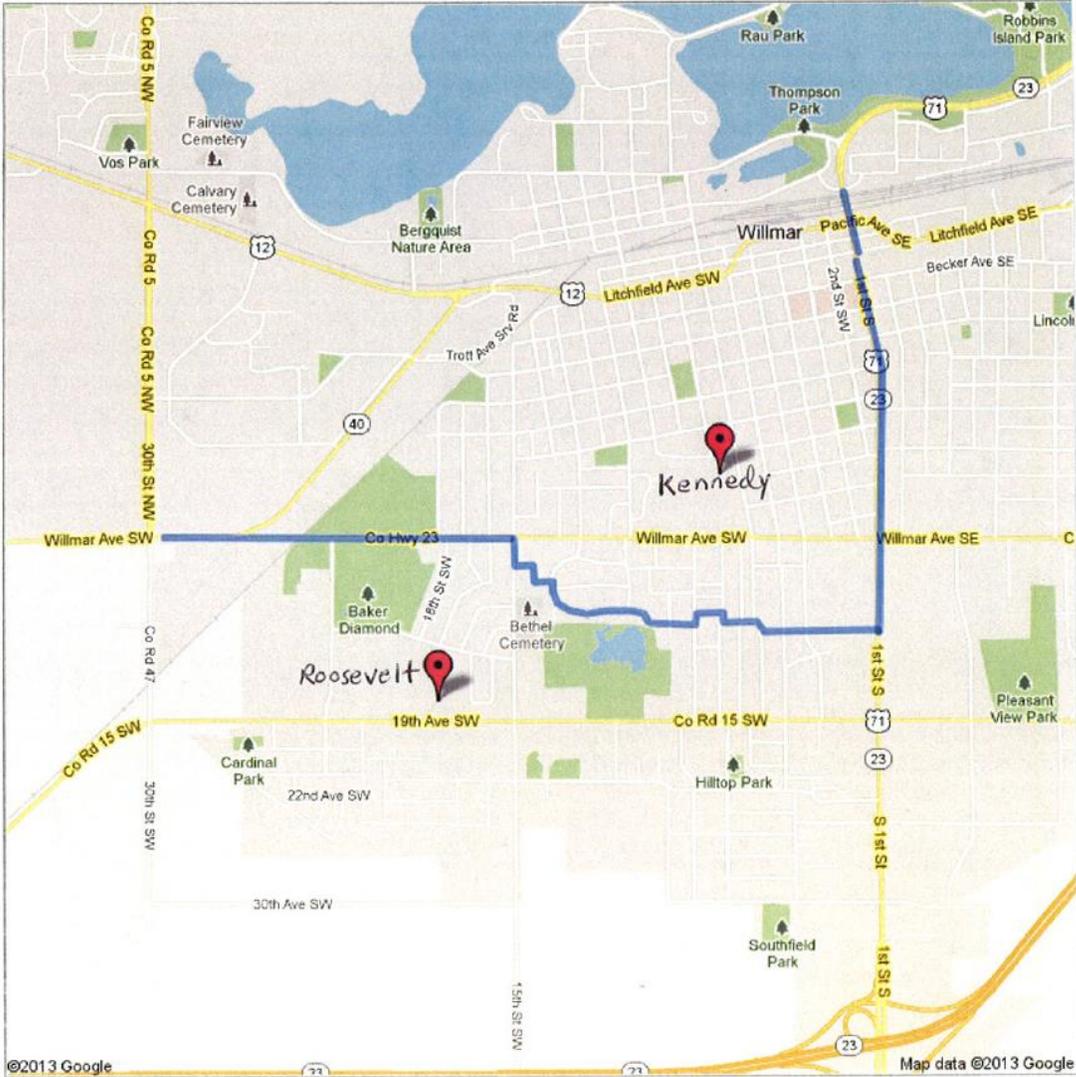
Roosevelt Elementary School

Roosevelt Elementary school is located at 1800 19th Avenue SW. The school is located in a Southwestern Willmar. The school is bordered by park/recreation land to its west, and residential property on its other sides. 19th Avenue SW has mostly businesses located on it. Within the school's walking zone is one neighborhood that accesses the property from the front side. This large neighborhood is located on the south side of 19th Avenue. A second neighborhood accesses the property on the school's backside off 15th Avenue. A large portion of the school's city territory is located in the eastern side of the community, and outside of the walk zone.



Roosevelt Elementary has an enrollment of 944 students. The school has grades kindergarten through 5th grade. The population by grade is as follows: Kindergarten 155 students, First Grade 163 students, Second Grade 177 students, Third Grade 155 students, Fourth Grade 159 students, and Fifth Grade 135 students.

Map showing student attendance line between Willmar’s two elementary schools



The above map shows the line between where elementary school children go to either Kennedy or Roosevelt Elementary School in Willmar. As can be seen Roosevelt’s territory in Willmar covers the City’s south and east sides.

Accident Information

City of Willmar Accident Data

There are no hot spots for concern when it comes from analyzing vehicle accidents involving pedestrians or bicyclists. During the past ten years, records show that these accidents have occurred randomly throughout the entire community. Some busy streets had more accidents involving bicycles and pedestrians than other streets in the community. First Street, Willmar Avenue, Trott Avenue, Becker Avenue, and Highway 12 had the most accidents. While it is likely that not all instances have been reported to the Minnesota Department of Transportation State Aid Crash Tool Data site that was reviewed, the ten year record shows only two accidents that involve children going or coming from school in the ten year time frame of the review. One of these accidents occurred on the Middle School property. This accident happened to a 13 year old female, who was at fault for darting into traffic in the parking lot back in 2009. The other accident that may involve a child going to school happened at the intersection of 7th Street SW and Willmar Avenue. The Bicyclist was 14 years old, and the driver was 16 years old. The driver was distracted and caused the accident. The Accident occurred in September of 2008 at 7:46 a.m.

During the period that was reviewed (2002 through 2012) there were a total of 93 accidents in Willmar that involved both a motor vehicle and a pedestrian or bicyclist. Fifty-three involved bicyclists and 40 involved pedestrians.

There were 14 accidents that involved both bicycles and vehicles with bikers between the ages of 5 years old and 14 years old during the period reported. Of these 14 accidents, 12 (86%) occurred at intersections. Ten of the 14 accidents were the bicyclists fault alone, 2 were the motorist's fault and 2 accidents were of joint fault between the participants. There were an additional 7 accidents involving children biking ages 15 to 18 years old, of which 6 happened at intersections. Three bicycle accidents occurred to children under 5 years old, none at intersections. All three of these accidents were the fault of the child.

Pedestrian involved with accidents between the ages 5 to 18 totaled 12 children during the 10-year time period studied. Of these accidents, 8 of the 12 were the full fault of the pedestrian. Two accidents were where both were at fault, one was solely the fault of the motorist, and the other case is an unknown cause. Many of these accidents to children were the result of playing and darting out in front of a motor vehicle or playing in the street.

When looking at pedestrian and bicycle accidents involving motor vehicles, it is shown that 25 percent of the reported accidents had driver distractions involved and close to 10 percent had

distractions of the pedestrian or bicyclist. For example a pedestrian or biker may have been playing loud music on headphones.

Vehicle Accident History for the Roosevelt Elementary Walk Zone

When looking at all accidents involving motor vehicles during 2002 through 2012, it is possible to identify intersections with a greater accident history than others, and streets in general where traffic is higher and more accidents have occurred. While these accidents do not involve bicyclists or pedestrians, they do show areas where more awareness of potential walking and biking concerns are. Because the data includes ten years of traffic accidents there are accidents that occur most everywhere you look, but on an annual basis, many streets may not have any accidents.

Roosevelt Elementary School's walk zone is approximately one-half mile in radius. The school walk zone does not include walking across two of Willmar's most dangerous and busy streets, Highway 12 and First Street. Accident history shows that the street with the most accidents within the school's walk zone is 19th Avenue SW. The street on which the school is located, but also has crossing guards to assist children with crossing. There have been 53 accidents along 19th Avenue SW between 21st Street SW and 11 Street SW in the 10 years reviewed. Fourteen of these accidents have occurred at the intersection with 15th Street. Ten accidents have occurred in front of the school property on 19th Avenue during this period of time.

The neighborhood streets to the south of 19th Avenue within the school walk zone do not have sidewalks, but also have very little accident history compared to other neighborhoods in Willmar. Only eight accidents involving motor vehicles have been reported in the ten-year span in the walk zone area south of 19th Avenue SW. Three of these accidents have occurred on 20th Avenue SW near 24th Street SW. Another three occurred on 21st Street SW.

Motor vehicle accidents north of the school have been fairly low as well. 15th Avenue is the greatest concern as it must be crossed to get to the school. Only six accidents have occurred on this street in the 10 years reviewed. Two accidents at the intersection with 15th Street SW and one accident each at the other 4 intersections near the school. There is history however of vehicles missing the stop sign at the corner of 16th Street and 15th Avenue, the location of the school's backside pathway. The neighborhood north of 15th Avenue has seen only two accidents in the 10 years, both on 17th Street SW.

Somewhat surprisingly, outside of the intersection with 19th Avenue SW, there have not been many accidents during the 10-year review on 15th Street SW near Roosevelt Elementary School. It is a busy street but only 2 accidents have been reported south of 19th Avenue and three accidents on 15th Street north of 19th Avenue within the school walk zone. Two of these are at the intersection with 15th Avenue SW, which was discussed above.

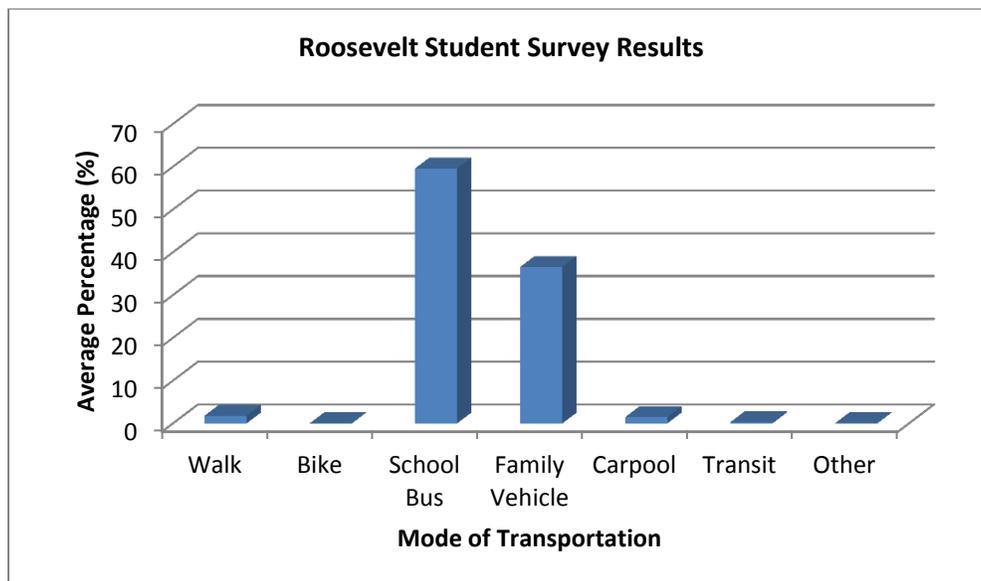
Parent Survey and Student Tally

This section discusses what safety issues, attitudes, and barriers may exist within the community. The school conducted both parent surveys and in classroom student tallies as part of this planning process. This survey information, along with the route assessment evaluations, provide a baseline assessment and as a starting point for future deliberation, monitoring, and evaluation.

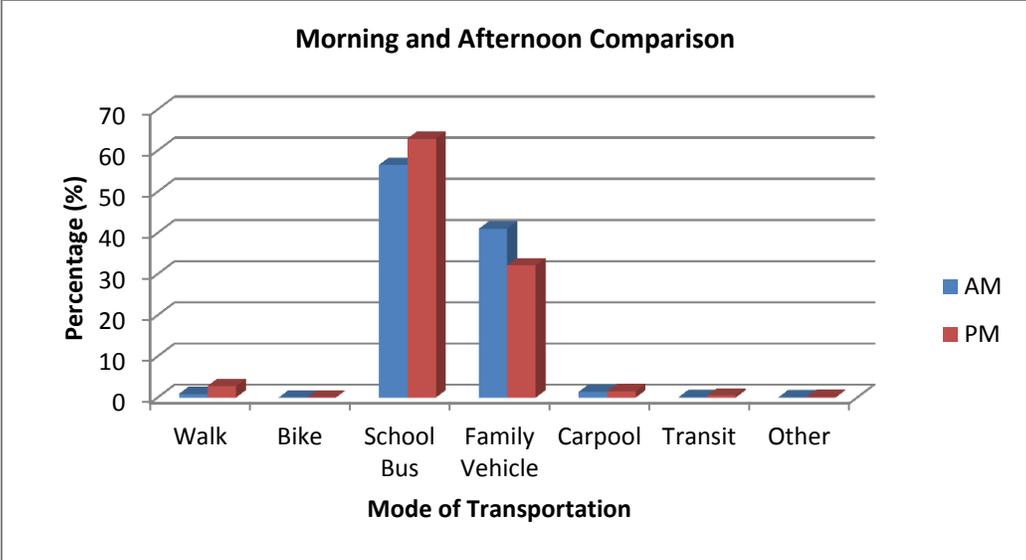
A complete analysis and results of the surveys can be found within the appendix of this plan. The student tally and the parent survey instruments were developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School. Student Tallies were administered by teachers during the school week. The parent survey was brought home by students and was written in English, Spanish, and Somali. The Mid-Minnesota Development Commission tabulated the results of both surveys.

Student Tallies

Student Tallies were conducted in the middle of January 2013. The in classroom surveys were conducted in both the morning and afternoons during the middle of the school week. The survey tallies had 39 classrooms that participated. All five grades were included within the surveys, but there was slightly more classrooms from the younger aged classrooms, which may have skewed the results somewhat. As the tallies were conducted in January, the results would have fewer students walking and biking than in the warmer fall or spring months.



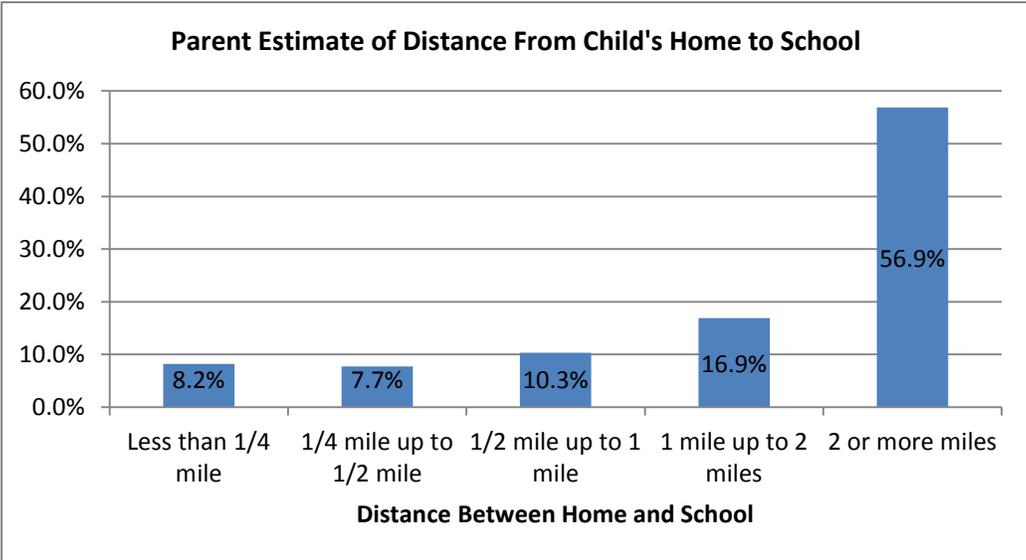
The above graph shows that both family vehicle and school bus are the two most frequently utilized modes of transportation to and from Roosevelt Elementary School. In the middle of winter, less than two percent of the students walk or bike to school.



The above graph shows that more children walk home in the afternoon than arrive by walking in the morning. In the morning, the family vehicle is the most often used mode of transportation, while in the afternoon the school bus is the most often used.

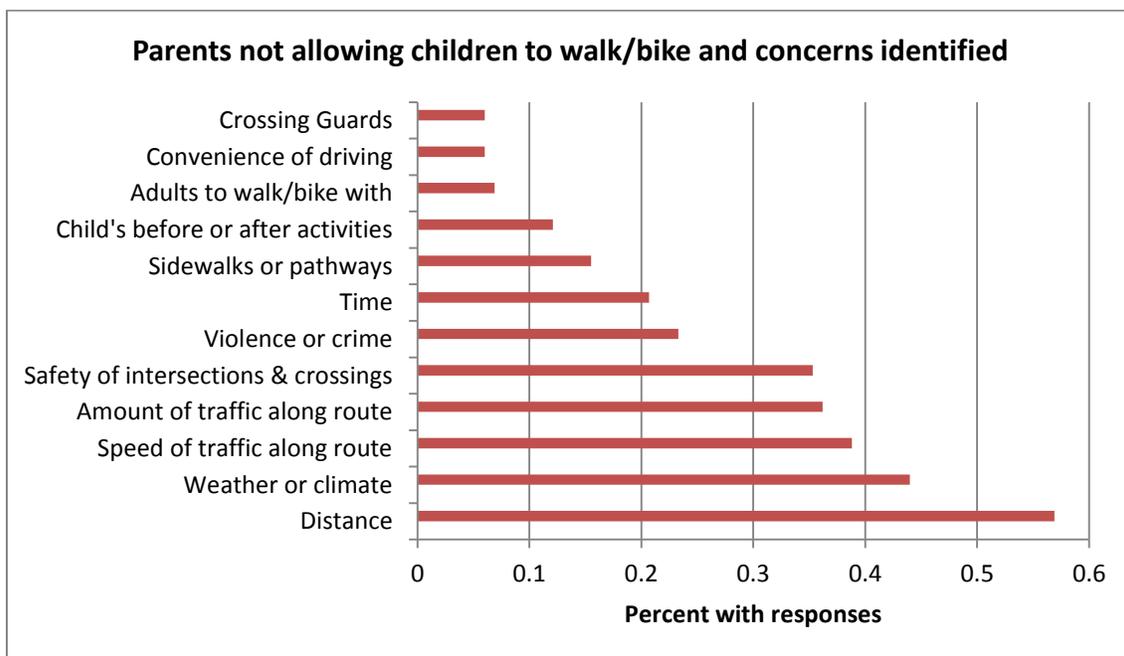
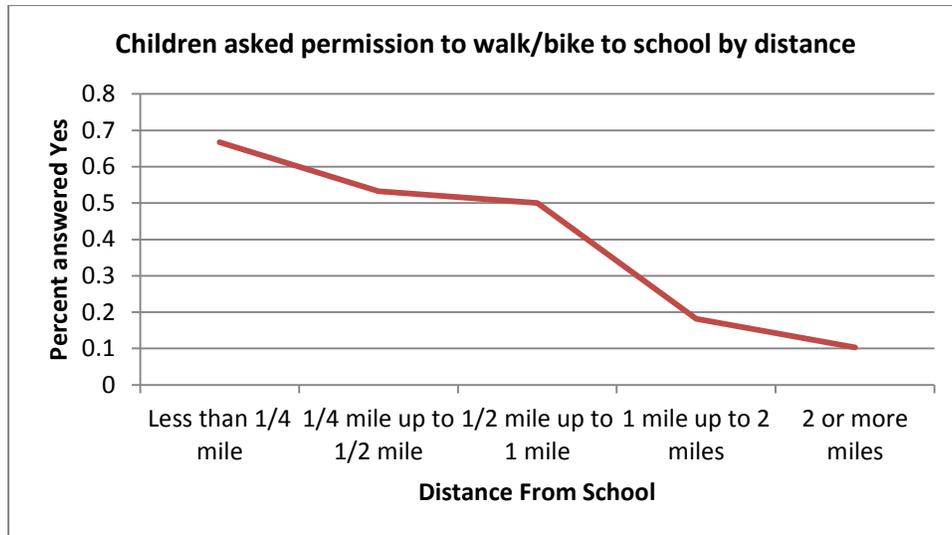
Parent Survey Result Highlights

The parent survey was conducted in the late fall of 2012. A total of 208 surveys were returned, with a fairly well distribution representing all five grades and about an equal number of boys and girls represented.



The above graph shows that approximately 16 percent of the children attending Roosevelt Elementary live within the one-half mile walk zone. Nearly 74 percent live one mile or more from the school. The classroom student tally and the parent survey both show similar results on

the mode of transportation used for children getting to and from school. It is no great surprise to find that those that live closer to school have a much greater likelihood to walk or bike than students that live further distances do. The survey showed that a majority of children that live within the walk zone have expressed interest in walking or biking to school as shown in the below graph. This information shows that if the parents can be shown that safety improvements are made, and if perceptions can be changed, there is opportunity for more children walking and biking to and from school.



On the survey, parents were asked what factors were they concerned about with allowing their children to walk or bike to school. Those families that lived far from the school site were most

likely to state that the distance factor prohibits their children from walking or biking. Weather or climate was the second most answered factor on allowing their children to walk or bike to school. Amount of traffic, speed of traffic, and dangerous intersections were the other most common worries of parents at all distances from the school. The above graph shows the parents attitudes of the reasons why they do not want their children to walk or bike to school.

The last three questions on the parent survey asked opinions on walking and biking to school. The vast majority of survey respondents (78.4%) view that the school currently takes a neutral view on either encouraging or discouraging children to walk or bike. More parents think the school encourages walking and biking as opposed to discouraging them.

Sixty-six percent of parents also took a neutral opinion on if walking or biking to school is fun or boring for children. Almost 27 percent of the parents believe that walking and biking to school is fun or very fun, while 7.4 percent think that children walking or biking to school is boring or very boring. Sixty-nine percent of the parents believe that walking and biking to school is a healthy or very healthy activity. Twenty-seven percent were neutral on the healthy question, and only four percent thought that walking and biking to school were unhealthy activities. Comments show that those who answered it being unhealthy believe it is so because of the safety dangers that exist.

Roosevelt's Travel Environment

Roosevelt Elementary School is one of two elementary schools in the City of Willmar. The location of the school is in Southwest Willmar. The walk/bike zone has most of the children living in neighborhoods south of the school. There are also neighborhoods north of the school site, but within a few blocks, the line is drawn from where children attend Kennedy Elementary. The vast majority of students live outside of the designated walk/bike zone, and most of them live over 2 miles from the school's location. Most of the nearby neighborhoods do not have sidewalks on the local residential streets.

There are two streets that border on school property. On the school's front side is 19th Avenue SW, which is the access for the school's parking lot and access for student drop-off and pick up. At the school's rear is 15th Avenue SW, which is the access for the separated bus drop-off and pick-up parking lot. For security reasons, students can only enter the school from doors located on the front side and northwest side of the building.

The school faces 19th Avenue SW. It is a very busy minor arterial street with 40 mph speed limits generally, and 30 mph limits during arrival and departure times. The annual average daily traffic (AADT) on 19th Avenue in front of the school is over 9,000 vehicles. The road in front of the school has 3 lanes (middle left turn lane). A little further to the east the road becomes a five

lane road, with an AADT of approximately 11,000 vehicles. There are proper school zone signs and flashers in place. For children coming from neighborhoods on the south side of this street, the school has set up a mid-block street crossing. A marked crosswalk and signs are in place and, crossing guards are utilized, but it is still perceived as a dangerous situation. Accidents and near accidents have occurred at the location. Low sun angles during drop-off and pick-up times have added to the problems for drivers not seeing the crossing guard. The school has rules and a sign that does not allow left turns onto 19th Avenue off the drive to the parking lot and pick-up/drop-off during the proper hours. Some drivers do not always follow these rules and turn left. This causes problems of being too near the street crossing location.



Not many parents are allowing their children to walk to school from the nearby neighborhoods on the south side of 19th Avenue because of the crossing issues on the street. Besides the crosswalk at the school location, there is a four-way streetlight crossing a little further to the east at 19th Avenue and 15th Street. This crossing is unsupervised, but does have the appropriate pedestrian count down mechanisms. Fifteenth Street SW is designated as a collector route for the City. On the north side of 19th Avenue, the AADT is 2,200. On the south side of 19th Avenue, the AADT is 1,800 vehicles. The only other nearby street designated as a collector street is 22nd Street SW. This street has an AADT that ranges from 1,800 just north of 19th Avenue to 2,350 near Willmar Avenue. This road is surrounded by recreational fields and other non-residential land uses and thus has little impact on children walking or bicycling to/from school. Further to the north, Willmar Avenue is designated as an urban minor arterial, but the road is within the school zone for attending Kennedy Elementary School.

The school has a pathway to get onto their property from the backside (north side) that connects to the 3 way corner of 15th Avenue and 16th Street SW. The corner has three-way stop signs, but no crosswalks. There are no sidewalks on 16th Street, or on the north side of 15th Avenue, which is the reason for the lack of marked crosswalks. Children do cross the street at this location to utilize the pathway. Some drivers on 15th Avenue do not anticipate a stop sign at this location, and thus run through the sign. More attention is needed to make drivers aware of the stop sign and that children cross at this location. 15th Avenue SW has an AADT of 700 vehicles.



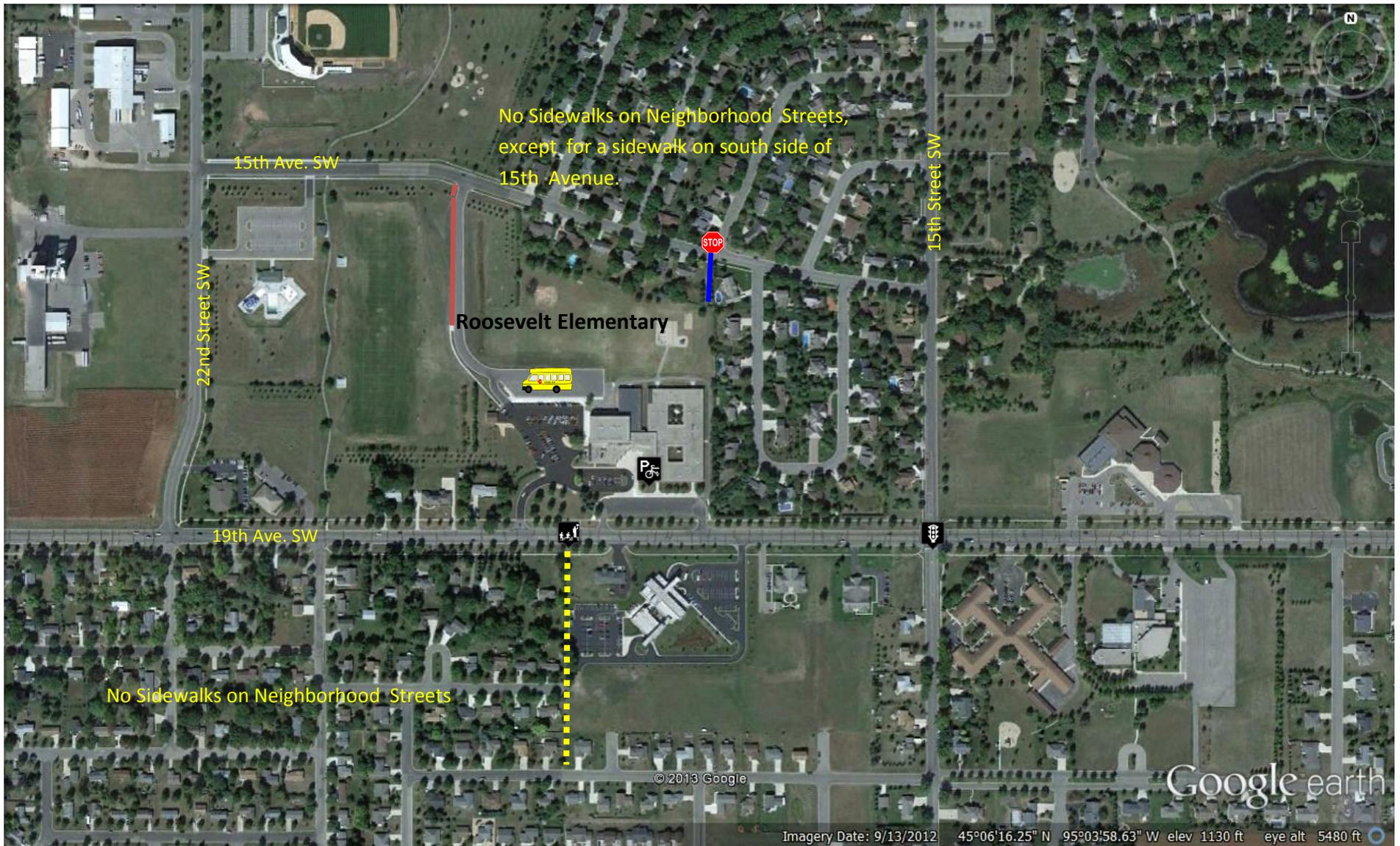
A sidewalk/path would be helpful that heads south on the southern side of the crosswalk in front (south side) of the building. If a sidewalk/path was placed in this location it would greatly lessen the walk for children living in a neighborhood directly south of the school's location. Some children cut across this property without a sidewalk being present.

There are few sidewalks located within the school's walk zone. The neighborhoods south of 19th Avenue do not have any sidewalks. 19th Avenue has sidewalks on both sides that are wide and well set back from the busy road. Most of the neighborhood to the school's north side also lack sidewalks. There is a missing segment of sidewalk that leads out to 15th Avenue that follows the school road that the buses utilize to enter and leave the school property. Some children come to the school from this direction, and thus walk on this private school bus road where the sidewalk ends.

Overall, the approach the school has set up for school buses and parent drop-off and pick-up is very well thought out. School buses unload and pick-up at a completely separated location from where pedestrians and parent drop-off and pick-up locations. Buses unload on a curb and sidewalk. Some kids do not follow rules to use the sidewalk and slightly cut across the employee parking lot to get to the northwest entry doors.

The school utilizes two parent drop-off and pick-up areas. Both are designed to drop children off on the front (South side) of the school off the very busy 19th Avenue. Overall, it seems to be a good layout. Drop-off observations showed no congestion problems. Pick-ups are a little more problematic with cars being sometimes stacked out onto 19th Avenue waiting for their turn. Rules are not always followed for kids getting out of the cars at curb side and walking across traffic and the parking lot instead of using the sidewalk. Parents are given written instructions to follow on procedures at the beginning of the school year. Extending the sidewalk on the south side of the rotational drop-off location may assist with any backups that occur at this location by increasing the curbside drop-off zone.

Roosevelt Elementary School



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  School Bus Loading |  Stop Light |  Location where vehicles run stop sign |
|  Bike Racks |  Missing Sidewalk |  Current Pathway |
|  Crossing Guard Location |  Possible Trail Location | |

Roosevelt Elementary School's SRTS Needs Discussion

Engineering Needs and Measures Discussion

19th Avenue SW Crossings

The top engineering need for Roosevelt Elementary School is a safer crossing of 19th Avenue SW. Currently, the principal crossing point is the marked crosswalk in front of the school, which is a mid-block location. The picture shows the current crosswalk. Crossing guards are utilized by the school during appropriate morning and afternoon before and after school times. Crossing guards, however, are not enough of a safety measure. The following recommendations would increase children safety:



- Currently the school zone speed limit is dropped from 40 miles per hour (mph) to 30 mph during school arrival and departure times. The mph during these times should be lowered to a limit to what is allowed by law. It is likely that the speed limit can be lowered another 5 mph at this location, however, if allowed a 20 mph is preferable. Studies show that the likelihood of a pedestrian crash resulting in a fatality increases exponentially with higher vehicular speeds. According to the United States Department of Transportation, if a vehicle is traveling at 20 mph, the chance of a collision resulting in a pedestrian fatality is five percent, compared to 100 percent at 50 mph. At 40 mph, the fatality rate is approximately 85 percent, and 45 percent at 30 mph. The school zone has proper signage and flashers to warn drivers of the speed zone.
- The crosswalk in front of the school should have a center refuge safety island constructed. This island should be constructed using current AASHTO and MNDOT Road Design Manual standards, and should utilize an angled crosswalk in the median. The angled crosswalk in the island median can direct pedestrians to face upstream and increase the pedestrian's awareness of traffic. The picture shows an example of an angled crosswalk.



Constructing an island in the center lane of 19th Avenue will greatly impact the safety of the crosswalk by providing refuge midway, be more visible to drivers, and act as a traffic calming device. It will also shorten the distance that pedestrians are within traffic lanes. Past studies show that this type of infrastructure improvement decreases the percentage of pedestrian crashes and casualties by 57 to 82 percent. The crosswalk would be cut into the island, so that the walk would remain on a level surface. Engineering design of the island and crosswalk will determine what other safety infrastructure would be utilized for this facility. The cost of such a facility will range between \$10,000 to \$40,000 depending on the design and dimensions of the island. It should be noted that the private Community Christian School is also located on 19th Avenue SW, several blocks to the east of Roosevelt. It is likely that they would also like to see the same improvements at their location.

- In addition to the construction of a crosswalk island, the school should consider adding additional safety features of highly visible portable crosswalk identification signs that can be placed on either end of the center island. Sign examples are shown to the right.
- Crossing guards should wear reflective safety vests and as an added safety feature carry flashing LED hand held stop signs, as seen here.
- The stoplight intersection of 19th Avenue and 15th Street has up-to-date street crossing facilities; however, it is recommended that the timing of the street crossing be checked to determine if adequate time is given for young children to cross without problems.



15th Avenue SW Improvements

Located behind the school is 15th Avenue SW. The school access for walkers is primarily at the T-intersection of 15th Avenue and 16th Street, where a short pathway leads to school property. The T-intersection has a stop sign at all three corners. The stop sign on 15th Avenue needs to be made more visible, as a number of motorists, are not anticipating a stop sign at this location, and as a result run through the stop. A solution to this problem is to make the stop signs more visible by utilizing LED flashing or lighted stop signs. A marked crosswalk is also needed to cross 15th Avenue at this location. The problem is that there is no sidewalk on the north side of 15th Avenue. A marked crosswalk needs to be connected to a safe landing zone. Ideally placing sidewalks on the Avenue's north side would be the best solution, but this may not be politically attainable. The alternative solution is to construct a corner safe landing zone at the intersection of 15th Avenue and 16th Street. This would allow a marked crosswalk to be placed at this T-

intersection. A marked crosswalk would have the added value of drawing more attention to the 3-way stop signs at the location.

Sidewalks and New Trail Segment

To shorten the walking distance for many students that live south and southeast of 19th Avenue, a new trail segment going directly south of the crossing location and in between private property lines would be very beneficial. The distance students would need to travel could be shortened up to the equivalent of 5 blocks in length for some students. This would open up the possibility of more students walking to get within the one-half mile walk zone. The trail would only need to be one to two blocks in length, thus would be an affordable improvement. The need to get an easement approved from the current property owners would have to happen before the project could move forward. The City would likely place the snow removal responsibilities onto the school for the short trail.



On school property, along the private school driveway for busses there is a gap in the sidewalk that leads up to 15th Avenue SW. A sidewalk should be installed to keep children off the bus driveway for improved safety. The length of the needed sidewalk is roughly one and one-half blocks long. The school has already made safety improvements to one area of concern that was raised. The curb zone for waiting to load busses has been improved with a yellow painted

line for students to stand behind. This has also been done for the parent dropoff and pickup location.

The location of the school is in neighborhoods that do not have sidewalks on most of the residential streets. It would be politically difficult to place sidewalks on all the streets, but further study could determine if there are certain streets that serve as collector streets for the neighborhood as far as pedestrian travel is concerned. It may be more acceptable for the City to look at adding sidewalks to the key safe routes to school corridors in these neighborhoods in the future. While sidewalks are the best solution, the current situation



is fairly safe, as most of the streets in the area are strictly residential in nature, with minor traffic counts.

Bike Rack Placement

The current location of the school's bike rack is good, near the front doors; however, they currently sit on the grass. There is a need to extend the sidewalk to have pavement underneath the bike racks.

Enforcement, Education, and Encouragement Discussion

The needs and strategies for the SRTS Plan dealing with the categories of enforcement, education, and encouragement are all interrelated. There will be some planned measures that can easily fit and be discussed within more than one of these three categories. All three categories must be worked on together to reach the vision for this plan.

While the needs for engineering solutions are different at each Willmar School District site, the enforcement, education, and encouragement goals are basically the same. Because of this, there will be opportunities for the two elementary schools and the middle school to work together in some of action measures discussed below. The middle school may have greater differences in how it goes about encouraging and educating their students than the two elementary schools due to the age differences in the children.

In moving forward to implement SRTS Plans at each of the three school sites involved with SRTS, the SRTS Teams at each school will need to work with the other teams. Time, effort, and costs can be shared in working on some shared action steps together. For example, if someone is brought in to talk to children at a SRTS educational assembly, it can be arranged that the person could visit all three schools on the same day. SRTS media campaigns can be coordinated together between the three SRTS Teams as another example. In preparing the three SRTS plans for the Willmar School District, an effort has been made to keep each school aware of what the other school's strategies are so that coordination is thought about upfront. Many of the same strategies and action steps discussed in all three plans are similar to allow this helpful coordination to occur.

Enforcement Needs and Measures

The primary purpose of SRTS enforcement strategies is to deter unsafe behaviors of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists and to encourage all road users to obey traffic laws and share the road safely. Enforcement measures are not only the responsibility of the local police, but with the school and the community at large as well. Enforcement measures go hand in hand with education and safety awareness measures that are also discussed within this plan.

Through the various needs identification steps taken in preparing this plan there have been unsafe behaviors that have been identified for streets around the school and on the school campus. Speeding is a concern on the streets surrounding the school, particularly on 19th Avenue, and 15th Avenue SW. Particular attention needs to be paid to the school's designated school speed zones. Studies show that speed matters when it comes to determining if a pedestrian lives or dies in an accident. "At 20 mph, a pedestrian has a 5 percent chance of dying if he/she is hit by a car. At 30 mph, the chance of dying increases to roughly 45 percent. If a pedestrian is hit by a motor vehicle traveling 40 mph, the risk of dying increases to 85 percent."

Another enforcement concern is for motorists to follow the laws regarding yielding to pedestrians. All city street intersections are crosswalks, not just the marked crosswalks. The law is unfortunately often ignored. Concerns are also with motorists obeying crossing guards at 19th Avenue crossing location. In addition, motorists need to make full stops at the marked stop signs on the streets near the school. Additionally, motorists need to obey laws regarding passing stopped school buses.

Roosevelt has some concerns for parents not following rules and signs that say no left turns during the times students are dropped off and picked up at school. There also have been some problems on 15th Avenue with running the stop signs posted on the road. Lastly, there have been some problems of some parents making unlawful U-turns at the intersection of 19th Avenue and 22nd Street SW.

Pedestrian and bicyclist poor behaviors are also a concern when it comes to traveling to and from school. While steps to correct these problems will be mainly addressed under education, it is proper under enforcement measures to stop children when seen not obeying laws to point out their errors, and take the appropriate corrective measures.

City Police Department Enforcement Measures

Discussions with the Willmar Police Department show their willingness to be a partner in the Safe Routes to School initiative. The Police Department already takes an active role in working to provide a safe environment for students both at school and at commuting to and from school. School Resource Officers are assigned to Willmar schools to assist with safety, enforcement, and safety education needs. Willmar Police also already provide a stepped up presence of patrols around the schools during the primary times when students are traveling to and from the schools. In addition, the police have set up a reporting program for both school bus drivers and crossing guards to utilize if they witness drivers not following traffic laws. All complaints are followed up on, and there have been tickets issued as a result.

As it is the case with many communities, the City budget restraints have an impact on the amount of assistance the Willmar Police Department can provide. The Department has seen

cutbacks in their budget, and thus they have limits on how much service they can offer. The Department no longer is able to afford providing bike patrols and the Community Service Officer position was dropped.

With these budgeting limits being said, the Police Department is willing to work with the school and community if there is a desire to begin a progressive ticketing and media campaign. The Police Department can assist with the media efforts with placing news about the program on their internet and Facebook sites as well as utilizing the local television access channel. The Department does reserve the right to give out tickets as they determine are necessary, meaning they will not always give warnings to law violators during the beginning of the program. A progressive ticketing campaign involves first a full community awareness of safety needs and to discuss stepped up enforcement measures. Warning tickets followed by actual traffic citations are also part of the program. It should also be pointed out that a zero tolerance policy should be kept for those caught speeding within a school's speed zone.

The Willmar Police Department currently owns two portable speed trailers. They are willing to place these trailers at key locations from time to time to assist with SRTS enforcement efforts.

Lastly, the Willmar Police Department wants to be contacted and be made aware of any safety concerns the school has, and with any regular traffic violations being seen at a particular location. They will step up patrol action in areas where it is determined to be needed.

School and Community Enforcement Measures

As described above under "Roosevelt's Travel Environment" section, the school provides crossing guards in front of the school to cross 19th Avenue. The crossing guards do not only make it safer for the students in traveling to/from school, but also leads to more parents feeling comfortable about their children walking or biking to school. Proper annual education of the crossing guards need to be continued. Currently the crossing guards have proper flag equipment, but do not have safety vests that would assist in their visibility. This should be on the priority list of needs to purchase the clothing. To increase visibility at the non-intersection crosswalk location, crossing guards could possibly carry flashing lighted signs.

School staff is also stationed outside observing and assisting with both student arrival and departure. The staff help ensure that students follow proper safety measures on the school's property.

There are a couple of community enforcement programs that are available, and should be investigated to determine if volunteers are available and willing to participate. On the neighborhood level, surrounding the school, some homeowners may put up yard signs or stickers to encourage drivers to slow down. Signs could possibly be designed and made ready

by art classes at the schools. Another possible program would have parent volunteers who drop off and/or pick up their children at school to agree to be part of a “pace car” program. A pace car program uses volunteers who take a pledge to follow speed limits, stop at stop signs, and obey other traffic control devices and school rules. The pace cars slow traffic down by modeling good behavior.

Education and Encouragement Needs and Measures

Education and encouragement will be discussed together as they work hand in hand, and the activities involved often address both areas. Roosevelt Elementary School will play an important role with these activities, but other organizations in the community will also play important roles. The Kandiyohi County YMCA, the Kandiyohi County Department of Public Health, and Willmar Community Education and Recreation are three important partners in providing both education and encouragement for healthy living and lifestyles. Education not only involves children, but parents and the community at large, especially focusing on safe driving behaviors.

YMCA Assistance

The Kandiyohi County YMCA, located in Willmar, is a willing partner with the Safe Routes to School Program. They have agreed to work with the schools to provide youth learning and encouragement opportunities in the programs that they operate. In April, the YMCA holds their Healthy Kids Day. It is a free event that is open to all children Pre-K through 5th Grade, but requires an adult to participate with a participating child. The program is designed to help keep children’s minds and bodies active during the summer months. Teaching bicycle safety is always part of the event. Willmar Police Department Officers assist with the effort.

The YMCA offers a Summer Day Camp Program for K – 6th Grade aged children. Each day different activities are planned for the children that have enrolled in the program. The YMCA is always looking for good activities for the Day Camp, and is willing to consider adding some SRTS activities that will both educate on safety and encourage walking and bicycling.

The YMCA has participated in the past with a Downtown Becker Market Family Bike Ride event. They are very willing to participate in such events in the future. The YMCA’s Healthy Family Home web site provides a variety of useful articles and information to promote and educate on healthy living. The Heart and Sole Running Club is open to children 9 – 14 years old that want to be part of a run for fun group, and get into the sport of running. The Club runs for 8 weeks during the year. The Youth Fitness program meets twice a week for six weeks, and is designed for youth ages 10 to 15 years old to gain a competitive edge in their respective sports by providing participants with increased strength and endurance through workouts using resistance and plyometric based training. The free Active Teens Program is open to 7th grade

and older aged children and is designed to orient participants to the Y's Wellness Center cardio and strength training equipment.

Willmar Community Education and Recreation (WCER)

The City and School District have a Joint Powers Agreement in operating the Willmar Community Education and Recreation Department. The WCER provides a wide array of youth recreational opportunities, both for team sport and leisure-type non-team sport activities. Annually, in the fall, the WCER holds its Ride the Trails Event. This Bicycling event provides organized riding opportunities geared towards families and longer designated routes for those looking for a longer bicycle ride. Proceeds of the event help to pay for the expansion of trail facilities in the City.

WCER has just started a new program in 2013 called the "Wheels for Kids" Program. The program takes old bicycles that need repairs and fix them up to give away. Many of the bicycles will come from bicycles that would have been auctioned off by the City's Police Department from unclaimed bicycles. Other bicycles will be donated by the public. Seventy bicycles have been collected thus far. The bicycles are in fairly decent condition, needing only minor repairs or maintenance. The bicycles range from young children to adult sizes. The Willmar Kiwanis Club donated \$10,000 that was used to purchase the needed repair equipment and three bike racks. The program is currently seeking out volunteers that have the needed knowledge in repairing bicycles. The Best Buy store in town has signed up to have store employees volunteer for a day in June to help at getting the 70 bicycles ready to be given to children in need. A retired bicycle repair expert has volunteered to help guide the repair efforts. The plan calls for additional bicycles to be donated/collected so that during the winter months additional bicycles will be made ready to be given to children. It is hoped that some children that will receive a bike, will help make the repairs. This will allow these children to be educated on bicycle maintenance and how to make simple repairs. The program may also get the Boy Scouts involved for scouts that are interested in earning a Bicycle Merit Badge.

SECTION FOUR: ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SRTS ACTION PLAN

I. Recommended Education and Encouragement Strategies

Education includes identifying safe routes, teaching students safe walking and bicycling techniques, and informing the public about driver safety concerns near schools. Encouragement strategies are aimed at increasing the number of students who walk and bike to school. The two strategies are tied closely together and are thus highlighted together.

A. Objective: Teach students pedestrian safety skills in a way that is clear, hands-on, and consistent.

- Action: Provide pedestrian education within physical education classes.
 - Who: School
 - When: Ongoing, beginning at start of school year
 - Funding: None needed

B. Objective: Teach students safe bicycling skills in a way that is clear, hands on, and consistent.

- Action: Provide Second Grade classes with bicycle safety training and provide students with helmets. Children are fitted for proper helmet size and fit.
 - Who: School and Willmar Police Department
 - When: Annually in May
 - Funding: Helmets are provided by the Police Department through United Way Funds
- Action: “Healthy Kids Day” will include bicycle training for children Pre-K to 5th Grade.
 - Who: Kandiyohi County YMCA, School to help promote
 - When: Annually in April
 - Funding: YMCA
- Action: Current “Ride the Trails” event provides an organized family bicycling event in the City.
 - Who: Willmar Community Education & Recreation
 - When: Annually in September
 - Funding: Participant fee
- Action: Willmar Ambulance Service has a Bike Helmet Program, funded through donations, where children’s bike helmets are given to families that cannot afford them.

- Who: Willmar Ambulance Service
- When: Ongoing, Their EMS Open House in May is one of the major times where helmets are given out
- Funding: Donations given to the Willmar Ambulance Service

C. Objective: Educate Parents on transportation related procedures, and all community drivers about the need for driving safely around the school to reduce the likelihood of accidents.

- Action: Provide parents with safety rules and school procedures dealing with students arriving and departing to/from school by all modes of travel, through parent informational packet and school web site.
 - Who: School
 - When: Ongoing, beginning at start of school year
 - Funding: Minor expense by the school
- Action: Promote safe driving around the school by newspaper articles and other means to be determined by the SRTS Team, with cooperation from the other School District SRTS Teams.
 - Who: All three school SRTS Teams
 - When: Ongoing, beginning at start of school year
 - Funding: Minor or no expense by the school

D. Objective: Encourage more parents to allow their children to walk or bike to school within the school's walk zone, and encourage all students to be more physically active. (Note: Most walking and biking to school encouragement will wait until safety concerns are addressed for 19th Avenue crossing.)

- Action: Prepare a walk and bike to school route map, and display on school's web site.
 - Who: School's SRTS Team
 - When: After 19th Avenue safety improvements made
 - Funding: Minor expense for school
- Action: Promote and attempt to have neighborhood parents begin "walking school busses."
 - Who: School SRTS Team to promote and provide information
Neighborhood parents to organize and run
 - When: After 19th Avenue safety improvements made
 - Funding: No significant cost involved
- Action: Promote an ongoing organized walk and bike to school days, including the "International Walk and Bike to School Day."

- Who: School’s SRTS Team
- When: After 19th Avenue safety improvements made
- Funding: Minor expense for school
- Action: Willmar Community Education & Recreation is in the process of beginning a “Wheels for Kids” program. Used bicycles will be repaired by volunteers and given to those who are in need. The program will include having children that will receive a bike, help out on the repairs, so they can learn about simple repairs and maintenance. The program may involve the Boy Scouts going for their Bicycle Merit Badge.
 - Who: Willmar Community Education & Recreation, Community Volunteers
 - When: Beginning in 2013 (20 bicycles to be fixed up to be given in the first round)
 - Funding: Willmar Kiwanis Club has donated \$10,000 for repair equipment and bike racks
WCER will continue to seek donations of cash and bicycles for the program
The program may seek SRTS funding to help assist with funding bike maintenance training and to help buy any additional needed bicycle repair equipment

II. Recommended Enforcement Strategies

SRTS enforcement is a community effort that involves law enforcement, students, parents, school administration, and others. The strategies will target driver behavior as well as pedestrian and bicyclist behavior.

A. Objective: Reduce the possibilities of accidents by providing traffic enforcement measures within the walk and bike zone of the school.

- Action: Begin a “progressive ticketing campaign,” with assistance from the Willmar Police Department. Publicity of stepped up enforcement will be a combination of publicity using local media, school information, and police web sites. The Police reserve the right to decide to ticket before giving a warning. Step up patrols at school opening and closing after media campaign.
 - Who: School’s SRTS Team to contact media, Willmar Police
 - When: In the beginning of the school year
Work on doing media campaign and stepped up enforcement annually

- Funding: Small expense for media campaign development
- Action: Willmar Police Department will continue to respond to school bus driver and school crossing guard reports of motorists not following traffic laws.
 - Who: School Bus Drivers, Crossing Guards, Police
 - When: Ongoing
 - Funding: No added costs
- Action: Periodically utilize the Police Department’s two portable speed trailers, especially after school begins to remind drivers to keep within the posted speed limits.
 - Who: Willmar Police Department
 - When: Periodically on an ongoing basis
 - Funding: No added costs
- Action: Develop a “pace car” program where parents volunteer to sign a pledge to obey traffic laws and school procedures to set a good example for other parents that drive their children to/from school. The school’s web site can be utilized to publicize the program.
 - Who: School’s SRTS Team
 - When: At times when parents are engaged with the school, such as parent teacher conferences
 - Funding: Minor expense for school

B. Objective: Help provide enforcement and increased safety through the use of crossing guards at the marked crossing in front of the school on 19th Avenue SW during arrival and dismissal times.

- Action: Continue to provide trained adult crossing guards at the marked crossing in front of the school on 19th Avenue SW. Investigate if any additional signs, vests, and other gear would assist making the crossing guard and the crossing more visible. Look into purchasing hand held lighted stop signs to have the crossing guard more visible to traffic.
 - Who: School and SRTS Team in investigating if added gear would help
 - When: Ongoing, with determining additional needs to be done in the short term
 - Funding: Low cost expense for school, over their current expenses

III. Recommended Engineering Strategies

Engineering strategies are meant to improve the safety conditions within the physical walking and bicycling environment. The issues and recommendations that have been identified should

be used for planning purposes only and may require further engineering analysis, design, and public input before implementation.

A. Issue: 19th Avenue SW is a very busy arterial street in the community with safety issues in crossing to the neighborhoods located south of the school. Many parents will not even consider letting their children walk or bike to school until safety conditions improve. This is the top engineering issue priority.

- Action: Investigate and change the school zone posted speed to a lower speed. It is likely that the posted school speed zone can be reduced from the posted 30 mph to 25 mph at a minimum.
 - Who: City of Willmar, and road owner Kandiyohi County
 - When: In the short term
 - Funding: Modest cost of new signs posting new school zone speed limits
Costs could be part of a comprehensive SRTS application
- Action: Design and construct a pedestrian island within the center turn lane at the location of the marked crossing. Details of project are described in plan's text.
 - Who: City of Willmar, and road owner Kandiyohi County
 - When: Apply for SRTS funding at the next available funding round
 - Funding: Depending on engineering, likely \$10,000 to \$40,000 cost
Apply for SRTS funding, likely needing match amount from school and/or city
- Action: Investigate if timing of streetlights at intersection of 19th Avenue SW and 15th Street SW are adequately set to allow young children to cross the street in a safe manner.
 - Who: City of Willmar
 - When: Summer or Fall of 2013
 - Funding: Staff time only

B. Issue: 15th Avenue SW runs east to west behind the school and has safety issues of students crossing the avenue at the intersection with 16th Street. The improvement of this intersection will improve the safety of children utilizing the short trail segment that brings children to the back side of the school starting on the south side of 15th Avenue at this location. The south side of 15th Avenue has a sidewalk.

- Action: To help alleviate motorists accidentally running the stop signs at the intersection, purchase and install stop sign with flashing lights.
 - Who: City of Willmar

- When: Within 5 years
- Funding: Cost should be under \$10,000, City of Willmar, as part of a future SRTS application.
- Action: Place a marked crosswalk at the intersection. There will be the need to construct a safe landing zone on the north side of 15th Avenue, as there are no sidewalks on the north side.
 - Who: City of Willmar
 - When: Within 5 years
 - Funding: Primary cost is for a safe landing area
City of Willmar as part of a future SRTS application
A curb extension cost is estimated at \$8,000 to \$10,000

C. Issue: The neighborhoods south of 19th Avenue SW and the neighborhood north of 15th Avenue SW lack sidewalks or pathways. While putting sidewalks on all these neighborhood streets is unlikely politically or financially, some key areas would impact safety and expand the school's walk zone.

- Action: Extend the sidewalk on school property that runs along the bus driveway out to the 15th Avenue SW sidewalk.
 - Who: Willmar School District
 - When: Within 5 years
 - Funding: Likely to cost approximately \$20,000 at today's costs
Should be considered as part of SRTS application along with the 15th Avenue and 16th Street intersection needs
- Action: Look into if property owners are agreeable to commit an easement to allow a pathway/trail to be constructed on the south side of 19th Avenue where the marked school crossing is located. The pathway would run south to neighborhoods directly to the south of the school, making it a safer walk, and expand the walk zone in that direction by several blocks.
 - Who: SRTS Team to investigate, if available, school and city project
 - When: Talk to property owners in the Fall, construct when funding can be secured
 - Funding: Likely to cost approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 at today's costs
Should be considered as part of SRTS application along with the 19th Avenue crossing island project as the school's top priority for funding
- Action: Determine what are the primary feeder routes for pedestrian travel to the school, and add sidewalks along these routes to improve safety.

- Who: City and property owners
- When: Long term project that would need to have political backing by property owners that would be affected
- Funding: Expensive project that would primarily fall on the area property owners

D. Issue: The school's bike racks are located on a grass surface just off the sidewalk in front of the school's front door. It would help encourage more students to bike if a paved/concrete surface could be expanded to cover the bike racks.

- Action: Expand the sidewalk area in front of the school to include the ground that the bike racks are located.
 - Who: School District
 - When: Long term, lower priority need
 - Funding: School District

IV. Recommended Evaluation Strategies

Evaluation is an important component of any SRTS program. There needs to be an impartial review of what strategies have been implemented to determine if adjustments or changes are necessary to meet the goals and objectives laid out in the plan. In addition, new strategies may need to be developed to better meet the plan's objectives. The parent survey and student tally results may be utilized as a baseline to help measure student travel behavior and measure effectiveness of SRTS efforts over time.

Evaluation Strategy Action Steps:

- Keep the SRTS Team in place to meet periodically to work on encouragement, education, and enforcement goals and to evaluate and push for activities related to engineering action steps. There should be no cost for this strategy step.
- On an annual basis, conduct classroom student tallies to determine if progress is being made on the number of students walking and biking to school with the SRTS efforts being conducted. There should be no cost for this strategy step.
- After it is determine that an appropriate number of action steps have been taken under education, encouragement, enforcement, and engineering, conduct another parent survey to determine if attitudes are improving over children walking and biking to

school. Resurvey every couple of years. This would involve a modest cost for making copies of the survey and for tabulating the results.

- After engineering action steps have been taken, the SRTS Team shall conduct a walking and/or biking audit of the improvement to see firsthand if the results of the new improvements have corrected the safety problems identified. There should be no cost for this strategy step.
- On an ongoing, periodic basis, ask the City of Willmar for both traffic count data and accident data to determine what changes are occurring over time. There should be no cost for this strategy step.
- Review and revise SRTS Plan. The SRTS Team should review how progress is being made on the action steps, and adjust efforts accordingly. Understanding that this Plan is created at a specific moment in time, the SRTS Team should review the Plan in detail periodically. Times, conditions, attitudes, and desires all will change over time. For this reason, the Plan should be revisited at least every 5 years to determine what changes are needed and what new action steps should be added to keep the Plan relevant in the future. There should be no cost for conducting this strategy step, however new activities will likely be added that will cost money when implemented.

SECTION FIVE: SRTS IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

A successful implementation of a SRTS plan will need the continued effort of the School's SRTS Team, along with the support from the School District, the City of Willmar, and various other organizations mentioned as part of this plan. The engagement of the parents and the general public will also be very important to successfully implementing the SRTS plan. There are both federal and state resources that can be utilized to assist with the plan. This section provides web addresses for some of the better-known websites. The SRTS Team may also utilize web search engines to look for issues specific in a particular activity that likely will result in finding additional resources.

The National Center for Safe Routes to School provides a very complete website with information and resources on all aspects of a Safe Routes to School.

<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/index.cfm>

International Walk to School maintains a website that shares SRTS information along with their efforts in organizing the annual International Walk to School Day.

<http://www.iwalktoschool.org/index.htm>

The Minnesota Department of Transportation's SRTS website has general information and resources, grant information, success stories, on line webinars and many other topics to assist with SRTS.

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

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) maintains a useful SRTS website containing information about the program.

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>

The Safe Routes to School Partnership provides links and contacts to businesses and organizations in each state that support SRTS, along with other useful information.

<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/>

Funding Sources

A variety of resources can be utilized in funding SRTS activities. This includes both public grants as well as private sector funding.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The new federal transportation act, MAP-21, combined the Safe Routes to School grant program in with several other grant programs into a new program called the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Minnesota Department of Transportation will administer the program. With this being a brand new program, details about how the program will be funded were still being worked on at the time this plan was written. A new application process will be developed. An important change over the past SRTS Program application is that there will now be a match requirement of likely 20 percent on projects that are funded. The Minnesota Department of Transportation should be contacted to learn more about this competitive grant.

Other Transportation Funding

It may be possible to include a SRTS safety project as part of a planned road major repair or reconstruction project. The engineer for the government entity that jurisdictionally operates the road should be contacted to discuss SRTS safety needs early on when a road project is being designed. There may be sources of funding these engineers could also possibly apply for that would help pay for SRTS safety projects that involve the streets near the school.

School District and City Funding and Other Local Government Funding

The School District and the City have been mentioned in the Action Plan for helping to carry out various inexpensive activities. The School and the City may also be needed as a source for match dollars for grant dollars that are obtained. The County's Department of Health may have programs or resources available to assist with educating and encouraging more physical activity.

Private Sector Funding

Often, local SRTS programs can solicit funding from non-governmental resources within their own communities. The multiple benefits of SRTS programs, including the safety, health, environment, and community impacts, often align with the interests of the local community. Civic Organizations such as the local Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Jaycees, and others may be willing to help pay for a particular project.

Foundations and corporations/businesses may be willing to assist with a SRTS project. One example of this is Minnesota Blue Cross/Blue Shield that has helped fund SRTS activities in various communities in the past.

Individuals could be possibly approached for funding through beginning a local fund drive. Many programs have raised funds by holding special events. Use the SRTS theme to attract funding. Hold a walkathon or a bicycle event. You can also choose more traditional funding efforts such as bake sales, concerts, talent shows, etc.

APPENDIX

Acknowledgements

Surveys

Roosevelt Student Tally Results

Roosevelt Survey Results

Parent Survey Results

Roosevelt Elementary School Survey Comments

Observations of Roosevelt Elementary School

Maps

Willmar Functional Classification

Intersection Accidents Willmar

Willmar Bike and Pedestrian Accident Locations

Roosevelt Elementary School's Summary

Roosevelt School Needs on Map

Roosevelt Elementary School's SRTS Team

- Kim Rosendahl – Physical Education Teacher – Team Leader
- Nate Cox – Principal
- Jeff Weitzel – Custodian
- Marie McMahon – Fourth Grade teacher
- Chad Kallstrom – Fifth Grade Teacher
- Greta Langland – Parent
- Carrie Youngerberg – Parent
- Steve Brisdendine – Director of Willmar Community Education & Recreation
- Bruce Peterson – Willmar Planning Department
- Megan Sauer – Willmar Planning Department
- David Wyffels – Willmar Chief of Police
- Gary Danielson – Director of Kandiyohi County Public Works
- Theresa Wittenberg – Director of YMCA
- BobbiJo Berg – Kandiyohi County Public Health
- Donn Winckler – Mid-Minnesota Development Commission

Roosevelt Elementary School Student Survey Results

The school conducted the "Student Tallies" during the middle of January, 2013.

The Survey was conducted in the mornings and afternoons of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, however, one classroom did not report on each of the six occurrences.

As the survey was conducted in January, weather was cold. There was snow on Wednesday afternoon.

Thirty-nine class rooms participated in the survey, with the following grade breakdown:

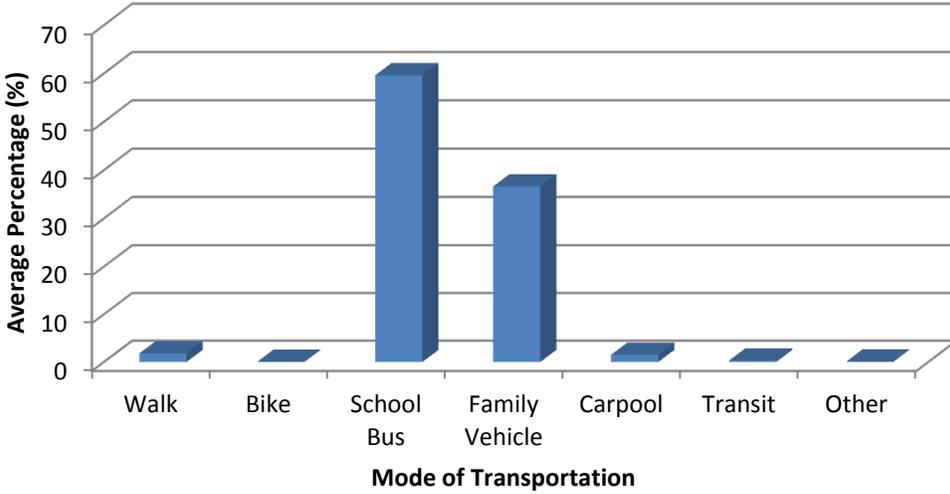
Kindergarten	8 classes
1st Grade	7 classes
2nd Grade	7 classes
3rd Grade	6 classes
4th Grade	6 classes
5th Grade	5 classes

Roosevelt Elementary Student Survey Results for all Six Survey Times

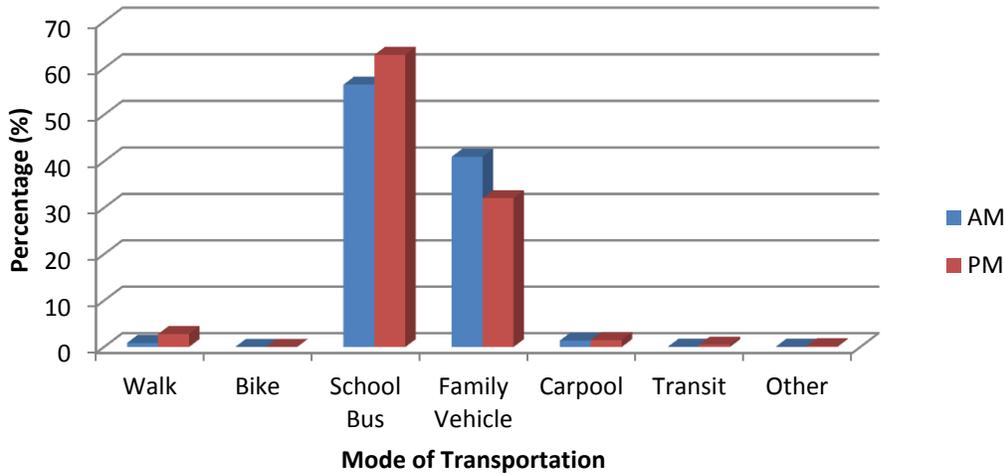
Mode	Average Percentage	AM	PM
Walk	1.80	0.90	2.80
Bike	0.04	0.04	0.04
School Bus	59.60	56.50	62.90
Family Vehicle	36.60	41.00	32.10
Carpool	1.50	1.40	1.50
Transit	0.30	0.10	0.50
Other	0.10	0.08	0.20

Mode	Totals	AM	PM
Walk	94	23	71
Bike	2	1	1
School Bus	3073	1483	1590
Family Vehicle	1888	1076	812
Carpool	75	38	37
Transit	15	3	12
Other	6	2	4

Roosevelt Student Survey Results



Morning and Afternoon Comparison



Percentage

KEY	Number In Classrooms	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tues. AM	892	0.9	0	57.3	40.1	1.3	0.1	0.2
Tues. PM	842	3.2	0	62.7	31.4	1.8	0.8	0.1
Wed. AM	867	0.9	0	55.9	41.5	1.5	0.1	0
Wed. PM	847	2.5	0	63.2	32.3	1.4	0.4	0.2
Thurs. AM	867	0.8	0.1	56.2	41.3	1.5	0.1	0
Thurs. PM	838	2.7	0.1	62.9	32.7	1.2	0.2	0.1

Note: Approximately 8 children walk or bike in the morning and 24 walk or bike in the afternoon in January.

SRTS Parent Survey Tabulation for Roosevelt Elementary School (208 Returns)

1. What is the grade of the child who brought home the survey?
 Kindergarten = 40, 1st grade = 44, 2nd grade = 45, 3rd grade = 30, 4th grade = 26, 5th grade = 22
 No Answers = 1
2. Is the child who brought home the survey male or female? Male = 101, Female = 106
 No Answer: 1
3. How many children do you have in k -8th grade?
 One = 83, two = 87, three = 29, four = 5, six = 1, seven = 1, No answers = 2

4. How far does your child live from school?

Less than ¼ mile:	16
¼ mile up to ½ mile:	15
½ mile up to 1 mile:	20
1 mile up to 2 miles:	33
2 or more miles:	111
Don't Know:	11
No Answer:	2

5. Answers to what is the street intersection nearest your home are not shown here.
6. Arrive and leave at school method on most days:

	<u>Arrive at school</u>	<u>Leave from school</u>
Walk	27	32
Bike	2	3
School Bus	107	124
Family Vehicle	87	68
Carpool	4	3
Transit	1	1
Other	0	0

Note: Some answered more than one category.

7. How long does it normally take your child to get to/from school?

	<u>To school</u>	<u>From school</u>
Less than 5 minutes	42	33
5 – 10 minutes	53	55
11 – 20 minutes	54	54
More than 20 minutes	41	55
Don't know/Not sure	16	10
No Answers:	2	1

8. Has your child asked permission to walk or bike to/from school in the last year?

Yes = 47, No = 156, No Answers: 5

9. At what grade would you allow your child to walk or bike to/from school without an adult?

1st = 1, 2nd = 7, 3rd = 10, 4th = 12, 5th = 18, 6th = 19, 7th = 7, 8th = 1, 9th = 3, 10th = 2

I would not feel comfortable at any grade = 114

No Answers: 12

10. What of the following issues affected your decision to allow, or not allow, your child to walk or bike to/from school? (select all that apply) (Number that checked shown)

Distance:	108
Convenience of driving:	14
Time:	44
Child's before or after school activities:	28
Speed of traffic along route:	79
Amount of traffic along route:	77
Adults to walk or bike with:	19
Sidewalks or pathways:	31
Safety of intersections and crossings:	74
Crossing guards:	19
Violence or crime:	45
Weather or climate:	91

11. Would you probably let your child walk or bike to/from school if this problem were changed or improved?

My child already walks or bikes to/from school: 16

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Not sure</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Distance:	73	60	16	59
Convenience of driving:	30	44	9	125
Time:	39	55	14	100
Child's before or after school activities:	31	54	8	115
Speed of traffic along route:	63	47	17	81
Amount of traffic along route:	65	51	17	75
Adults to walk or bike with:	42	38	7	121
Sidewalks or pathways:	40	55	6	107
Safety of intersections and crossings:	64	54	12	78
Crossing guards:	41	42	3	122
Violence or crime:	40	54	5	108
Weather or climate:	67	52	18	71

12. In your opinion, how much does your child' school encourage or discourage walking and biking to/from school?

Strongly Encourages:	9
Encourages:	16
Neither:	145
Discourages:	12
Strongly Discourages:	3
No Answers:	23

13. How much fun is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

Very Fun:	13
Fun:	34
Neutral:	116
Boring:	6
Very Boring:	7
No Answers:	32

14. How healthy is walking or biking to/from school for your child?

Very Healthy:	61
Healthy:	65
Neutral:	49
Unhealthy:	4
Very Unhealthy:	4
No Answers:	25

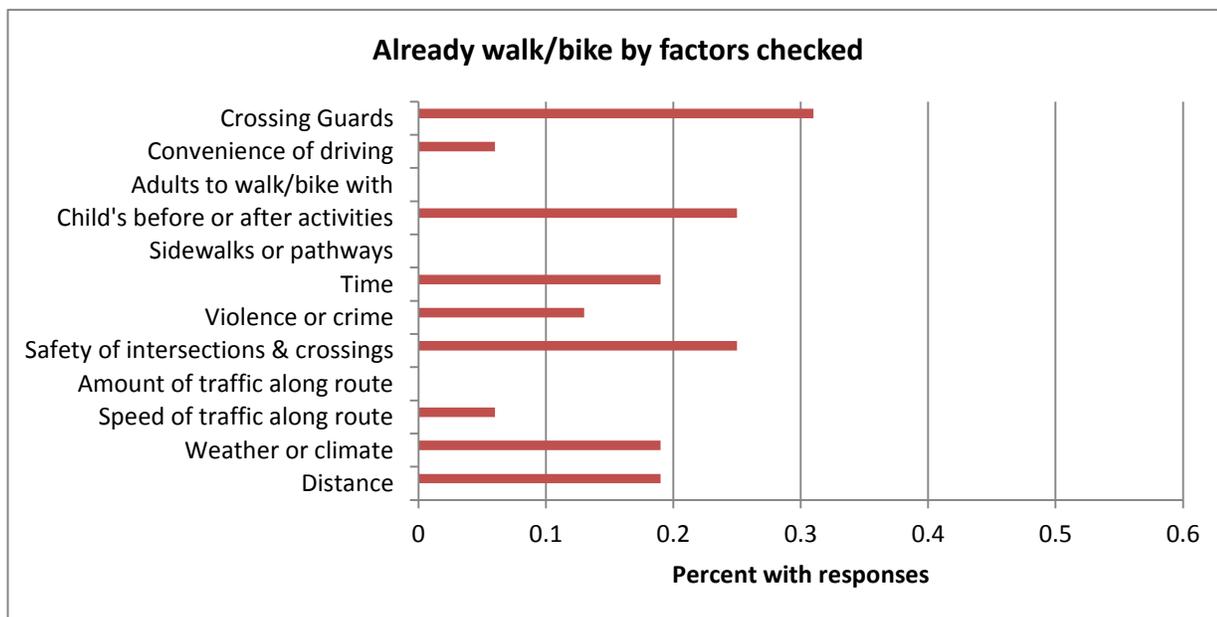
15. What is the highest grade or year of school you completed?

Grade 1 – 8:	9	Grade 9 – 11:	13	Grade 12 or GED:	28
College 1 to 3 or Tech:	85	College Graduate or more:	59	Prefer not to answer:	14

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

A total of 16 households reported that their child already walk/bikes to school.

Factor	Percent	Number
Distance	19%	3
Weather or climate	19%	3
Speed of traffic along route	6%	1
Amount of traffic along route	0%	0
Safety of intersections & crossings	25%	4
Violence or crime	13%	2
Time	19%	3
Sidewalks or pathways	0%	0
Child's before or after activities	25%	4
Adults to walk/bike with	0%	0
Convenience of driving	6%	1
Crossing Guards	31%	5



Kennedy Elementary School Survey Comments

School Bus – ½ to 1 mile

I am very insecure with my children's safety just going to the bus stop. I would be calling the school every morning to see if my children made it to school safely if they walked or biked to school. On the bus, at least, I know they are with an adult that requires them to bring them to school.

School bus/family vehicle, but says less than 1/4th mile?

Did not answer questions 10-14, they do not apply to us. Question 10 – yes all those choices affect weather or not my child travels alone if he were old enough but you cannot answer a question referring to the future when you can't imagine it-every situation is different.

School Bus

Rural – walking and biking is not an option unfortunately.

Family vehicle – ¼ to ½ mile

Would appreciate if cars would stop making U turns at the above intersection (19th Ave. SW and 21st street SW?) Many kids walk through this intersection and drivers use poor judgment. Some patrols & fine should stop this action.

Family vehicle and walk – less than 1/4th mile

We live 4 houses away from school. I feel it is very safe to walk. I'm only concerned with stop sign and people who do not stop at it for the kids. It needs blinking lights when school is in session.

Family vehicle- less than 1/4th mile

I would not feel comfortable because you never know what is out there. I always pick-up and drop-off my son, even if I live that close to the school. I would not let my son walk to school or after.

Family vehicle – less than 1/4th mile

I believe that this day in age, with all the missing children and violence, there should be no child in elementary school walking! I believe for the safety of our kids ALL children should get free busing, no matter the distance!

Family vehicle and bus – ½ mile to 1 mile

Children under 6th grade should be able to be picked up by the bus free of charge by the bus company, no matter how close they live. We pay taxes for this service. Safety is the number 1 reason for this.

Family vehicle and carpool – 1/4th to ½ mile

Students are not allowed to enter the building from the back side. Buses leaving school seem to be speeding and on occasion have failed to yield to car traffic. Also many of them travel east down 1st avenue.

Walk – less than 1/4th mile

There is an area beside Family Eye Center's building that I would like to see a sidewalk placed if possible. It would provide a shorter, safer walk to and from school.

Family vehicle – school bus- ½ to 1 mile

I think there should be more buses to pick up and drop off kids.

Family vehicle – ¼ to ½ mile

#14. I find it very unhealthy because my kids use nebs, and being out much makes it worse for them.

Family vehicle – no distance given

Busing needs to be provided no matter where child is at, daycare.. home. No distance should matter.

Bus – 2+ miles

Number 12-14 do not apply to this family because we do not live close to Roosevelt.

We live outside the school district.

School bus 1 to 2 miles

My 2nd grader lives too far from school to walk. If at the middle school he would walk as it is closer.

Bus 2+ miles

If we lived closer to the school, or if our daycare was close, we would have our kids walk.

Bus 2+ miles

Not applicable because of distance out of town. Biking on Hwy 71 would be dangerous.

Many other comments saying children ride the bus because of there distance.

Bus – 2+ miles

Too far, but they occasionally walk or ride bike six blocks to their grandmother’s house and they seem to enjoy it. Grandmother lives 6 blocks from school.

School bus 2+ miles

I do not know how it would even remotely be possible for my child to walk/bike to school. This seems like a silly survey since the entire south eastside of Willmar goes to a school on the southwest side of town.

School bus – family vehicle – 2+ miles

I have my child ride the bus as little as possible because of all of the inappropriate acts and language that she is exposed to. I wish this could change or be monitored/controlled more.

School bus 2+ miles

Why is this survey being given? It is not safe, day or night, with or without transportation or adult supervision.

School bus 1 to 2 miles

#14 – answered neutral because walking/biking is healthy, of course! Risk of harm from traffic is unhealthy – it is both.

School bus 1 – 2 miles

I don’t want my child crossing 19th Ave.

School bus and family vehicle – 2+ miles

We live too far for my child to walk. Very dissatisfied with the local school bus company. He has forgotten to pick kids up twice – very unreasonable company to deal with.

School bus 1-2 mile

Stanger danger is a high concern for us. Not a violent or high crime but the distance and worried about strangers along the way.

Family vehicle 2+ miles

The way this world is coming too, we can not trust no one anymore. We need to keep our children safe.

Bus and family vehicle 2+ miles

With the insanity of people in today's world I would never let her walk or ride a bike to school. Her safety is my main priority.

Family vehicle – 1-2 miles

My child would have too many unsafe streets to travel on. I choose to drop off so I know she gets there. Still too young for the long walk or bike ride.

Car Pool – School Bus – 2+ miles

My main concern is having kids walk with no access to sidewalks.

Safe Routes to School
Roosevelt Elementary School
Comments from February 28, 2013 Public & SRTS Team Meeting

The meeting was publicized in the Willmar West Central Tribune and the School's newsletter.

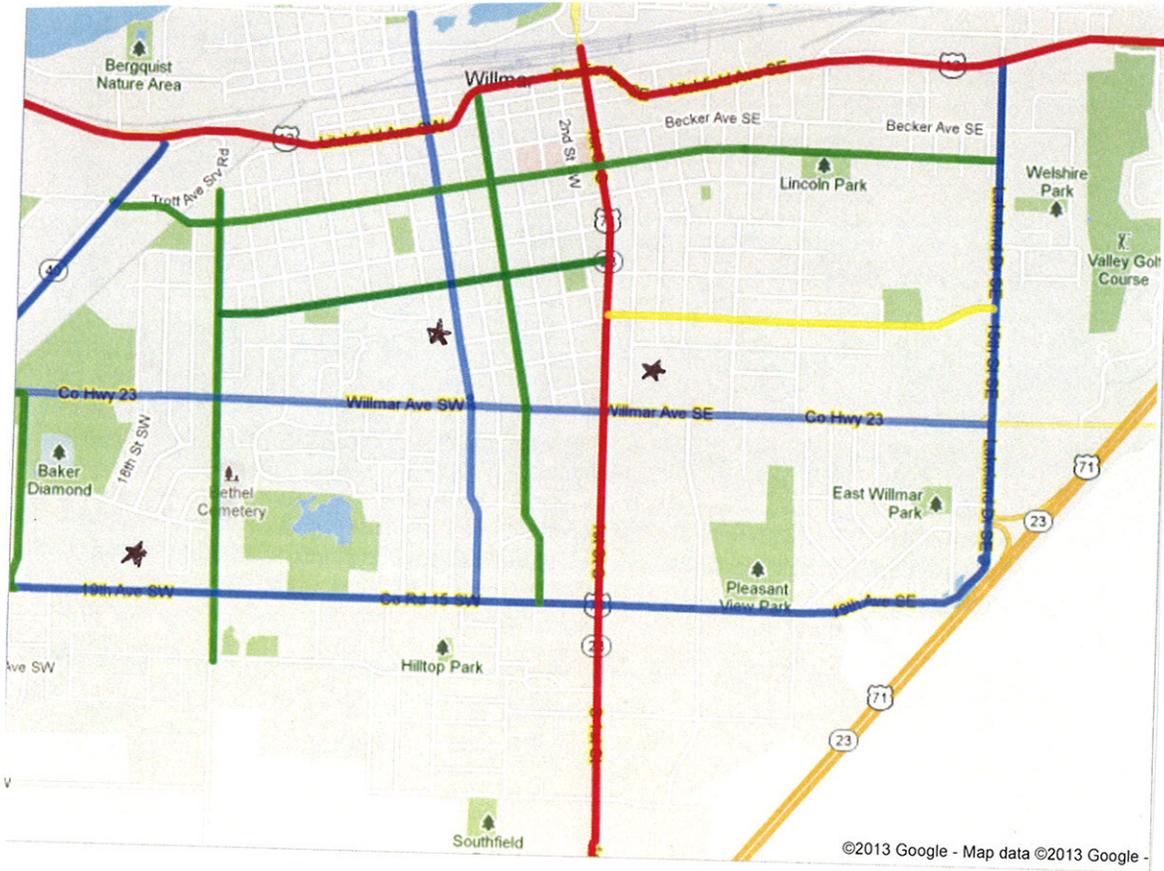
The meeting covered needs already identified by the SRTS Team, the walking audit, and the parent survey comments. A large map with the comments was presented at the meeting which covered the physical issues. These issues were also presented in handout form. These issues were discussed individually. At the end of the discussion there was an opportunity to bring up other needs.

The need for improving education, enforcement, and encouragement was also discussed. Details will be worked out with the school, law enforcement and others on exact steps that can be taken to improve these areas.

The key comments from the meeting are as follows:

- There was a general consensus that the listing of needs that was handed out was all needed activities.
- There was a discussion to drop the need identified by a parent from a survey to allow a back door to be open in the morning for children arriving. It would be a security problem to do so.
- One need that was identified was already taken care of. The school added a yellow painted line on the sidewalk where children wait to load the busses. This line tells the children to safely stand behind the line until they proceed to walk to their bus.
- There was a discussion that the surrounding neighborhoods do not have streets with sidewalks. While it is unlikely that the City will put in sidewalks at all these residential streets, they might look at adding sidewalks on some of the key school route streets.
- There was an emphasis that the major concern is the crossing of 19th Avenue. Even with crossing guards at the location of the mid-block street crossing, there have been close calls in the past.
- There was a question about if it were possible to lower the school zone speed from 30 mph to 20 mph on 19th Avenue. There was a discussion of the chances of surviving accidents at various speeds.
- The possibility of a new trail south of the street crossing location as a short cut to neighborhoods to the south of the school was really liked. Current property owners would need to agree to allow a trail being put in along their property line.

Willmar Functional Classification Map for Central City



KEY:

Red = Major Arterial

Blue = Minor Arterial

Green = Collector

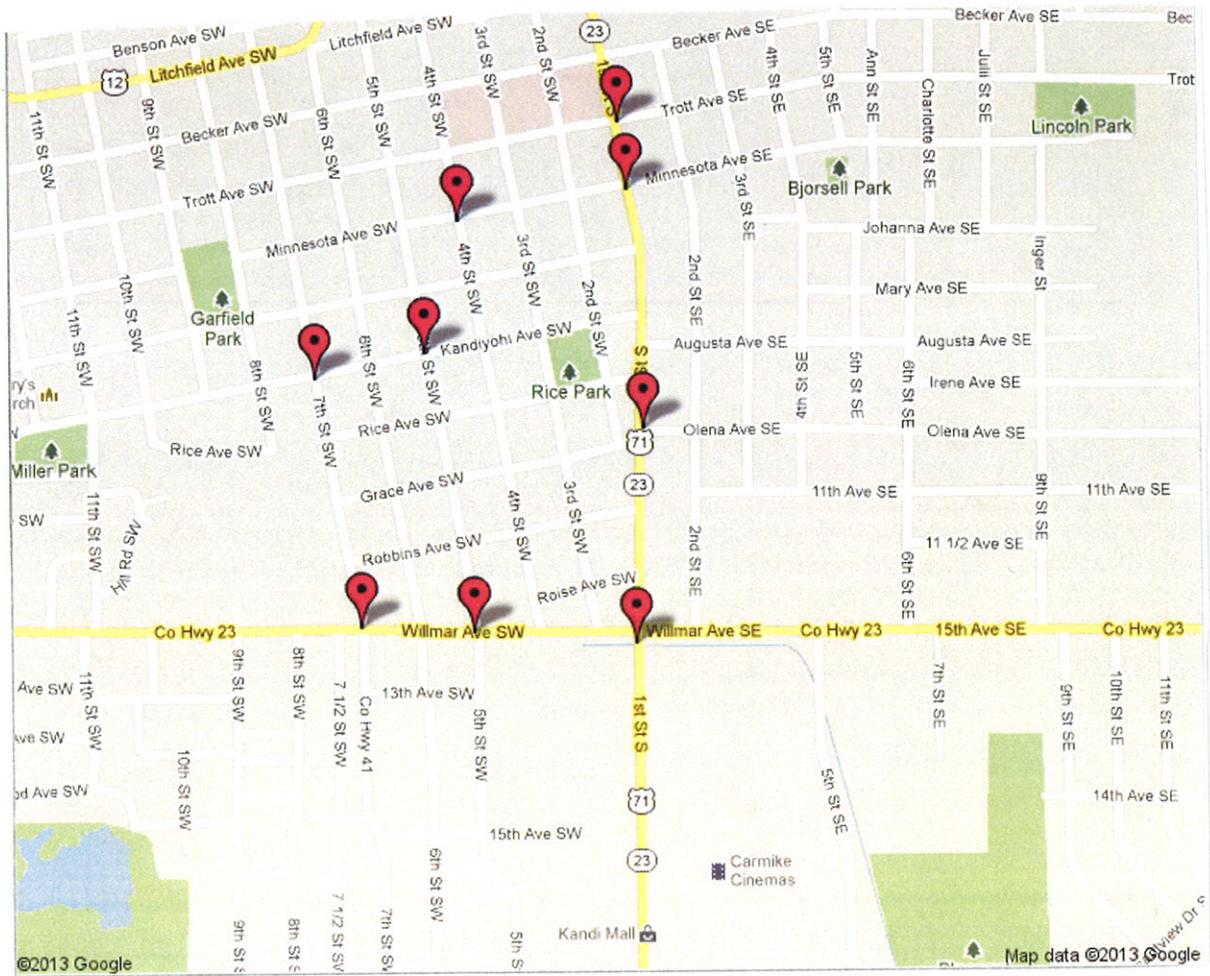
Yellow = Act like a Collector

Stars = School Locations

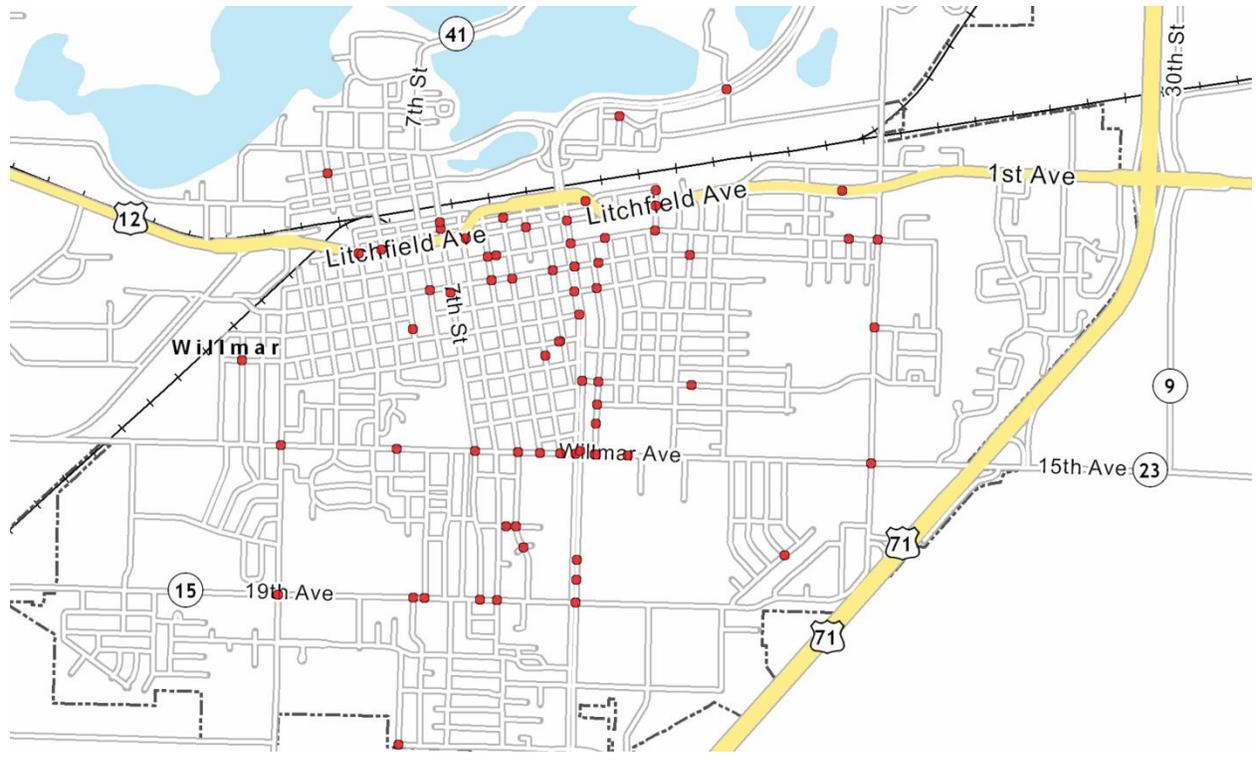
Intersections with Higher Total of Reported Accidents from 2002 to 2012

The map below shows intersections within Willmar school walking zones areas that show higher accident histories over a ten year period. The intersections are:

- 1st Street & Willmar Avenue with 140 accidents
- 1st Street & Trott Avenue with 45 accidents
- 1st Street & Olena Ave. with 31 accidents
- 1st Street & Kandiyohi Ave. with 26 accidents
- 5th Street SW & Kandiyohi Ave. with 33 accidents
- 5th Street SW & Willmar Ave. with 25 accidents
- 4th Street SW & Minnesota Ave. with 29 accidents
- 7th Street SW & Willmar Ave. with 20 accidents
- 7th Street SW & Kandiyohi Ave. with 24 accidents



City of Willmar Locations of Bicycle and Pedestrian Accidents From 2022 through 2012



Roosevelt Elementary School

Identified Problems/Concerns/Needs/Barriers:

1. 19th Avenue SW traffic volume and 40 mph zone
2. Cross walk on 19th Avenue needs to be more visible
3. Coming out of the parking lot, some parents do not follow sign for right turns only onto 19th Avenue during hours of drop off and pick up. This causes additional problems at the crosswalk.
4. Sidewalk behind school off of bus driveway and by the large soccer field stops one half way so it does not connect with 15th Avenue SW.
5. The T-Intersection behind the school at 15th Avenue SW and 16th Street SW has a stop sign, but this sign is run by some people not expecting to see a stop sign at this location. More needs to be done to make the stop sign more visible. A crosswalk would be a help at this location.
6. It would be helpful if a path/trail were added on the south side of the 19th Avenue crosswalk going south between the property lines to the large neighborhood to the south of the school. Students that walk or bike now need to travel out of their way by several blocks to get to/from the school with current routes.
7. The neighborhood streets around the school have few sidewalks.
8. A yellow painted line would be good to be placed on the sidewalk were children wait for their bus to identify that they need to stand behind for safety.
9. Some children that get off the buses cut across parking lot to get to school doors instead of following sidewalk.
10. Parents that pick-up their children after school face congestion problems with cars stacked out onto 19th Avenue. Rules are not always followed about curb side pick-up and drop-off. Extending the sidewalk on the south side of the rotational drop-off location may assist with backups that occur at this location.
11. The bike rack at the school is placed on grass. It would be helpful to extend the sidewalk to accommodate this rack.
12. A couple blocks east of the school's location is the stop lights at 19th Avenue and 15th Street SW. The City should investigate if the timing of the crosswalk signs are long enough for young children to make it across safely.
13. One of the parent survey respondents said that some cars make U-turns at the 19th Avenue and 21st Street intersection. This is a safety issue for children walking to school. The person wrote that drivers are using poor judgment.

Roosevelt Elementary School SRTS Identified Needs

