# FINAL Safe Walking Routes to School Plan



River Forest, Illinois









Prepared For:





River Forest Public Schools



January 28, 2019

## Contents

#### Executive Summary, ii

1.	Introduction Schools Studied School Meetings Reports Reviewed.	.1 .1
2.	Resident/Parent Survey	.2
3.	SWRTS Exhibits Data Collection Field Observations Methodology Safe Walking Routes to School Exhibits Trinity High School Evaluation.	.3 .3 .3 .3
4.	Recommended Street & Traffic Control Changes. Installation of New Two-Way Stop Control. Installation of New One-Way Stop Control. Installation of New All-Way Stop Control. Reversing Directionality of Existing Two-Way Stop Control. Convert One-Way Stop Control to All-Way Stop Control. Convert Two-Way Stop Control to All-Way Stop Control. Replacement of Yield Control with Stop Control. Installation of Enhanced Crosswalks. Installation of New High Visibity (Ladder-Style) Crosswalk. Replacement of Existing Transverse Crosswalk with High-Visibility Crosswalk. Installation of Enhanced Crosswalk with High-Visibility Crosswalk.	.8 .9 .9 0 1 2
5.	Recommended School Crossing Guard Changes 1   Current Crossing Guard Locations 1   Desired New Crossing Guard Locations 1   Proposed Crossing Guard Locations 1   Proposed Changes in Crossing Guard Policies 2	5 6 6
6.	Conclusions2	2
	n en l'en	

- Appendix
- SWRTS Exhibits
- Recommended Street Improvements
- Resident/Parent Survey



## I. Executive Summary

Kenig, Lindgren, O'Hara, Aboona, Inc., (KLOA, Inc.) was retained by the Village of River Forest and River Forest Public School District 90 to recommend a system of Safe Walking Routes to the six public and parochial primary schools in the Village of River Forest and the River Forest Community Center (RFCC), and to develop a street map exhibit illustrating the recommended routes to the schools and RFCC. It is anticipated that the exhibits will be posted on the websites of the Village, RFCC and subject schools, displayed at the schools and RFCC, and incorporated into the parent/student handbooks. The six subject schools include:

District 90 Public Schools	Parochial Schools
Roosevelt Middle School	Grace Lutheran School
Lincoln Elementary School	• St. Luke Parish School
Willard Elementary School	• St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Elementary School

The recommended routes were identified after (1) meeting/communicating with Village staff, Village Police Department representatives, and representatives of the subject schools and RFCC, (2) reviewing various Village documents and school parent/student handbooks, (3) distributing a survey regarding Safe Walking Routes to School to Village residents and to families attending the public and private schools in River Forest, and (4) performing a field review of all streets in the Village to document traffic controls and crosswalk markings, confirm pedestrian pathways, and observe school traffic circulation and crossing guard operations.

The determination of the safest walking routes to the schools and RFCC is based on the premise that students should cross streets at controlled locations where vehicles are required by law to come to a full stop, either via stop sign or traffic-signal control or with assistance from a school crossing guard. The recommended walking routes are also based on the premise that students will generally take the quickest and most direct paths to school.

This study has identified several measures that can be implemented by the Village of River Forest to enhance safety at the recommended street crossings along the school walking routes, including traffic control modifications, crosswalk marking installations, and pedestrian crossing signage. Many of these improvements address responses received from the survey.

Traffic control modifications include installation of stop signs where no traffic control signs or Yield signs exist, reversing the directionality of the two-way stop control, and conversion of oneway/two-way stop control to all-way stop control. Crosswalk markings include the installation of high-visibility "ladder-style" crosswalks at all recommended street crossings where no crosswalks exist or where less-visible transverse crosswalks exist. Pedestrian crossing signage includes crossings enhanced with static signage or signs featuring pedestrian-actuated flashing yellow beacons where stop control was not feasible.



This study has recommended two new locations for the posting of a crossing guard. One at Lake Street/Lathrop Avenue adjacent to the southeast corner of St. Luke Parish School. The other at Division Street/Ashland Avenue at the southeast corner of the Willard Elementary School block. This study has also identified three locations were crossing guards could be removed in place of other alternatives to address student safety. One location is on Oak Avenue at Ashland Avenue where there are no recommended walking routes that cross Oak Avenue at this location. Another location is at Division Street/Lathrop Avenue, where the crossing guard would be relocated to Division Street/Ashland Avenue, closer to Willard Elementary School. The third location is at the Roosevelt Middle School access driveways off Lathrop Avenue. At all three locations, the recommended measures should be monitored to determine if they have been effective, if additional measures are needed, or if the crossing guards should be redeployed.

Lastly, policies have been recommended for school crossing guards to follow to better balance pedestrian safety and traffic flow.

The Appendix of this report includes the recommended SWRTS street maps for each school, a map depicting all of the recommended street system changes such as intersections traffic controls and pedestrian crossings, and the responses from the resident/parent survey on safe walking routes to school.











GRACE LUHHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL





## **1. Introduction**

This report summarizes the recommended Safe Walking Routes to the public and parochial primary schools in the Village of River Forest and the River Forest Community Center (RFCC), and the methodologies that informed the recommendations. The Safe Walking Routes to School (SWRTS) have been depicted in a series of exhibits specific to each school and the RFCC. Each exhibit provides a street map showing the recommended walking routes to the respective school, which can be posted on the websites of the Village, RFCC and subject schools, displayed at the schools and RFCC, and incorporated into the parent/student handbooks.

#### **Schools Studied**

SWRTS exhibits were prepared for all three primary schools in the River Forest Public School District 90 system and all three parochial primary schools in the Village, as follows:

<b>District 90 Public Schools</b>	Parochial Schools
Roosevelt Middle School	Grace Lutheran School
Lincoln Elementary School	St. Luke Parish School
Willard Elementary School	• St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Elementary School

A SWRTS exhibit was also prepared for the River Forest Community Center. A preliminary review of Trinity High School was also performed to determine if a SWRTS exhibit would be of benefit to the student base.

#### **School Meetings**

The Village of River Forest hosted a series of meetings on April 26, 2018 with KLOA and representatives from District 90, Grace Lutheran School, St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School and the River Forest Police Department. The Village also organized a conference call with KLOA and representatives from St. Luke Parish School and River Forest Community Center. The purpose of the meetings was to describe the SWRTS exhibits being prepared for each school and to obtain input on any safety issues or areas of concern that should be considered as the maps are being developed. Village staff also communicated by email with representatives of Trinity High School to obtain more information on their student population to determine whether a SWRTS exhibit would be of benefit.

#### **Reports Reviewed**

In advance of the preparation of the SWRTS exhibits, KLOA reviewed the following Village documents as a foundation for the recommendations of the study.

- *Friendly Street Traffic Management Handbook*, River Forest Traffic Control Task Force, May 9, 2005.
- Village of River Forest Comprehensive Plan, 2003.
- *Parent/Student Handbook 2017-2018*, River Forest Public Schools District 90 *FINAL*



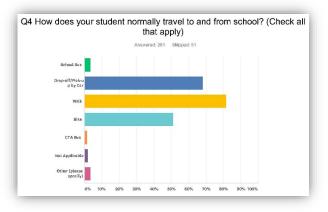
## 2. Resident/Parent Survey

A survey regarding Safe Walking Routes to School was broadcast via various electronic platforms to Village residents and to families attending the public and parochial schools in River Forest and those utilizing the RFCC. Platforms included email, websites, Facebook posts, etc. A total of 312

surveys were returned. The survey questions and responses are contained in the Appendix.

Key findings from the SWRTS survey are summarized below:

- More than 96% of responders were River Forest residents
- More than 51% of the responders also identify themselves as guardians of students in a River Forest school
- Approximately 94% of the guardians were of students in District 90 schools



- Approximately 6% of the guardians were of students in River Forest parochial schools
- More students walk to school then travel by any other mode

Several issues were repeatedly conveyed in the resident responses, including the following:

- Concern for pedestrian safety at uncontrolled intersections
- Need for more balanced traffic management by crossing guards along Lake Street
- Need for all-way stop control along Lake Street at Park, Franklin and Ashland avenues
- Need for all-way stop control at all intersections surrounding school sites
- Need for more stop signs on Washington Boulevard
- Need for better traffic control at the Keystone Avenue/Hawthorne Avenue intersection
- Need for crosswalks on Hawthorne Avenue at Thatcher Avenue and Keystone Avenue
- Need for a safe pedestrian crossing on Thatcher Avenue at Oak Avenue
- Need for a safe pedestrian crossing on Park Avenue at Greenfield Street without sight line conflicts with parked cars
- Limited visibility for students walking under railroad underpasses between Hawthorne Avenue and Central Avenue
- Vehicular speeds along Hawthorne Avenue and Central Avenue, and non-compliance with posted stop controls.
- Concern for safety at intersection of Washington Boulevard/Franklin Avenue/Park Drive
- School crossing guards only stopping traffic for students attending the crossing guard's school
- School crossing guards interfering with traffic flow not associated with student crossings



## **3. SWRTS Exhibits**

The SWRTS exhibits for each school and the RFCC were developed from GIS data and followed a specific methodology to maximize student safety and minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

#### **Data Collection**

In April 2018, KLOA obtained GIS mapping files of the River Forest street system from Village staff. KLOA then performed a field review of all streets in the Village to inventory traffic controls and crosswalk markings, document one-way street operations, and confirm pedestrian pathways. The GIS mapping and field data was incorporated into the SWRTS exhibits and informed the recommendations of the study.

#### **Field Observations**

In April 2018, KLOA also conducted observations of school traffic circulation and crossing guard activity. The observations were performed during student arrival and dismissal times and were compared to any drop-off/pick-up procedures published in the Parent-Student Handbooks and/or described in meetings with the school administrators. The observations are noted below under each school. In general, most parents followed the school drop-off/pick-up procedures. Any noted deviations from these procedures reflect observations only not approved procedures.

### Methodology

The determination of the safest walking routes to the schools and RFCC is based on the premise that students should be directed to cross streets at controlled locations where vehicles are required by law to come to a full stop. A controlled location is generally an intersection where the approach being crossed is marked with a crosswalk and is under stop sign control or traffic signal control if there are pedestrian signal heads present. A controlled location is also considered a street crossing that is not under stop or traffic signal control but has a crosswalk <u>and</u> a crossing guard in-place during school arrival and dismissal hours. The recommended walking routes are also based on the premise that students will generally take the quickest and most direct paths to school.

Based on these premises, stop signs were recommended at intersections where the preferred walking route required a street crossing that was uncontrolled or under Yield control. At some locations, the directionality of the two-way stop control was recommended to be reversed or replaced with all-way stop control. On all preferred walking routes, high-visibility "ladder-style" crosswalks were recommended at street crossings where no crosswalks exist or where less-visible transverse (parallel line) crosswalks exist.

#### Safe Walking Routes to School Maps

The SWRTS exhibits depict the recommended walking routes to each school, from every residential block in the public school attendance area and from several blocks out from the parochial schools and RFCC, on a street map which can be posted on the websites of the Village,



RFCC and subject schools, displayed at the schools and RFCC, and incorporated into the parent/student handbooks. The walking routes are based on a determination as to the safest manner for students to cross streets en-route to school.

Priority has been given to crossing students where traffic controls currently exist that bring vehicles to a complete stop (i.e., traffic signals and stop signs) or where school crossing guards are located that KLOA has determined should remain in-place. High-visibility crosswalks have been recommended at these locations where they do not currently exist. At two-way stop locations where it was not possible to cross a student at a stop-controlled approach without creating a circuitous path to school that would likely not be followed, recommendations have been made to either reverse the direction of the two-way stop control or convert to all-way stop control.

#### **Lincoln Elementary School**

Lincoln Elementary School serves students in grades K-4 and had an enrollment of approximately 400 students during the 2017-2018 school year. The District 90 administrative offices are also located at Lincoln School. Drop-off/pick-up activity occurs along Park Avenue and Franklin Avenue. Many students that reside on the south side of the railroad approach from Franklin Avenue and cross Lake Street where a school crossing guard is posted. Students also travel through the intersections of Lake Street/Park Avenue, Oak Avenue/Park Avenue, Oak Avenue/Ashland Avenue and Oak



Avenue/Franklin Avenue, where crossing guards are also posted, and mix with the drop-off/pickup traffic flows. The recommended SWRTS exhibit for Lincoln Elementary School is in the Appendix.

#### Willard Elementary School

Willard Elementary School serves students in grades K-4 and had an enrollment of approximately 375 students during the 2017-2018 school year. Drop-off/pick-up activity occurs along Franklin Avenue and Ashland Avenue. Students travel through the intersections of Division Street/Franklin

Avenue and Division Street/Lathrop Avenue, where school crossing guards are posted, and mix with the drop-off/pick-up traffic flows. Students also travel through the Greenfield Street/Franklin Avenue and Greenfield Street/Ashland Avenue intersections where no crossing guards are posted. The recommended SWRTS exhibit for Willard Elementary School is in the Appendix.



#### FINAL



#### **Roosevelt Middle School**

Roosevelt Middle School serves students in grades 5-8 and had an enrollment of approximately 665 students during the 2017-2018 school year. Drop-off/pick-up activity occurs along Lathrop

Avenue, Jackson Avenue and Oak Avenue. Students travel through the intersections of Lathrop Avenue/Oak Avenue, Lathrop Avenue/Chicago Avenue and the school driveways on Lathrop Avenue, where school crossing guards are posted, and mix with the dropoff/pick-up traffic flows. Students also travel through the intersections of Jackson Avenue/Oak Avenue and Jackson Avenue/Chicago Avenue where crossing guards are also posted. The recommended SWRTS exhibit for Roosevelt Middle School is in the Appendix.



#### **Grace Lutheran School**

Grace Lutheran School serves students in grades pre-K-8 and had an enrollment of approximately 211 students during the 2017-2018 school year, approximately 23 (11%) of whom are River Forest



residents. Drop-off/pick-up activity occurs along Bonnie Brae. Many parents also park in the Fenwick High School athletic field parking lot and walk their children across Division Street where the Grace Lutheran crossing guard is posted (PM only). School staff indicate that few students walk to school and approximately 5 to 10 students regularly bike to school. The recommended SWRTS exhibit for Grace Lutheran School is in the Appendix.

#### St. Luke Parish School

St. Luke Parish School serves students in grades pre-K-8 and had an enrollment of approximately 350 students during the 2017-2018 school year, approximately 125 (35%) of whom are River Forest residents. Drop-off/pick-up activity occurs within the school parking lot off of Ashland Avenue with stacking along the Ashland Avenue curb. School staff indicates that approximately 40 to 50 students



regularly walk or bike to school. Students travel through the intersections of Lake Street/Ashland Avenue, where a St. Luke crossing guard is posted, and mix with the drop-off/pick-up traffic flows. Students also travel through the signalized intersection of Lake Street/Lathrop Avenue, where no crossing guard is posted, and the intersections of Oak Avenue/Ashland Avenue and Oak Avenue/Lathrop Avenue where District 90 crossing guards are posted. The recommended SWRTS exhibit for St. Luke Parish School is in the Appendix.



#### St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School

St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School serves students in grades pre K-8 and had an enrollment of approximately 260 students during the 2017-2018 school year, approximately 45 (18%) of whom

are River Forest residents. Approximately 155 students (60%) reside in Elmwood Park. Dropoff/pick-up activity occurs within the school parking lot off of Le Moyne Parkway and along Le Moyne Parkway, with stacking along the west side of Jackson Avenue. The crossing guard at North Avenue/Lathrop Avenue assists the Elmwood Park walking students across North Avenue. School staff have not observed students riding their bikes to school. The recommended SWRTS exhibit for St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School is in the Appendix.



#### **River Forest Community Center**

During the school year the RFCC offers early childhood education and recreation programs, before school/afterschool programs, and the Opportunity Knocks program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. During the summer the RFCC offers Summer Camp programs. The early childhood programs serve 65-75 youngsters and there are 50-65 participants in the before



school and/or afterschool programs. Approximately 30-40 participate in the recreation programs and from 260-290 youth participate in Summer Camp. Most early childhood participants are dropped-off and pick-up by parents, some by walking to the facility. Afterschool participants arrive by school bus from the various schools. During the school year, and during the summer camps, groups of children are escorted by staff through the neighborhood and to destinations such Keystone Park. Some participants as in Opportunity Knocks also walk to the facility.



### **Trinity High School Evaluation**

Trinity High School had a 2017-2018 enrollment of 450 students and has an enrollment capacity of 600 students. Of the current enrollment, approximately 29 (6.4%) reside in River Forest. School staff indicates that less than 20 percent of those from River Forest have been observed walking or biking to school. Some of those that do travel through the Lathrop Avenue/Division Street intersection where a District 90 crossing guard is posted for Willard Elementary School. By comparison, St. Vincent Ferrer has 60 percent more students that reside in River Forest than Trinity High School, St. Luke Parish has four times as many students that reside in River Forest, and Grace Lutheran has almost twice as high of a percentage of their student body that reside in River Forest than Trinity High School.

Since very few Trinity High School students reside in the Village with fewer known to walk to school, and being that high school students are typically more observant than primary school students, it was determined that a SWRTS exhibit for Trinity High School would have little benefit to the general student body.





## 4. Recommended Street & Traffic Control Changes

In support of the recommended school walking routes, several recommendations have been made to enhance safety on the routes, including upgraded traffic controls and increased visibility of the street crossings. Traffic control upgrades include installing stop signs where no traffic control signs exist or where yield signs exist, reversing the directionality of the two-way stop control, converting one-way or two-way stop control to all-way stop control, and implementing measures to increase the visibility of existing signs. The street crossing improvements include installing high-visibility (ladder-style) crosswalks where no crosswalks exist, replacing transverse (parallel-line) crosswalks with more visible ladder-style markings, and installing school or pedestrian crossing signage. Many of these recommendations address comments and concerns expressed by survey respondents. An exhibit depicting the recommended street improvements is in the Appendix.

#### **Installation of New Two-Way Stop Control**

The following 14 uncontrolled four-way intersections are traversed by recommended school walking routes. Two-way stop control is recommended to enhance safety on the uncontrolled approaches being crossed.

#### **Lincoln Elementary School**

• Clinton Place at Oak Avenue

#### Willard Elementary School

- Forest Avenue at Thomas Street
- Berkshire Street at Monroe Avenue
- Thomas Street at Franklin Avenue
- Thomas Street at Jackson Avenue
- Thomas Street at Ashland Avenue
- Iowa Street at Keystone Avenue

- Linden Street at Gale Avenue
- Iowa Street at Park Avenue
- Iowa Street at Franklin Avenue
- Ashland Avenue at Iowa Street
- Jackson Avenue at Iowa Street
- William Street at Iowa Street
- Clinton Place at Iowa Street

#### **Installation of New One-Way Stop Control**

The following 21 uncontrolled three-way intersections are traversed by recommended school walking routes. One-way stop control is recommended to enhance safety on the uncontrolled approach being crossed.

#### **Lincoln Elementary School**

- Clinton Place at Holly Court
- Holly Court at William Street
- Holly Court at Bonnie Brae
- Gale Avenue at Hawthorne Avenue
- Keystone Avenue at Hawthorne Avenue

• Forest Avenue at Hawthorne Avenue

- Linden Street at Forest Avenue
- Linden Street at Park Avenue
- Vine Street at Forest Avenue
- Vine Street at Park Avenue





#### Willard Elementary School

- Le Moyne Parkway at Park Avenue
- Keystone Avenue at Greenfield Street
- Forest Avenue at Greenfield Street
- Bonnie Brae at Greenfield Street
- Clinton Place at Greenfield Street
- Berkshire Street at William Street

#### **Installation of New All-Way Stop Control**

The following uncontrolled four-way intersection is traversed by recommended school walking routes to RFCC. All-way stop control is recommended to enhance safety on the uncontrolled approaches being crossed.

#### **River Forest Community Center**

• Vine Street/Gale Avenue intersection

### **Reverse Directionality of Existing Two-Way Stop Control**

The following two-way stop-controlled intersection is traversed by a recommended school walking route, but the desired crossings are on the uncontrolled approaches. The directness of the walking route would be compromised to the point where students may choose to cross at the uncontrolled locations rather than take a circuitous alternate route to school. The recommendation is to switch the two-way stop control from the current controlled street to the current uncontrolled street. This change will have the additional benefit of reducing the consecutive number of intersections under stop control on Thomas Street.

#### Willard Elementary School

• Park Street at Thomas Street (switch two-way off Thomas Street)

#### **Convert One-Way Stop Control to All-Way Stop Control**

The following one-way stop-controlled intersection is traversed by a recommended school walking route, but the desired crossing is on the uncontrolled approach. The directness of the walking route would be compromised to the point where students may choose to cross at the uncontrolled location rather than take a circuitous alternate route. The recommendation is to convert the one-way stop control at the intersection to all-way stop control. In addition, to increase the sight lines to and from Greenfield Street, parking should be prohibited on the west side of Park Avenue from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. between the two offset legs of Greenfield Street. This parking regulation is similar to the current regulation on the east side of Park Avenue between the two Greenfield Street approaches and on the west side of Park Avenue south of Greenfield Street.

#### Willard Elementary School

Greenfield Street/Park Avenue intersection

- Thomas Street at Keystone Avenue
- Thomas Street at Monroe Avenue
- William Street at Augusta Street
- Clinton Place at Augusta Street
- Iowa Street at Forest Avenue





### **Convert Two-Way Stop Control to All-Way Stop Control**

The following two-way stop-controlled intersection is traversed by recommended school walking routes where the desired crossing is on the uncontrolled approach. The directness of the walking route would be compromised to the point where students may choose to cross at the uncontrolled location rather than take a circuitous alternate route. The recommendation is to convert the two-way stop control at the intersection to all-way stop control.

#### Willard Elementary School

• Augusta Street/Franklin Avenue intersection

#### Lincoln Elementary School

• Linden Street/Franklin Avenue intersection

In addition, it is typical for all-way stop control to be utilized on local streets surrounding primary schools to give priority to student safety, particularly for schools that do not offer standard school bus service and/or have a large number of students that walk or bike to school. However, there are instances where the needs of the motoring public must be balanced with the needs of pedestrians, particularly along arterial streets and collector streets that are meant to accommodate larger volumes of traffic through a community, such as Lake Street and Division Street.

The following two two-way stop-controlled intersections are at the corners of school blocks and are traversed by a large number of students. Oak Avenue and Franklin Avenue are classified as local streets, so converting the two-way stop control to all-way stop control at the Oak Avenue/Franklin Avenue intersection is appropriate. Division Street has a higher classification as a collector street, which typically would have the right-of-way over a local street. However, there are currently several all-way stop-controlled intersections with local streets along Division Street to regulate traffic adjoining Trinity High School, Dominican University and Concordia University. Regulating traffic adjacent to a primary school should take priority over older students. As such, the two-way stop control at the Division Street intersection listed below is also recommended to be converted to all-way stop control.

#### **Lincoln Elementary School**

• Oak Avenue/Franklin Avenue intersection

#### Willard Elementary School

• Division Street/Franklin Avenue intersection

### **Replacement of Yield Control with Stop Control**

The following Yield-controlled intersection approaches are on recommended SWRTS street crossings. The Yield control should be replaced with Stop control to enhance crossing safety.

#### Lincoln Elementary School

• Vine Street at Ashland Avenue



#### **Installation of Enhanced Crosswalks**

The following uncontrolled locations are on recommended SWRTS street crossings. The proximity of the crossing locations to traffic signal-controlled intersections of an arterial street (i.e., Harlem Avenue or Lake Street) make these locations less feasible for to install stop control. Alternatively, a high visibility crosswalk, pedestrian/school crossing signage, and an in-street pedestrian/school crossing sign could be installed instead, similar to the Division Street crossing at Bonnie Brae and the Lake Street crossing at Forest Avenue. These signs should be posted back-to-back on both sides of the street to face both directions of travel.

#### Grace Lutheran School (School Crossing Sign with In-Street Sign)

• Augusta Street at Bonnie Brae

#### **Roosevelt Middle School (Pedestrian Crossing Sign with Rapid Flashing Beacons)**

• Oak Street at Thatcher Avenue







### Installation of New High-Visibility (Ladder-Style) Crosswalk

The following 162 unmarked intersection approaches are on recommended SWRTS street crossings. Installation of a high-visibility (ladder-style) crosswalk is recommended.

#### Lincoln Elementary School

- Forest Ave (s approach) at Chicago Ave
- Park Ave (s approach) at Chicago Ave
- Keystone Ave (n approach) at Oak Ave
- Forest Ave (n approach) at Oak Ave
- Park Ave (both approaches) at Oak Ave
- Ashland Ave (both approaches) at Oak Ave
- Monroe Ave (both approaches) at Oak Ave
- William St (both approaches) at Oak Ave
- Clinton Pl (both approaches) at Oak Ave
- Bonnie Brae (n approach) at Oak Ave
- Bonnie Brae (n approach) at Quick Ave
- Clinton Pl (n approach) at Quick Ave
- William St (n approach) at Quick Ave
- Monroe Ave (n approach) at Quick Ave
- Holly Ct at Bonnie Brae
- Clinton Pl at Holly Ct
- Holly Ct at William St
- William St (both approaches) at Lake St
- Monroe Ave at Lake St
- Edgewood Pl (s approach) at Lake St
- Auvergne Pl at Lake St
- River Oaks Dr at Lake St
- Central Ave (w approach) at Franklin Ave
- Central Ave (e approach) at Ashland Ave
- Ashland Ave (s approach) at Hawthorne Ave

#### Willard Elementary School

- Forest Ave (s approach) at North Ave
- Le Moyne Pkwy at Park Ave
- Keystone Ave at Greenfield St
- Forest Ave at Greenfield St
- Greenfield St (both approaches) at Park Ave
- Thomas St at Keystone Ave
- Ashland Ave (s approach) at Augusta St
- Monroe Ave (both approaches) at Augusta St
- William St at Augusta St
- Clinton Pl at Augusta St

- Franklin Ave (s approach) at Hawthorne Ave
- Hawthorne Ave (w approach) at Franklin Ave
- Hawthorne Ave (e approach) at Ashland Ave
- Park Ave at Hawthorne Ave
- Forest Ave at Hawthorne Ave
- Keystone Ave (s approach) at Hawthorne Ave
- Hawthorne Ave (w approach) Keystone Ave
- Gale Ave at Hawthorne Ave
- Linden St (both approaches) at Gale Ave
- Linden St (both approaches) at Keystone Ave
- Linden St at Forest Ave
- Linden St at Park Ave
- Linden St (both approaches) at Ashland Ave
- Ashland Ave (s approach) at Washington Blvd
- Forest Ave (s approach) at Washington Blvd
- Gale Ave (both approaches) at Washington
- Washington Blvd (e approach) at Thatcher Ave
- Keystone Ave (s approach) at Vine St
- Vine St (both approaches) at Gale Ave
- Vine St at Forest Ave
- Vine St at Park Ave
- Vine St (both approaches) at Franklin Ave
- Vine St (both approaches) at Ashland Ave
- Vine St at Lathrop Ave
- Forest Ave (both approaches) at Thomas St
- Augusta St (both approaches) at Park Ave
- Augusta St (both approaches) at Franklin Ave
- Jackson Ave (both approaches) at Greenfield St
- Monroe Ave (both approaches) at Greenfield St
- William St (both approaches) at Greenfield St
- Thomas St (both approaches) at Jackson Ave
- Thomas St (both approaches) at Ashland Ave
- Thomas St (both approaches) at Franklin Ave
- Park Ave (s approach) at Greenfield St (e leg)



- Bonnie Brae (s approach) at Augusta St •
- Clinton Pl at Greenfield St
- Bonnie Brae at Greenfield St •
- Thomas St at Bonnie Brae
- Thomas St at Monroe St •
- Iowa St (both approaches) at Bonnie Brae
- Clinton Pl (both approaches) at Iowa St •
- William St (both approaches) at Iowa St •
- Park Ave (both approaches) at Thomas St •
- Iowa St (both approaches) at Monroe Ave •
- Iowa St at Forest Ave •
- Clinton Pl (n approach) at Chicago Ave
- Bonnie Brae (n approach) at Chicago Ave •
- William St (n approach) at Chicago Ave •

#### **Roosevelt Middle School**

- Thatcher Ave (s approach) at Oak Ave
- Park Ave (s approach) at North Ave •
- Keystone Ave (s approach) at Oak Ave •
- Forest Ave (s approach) at Oak Ave
- Ashland Ave (n approach) at Augusta St
- Bonnie Brae (n approach) at Augusta St •
- Franklin Ave (s approach) at North Ave
- Clinton Pl (s approach) at Quick Ave •
- Monroe Ave (s approach) at Quick Ave •

#### St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School

•

#### **River Forest Community Center**

• Gale Ave (both approaches) at Vine St

### **Replacement of Existing Transverse Crosswalk with High-Visibility Crosswalk**

The following 61 intersection approaches are on recommended SWRTS street crossings and are currently marked with transverse (parallel line) crosswalks. It is recommended that the visibility of these crosswalks be enhanced with ladder-style crosswalk markings.

#### **Lincoln Elementary School**

- Keystone Ave (both approaches) at Chicago •
- Ashland Ave (s approach) at Chicago Ave
- Oak Ave (e approach) at Park Ave
- Jackson Ave at Lake St •

- Linden St at Thatcher Ave •
- Linden St at Lathrop Ave •
- Washington Blvd (w approach) at Lathrop Ave •
- Vine St at Thatcher Ave



- Clinton Pl (both approaches) at Le Moyne Pkwy
- Bonnie Brae (both approaches) at Le Moyne Pkwy
- William St (both approaches) at Le Moyne Pkwy •
- Monroe Ave (both approaches) at Le Moyne Pkwy •
- Ashland Ave (n approach) at Le Moyne Pkwy •
- Le Moyne Pk (both approaches) at Franklin Ave •
- Jackson Ave (both approaches) at Iowa St •
- Ashland Ave (both approaches) at Iowa St Ave •
- Iowa St (both approaches) at Franklin Ave •
- Iowa St (both approaches) at Park Ave ٠
- Clinton Pl (both approaches) at Le Moyne Pkwy •
- Iowa St (both approaches) at Keystone Ave •
- Monroe Ave (n approach) at Chicago Ave
- Le Moyne Pkwy (w approach) at Harlem Ave
- Le Moyne Pkwy (both approaches) at Bonnie Brae ٠
- Le Moyne Pkwy (both approaches) at Clinton Pl •
- Berkshire St (both approaches) at Jackson Ave •
- Franklin Ave (both approaches) at Chicago Ave •
- Berkshire St at William St •
- Ashland Ave (s approach) at North Ave •
- Quick Ave (both approaches) at William St
- Franklin Ave (both approaches) at Le Moyne Ashland Ave (n approach) at Le Moyne Pkwy



- Thatcher Ave (both approaches) at Lake St
- Edgewood Pl (n approach) at Lake St

#### Willard Elementary School

- Thomas St at Harlem Ave
- Keystone Ave at Division St
- Forest Ave at Division St
- Park Ave (s approach) at Division St
- Forest Ave (both approaches) at Augusta St
- Iowa St at Harlem Ave
- Iowa St at Thatcher Ave
- William St (n approach) at Chicago Ave
- William St at Division St
- Bonnie Brae at Division St

#### **Roosevelt Middle School**

- Division St (w approach) at Harlem Ave
- Berkshire St (e approach) at Lathrop Ave
- Keystone Ave (n approach) at Chicago Ave
- Forest Ave (n approach) at Chicago Ave
- Franklin Ave (both approaches) at Chicago
- Augusta St (both approaches) at Monroe Ave

#### **Grace Lutheran School**

• Dominican Priory Campus Drive at Division St

#### St. Luke Parish School

• Oak Ave (w approach) at Park Ave



- Lathrop Ave (both approaches) at Greenfield St
- Thomas St (both approaches) at Lathrop Ave
- Augusta St at Thatcher Ave
- Augusta St (both approaches) at Keystone Ave
- Jackson Ave (both approaches) at Division St
- Augusta St (both approaches) at Lathrop Ave
- Ashland Ave (both approaches) at Division St
- Monroe Ave (both approaches) at Division St
- Iowa St (both approaches) at Lathrop Ave
- Lathrop Ave (both approaches) at Thomas St
- Greenfield St (both approaches) at Lathrop Ave
- Division St (both approaches) at Monroe Ave
- Division St (both approaches) at Park Ave
- Park Avenue (n approach) at Chicago Ave
- Ashland Ave (n approach) at Chicago Ave







## 5. Recommended School Crossing Guard Changes

The SWRTS study evaluated the current crossing guard locations, identified additional guard locations desired in the survey responses or through dialogue with the schools, and recommended changes to the crossing guard locations and operational policies. It is clear from the survey responses that several of the crossing guard locations were based on driver behavior and violations of the posted traffic control signs (speed limits, stop signs, etc.). Many responses related to drivers not coming to a full stop at stop-controlled intersections.

#### **Current Crossing Guard Locations**

Crossing guards are currently posted at the following 16 intersections during school arrival and dismissal times. The guards for the District 90 schools are retained from Andy Frain Services and jointly funded by District 90 and the Village. The guard for St. Luke Parish is also retained from Andy Frain Services and is funded by St. Luke. The guard deployed by Grace Lutheran School is a school volunteer. The guard for St. Vincent Ferrer School is provided by the Village of Elmwood Park as 60 percent of the students in the school are Elmwood Park residents.

#### **Lincoln Elementary School**

- Lake St / Park Ave intersection
- Lake St / Franklin Ave intersection
- Oak Ave / Park Ave intersection

#### **Willard Elementary School**

• Division St / Franklin Ave intersection

#### **Roosevelt Middle School**

- Oak Ave / Lathrop Ave intersection
- Oak Ave / Jackson Ave intersection
- Chicago Ave / Lathrop Ave intersection (signalized)

#### **Grace Lutheran School**

• Division St / Bonnie Brae intersection (PM only)

#### St. Luke Parish School

• Lake St / Ashland Ave intersection

#### St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School

• North Ave / Lathrop Ave intersection (signalized)



- Oak Ave / Franklin Ave intersection
- Oak Ave / Ashland Ave intersection
- Division St / Lathrop Ave intersection
- Chicago Ave / Jackson Ave intersection
- Roosevelt MS N & S Drives on Lathrop Ave

### **Desired New Crossing Guard Locations**

The following intersections were identified in the survey responses as locations where additional crossing guards are desired.

- Lake Street/Lathrop Avenue (signalized)
- Franklin Avenue/Hawthorne Avenue
- Franklin Avenue/Central Avenue
- Greenfield Street/Park Avenue
- Greenfield Street/Franklin Avenue
- Greenfield Street/Ashland Avenue
- Greenfield Street/Lathrop Avenue
- Division Street/Ashland Avenue
- Along Washington Boulevard

#### **Proposed Crossing Guard Locations**

Current and recommended locations for the posting of school crossing guards are discussed below based on the form of traffic control and the subject intersections.

#### **Traffic Signal Controlled Intersections**

Crossing guards are located at two signalized intersections in the Village, including one serving Roosevelt Middle School (Chicago Avenue/Lathrop Avenue) and one serving St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic School (North Avenue/Lathrop Avenue). Due to the width of these street crossings and high traffic volumes and speeds, it is appropriate to maintain crossing guards at these intersections to supplement the pedestrian signal heads and high-visibility crosswalks.

The intersection of Lake Street/Lathrop Avenue is adjacent to the southeast corner of the St. Luke Parish School block and is another signalized intersection in which student safety would be enhanced with the addition of a crossing guard. The reasoning for this recommendation is the same as that for the two signalized intersections noted above (road width, traffic volume and speeds).

#### Recommendation:

- Maintain crossing guard at Chicago Ave/Lathrop Ave and North Ave/Lathrop Ave
- Post new crossing guard at Lake Ave/Lathrop Ave

#### **All-Way Stop Controlled Intersections**

It is typical for all-way stop control to be utilized on local streets surrounding primary schools to give priority to student safety, particularly for schools that do not offer standard school bus service and/or have a large number of students that walk to school. This form of stop control, combined with highly-visible crosswalk markings, is generally sufficient in calming traffic around schools such that crossing guards may not always be needed to supplement the traffic control signs. However, due to driver behavior in River Forest, crossing guards have been posted at all-way stop controlled intersections near Willard Elementary School (Division/Lathrop), Lincoln Elementary School (Park/Oak), and Roosevelt Middle School (Oak/Lathrop, Oak/Jackson).



KLOA concurs with keeping the crossing guards at the corners of the primary school sites until additional safety measures are installed and monitored for effectiveness. These include all locations noted above except for the Division Street/Lathrop Avenue intersection. The safety measures are listed below and are aimed at reinforcing the stop controls and modifying driver behavior. If the measures prove effective, consideration could be given to removing some or all of the crossing guards. The measures should also be installed at the intersection of Division Street/Lathrop Avenue where the guard is recommended to be relocated to the southeast corner of the Willard Elementary School block at Division Street/Ashland Avenue, as discussed below.

- Using In-Street School Crossing signs
- Replacing the stop signs with stop signs that feature flashing LED lighting around the frame
- Installing red retroreflective panels within the stop sign posts
- Reconstructing the intersection as a raised intersection with different pavement treatment

Survey responses and discussions with the River Forest Police Department suggested consideration for posting additional crossing guards at the four intersections of Hawthorne Avenue and Central Avenue with Franklin Avenue and Ashland Avenue due to the limited sight lines at the railroad underpass and the volume of traffic and pedestrian activity. Consideration should first be given to reinforcing the all-way stop controls at these intersections with measures aimed at modifying driver behavior. The intersections could then be monitored to determine if the measures have been effective, if additional measures are needed, or if crossing guards should be deployed. Enhancement options could include:

- Installing high-visibility crosswalks across the SWRTS paths on Central and Hawthorne
- Using In-Street School Crossing signs on the crosswalks
- Replacing the stop signs with stop signs that feature flashing LED lighting around the frame
- Installing red retroreflective panels within the stop sign posts
- Posting of convex mirrors to improve sight lines from acute angles
- Improving the lighting under the viaducts

Survey responses also requested consideration for posting a crossing guard on Park Avenue at Greenfield Street. As noted above, the one-way stop controls at this intersection are recommended to be upgraded to all-way stop control at the east leg of Greenfield Street, which should improve pedestrian safety crossing Park Avenue. The intersection could then be monitored to determine if the measure has been effective, if additional measures are needed, or if a crossing guard should still be considered.

#### Recommendation:

- Maintain crossing guard, install additional safety measures, and monitor Oak Ave/Park Ave, Oak Ave/Lathrop Ave, and Oak Ave/Jackson Ave
- *Relocate crossing guard at Division/Lathrop to Division/Ashland, install additional safety measures at Division/Lathrop, and monitor*
- Install additional safety measures and monitor Hawthorne Ave/Franklin Ave, Hawthorne Ave/Ashland Ave, Central Ave/Franklin Ave, Central Ave/Ashland Ave

• Install all-way stop control on east leg of Park Ave/Greenfield St and monitor FINAL







#### **Two-Way Stop Controlled Intersections**

Crossing guards are also located at two-way stop-controlled intersections near Lincoln Elementary School (Lake Street/Park Avenue, Lake Street/Franklin Avenue, Oak Avenue/Franklin Avenue), Willard Elementary School (Division Street/Franklin Avenue), Roosevelt Middle School (Chicago Street/Jackson Avenue, Oak Avenue/Ashland Avenue), and St. Luke Parish School (Lake Street/Ashland Avenue). All intersections are at the corners of school sites with the exception of the Oak/Ashland intersection. Two-way stop-controlled intersections are the most critical for use of crossing guards as they assist students across the uncontrolled intersection approaches.



Ideally there would be all-way stop control (or traffic signal control) at the intersections on all four corners of the block surrounding a primary school. However, there are instances where the needs of the motoring public must be balanced with the needs of pedestrians, particularly along arterial streets like Lake Street that serve as primary vehicular travelways through the Village where vehicular flow is controlled with traffic signals. There are also locations in close proximity to traffic-signal controlled intersections where traffic stacking at an all-way stop controlled intersection could impede traffic movements through the signalized locations, such as the Division Street/Chicago Avenue intersection.

Streets of lower functional classification typically traverse residential neighborhoods, such as Division Street (collector street) and Oak Avenue, Franklin Avenue and Ashland Avenue (all local streets). The intersection traffic controls on these lower volume streets can be modified around school sites to balance traffic efficiency and pedestrian safety.

The current two-way stop control is recommended to be converted to all-way stop control at the Oak Avenue/Franklin Avenue intersection, located at the northeast corner of the block surrounding Lincoln Elementary School, and at the intersection of Division Street/Franklin Avenue, at the southwest corner of the block surrounding Willard Elementary School.

Based on the distance from Willard Elementary School, consideration should be given to relocating the crossing guard at the Division Street/Lathrop Avenue intersection to the Division Street/Ashland Avenue intersection. Other measures could be implemented at Division Street/Lathrop Avenue to maintain safety for student crossings, as noted previously.

Based on the distance from Willard Elementary School and Roosevelt Middle School, consideration should also be given to removing the crossing guard at the Oak Avenue/Ashland Avenue intersection and installing other measures to discourage student crossings of Oak Avenue at this location, maintain adequate sight lines, and calm traffic flows from St. Luke Parish School. The intersection could then be monitored to determine if the measures have been effective, if additional measures are needed, or if the guards should be redeployed. Measures could include:

- Removing the high-visibility crosswalks across the uncontrolled Oak Avenue approaches
- Installing high-visibility crosswalks on the stop-controlled Ashland Avenue approaches
- Posting of signs prohibiting stopping, standing, parking within 20 feet of the intersection
- Installing signage reinforcing the Oak Avenue crossing location at Lathrop Avenue or Franklin Avenue where crossing guards are stationed
- Using In-Street School Crossing signs on the Ashland Avenue crosswalks
- Installing flashing LED lighting around the stop sign frames and Do Not Enter signs (on timers during school hours)
- Installing red retroreflective panels within the stop sign posts

#### Recommendation:

• Maintain crossing guard at Lake St/Park Ave, Lake St/Franklin Ave, Lake Street/Ashland Ave, and Chicago Ave/Jackson Ave



- Maintain crossing guard and install all-way stop control at Oak Ave/Franklin Ave and Division St/Franklin Ave
- *Remove crossing guard at Oak Avenue/Ashland Avenue and install and monitor other safety measures to discourage crossings of Oak Avenue at Ashland*
- Relocate crossing guard from Division/Lathrop to Division/Ashland

#### **Roosevelt Middle School Driveway Intersections**

Crossing guards are also located at both Roosevelt Middle School access driveways on Lathrop Avenue. These are additional locations where other measures could be installed to increase pedestrian safety and motorist awareness in place of the crossing guards. Again, the driveways could then be monitored to determine if the measures have been effective, if additional measures are needed, or if the crossing guards should be redeployed. The measure could include:

- Installing high-visibility crosswalks across the driveway aprons on Lathrop Avenue
- Using In-Street School Crossing signs on the driveways
- Installing stop signs that feature flashing LED lighting around the frame on the driveway exits
- Installing red retroreflective panels within the stop sign posts

#### Recommendation:

• *Remove crossing guard at Roosevelt Middle School driveways and install and monitor other safety measures* 

### **Proposed Changes in Crossing Guard Policies**

The crossing guards' principle objective should be to safely guide students across the street. Where possible, traffic should be stopped in sequence with nearby traffic signals such that traffic delays at the crossing guards' intersection are minimized. However, the guards should at no time take on the role of a traffic management officer. Several survey responses were received advising that the crossing guards were significantly and unnecessarily delaying traffic movements, particularly along Lake Street.

#### **Observations of Crossing Guard Activity**

Field observations conducted by KLOA along Lake Street during the weekday peak hours of school traffic activity indicated that traffic congestion from the school crossings exists for the following reasons:

- Lincoln Elementary School crossing guards at Park Avenue and Franklin Avenue do not stop traffic on Lake Street for pedestrian crossings in concert with each other, causing concurrent traffic queues on Lake Street between the two intersections.
- Lincoln Elementary School crossing guards do not stop traffic on Lake Street for pedestrian crossings in concert with the St. Luke Parish crossing guard at Ashland Avenue, causing Lake Street traffic queues between Franklin Avenue and Ashland Avenue.



- St. Luke Parish crossing guard at Ashland Avenue at times stops traffic on Lake Street for pedestrian crossings when Lake Street receives the green indication at the Lathrop Avenue traffic signal causing Lake Street traffic queues that extend back to the Lathrop intersection.
- St. Luke Parish crossing guard at Ashland Avenue also stops traffic on Lake Street to allow northbound vehicles on Ashland Avenue to turn left onto Lake Street or continue north on Ashland Avenue, and eastbound vehicles on Lake Street to turn left onto Ashland Avenue.
- School-related traffic queues extended along Lake Street from Park Avenue through Lathrop Avenue and along southbound Lathrop Avenue between Oak Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue.

Based on the above observations, the following policies are recommended for school crossing guards to better balance pedestrian safety and traffic flow. The guards should receive periodic training to reinforce these policies.

#### **Recommended Crossing Guard Policies**

- 1. Lincoln Elementary School crossing guards on Lake Street at Park Avenue and Franklin Avenue should coordinate the times in which traffic is stopped on Lake Street for pedestrian crossings.
- 2. Lincoln Elementary School crossing guards on Oak Avenue at Park Avenue and Franklin Avenue should coordinate the times in which traffic is stopped on Oak for pedestrian crossings.
- 3. Roosevelt Middle School crossing guards on Oak Avenue at Lathrop Avenue and Jackson Avenue should coordinate the times in which traffic is stopped on Oak Avenue for pedestrian crossings.
- 4. Roosevelt Middle School crossing guards on Chicago Avenue at Jackson Avenue should coordinate the times in which traffic is stopped on Chicago Avenue with the north/south green phase at the Chicago Avenue/Lathrop Avenue intersection.
- 5. Willard Elementary School crossing guards on Division Street at Franklin Avenue and Ashland Avenue should coordinate the times in which traffic is stopped on Division Street for pedestrian crossings.
- 6. St. Luke Parish crossing guard on Lake Street at Ashland Avenue should coordinate the times that traffic is stopped on Lake Street with the north/south green phase at the Lake Street/Lathrop Avenue intersection.
- 7. Grace Lutheran School crossing guard on Division Street at Bonnie Brae should coordinate the times that traffic is stopped on Division Street with the north/south green phase at the Division Street/Harlem Avenue intersection.
- 8. Crossing guards should assist students across the street regardless of which school they attend.
- 9. Crossing guards should extend across the street centerline, at a minimum, while assisting students across the street.
- 10. Crossing guards should at no time direct traffic movements within the street.



## 6. Conclusions

This Safe Walking Routes to School (SWRTS) study has included an exhibit for each of the private and parochial primary schools in River Forest, and the River Forest Community Center, that can be used as a guide by students, parents and guardians to travel to school and the Community Center by the safest paths possible. Each exhibit provides a street map showing the recommended walking routes to the respective school or RFCC, which can be posted on the websites of the Village, RFCC and subject schools, displayed at the schools and RFCC, and incorporated into the parent/student handbooks.

Further, this study has identified several measures that can be implemented by the Village of River Forest to enhance safety at the street crossings along the school walking routes, including traffic control modifications, crosswalk marking installations, and pedestrian crossing signage. Many of these improvements address responses received from the survey.

This study has recommended two new locations for the posting of a crossing guard. One at Lake Street/Lathrop Avenue adjacent to the southeast corner of St. Luke Parish School for the same reasons as the guards currently posted at the other signalized intersections adjoining school blocks (road width, traffic volume and speeds). The other at Division Street/Ashland Avenue at the southeast corner of the Willard Elementary School block.

This study has also identified three locations were crossing guards could be removed in place of other alternatives to address student safety. One location is on Oak Avenue at Ashland Avenue where there are no recommended walking routes that cross Oak Avenue at this location. Another location is at Division Street/Lathrop Avenue, where the crossing guard would be relocated to Division Street/Ashland Avenue, closer to Willard Elementary School. The third location is at the Roosevelt Middle School access driveways off Lathrop Avenue. At all three locations, the recommended measures should be monitored to determine if they have been effective, if additional measures are needed, or if the crossing guards should be redeployed.

Lastly, policies have been recommended for school crossing guards to follow to better balance pedestrian safety and traffic flow.





## **SWRTS** Exhibits

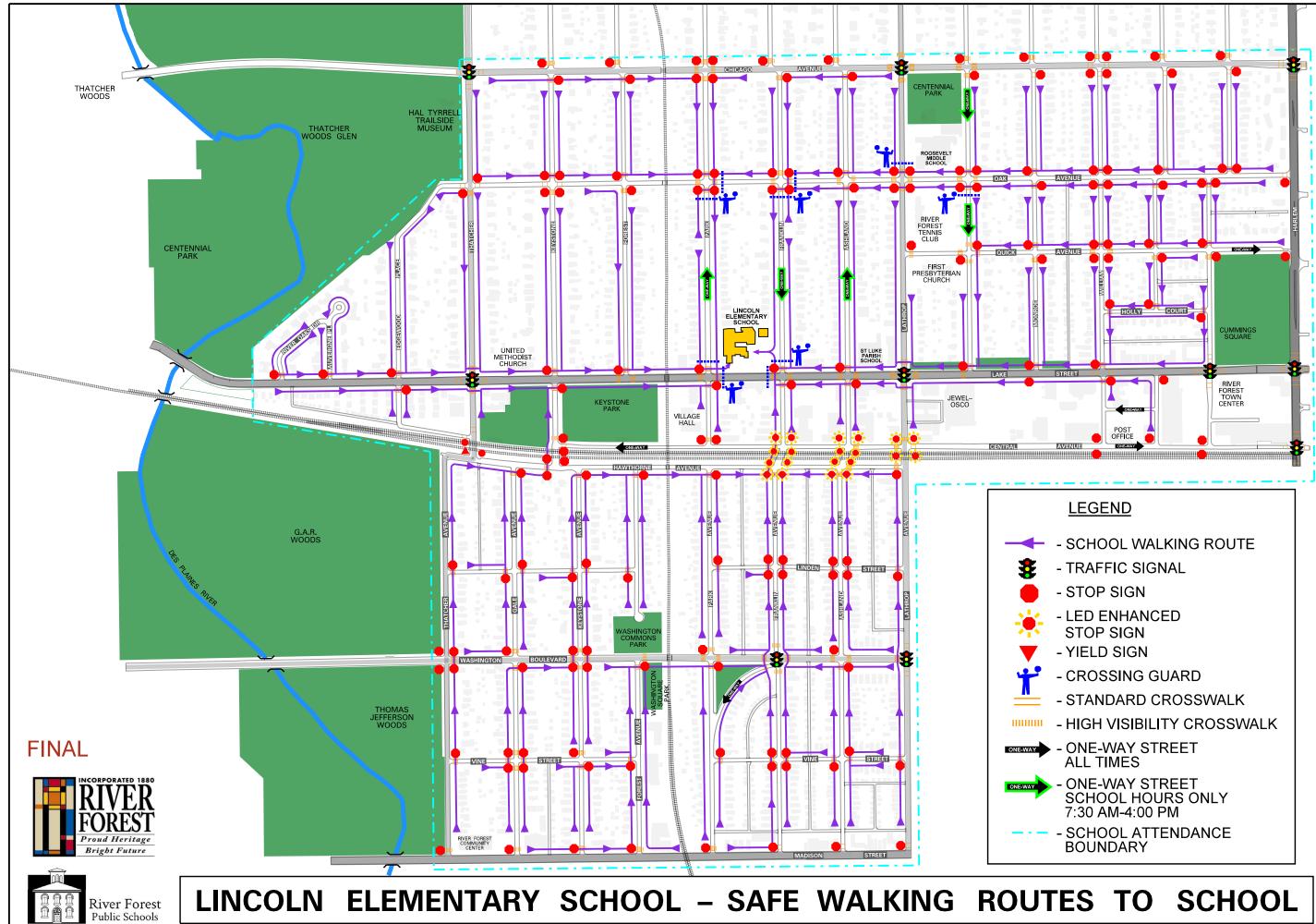
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Recommended Street Improvements Resident/Parent Survey

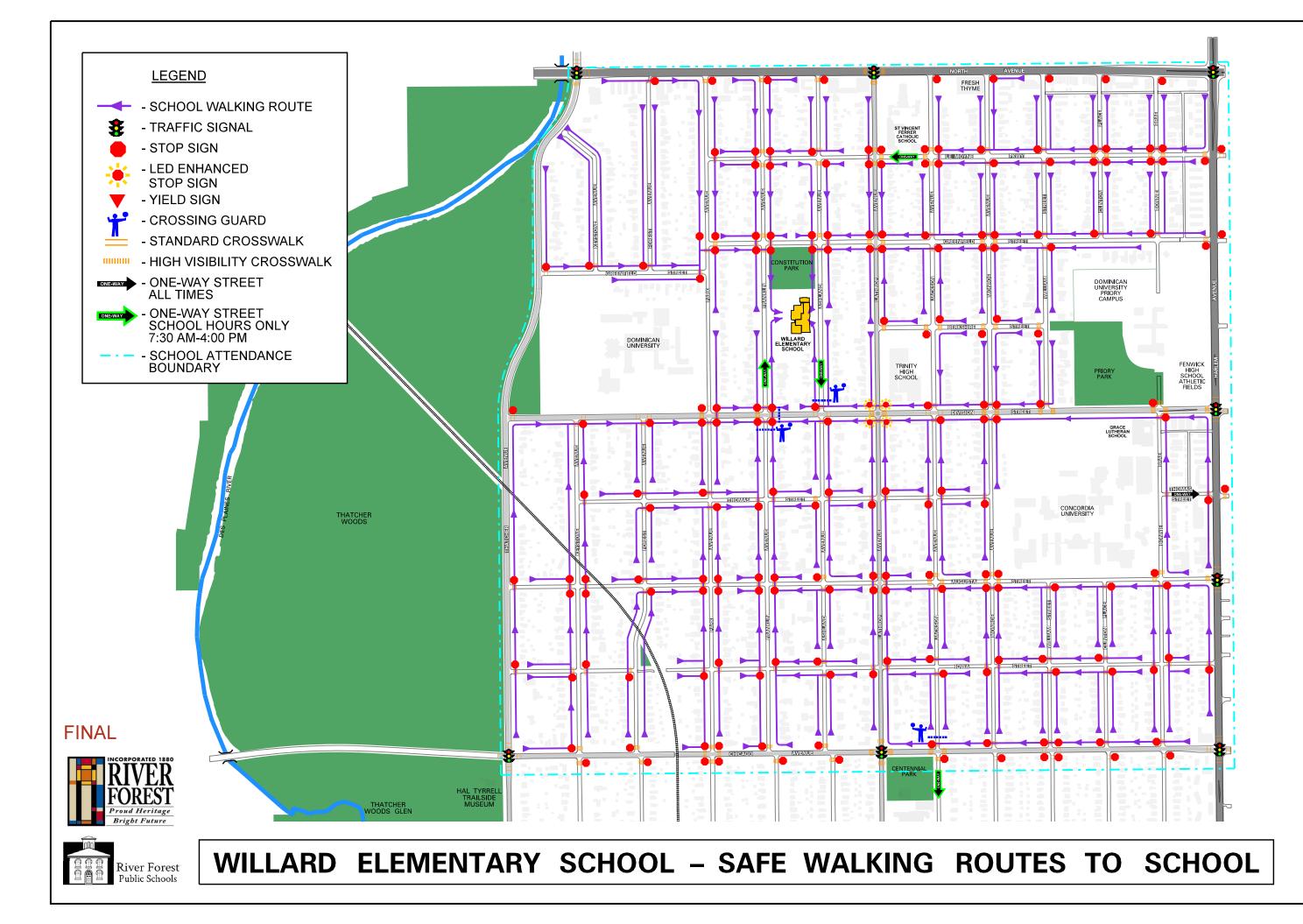


# **SWRTS** Exhibits

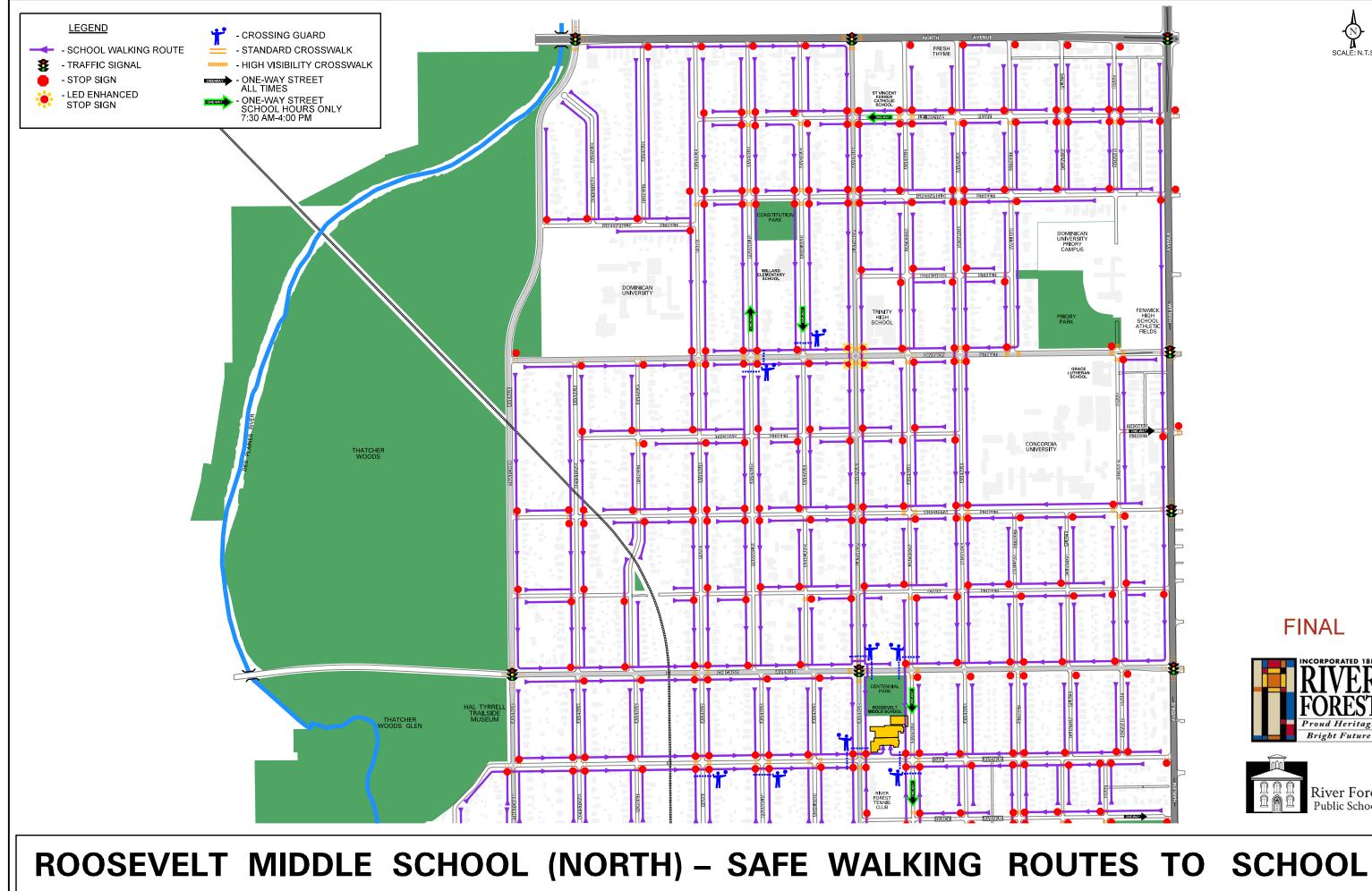












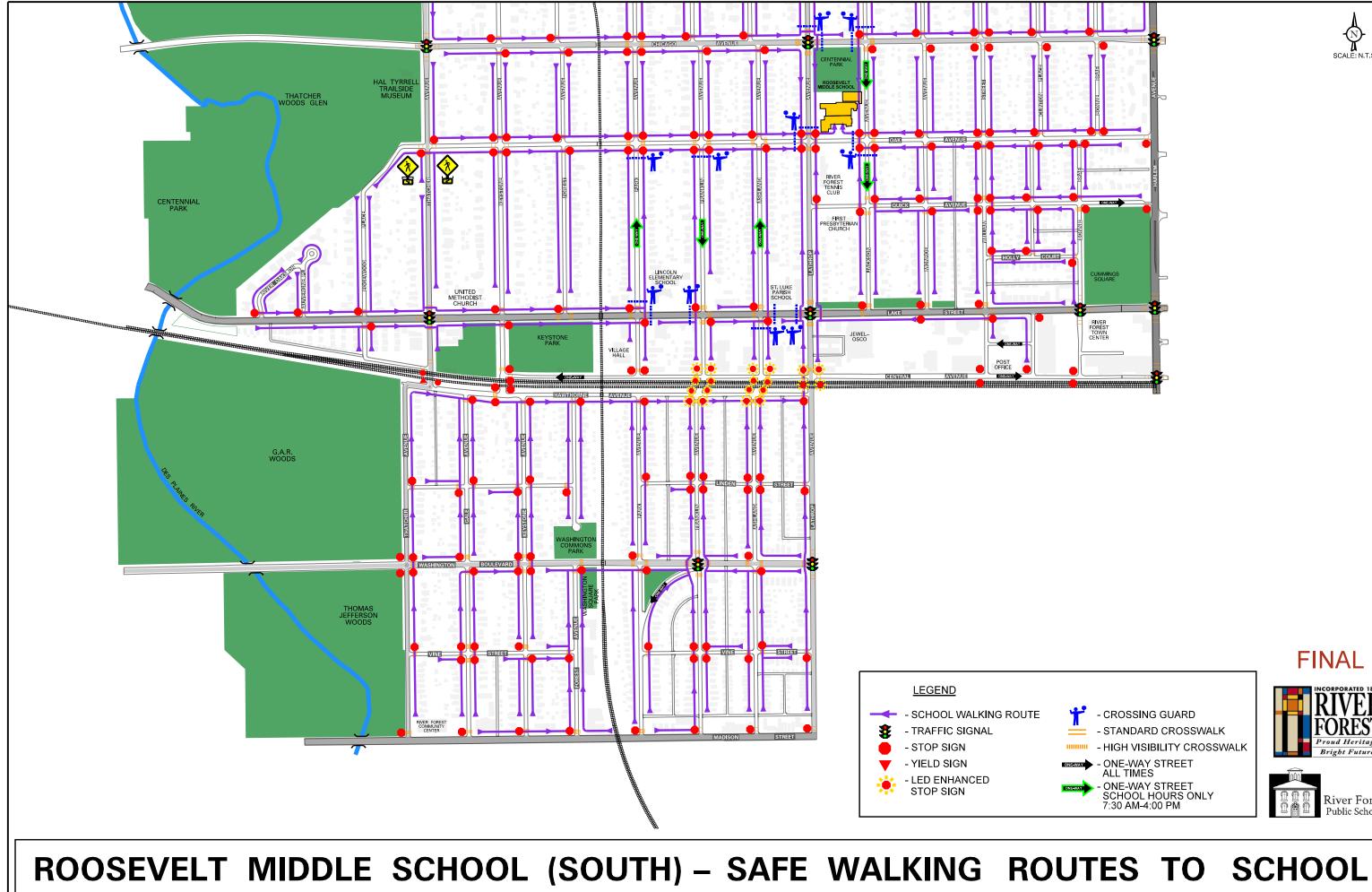


## **FINAL**





River Forest Public Schools

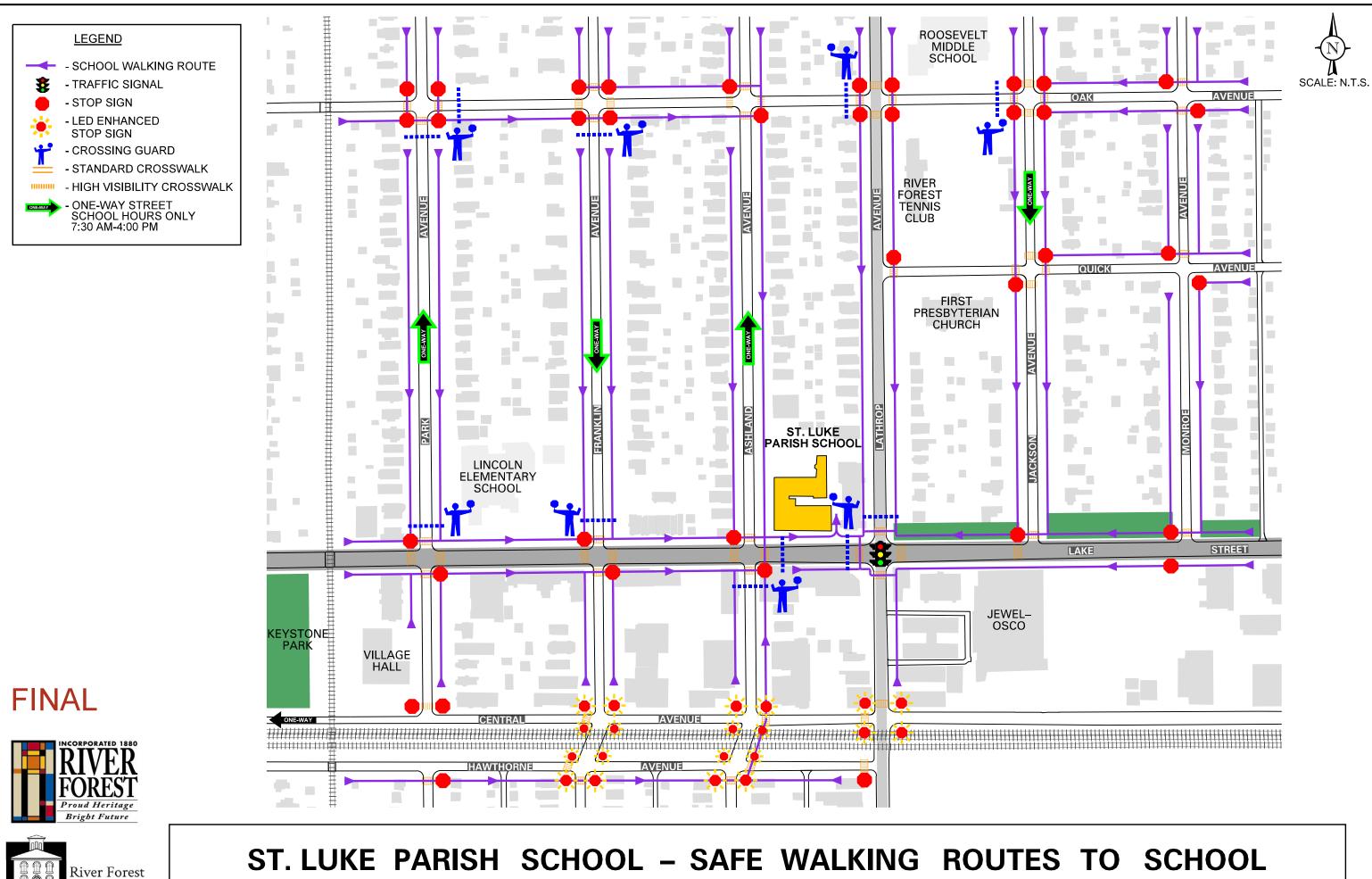




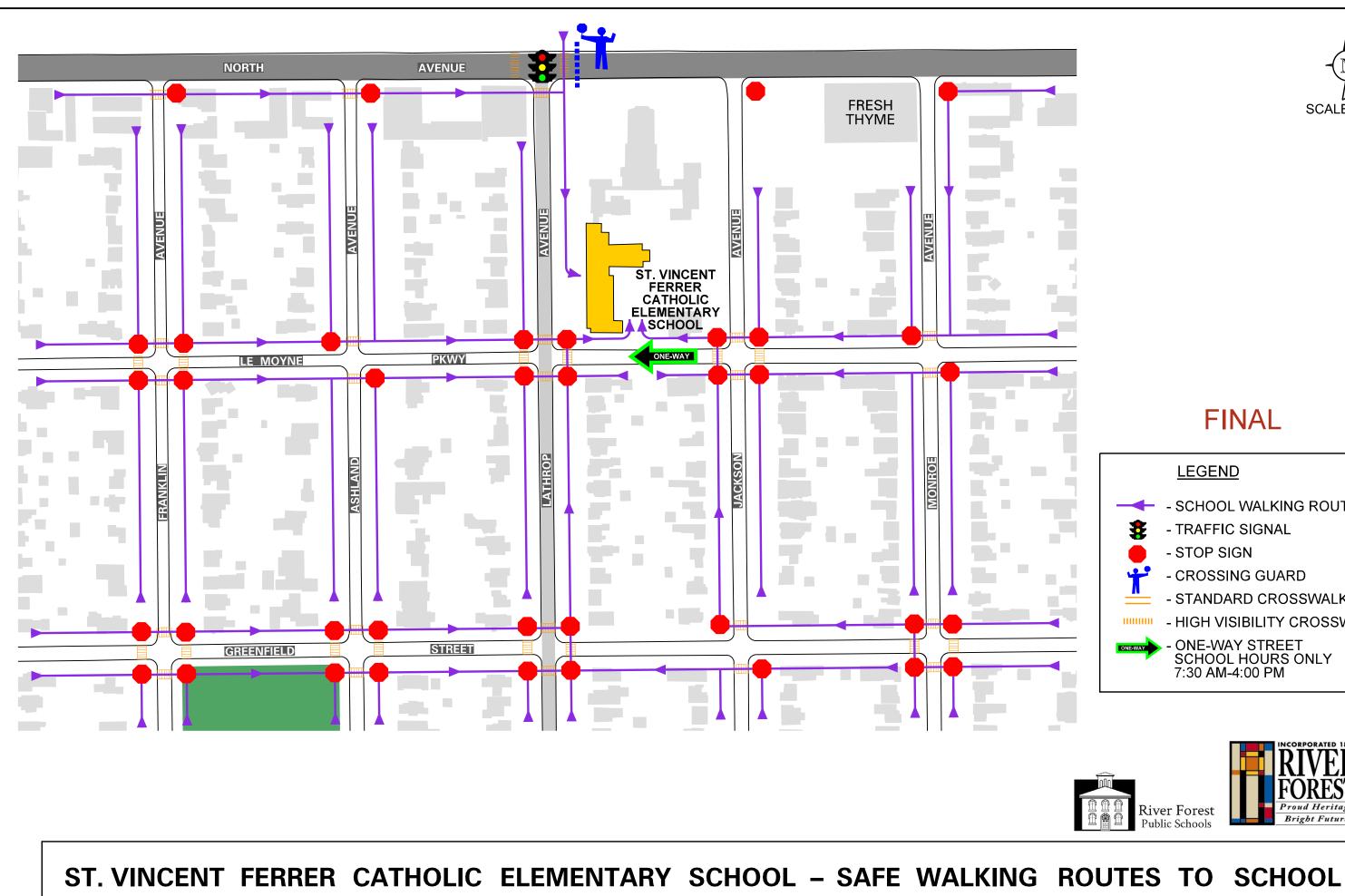




**River** Forest **Public Schools** 



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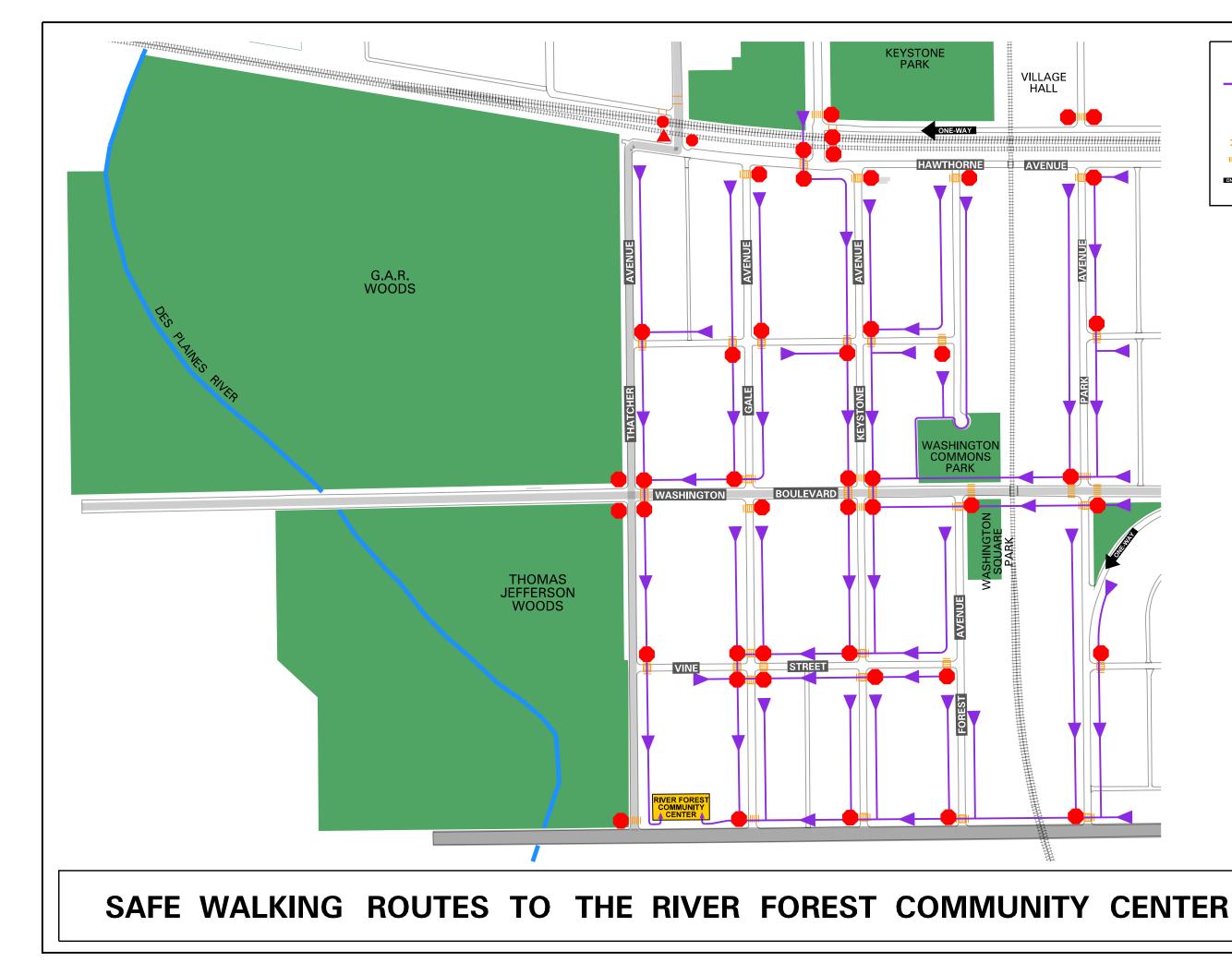
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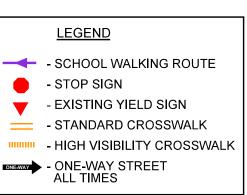
- STANDARD CROSSWALK
- HIGH VISIBILITY CROSSWALK

















River Forest Public Schools

# **Recommended Street Improvements**



