

JUNE 2020

# Safe Routes to School

*A plan to make walking and biking to school  
a safe, fun activity*

**GIDEON POND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
BURNSVILLE, MN

**m** DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION



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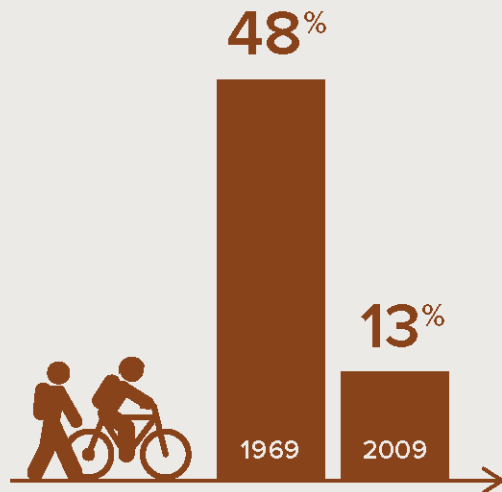




01

INTRODUCTION + CONTEXT

# Why Safe Routes to School?



THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WALKING OR BIKING TO SCHOOL HAS DROPPED PRECIPITOUSLY WITHIN ONE GENERATION



MOST KIDS ARE NOT GETTING ENOUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



ROADS NEAR SCHOOLS ARE CONGESTED, DECREASING SAFETY AND AIR QUALITY FOR CHILDREN

## KIDS WHO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL:



Arrive alert and able to focus on school



Get most of the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity during the trip to and from school



Are more likely to be a healthy body weight



Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance\*



Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety

## THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF INCREASED TRAFFIC LEADING TO REDUCED WALKING AND BICYCLING:



Fewer students walking & biking to school

More parents driving children to school

Rising concern about safety of walking & biking

Increased traffic at and around school

\*More information, including primary sources, can be found at <http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org>

## THE SIX E'S

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs use a variety of strategies to make it easy, fun, and safe for students to walk and bike to school. These strategies are often called the "Six E's."

### EQUITY

Equity is an overarching concept that applies to all of the E's. Equity in SRTS means that the SRTS program is inclusive, celebrates the diversity of students, allocates resources to overcome inequities, and supports a community where walking and biking is safe, comfortable, and convenient for every student.



#### EDUCATION

Programs designed to teach children about traffic safety, bicycle and pedestrian skills, and traffic decision-making.



#### ENFORCEMENT

Strategies aimed at improving driver behavior near schools and ensuring safe roads for all users.



#### ENCOURAGEMENT

Programs that make it fun for students to walk and bike, including incentive programs, regular events or classroom activities.



#### EVALUATION

Strategies to help understand program effectiveness, identify improvements, and ensure program sustainability.



#### ENGINEERING

Physical projects that are built to improve walking and bicycling conditions.

## NAVIGATING THIS PLAN

Below is a roadmap for navigating the way through this plan. Use it to find all the information you need for helping students be safer and more active!



#### PROGRAMS

Getting children to walk and bike to school requires fun and engaging programs for schools and families. Turn to this section for recommended events, activities, and strategies that will get students moving.



#### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The more people involved with a local Safe Routes to School process, the more successful it will be! Use this section to find out how you can be a part of this important initiative.



#### INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensuring the safety of students on their trips to and from school means upgrading streets. See this section for suggestions to improve the safety, comfort, and convenience of walking and biking, including paint, signage, and signals.



#### APPENDICES

There is more information available than could fit in this plan. For additional resources, turn to this section.





## The Vision

*Walking and biking to school is safe, comfortable, and fun for all students at Gideon Pond.*

This plan was made possible with support from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and was developed in coordination with the Gideon Pond Elementary and City of Burnsville community. Recommendations within this plan are the result of workshops, discussion, and site visits involving city and MnDOT staff, teachers and school administrators, elected officials, students, parents, and other stakeholders.

The Gideon Pond SRTS Plan identifies program strategies to create a culture of walking and biking and infrastructure recommendations to support a safe and comfortable environment for active transportation near campus. Some recommendations may be implemented almost immediately while others will require more planning, analysis, and funding. While not all of these recommendations can be implemented right away, achieving short-term successes where possible will help build momentum and lay the groundwork for more complex projects in the future.

### EQUITY HIGHLIGHT

#### EQUITY IN SRTS

Equity in SRTS means that every student is able to safely, comfortably, and conveniently walk and bike to school, regardless of race, cultural identity, tribal affiliation, immigrant or refugee status, language, gender or sexual identity, income, religion, and whether or not a student receives special education, has a physical or mental disability, or is homeless or highly mobile.

An equity approach requires working with local partners to tailor programs and allocate resources to meet the unique needs of the community.

# Plan Development

The Gideon Pond SRTS Plan was a collaboration between stakeholders who work with students and transportation at Gideon Pond Elementary School and within the City of Burnsville. For more information related to the planning process, see Appendix C.

- **SRTS Planning Team:** The SRTS Planning Team included representatives from Gideon Pond Elementary, the City of Burnsville, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and parents. Stakeholders brought varying perspectives and expertise to the team including teaching and learning, school administration, urban planning, engineering, and public health.
- **Rapid Planning Workshop:** The SRTS Planning Team convened for a Rapid Planning Workshop in the fall of 2019. It brought together the Gideon Pond SRTS Team as well as students who participated in a student panel to identify issues and opportunities related to walking and biking to Gideon Pond.
- **Parent/Caregiver Survey:** Surveys collected information from parents and caregivers about habits and barriers related to walking and biking to Gideon Pond Elementary.
- **Administrative Survey:** School administrators completed a school environment and policy assessment to identify policies, practices, and infrastructure that promotes or discourages walking and biking to school.
- **Interactive Online Map:** An interactive online map allowed students, parents, and community stakeholders to identify destinations, routes, and barriers for walking and biking.
- **School Community Engagement:** SRTS staff hosted a table at the Gideon Pond Bingo Night on Friday, October 25, 2019. Staff set-up a table in a high-traffic location and talked to 40 students, parents and staff. Materials included an interactive mapping activity, a walking and biking trivia game, and an activity book with games and SRTS resources to gather feedback from participants.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### Challenges

- Busy streets and intersections, including: Nicollet Avenue, E 130th Street, and the intersections of E 130th Street at Nicollet Avenue, Portland Avenue, Oakland Drive, and Parkwood Drive
- Driver behavior including speeding and poor pedestrian yielding and passing behavior, especially along E 130th Street and at the intersection of E 130th Street and Oakland Drive.
- Congestion and parent behavior in the school parking lot and pick-up/drop-off area.

### Opportunities

- There are many destinations near Gideon Pond that can be used for walking/biking field trips or remote drop-off sites including: Nicollet Middle School, Civic Center Park, downtown Burnsville, and numerous local and community parks.
- Active and organized PTO with interest and capacity to support program implementation.
- General interest among students and families in making walking and biking to school safer and more inviting for Gideon Pond students.





## Gideon Pond Elementary in Context

Gideon Pond Elementary School part of the Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191. During the 2019-2020 school year, approximately 455 students in Pre-K through 5th grade attended Gideon Pond. The school and campus has a number of programs and amenities that attract students and community members alike including a community garden, service learning club, and an active Parent Teacher Organization and parent volunteer group.

Located off of E 130th Street in the heart of Burnsville, Gideon Pond is close to many destinations including Burnsville City Hall and Civic Center, downtown Burnsville, Nicollet Middle School, and many other parks and civic destinations. Residential development near Gideon Pond is primarily single family residential, but there are a handful of multi-family residences including Shalimar Estates to the southwest, town homes to the east, and apartments closer to downtown.

During school arrival and dismissal, buses use E 130th Street directly north of the school, and parents use a parking lot on the east side of the building. Several parents park on E 130th Street and walk their students into school, or use local nearby streets including

Oakland Drive, Portland Avenue, and E 131st Street. Gideon Pond also has a partnership with the Church of Apostles to the east that allows parents to use the church parking lot as a remote drop location. Student patrols and adult supervisors are stationed on E 130th Street at both Portland Avenue and Oakland Drive to help facilitate pedestrian crossings. Sidewalks are present on both sides of E 130th Street starting at Gideon Pond and heading east, but on the north side only going west. As a policy, the City of Burnsville does not install sidewalks on local streets, which contributes to conflicts between walkers, school buses, and parent vehicles on neighborhood streets near school.

In November 2019, student travel tallies were conducted to understand how students typically travel to and from school. Overall, the results indicate that most students travel by school bus (about 50 percent), followed by family vehicle (about 30 percent), walking (about 15 percent), carpool (about 5 percent), and biking (about 5 percent). Results indicate that many students who are dropped off in a family vehicle in the morning either walk or take the bus home.







## Introduction to Programs

*The Safe Routes to School movement acknowledges that infrastructure changes are necessary for shifting school travel behavior, but are insufficient on their own. Programs are a necessary component of any successful SRTS plan.*

While engineering improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways are important, equally important are education programs to give students basic safety skills, encouragement programs to highlight walking and bicycling to school as fun and normal, enforcement against unsafe motorist behavior, and evaluation of the impact of investments and non-infrastructure efforts. When planning and implementing SRTS programs, it is important to design events and activities that are inclusive of students of all backgrounds and abilities.

Often, programs that help to get more youth walking and biking lead to increased public support for infrastructure projects - they can be an important first step towards building out the physical elements that make walking and biking safer and more comfortable. And relative to certain infrastructure projects, most programs are very low cost.





## Existing Programs

Gideon Pond Elementary and the City of Burnsville have been actively working towards providing safe and inviting spaces around school campuses for students. This foundation of encouraging student travel safety provides a valuable baseline for expanding programs to encourage more students to walk and bike.

### Programs already active at Gideon Pond:

- Walk/Bike to School Days
- Student Patrols
- Speed trailer available
- Demonstration projects
- Fun Run fundraiser
- Active PTO with regular parent events

### EQUITY HIGHLIGHT

#### EQUITY IN PROGRAMMING

When planning and implementing SRTS programs, it is important to design events and activities that are inclusive of students of all ethnicities, genders, backgrounds and abilities. Language and cultural barriers, physical abilities, personal safety concerns, and infrastructure barriers can all create potential obstacles to participation. Creative outreach, low-cost solutions, and flexible implementation can help overcome obstacles and enable more students and families to participate.

For more information about equity in SRTS planning, see Appendix K.



## Program Recommendations

The following programs are recommended to increase the awareness, understanding, and excitement for walking and biking to school. Programs were selected through conversations with school and district staff, parents, students, community members, and city staff, and are tailored to meet the needs and interests of the school community in the near term (one to five years). Some build on existing programs while others will require new resources and partnerships.

### **Recommended programs include:**

- Walk/Bike to School Days
- Bike Swap
- School Communication/Parent Workshop
- School Safety Campaign
- Bicycle Playground
- Park & Walk
- Trip Tracking
- Walk! Bike! Fun!
- Walk/Bike Field Trips

Programs have been prioritized into implementation timelines based on existing programs, input from local stakeholders, and readiness of the school to launch the program:

- Immediate implementation
- Short-term (1-2 years)
- Medium-term (2-3 years)
- Long-term (3-5 years)

Additional details about each recommended program including a brief description, suggested leads, and an explanation of why the program is recommended are provided on the following pages.





## WALK/BIKE TO SCHOOL DAYS

National Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day attract millions of students and families to try walking and biking to school every October and May. In addition, Minnesota celebrates Winter Walk to School Day in February. Additional education, encouragement, and enforcement programming can be used to promote the event, increase awareness, and expand participation. Walk/bike to school days can also take place more frequently (e.g., Walking Wednesdays) if there's interest and capacity.

**Program lead/partners:** Gideon Pond staff and administrators, PTO, students, Cub Scouts/Boy Scouts, Burnsville Police Department, middle school and/or high school athletes

**Timeline:** Immediately

**Why we recommend it:** Gideon Pond has participated in Walk/Bike to School Days in the past, but there is an opportunity to increase the promotion, participation, and frequency of events. Check out the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center to register and receive poster templates, promotional materials, and incentives. Promote Walk/Bike to School Days through school communication, and consider piloting supporting programs such as a Walking School Bus or Drop & Walk to increase participation.



## BIKE SWAP

A bike swap is an opportunity for school and community members to purchase, sell, or trade used bikes and gear that children have outgrown or simply don't use anymore. Elementary, middle, and high school students could help with simple mechanical fixes on their own bikes or bikes for the bike swap during a bike fit-it day leading up to the event. A bike swap could also be combined with a bike drive or raffle to provide free bikes, helmets, locks, and other gear to students who wouldn't otherwise have access.

**Program lead/partners:** PTO, Burnsville Police Department and Fire Department, Nicollet Middle School, Erick's Bike Shop, Penn Cycle

**Timeline:** Immediately

**Why we recommend it:** Many families and students have bikes that have been outgrown, or don't have access to a bike at all. During the Rapid Planning Workshop, members of the Gideon Pond SRTS Team expressed excitement about organizing a bike swap to help increase student access to bikes. Consider incorporating with Parent Connect nights and reaching out to Erick's Bike Shop or the Penn Cycle Van for mechanic support.





## SCHOOL COMMUNICATION/PARENT WORKSHOP

Communication may include paper and electronic newsletters, social media blasts, parent workshops, and other outreach strategies to educate families about school transportation practices and promote walking and biking as an option. Outreach may include information on suggested routes and crossing locations, dressing for the weather, locking bikes, SRTS news and efforts to date, and opportunities to get involved in SRTS programs.

**Program lead/partners:** Gideon Pond administrators, PTO, school liaisons

**Timeline:** Immediately

**Why we recommend it:** There is a big opportunity to increase awareness of SRTS by actively discussing and encouraging walking and biking to Gideon Pond through school communication and parent workshops. Back to school nights, Somali parent meetings, and the PTO Facebook page are all great resources for family communication at Gideon Pond.



## SCHOOL SAFETY CAMPAIGN

A safety campaign is an effective way to build awareness around students walking and biking to school and encourage safe driving behavior among student drivers, parents, and other motorists. A campaign can use media on campus or near school including posters, window stickers, yard signs, and/or street banners to remind drivers to slow down and use caution in school areas. This type of campaign can also address other specific behaviors such as walking or bicycling to school, school bus safety, and/or parent drop-off and pick-up behavior. Safety campaigns should use positive messaging to promote preferred behaviors.

**Program lead/partners:** PTO, Gideon Pond staff and administrators, Burnsville Police Department, 5th grade students and student patrols

**Timeline:** Immediately

**Why we recommend it:** During the Rapid Planning Workshop, the Gideon Pond SRTS Team discussed strategies to improve awareness about safe behavior around school by parents and other members of the community. Students, parents, and school staff can work together to identify safety campaign goals, messaging, and materials to encourage safe driving, biking, and walking behavior on and near campus. Consider establishing a student leadership group to help champion a school safety campaign and other programs in the future.



## WALKING SCHOOL BUS

A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking to school, often with one or more adults. Parents can take turns leading the bus, which follows the same route each time and picks up children from their homes or designated bus stops at specified times. Ideally, buses run every day or on a regular schedule so families can count on it, but they often begin as a one-time pilot event. Older students or “walking buddies” could also be used once a safe route has been established with the help of a trusted adult.

**Program lead/partners:** PTO, Lion’s Club, VFW, Rotary Club, student patrols, church and faith organizations, middle school/high school volunteer and leadership groups

**Timeline:** Short term (1-2 years)

**Why we recommend it:** The Gideon Pond PTO has discussed establishing a walking school bus in the past. Parent volunteers or other community members could sign up to Adopt a Walking Bus Route and walk with students or provide eyes on the street along a designated route. Pilot a Walking School Bus during national Walk/Bike to School Day and increase frequency as interest and capacity allows.



## PARK & WALK

During a Park & Walk event (also called a remote drop-off event), bus drivers and caregivers drop students at a designated off-campus location and students walk the rest of the way to school. Remote drop-off events can help reduce drop-off congestion on campus and provide students who live further from school with an opportunity to walk to school.

**Program lead/partners:** PTO, Gideon Pond staff, Schmitt & Sons Transportation

**Timeline:** Short term (1-2 years)

**Why we recommend it:** Gideon Pond has a great relationship with the Church of Apostles located just east of campus, and has considered establishing a formal drop and walk program in partnership with the church in the past. Today, many parents informally use the church parking for student pick-up and drop-off. Civic Center Park could also be used as a drop location with support from staff and/or parent volunteers to chaperone students to Gideon Pond using back roads and trails. Pilot the program during national Walk/Bike to School Days and increase frequency as interest and capacity allows.



## TRIP TRACKING

Competitions and contests reward students by tracking the number of times they walk and bike to school. Contests can be individual, classroom competitions, or school wide. Students and classrooms can compete for prizes and bragging rights. Inexpensive incentives such as shoelaces, stickers, bike helmets, or class parties can be used as rewards for participation. Competitions could be held on an ongoing monthly basis or a couple times a year, incorporated into existing events / competitions.

**Program lead/partners:** Gideon Pond staff and administrators, Dakota County SHIP

**Timeline:** Short term (1-2 years)

**Why we recommend it:** Gideon Pond can adapt its existing PBIS reward system to support and encourage walking and biking. Consider connecting with Dakota County SHIP, local bike shops, and other businesses to provide incentives.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

#### MN SRTS RESOURCE CENTER

There are many great resources already available on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center. You can find answers to many common questions, information about upcoming events, and even promotional material that can easily be customized for your community's SRTS event.

The MN SRTS Resource Center is a great way to stay engaged throughout the year!

[mnsaferoutestoschool.org](https://mnsaferoutestoschool.org)



### PROGRAMS

#### PARENT SURVEYS AND STUDENT TRAVEL TALLIES

There are two great tools to evaluate all the SRTS work in the community:

**Parent Surveys:** Recommended once every 2-3 years. A hard copy survey or link to an online version can be sent to parents to gather their perceptions of walking and biking to school. Surveys can be distributed through newsletters, school websites, or at conferences.

**Student Travel Tally:** Recommended in fall and spring of every year. In-class tallies ask students how they traveled to and from school on a given day.





## WALK/BIKE FIELD TRIPS

A field trip made by foot or by bicycle gives students a supportive environment in which to practice their pedestrian safety or bicycling skills. Walk/bike field trips can also showcase the many benefits of walking and bicycling for transportation including health and physical activity, pollution reduction, and cost savings. The destination of the field trip may vary, or the field trip could be the ride or walk itself.

**Program lead/partners:** School staff

**Timeline:** Short term (1-2 years)

**Why we recommend it:** There are several potential field trip destinations within walking distance of Gideon Pond Elementary, including Burnsville City Hall, Civic Center Park, Ames Center, and more. Students could walk to Nicollet Middle School to meet with reading buddies, or to local parks to learn about local ecosystems and the environment.



## WALK! BIKE! FUN!

Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum is a two-part curriculum designed specifically for Minnesota's schools. It is structured to meet Minnesota education standards and is an important part of the Safe Routes to School Program in Minnesota. Walk! Bike! Fun! helps children ages five to thirteen learn traffic rules and regulations, the potential hazards to traveling, and handling skills needed to bike and walk effectively, appropriately and safely through their community.

**Program lead/partners:** Gideon Pond staff and administrators, ISD 191, PE teacher

**Timeline:** Short term (1-2 years)

**Why we recommend it:** Knowing how to safely and effectively walk with traffic is a critical life skill. During the Rapid Planning Workshop, the Gideon Pond SRTS Team identified an opportunity to take a district-wide approach to pedestrian and bicycle safety education by engaging with ISD 191 physical education teachers at their monthly meeting.



## BICYCLE PLAYGROUND

A bicycle playground, also called a traffic garden or safety village, is a park where children can learn the rules of the road and bicycle handling skills. Traffic gardens include a miniature street network where students can learn about traffic safety and practice walking, bicycling, and “driving” along roadways and through intersections and crossings in an environment that is free of motorized traffic.

**Program lead/partners:** Burnsville Parks and Recreation, Parks Commission, school and district staff, Lion’s Club

**Timeline:** Long term (3-5 years)

**Why we recommend it:** As part of the Gideon Pond SRTS planning process, the Gideon Pond school community started discussions with the Burnsville Park & Recreation Department about implementing a bicycle playground in the city. Terrace Parks East was identified as a potential opportunity site due to the existing mountain bike course within the park and some underutilized space that would be a great candidate for a bicycle playground. Programming could be coordinated with education day with support from the Lion’s Club. The site could also serve as a walking/ biking field trip destination for Gideon Pond students. Consider providing a bike fix-it station and vending machine to support on-site mechanical fixes and adaptive bikes for special education students.

### QUICK-BUILD PROJECTS

#### DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

Demonstration projects are an approach to neighborhood building using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions to catalyze long-term change for safer streets and healthier, more vibrant communities.

Many infrastructure improvements near schools can start as demonstration projects in order to test installations and build support for more long term improvements. More information about demonstration projects near schools can be found at the link below.

[http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/demonstration\\_projects.html](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/mnsaferoutes/resources/demonstration_projects.html)



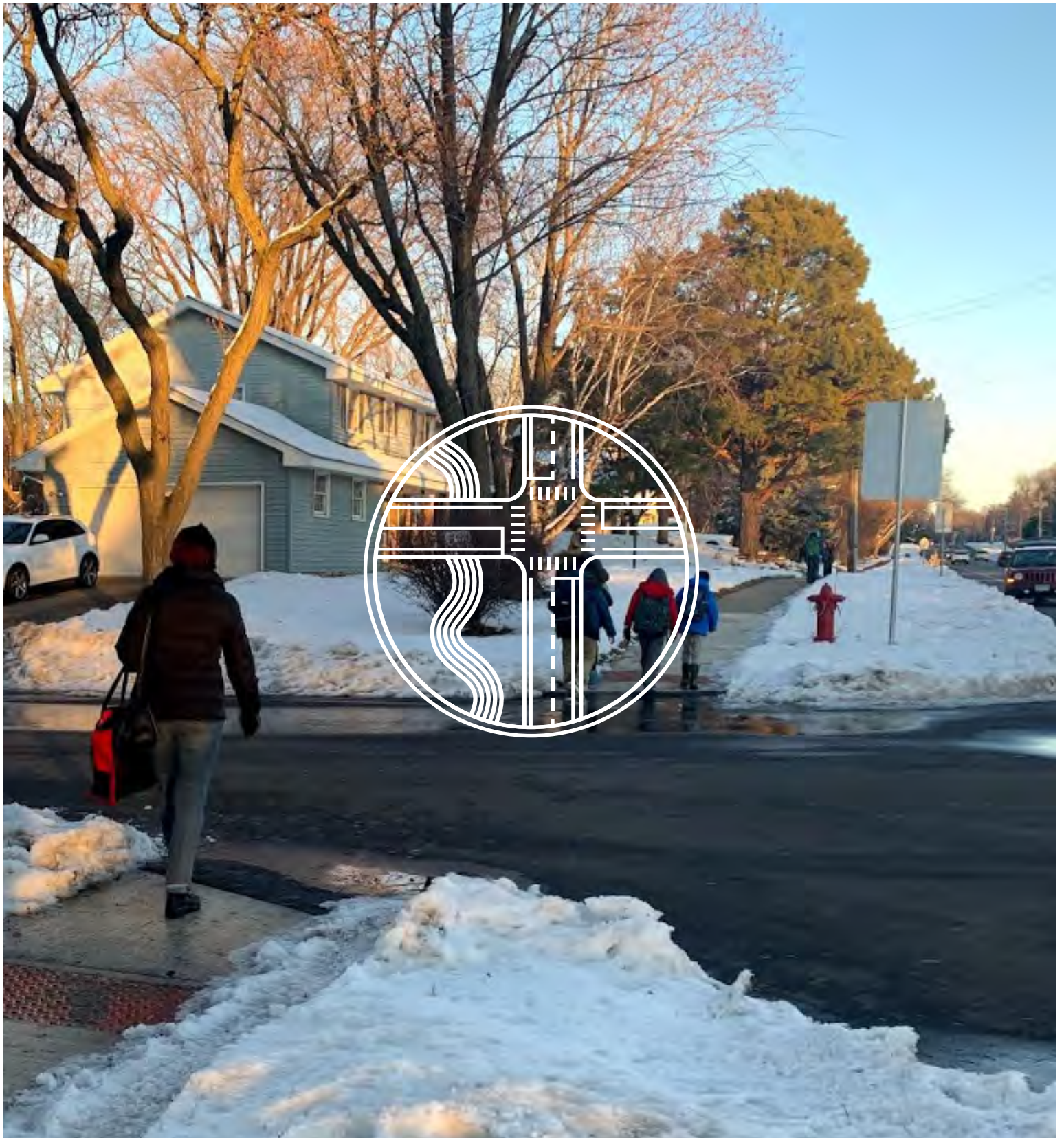
### PROGRAMS

#### FURTHER READING

For a complete list of all potential programs and descriptions, see

<http://mndotsrts.altaprojects.net/>









## Introduction to Infrastructure

*In addition to program recommendations, changes to the streetscape are essential to making walking and biking to school safer and more comfortable.*

The initial field review and subsequent meetings yielded specific recommendations to address the key identified barriers to walking and bicycling at Gideon Pond Elementary.

This plan does not represent a comprehensive list of every project that could improve conditions for walking and bicycling in the neighborhood. Instead, it calls attention to key conflict points and potential improvements. Recommendations range from simple striping changes and signing to more significant changes to the streets, intersections, and school infrastructure.

Engineering recommendations are shown and described on the following page. It should be noted that funding is limited and all recommendations are planning level concepts only. Additional planning and engineering study will be needed to confirm feasibility and costs for all projects.

# Existing Infrastructure

This section highlights existing infrastructure and challenge areas on and near campus. Photos and observations were made by the Gideon Pond SRTS Team during a fall 2019 Rapid Planning Workshop and walk assessment that allowed the team to experience what it's like for students who walk and bike in the area.



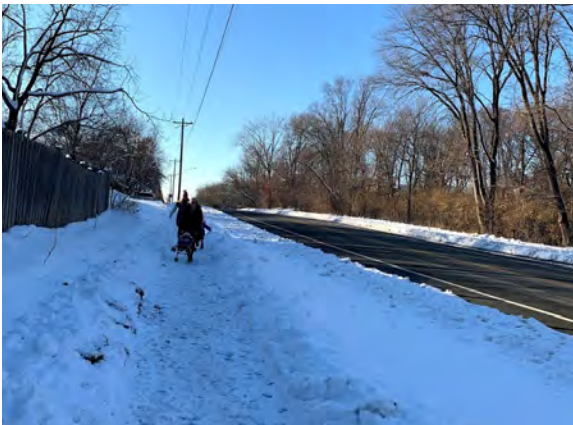




**Above - left to right, from top left:** In the afternoon, parents circulate through the parking lot clockwise and load students from the driver's side to allow for additional queuing in the lot; bike parking by door 2; snow storage blocks a pedestrian crossing at E 130th St and Portland Ave; a trail connects Gideon Pond Elementary to E 131st St to the south; the well-used crossing at E 130th St and Oakland Dr; looking east on E 130th St between Portland Ave and Oakland Dr from the bus loading area.

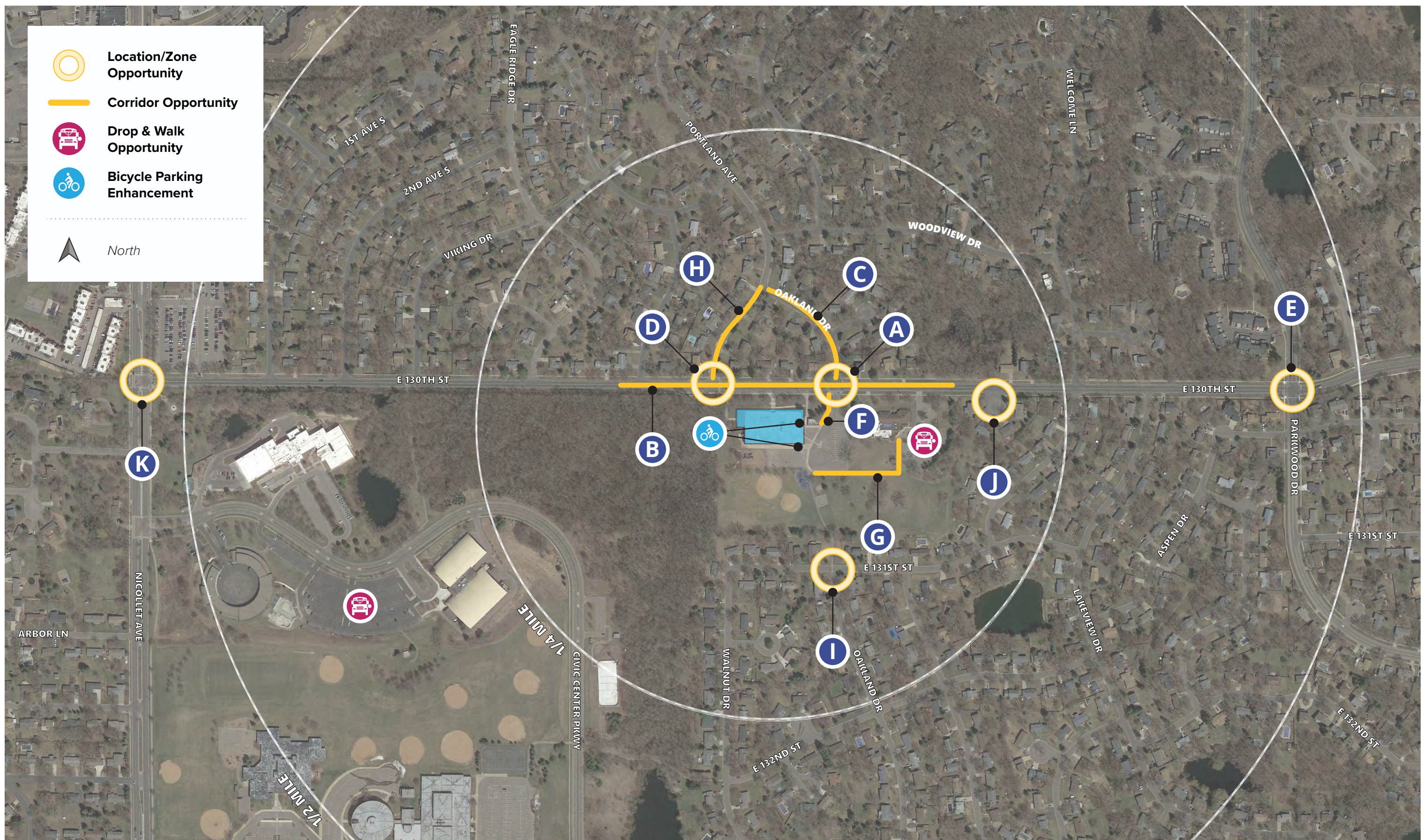
**Opposite - left to right, from top left:** Students walk in the street in the neighborhood south of Gideon Pond; students identified the intersection of E 130th St and Parkwood Dr as a challenge for walking and biking to school; buses queue up along E 130th St during school arrival; E 130th St has a posted speed of 30 mph and school speed of 20 mph; a flashing sign and orange cones encourage drivers to take a right only out of the Gideon Pond parking lot; during school arrival, parents circulate through the parking lot counter-clockwise and drop students on the passenger side.





**Left to right, from top left:** Parents pick up students near the trail access point on E 131st St south of Gideon Pond; the Gideon Pond SRTS Team visits the E 130th St cul-de-sac east of the Church of Apostles, which many drivers use for U-turns during arrival and dismissal; even after plowing sidewalks, snow creates challenges for walkers, bikers, and people with strollers along E 130th St; parents park along E 130th St, load and unload from the travel lane, and walk their students in to school; student patrols facilitate crossings at E 130th St and Oakland Dr; students walk in the street and navigate parent vehicles and school bus traffic along Oakland Ave after school.





## Gideon Pond Infrastructure Recommendations



# Gideon Pond Infrastructure Recommendations

	LOCATION	PROBLEM/ISSUE/OPPORTUNITY	POTENTIAL SOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	E 130th St & Oakland Dr	Long crossing distances, poor driver yielding and passing behavior	Install curb extensions onto E 130th St. Consider consolidating pedestrian crossings at Oakland Dr. Evaluate need/impact and long-term solutions as part of planned temporary demonstration project.	Reduce pedestrian crossing distance; increase visibility between pedestrians and drivers; improve driver yielding behavior	City of Burnsville	High
B	E 130st St north of Gideon Pond	Concerns about driver speeding behavior and school zone compliance	Upgrade existing school zone signage to enhanced school speed zone assembly including flashing light and “WHEN FLASHING” speed zone signage.	Provide a designated space for people walking	City of Burnsville	High
C	Oakland Dr between E 130th St and Portland Ave	No dedicated space for students walking/biking along primary route to school; conflicts between pedestrians, buses, caregiver vehicles, and other motorists during dismissal	Install a dedicated walkway along one side of Oakland Dr. Use paint, pedestrian stencils, and signage to mark a pedestrian lane. Prohibit parking and pick-up/drop-off traffic in the walk lane.	Provide a designated space for people walking	City of Burnsville	Medium
D	E 130th St & Portland Ave	Long crossing distances, poor driver yielding and passing behavior, poor visibility in advance of Oakland Dr pedestrian crossing	Consider installing curb extensions or other gateway treatment onto E 130th St in coordination with intersection improvements at Oakland Dr. Evaluate need/impact and long-term solutions as part of planned temporary demonstration project.	Calm motorized traffic entering school zone; reduce pedestrian crossing distance; increase visibility between pedestrians and drivers	City of Burnsville	Medium
E	E 130th St & Parkwood Dr	Long crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior	Install curb extensions and forward stop bars on all approaches. Incorporate updates into 2024 Parkwood Dr project.	Reduce pedestrian crossing distances; increase visibility between pedestrians and drivers; improve driver yielding behavior	City of Burnsville	Medium
F	West side of school driveway	No dedicated space for people walking along route to primary school entrance	Install a sidewalk along the west side of the school driveway to the east school entrance. In the short term, encourage parents to walk students to the northern entrance on E 130th St.	Provide a designated space for people walking	Gideon Pond Elementary School	Medium
G	Connection between Gideon Pond and Church of the Apostles	No dedicated/direct route for people walking between church parking lot (existing remote drop area) and primary school entrance	Install a sidewalk or trail between the church parking lot and Gideon Pond Elementary School along the southern end of the school parking lot.	Provide a direct and conflict-free route for people walking; encourage drop & walk using church parking lot	Gideon Pond Elementary School Church of the Apostles	Medium
H	Portland Ave between E 130th St and Oakland Ave	No dedicated space for students walking/biking along primary route to school, conflicts between pedestrians and motorists during dismissal	Create a dedicated walk lane on one side of Portland Ave. Use paint, pedestrian stencils, and signage to mark a pedestrian lane. Prohibit parking and pick-up/drop-off traffic in the walk lane.	Provide a designated space for people walking	City of Burnsville	Low
I	E 131st St & Oakland Dr	Poor visibility of pedestrian crossing and trail access during arrival and dismissal	Consider a paint the pavement project or other community-building activity to bring attention to the school/neighborhood trail; install “STOP HERE FOR PEDESTRIANS” signage.	Increase visibility between pedestrians and drivers; improve driver yielding behavior; increase driver awareness of school	City of Burnsville	Low
J	E 130th St cul-de-sac	Long crossing distance; frequently used by motorists for u-turns; undefined open space allows for fast and unpredictable motorist behavior that conflicts with student walkers	Reduce the crossing distance and provide a more defined route for drivers through this space. Consider installing a one-way loop with one 20-ft driveway or two 10-ft driveways. Consider opportunities to replace pavement with shared green space.	Reduce pedestrian crossing distance; discourage unpredictable u-turn behavior; calm driver speeds	City of Burnsville	Low
K	Nicollet Ave & E 130th St	Long crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior by turning motorists	Install leading pedestrian interval, and consider high visibility crosswalk markings. Relocate forward stop bars back to give pedestrians more space in the crosswalk.	Reduce pedestrian crossing distances; increase visibility between pedestrians and drivers; improve driver yielding behavior	City of Burnsville Dakota County	Low





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# 04

HOW TO GET INVOLVED



## Using this Plan

*At the heart of every successful Safe Routes to School comprehensive program is a coordinated effort by parent volunteers, school staff, local agency staff, law enforcement, public health, and community advocates.*

This plan provides an overview of Safe Routes to School with specific recommendations for a 6 E's approach to improve the safety and the health and wellness of students. The specific recommendations in this plan are intended to support improvements and programs over the next five years. These recommendations include both long- and short-term infrastructure improvements as well as programmatic recommendations.

It should be noted that not all of these projects and programs need to be implemented right away to improve the environment for walking and bicycling to school. The recommended projects and programs listed in this plan should be reviewed as part of the overall and ongoing Safe Routes to School strategy. Some projects will require more time, support, and funding than others. It is important to achieve short-term successes while laying the groundwork for progress toward some of the larger and more complex projects.





## Who are you?

Successful programs are achieved through the coordinated efforts of parent volunteers, school staff, local agency staff, law enforcement, and community advocates, such as public health. Each partner has a key role to play in contributing to a plan's success. The following paragraphs highlight the unique contributions of key partners in Safe Routes to School.

### I AM A STUDENT

Students can have incredible influence when advocating for change in their school and broader community. There are many ways that students can support and lead SRTS initiatives including: encourage safe walking, biking, and driving to, from, and near school; develop campaigns to generate enthusiasm and improve social conditions for SRTS; volunteer time to lead a Walking School Bus or organize a bike drive; promote SRTS activities through newspaper and media courses; advocate for funding and infrastructure improvements at City Hall, and more.

### I AM A PARENT

Parents can use this report to understand the conditions at their children's school and to become familiar with the ways an SRTS program can work to make walking and bicycling safer. Concerned parents or city residents have a very important role in the Safe Routes to School process. Parent groups, both formal and informal, have the ability and the responsibility to help implement many of the educational and encouragement programs suggested in this plan. Parent groups can also be key to ongoing success by helping to fundraise for smaller projects and programs.

### I AM A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

School administrators have an important role in implementing the recommendations contained within this SRTS plan. For a plan to succeed, the impetus for change and improvement must be supported by the leadership of the school.



School administrators can help with making policy and procedural changes to projects that are within school grounds and by distributing informational materials to parents within school publications. Please read the SRTS talking points in Appendix B.

## I WORK FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

School district staff can use this report to prioritize improvements identified on District property and develop programs that educate and encourage students and parents to seek alternatives to single-family commutes to school.

District officials are perhaps the most stable of the stakeholders for a Safe Routes to School program and are in the best position to keep the program active over time. District staff can work with multiple schools, sharing information and bringing efficiencies to programs at each school working on Safe Routes.

## I AM A TEACHER OR OTHER STAFF MEMBER

Other than parents, teachers might interact with students the most. Teachers can include bicycle and pedestrian safety in lesson plans (see *Walk! Bike! Fun!*). Sharing books in your classroom that promote walking and biking is a good way to get kids interested at an early age. Teachers can also arrange for field trips within walking distance of school and incorporate informal lessons about safety along the way. In general, being positive and encouraging about walking and biking is a great way to start!

## I AM A COMMUNITY MEMBER

Community residents, even if they don't currently have children enrolled in school, can play an important role in supporting implementation of the plan. They can use this report to better understand where there may be opportunities to participate in programming initiatives and infrastructure improvements. Community members, including seniors or retirees who may have more flexible schedules than parents with school-aged children, may volunteer in established programs or work with school staff or community partners to start new programs recommended in this plan.

## I WORK FOR THE CITY OR COUNTY

City and County staff can use this report to identify citywide issues and opportunities related to walking and bicycling and to prioritize infrastructure improvements. City staff can also use this report to support Safe Routes to School funding and support opportunities such as:

- MnDOT SRTS grants
- Federal SRTS grants
- Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)

For all infrastructure recommendations, a traffic study and more detailed engineering may be necessary to evaluate project feasibility. Additional public outreach should be conducted before final design and construction. For recommendations within the public right-of-way, the responsible agency will determine how (and if) to incorporate suggestions into local improvement plans and prioritize funding to best meet the needs of each school community.

## I WORK FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police department staff can use this report to understand issues related to walking and bicycling to school and to lead and support education, encouragement, and enforcement activities that make it easier and safer for students to walk and bike to school. Enforcement efforts should focus on traffic safety education, rewarding positive behavior, and supporting school walk and bike events. Law enforcement representatives should be mindful of strategies that may disproportionately and negatively affect students and families of color, low wealth, or marginalized populations.

## I WORK IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health staff can use this report to identify specific opportunities to collaborate with schools and local governments to support safety improvements and encourage healthy behaviors in school children and their families.







## Next Steps

*With a SRTS Plan in place, it's time to shift attention to implementation.*

*The strategies identified in this plan may seem overwhelming at first. Just remember that anything you can do to make walking and biking to school safer, easier, and more fun for students is a step in the right direction. Here are some things to remember:*

### START SMALL

Small actions can have a big impact, especially when it comes to building support, interest, and momentum for bigger initiatives.

### FOCUS ON EQUITY

Not everyone has equal opportunities to walk and bike to school. Identify and prioritize strategies to address and overcome barriers that disproportionately impact the most vulnerable students.

### BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Look for opportunities to strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones. Reach out to parents, community members, local agencies and community organizations, and other stakeholders to expand capacity and support for Safe Routes to School initiatives.

### EMPOWER STUDENTS AS LEADERS

Students-led initiatives can generate enthusiasm and improve social conditions for Safe Routes to School. Empower students to take ownership of programs to raise awareness, build excitement, and expand opportunities for their peers to walk and bike to school.

### TRACK PROGRESS

Continue to track trips and survey parents and students about their experiences walking and biking to school. Conducting regular evaluation will help your team understand what works and what doesn't work and allocate resources accordingly. Consider reporting annually on progress.

### CELEBRATE SUCCESS

Take time to recognize efforts and celebrate progress. Whether it's changing travel habits, achieving a major milestone, implementing an infrastructure improvement, launching a new program, or hosting a successful event, recognize and celebrate success.

