Safe Routes to School Policy Plan

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

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

JUNE 2017

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MINNESOTA **SAFE ROUTES** TO SCHOOL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following key people/entities participated in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan efforts for this Safe Routes to School Policy Plan. Their creativity, energy, and commitment were critical to the success of this effort.

MINNESOTA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

mn DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

alta PLANNING + DESIGN

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INTRODUCTION + CONTEXT

Why Safe Routes to School?

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13%

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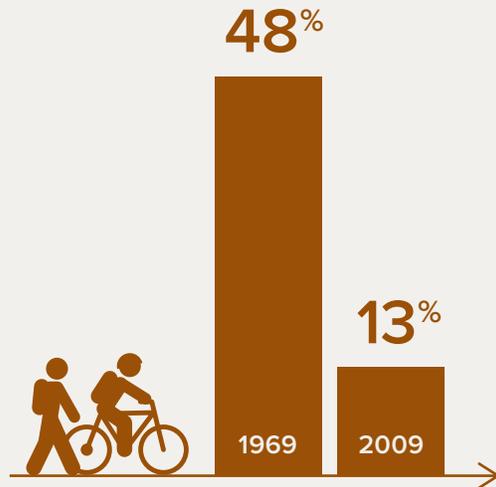
THE PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WALKING OR BIKING TO SCHOOL HAS DROPPED PRECIPITOUSLY WITHIN ONE GENERATION

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

Are more likely to be a healthy body weight

Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety

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

Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance*

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

Introduction

"Walking and biking to school is a rite of passage for kids. We are helping them do so safely by developing a Safe Routes to School program in Saint Paul. By investing significant resources to improve pedestrian safety across the entire city, we are making Saint Paul more walkable, bikeable, and sustainable, for generations to come."

 - Mayor Chris Coleman

The Saint Paul Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Steering Committee believes that schools are the heart of the community and share a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) vision that people of all ages and abilities are able to safely walk, bike, or take transit to and from school.

More than 37,000 students attend Saint Paul Public Schools. Nearly half speak a language other than English at home, and 70% are eligible for free or reduced price lunch. According to the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey, between 22-30% of students in 8th, 9th and 11th grade in Ramsey County were overweight or obese. Between 8-17% of students reported zero days with the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity over a one week period.

The City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS), and other stakeholders will need to work closely together to advance opportunities for youth to walk and bike. This SRTS Policy Plan provides a coordinated strategy to make it easier and safer for youth to walk and bike throughout Saint Paul.

This SRTS Policy Plan presents recommendations for ways that the partner agencies of the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, and SPPS can deepen involvement with SRTS activities.

- Chapter 1 Introduction + Context provides the context of why the partner agencies support SRTS activities and presents an overview of existing activities that support active transportation for school commutes.

- Chapter 2 Policy Recommendations considers transportation, land use, enforcement, and school district policies that impact school travel and transportation improvements.

- Chapter 3 SRTS Integration into Agency Operations addresses strategies for how the City, County, and SPPS can promote SRTS considerations throughout agency procedures.

- Chapter 4 Community Engagement Strategies propose ways the partner agencies can promote SRTS messages through communications and involve the public in SRTS activities and planning activities.

- Chapter 5 Action Plan + Next Steps summarizes the key recommendations by agency and suggests implementation strategies.

The Appendices provide supporting information, and accompanying technical memoranda present complete background, best practices, and detailed recommendations. The recommendations throughout this plan are based on peer city best practices, research, and current policy and practice in Saint Paul.

Safe Routes to School in Saint Paul

Saint Paul schools have a long history of supporting walking and biking to school, beginning as early as 1920 with the founding of the Saint Paul School Police Patrol Program, in which students help their peers cross safely at busy streets near schools. Public, charter, and private schools participate in the program, which culminates with a yearly parade through downtown Saint Paul.

Other current activities in Saint Paul include:

- Some SPPS schools use the **Walk! Bike! Fun!** curriculum to educate students on traffic rules, bicycle handling and maintenance, and safe walking behaviors.

- The District and some schools have **bike fleets** for use in student education and encouragement activities.

- Many SPPS schools participate in the **national Walk/Bike to School Days** in October and May. Schools compete for the Walk/Bike to School Day Traveling Trophy by promoting the day and conducting remote bus drops, allowing students to take the bus partway to school and then walk. Over 3,000 students at 17 schools participated in spring 2017.

- Analysis of **parent/caregiver surveys** from eight schools, Washington Technology Magnet, Randolph Heights, Expo for Excellence, Chelsea Heights, Bruce Vento, Farnsworth Upper, Holy Spirit, and Cretin Derham Hall found that fear of crime or violence, distance, safety of intersections and crossings, presence of sidewalks, presence of crossing guards, and speed/amount of traffic along the route are common barriers for parents allowing their children to walk or bicycle at these schools. SRTS programs can address these concerns through outreach and messaging, while working on larger infrastructure improvements. SRTS programs like walking school buses and neighborhood beautification can reduce fears about personal safety while walking and biking to school, leading to improved school attendance rates.

- The City's **"Stop for Me" campaign** encourages people driving and walking to be more aware at intersections, crosswalks, and parking lots; educates drivers about how stopping for pedestrians is the law and common courtesy; and helps enforce Minnesota's crosswalk law. The campaign is an initiative of the Saint Paul Police, the Saint Paul District Councils, and community groups. The campaign is aimed at the general public and is not specifically targeted at youth or families.

- The City will soon **improve pedestrian infrastructure** near Washington Technology Magnet School and Expo Elementary using $1.3 million in funding from the federal and state governments. The City and SPPS are working together on three school-specific SRTS Plans at Chelsea Heights, Bruce Vento, and Farnsworth Upper schools.

- SPPS **communicates** with parents about transportation issues, primarily bussing, through social media, the SPPS website, the SPPS Happening Now newsletter, individual school newsletters, and automated calls, texts, and emails.

The Six E's

Safe Routes to School programs use a variety of strategies to make it easy, fun and safe for children to walk and bike to school. These strategies are often called the "Six Es." Programs utilizing all six E's are more successful than those using just a few strategies.

EDUCATION

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

ENCOURAGEMENT

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

ENGINEERING

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

ENFORCEMENT

Strategies aimed at improving travel behavior near schools and ensuring safe roads for all users through law enforcement and other avenues.

EVALUATION

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

EQUITY

An overarching concept that applies to all of the E's, ensuring that all residents have access to and can take advantage of the resources provided through the program.
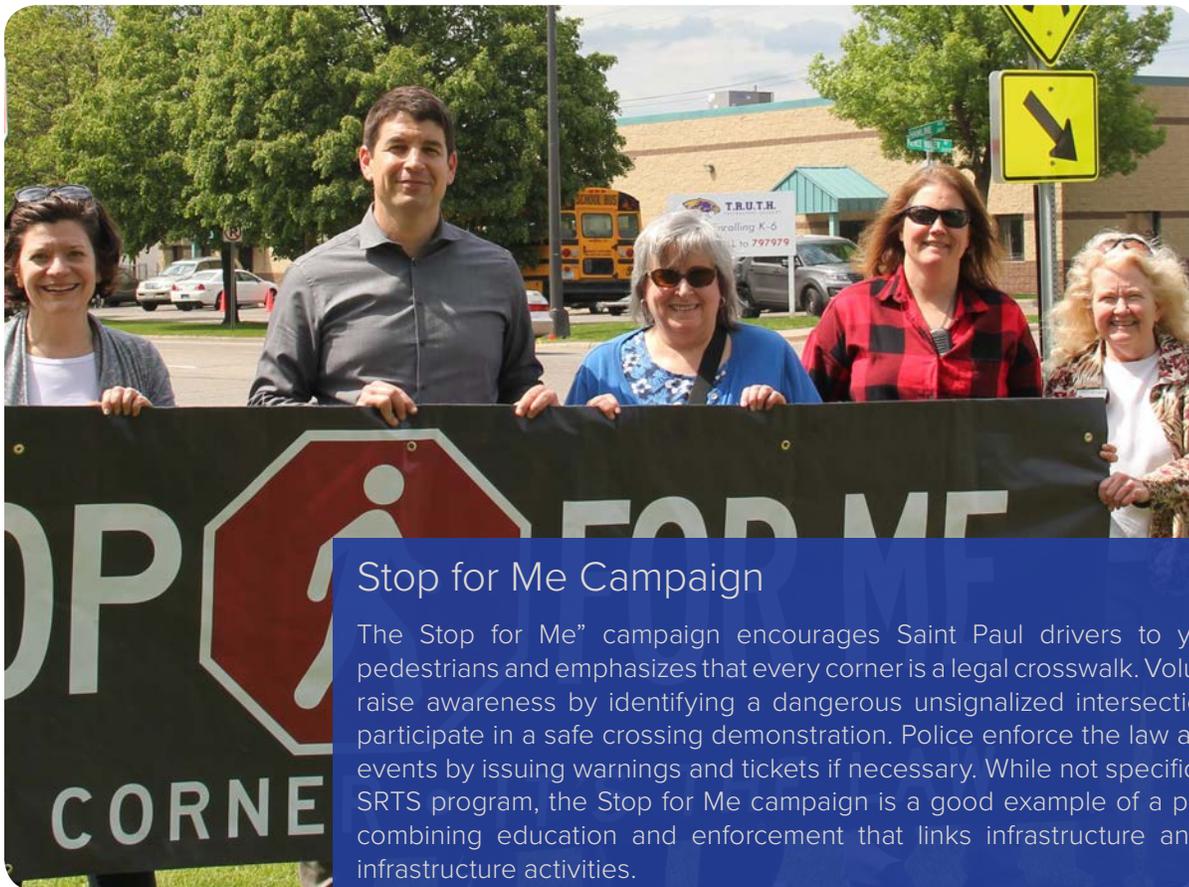
Stop for Me Campaign

The Stop for Me" campaign encourages Saint Paul drivers to yield to pedestrians and emphasizes that every corner is a legal crosswalk. Volunteers raise awareness by identifying a dangerous unsignalized intersection and participate in a safe crossing demonstration. Police enforce the law at these events by issuing warnings and tickets if necessary. While not specifically an SRTS program, the Stop for Me campaign is a good example of a program combining education and enforcement that links infrastructure and non-infrastructure activities.

02

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on a review of existing local policies and practices, national guidance, research, and peer city case studies. While pedestrian crossing policies are a component of transportation policy, the City of Saint Paul identified a specific need for more guidance on these issues, and the Plan provides additional recommendations pertaining to pedestrian crossings at signalized, un-signalized, and school intersections.

The following chapter, *SRTS Integration into Agency Operations*, discusses in detail suggestions for implementing these policy recommendations.

Policy Context

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

Transportation policies can support SRTS by promoting a focus on providing safe and comfortable bicycle and walking routes to schools, by requiring accommodation of all types of bicyclists in facility design guidelines, and through other Complete Streets policies.

Current transportation planning policy for Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul supports complete streets and active transportation:

- The City's *Comprehensive Plan* policy requires staff to establish partnerships and strategies to invest in bicycling and walking. The Plan describes schools as strategic partners in education and important community destinations for people walking and bicycling.

- The *Saint Paul Street Design Manual* promotes complete streets and addresses school-specific challenges. The Manual reflects national best practice for safe, multi-modal urban design.

- The City's *Complete Streets Action Plan* identifies a need for a unifying SRTS framework for promotion of transportation improvements, and it calls for the establishment of a citywide SRTS policy to unite different safety, education, and design planning components.

- The County's *All Abilities Transportation Policy* outlines its dedication to providing infrastructure for people of all abilities in all modes of transportation. It prioritizes pedestrians first, followed by people who bike, people who use transit, drivers/parkers, and freight operators.

In practice, however, both the City and County have faced challenges with implementing policies to build more bike and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, including near schools. Both the City and the County tend to use a request-based system to determine where to make stand-alone pedestrian crossing improvements. Stand-alone pedestrian crossing improvements are sometimes proposed as part of the City's capital improvement planning process. City staff have a Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Traffic Safety Program fund of only approximately $235,000 per year to draw on for stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian improvements. This funding represents less than one percent of the money allocated to Public Works in the Capital Improvement Budget. Local officials are interested in a more strategic, plan-based approach.

Challenges to implementing SRTS programs in particular have centered on issues with capacity and coordination, especially prior to the establishment of the Safe Routes to School Steering Committee. The City of Saint Paul acquired some resources to do walking route maps for a handful of schools, though the communication and follow-up with those schools were a challenge. Capacity for SRTS work is still an ongoing concern, particularly at SPPS, but having the Steering Committee in place helps with communication and distributing the work load as much as is feasible.

Pedestrian Crossing Guidance and Policies

The City and County regularly consider pedestrian crossing improvements as part of larger resurfacing and reconstruction projects. Both the City and the County tend to use a request-based system to determine where to make stand-alone pedestrian crossing improvements, but would like to move towards a more systematic and proactive approach to crossing improvements. The current processes include:

- When a marked crossing is requested at an unsignalized location, City staff refer to the Saint Paul Department of Public Works Traffic and Lighting Division Traffic Engineering Section Policy and Procedure Manual. City staff consider factors such as average daily traffic, roadway width, and crash history, among others.

- County staff evaluate a marked crossing request with guidance from the MnDOT Pedestrian Crossings on Minnesota State Highways decision flowchart, (published in 2005 and updated in a Technical Memorandum released in 2015) which considers elements like average daily traffic and number of students crossing. Staff are flexible on the guidelines within school areas, and will consult the school's SRTS plan, if available.

Both City and County staff noted that the lack of clear communication tools for pedestrian crossing decisions creates challenges for their work. They also lack formal processes for implementing school speed zones, High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) beacons, and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) Signal

The HAWK signal remains dark until activated by pressing the crossing button. Once activated, the signal responds immediately with a flashing yellow pattern which transitions to a solid red light, providing unequivocal 'stop' guidance to motorists. HAWK signals have been shown to elicit high rates of motorist compliance.

Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB)

An RRFB uses an irregular stutter flash pattern with bright amber lights (similar to those on emergency vehicles) to alert drivers to yield to people waiting to cross. The RRFB offers a higher level of driver compliance than other flashing yellow beacons, but lower than the HAWK signal.

LAND USE POLICIES

Land use policies are adopted and implemented by city and county governments with land use authority. The types of land use policies that impact SRTS include standards that require or encourage new development to provide access to schools, promotion of mixed-use development, planning for neighborhood schools. All of these types of policies are likely to increase the preponderance of families living within walking or bicycling distance of their schools.

Saint Paul land use policy is centered around the Comprehensive Plan, which is currently being updated. The current 2010 Comprehensive Plan promotes mixed-use development and increased density as the city grows; it does not include any specific goals or strategies for SRTS.

SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

Policies at the school district level can greatly impact school travel by normalizing walking and bicycling as desirable, healthy, and safe ways for students to get to school. In particular, hazard busing zones, school siting policies, and school choice policies have the potential to impact SRTS programs. School choice policies especially impact SRTS because when children do not attend their neighborhood school, they may live too far from school to walk or bike.

SPPS policy does not currently address or promote students walking or biking to school, aside from brief mentions of providing bike parking in front of schools. Most District materials, including in the District's 2017 School Selection Guide, the policy, student safety conduct guidelines, or the departure and arrival policy, do not mention biking and walking at all. The Selection Guide alerts parents that the bus is the easiest way for students to get to school, with no mention of alternatives such as walking to school. SPPS recently changed its busing policy to reduce the minimum busing distance, to compete with charter schools that pick up students from home.

ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

As one of the main "E's" of SRTS efforts, enforcement can have a large impact on whether families feel safe and comfortable walking and bicycling to school. Policies can cover when and how local police enforce traffic laws and establish community-based approaches to enforcement, and should pay special attention to ensuring that enforcement initiatives are equitable and not targeted to members of specific communities. Some enforcement policies, such as required helmet use for adults and restrictions on bicycling on the sidewalk, may deter walking and bicycling.

The Saint Paul Police Department (SPPD) requires the department to have a School Police Patrol coordinator to oversee school patrol operations. The SPPD has enforcement policies for traffic violations that they enforce particularly in school zones. However, none of the current policies specifically address students walking or biking to school, either positively or negatively.

The Toward Zero Deaths statewide traffic safety program, which includes enforcement activities, does not sufficiently address walking and biking in urban areas. A Vision Zero program in Saint Paul could fill that gap, but the City has not yet adopted a Vision Zero Policy to guide transportation enforcement activities. Vision Zero is a strategy used in cities around the world to end traffic fatalities and injuries while supporting safe, healthy, and equitable mobility.

Policy Recommendations

SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Non-Infrastructure Policies

- Establish a districtwide SRTS Policy that elevates walking and biking as healthy, fun, and useful alternatives to driving and taking the bus that help students pay attention in class and meet physical activity goals.

- Integrate lessons from the Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum developed by MnDOT as part of Bus Safety Week to get students excited and prepared to bike and walk to school from the start.

- Incentivize walking and biking to school and minimize dangers from cars by adopting early dismissal guidelines that allow students who walk and bike to school to leave before those who are taking the bus or traveling by car.

- Add SRTS to the District Policy that is currently under development, to promote biking and walking to school as an easy way to add physical activity and for students to spend time with friends and family.

- Adopt an evaluation policy to track SRTS program participation by school in the fall and spring by collecting student tallies and/or National Center for SRTS parent surveys. Schools with SRTS programs will prepare a yearly progress report for the district and update their SRTS plans every 5 years.

- Adopt a policy that establishes an adult crossing guard program with police officers and/or paid adults in collaboration with Ramsey County, Saint Paul Police Department, and the City of Saint Paul.

- Work with neighborhood watch, anti-bullying, and youth violence prevention programs to support student personal safety while walking and biking to school.

- Recruit parent and community volunteers to serve as Corner Captains in areas where student personal safety is a concern. Corner Captains are stationed at hot spot locations and provide increased adult presence along routes to school, discouraging bullying and other unsafe behaviors.

Infrastructure Policies

- Amend the "Transportation Due to Extraordinary Hazardous Traffic Conditions" policy to establish a clearer link between the criteria for designating a road as hazardous and solutions for minimizing danger. A school designates a roadway as 'an extraordinary hazard' if it has a posted speed limit over 30 mph. The school will make an exception if traffic volumes on the roadway are low enough to allow students to cross during gaps in traffic. Students who live within the school's walk zone but who would have to cross a hazardous roadway on their route to school are bussed. A revised policy could describe types of street situations where different solutions would apply, e.g., speed and volume and route thresholds for considering traffic control changes, increased enforcement, installing sidewalks, or employing an adult crossing guard where appropriate.

- Establish district district-wide facility guidelines for quantity, quality, and location of school bike racks. (Currently, SPPS considers bike storage on a school-by-school basis.)

- Amend the school siting and closure policies to include criteria that consider SRTS-supportive factors, such as street design, surrounding land use patterns, and proximity to homes, into procedures for school siting and closures.

- Amend facility plans to address how to design for people walking and biking.

- Update SPPS district and school SRTS plans to adopt the prioritization recommendations developed through the SRTS Policy Plan.

Potential SRTS education policy:

District encourages individual schools to provide active transportation safety education and trainings on walking and bicycling skills as part of Bus Safety Week, using the MnDOT Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum.

Suggested policy language from ChangeLab Solutions/SRTS National Partnership

Enforcement Policy

District, in partnership with the administrator of the crossing guard program, if applicable, shall work together with Safe Routes to School District Task Force, and School Teams, if applicable, to ensure that an effective process exists for hiring, funding, training, locating, supervising, and properly equipping crossing guards for District schools. District, in partnership with the aforementioned entities, if applicable, shall work to ensure the equitable distribution of crossing guards among District schools in light of specific safety hazards and the number of students affected by such hazards. If the number of crossing guards at a particular school is insufficient, District shall, in partnership with the aforementioned entities, if applicable, seek additional funding or resources to increase the number of crossing guards at such school.

Policy in Support of SRTS

District supports SRTS programs and activities because active transportation can:

- *Increase physical activity levels for students,*

- *Improve student health,*

- *Decrease automobile congestion and related danger of injury to students,*

- *Reduce air pollution and related greenhouse gas emissions,*

- *Reduce costs related to busing, and*

- *Improve attendance rates and student achievement*

District further supports efforts to increase participation in Safe Routes to School programs and activities in those schools with the fewest resources, among low-income students, students with health challenges, and those with physical and mental disabilities.

More policy language available at http://www.changelabsolutions.org/safe-routes/policies

CITY OF SAINT PAUL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Policies

- Adopt a Comprehensive Plan goal for bicycle and pedestrian mode share, and reference it in updates to the SRTS Plan, Bicycle Plan, Pedestrian Plan, and Compete Streets Design Guide. Require that new development has high quality bike and pedestrian accessibility.

- As the City of Saint Paul updates its Bicycle Plan and creates its Pedestrian Plan, the City should integrate the Saint Paul SRTS Plan, include schools as key destinations, and plan for SRTS engineering improvements, encouragement, and increased enforcement around schools. The Pedestrian Plan could include an "All Ages and Abilities Priority Network" that connects schools, parks, and community centers and identifies recommended improvements to build this network. Add a section to the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan about SRTS, summarizing relevant design and safety guidelines and using the route maps in facility prioritization. Some proposed routes in the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan may need to be re-routed to include connectivity to schools, and some proposed facilities may need to be modified to a facility type more comfortable for youth.

- Develop and adopt a school speed zone policy to determine priority locations and implement reduced speed limits on city roads.

- Develop guidelines for signage and RRFBs at crosswalks in school zones (see Appendix B for details).

- Adopt a policy of painting high-visibility crosswalks at schools and along designated walking routes.

- Add policy language requiring annual evaluation of the Complete Streets Design Guide's performance measure: the number of students who walk and bike to school in the City of Saint Paul. The City should use student tally data collected by the district and school SRTS programs.

Land Use Policies

- Amend the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan to include walking and biking to school in the Vision Statement, e.g., "We envision a community where children and adults safely and conveniently walk, bicycle, and use public transportation as part of daily routines to get to schools, parks, shopping, health care facilities, work, and other destinations."

- Adopt a Comprehensive Plan land use policy to promote infill development near schools in a way that integrates development into the existing community instead of in industrial districts.

- Adopt a Comprehensive Plan policy that directly supports biking and walking to school.

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan to include a school facility plan that includes requirements for bike parking, connectivity to the bike and pedestrian networks, and school location.

- Understanding that new charter schools open on a regular basis, the City should identify opportunities within the existing review process to consider bike and pedestrian safety and accessibility. If no review process exists, the City should consider establishing a permitting system for new schools that includes an assessment of bike and pedestrian safety, including such criteria as a complete sidewalk network or the percentage of students who live within a 1/2 mile or mile, depending on the grade range of the proposed charter.

- Coordinate with SPPS to create school siting and closure criteria that factors in land use and street design for people walking and biking. The policy should discourage school siting in industrial areas, encouraging schools to be built in residential or mixed-use areas.

- Implement the Complete Streets Action Plan requirement that school development projects require pedestrian impact studies and improvements and examine the impact on bicyclists.

Enforcement Policies

- Support an adult crossing guard program with police officers and/or paid adults for SPPS in collaboration with Ramsey County, Saint Paul Police Department, and SPPS. Currently Saint Paul police officers receive some training about helping students cross the road, but there is not a program.

- Advance equity in enforcement by working with the Saint Paul Police Department to adopt a policy of warnings and education for all but the most egregious traffic violations potentially in parallel with a promotional campaign that connects youth bicyclists with bike helmets and lights and provides safety education in lieu of citations.

- Start a Vision Zero program to promote policies that complement SRTS by working to eliminate traffic fatalities, prioritizing engineering improvements and outreach activities near schools, where some of the most vulnerable populations travel.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RAMSEY COUNTY

Transportation Policies

- Adopt the county-specific recommendations of the Saint Paul SRTS Plan and the Ramsey County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP). Updates to the BPMP should include schools as key destinations and call for SRTS engineering improvements, encouragement and enforcement around schools.

- Include proximity of a transportation project to a school as part of the criteria in the County's All Abilities Network Evaluation Checklist.

Enforcement Policies

- Start a Vision Zero program to promote policies that complement SRTS by working to eliminate traffic fatalities, prioritizing engineering improvements and outreach activities near schools, where some of the most vulnerable populations travel.

03

SRTS INTEGRATION INTO AGENCY
OPERATIONS

SRTS Integration in Agency Operations

The City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, and SPPS can integrate SRTS into their regular processes and operations to benefit from a citywide approach to SRTS. Currently, there is no consistent point of contact for questions, concerns or ideas about walking and biking to school at the City, County, or School District, leading to missed opportunities to improve student safety and health as well as inefficient and inconsistent responses to requests for improvement near schools.

Cities and school districts can support each other to create a well-rounded SRTS program: School districts can implement local infrastructure projects (bike parking, sidewalks on campus, access to school grounds), while cities can make changes off campus (crossings and route improvements). Schools can offer in-school programming (curriculum, P.E. class education), and cities can broadly communicate the benefits of SRTS to community partners outside of schools.

Recommendations for City and County operations consider transportation planning and infrastructure projects, as well as coordination with police, zoning, and public health. Recommendations for SPPS focus on communication with schools, facilities improvements, SRTS programming, and funding. To work across agency boundaries, SPPS, the City, and the County should conduct bi-monthly SRTS steering committee meetings to coordinate activities and share resources.

Project Prioritization

Identifying SRTS priority areas will help the City focus staff time on planning, design, education, and enforcement for areas with the greatest SRTS needs. Establishing criteria to rank potential infrastructure projects will allow for a transparent, objective, and proactive process, leading to more equitable outcomes.

IDENTIFY SRTS PRIORITY AREAS

Using available geospatial data, the City could create a map that shows SRTS priority areas. This process would help the City understand areas of greatest need for SRTS planning, infrastructure, education, and enforcement. See Appendix C for recommended elements to identify priority areas.

This analysis will help the City take a more proactive approach to SRTS. With an understanding of SRTS priority areas, the City could work with schools in the priority areas to develop SRTS plans and identify SRTS infrastructure improvements in these areas. The City could also focus its education and enforcement efforts in SRTS priority areas.

PRIORITIZE POTENTIAL SRTS PROJECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

As the City generates a list of potential SRTS infrastructure projects, it will be helpful to develop a clear and transparent process for prioritizing implementation of SRTS infrastructure. The following criteria could be used by the City to evaluate and prioritize projects for funding and implementation:

- Does the pedestrian crossings flowchart (see Appendix B) indicate a need for crossing improvement regardless of whether the crossing is in a school area?

- Proximity to a school: is the project along an identified walking route?

- Documented concern: crash data, traffic volumes and speeds, and other evidence supporting the need for the project.

- Project improves crossing of road designated as hazardous by school district that cuts off the walk zone.

- Number of students in the walk zone.

- School support for SRTS initiatives, indicated by existing school patrol and other SRTS activities.

- Project connections to other destinations for youth: community centers, parks, libraries, etc.

- Project addresses SRTS for underserved populations.

    - Number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch.

    - Number of students of color.

    - Number of students who are English Language Learners.

- Technical feasibility and project readiness.

Policy Prioritization

Policy changes and implementation can require significant staff resources and will need to take place over several years. To assist in determining which policies should be a focus in the near term, the City could identify policy priorities using the following criteria:

- Safety: policy has the greatest potential to improve safety for youth by reducing traffic speeds, improving crossings, filling sidewalk/bikeway gaps, and enforcing safe driving around schools.

- Equity: policy takes a systematic approach to improving walk/bike opportunities and safety for underserved youth.

- Timeliness: is there a limited time window for integrating a SRTS policy into a current plan or policy update?

SRTS Coordinator Position

SRTS Coordinators are vital to successful coordination between agencies. They can be full- or part- time staff members housed at the City, County, and School District. Coordinator activities at all levels can include:

- Coordinating planning for infrastructure improvements across agency boundaries.

- Providing program administration across the agencies.

- Addressing community member concerns about school crossings, driver behavior, and other transportation issues.

- Integrating SRTS into operations and supporting a more systematic process for improving walking and biking to schools.

- Supporting SRTS education and encouragement programming.

- Monitoring and evaluating progress toward goals.

- Helping schools apply for funding.

- Developing SRTS champions and teams at schools in priority areas.

Table 1 shows additional responsibilities for Coordinators housed at the City, County, and District. At the City or County level, a part-time or full-time staff person could support SRTS activities, depending on the funding available. If the agency budget cannot accommodate the position, it could be funded through a transportation or health grant, or formalized in the job description of existing Public Works staff.

In particular, a District SRTS Coordinator will be important in communicating the everyday issues faced by students and school staff, and can fill the vital role of serving as a support within the school district to help schools make progress on SRTS efforts.

Table 1. SRTS Coordinator Responsibilities by Agency

AGENCY	CITY OF SAINT PAUL	RAMSEY COUNTY	SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Infrastructure project coordination	Incorporating SRTS into planning and projects on city roads. Helping school SRTS plans comply with City policies and capabilities. Reviewing school rezoning and siting requests.	Incorporating SRTS into planning and projects on county roads. Helping school SRTS plans comply with County policies and capabilities.	Incorporating SRTS into SPPS facilities planning and projects on district property. Representing SPPS in transportation planning and projects .
Collaboration & coordination	Facilitating across agency boundaries and with charter and private schools. Working with police to support education and enforcement. Serving as the point of contact for concerns on City roads.	Connecting Public Health department resources to SRTS efforts. Serving as the point of contact for concerns on County roads.	Communicating with individual schools about opportunities to provide input on transportation planning and capital improvement projects. Coordinating District-wide Bike/Walk to School Days and adult crossing guard program. Serving as the point of contact for individual school, parent, and community concerns, and communicating those concerns to the City and County SRTS Coordinators.

SRTS Integration into City Operations

Integration of SRTS into City operations means institutionalizing walking and biking to school as an acceptable and encouraged norm by including it in policies, plans, staffing, informational material, and routine practices. Strategies for integrating SRTS into City operations include: identifying a citywide SRTS Coordinator, integrating SRTS into transportation planning and project development, and integrating SRTS into land use, education and enforcement efforts.

INTEGRATION WITH TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESSES

Updates to Existing Transportation Plans

As infrastructure funding becomes available, City staff should reference the following planned recommendations for active transportation improvements and consider impacts to school travel:

- *The Saint Paul Street Design Manual* proposes street treatments around schools.

- *The Saint Paul Bicycle Plan* calls for better connections to schools and identifies specific routes for bicycling enhancements.

- The Complete Streets Action Plan calls for citywide connections to schools.

- The upcoming *Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan.*

- Walk audits or charrettes (recommended below).

- School-specific SRTS plans.

Updates to each plan should prioritize projects and policies that increase safety and comfort for people walking and biking near schools.

Identify and Prioritize Projects within School Walk Zones

The City should evaluate needs at all schools and prioritize projects within school walk zones in priority areas, as detailed on page 20. Walk zones are the areas to which the District does not provide bus service because homes are within walking distance and there are no safety barriers.

Needs should be identified through a school-specific SRTS planning process, which can take many forms, from simple walk audits to multi-day community design charrettes. Walk audits bring staff, parents, students, and other stakeholders together to observe student drop-off or pick-up, identify common routes and uncomfortable or unsafe crossings in the

walk zone. A SRTS charrette includes all the components of a walk audit, and is a one- or two-day community-building event that establishes support and buy-in by involving many stakeholders in the planning process.

Both processes result in a School Travel Plan that identifies specific needs and projects to improve walking and bicycling access to schools as well as suggested walking routes to schools. Ideally, schools should update their plans every five to ten years, or when there is significant change to the school layout or surrounding property. With approximately 51 public schools and 56 charter schools, it will be important to prioritize schools and group improvements. The City could work with school clusters to maximize efficiency and complete more plans each year.

The SRTS Steering Committee should do the following:

1. **Complete School-Based SRTS Plans at Priority Schools:** The Steering Committee could generate a list of priority schools for SRTS planning based on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans and safety and equity data. Based on the prioritized list, the Steering Committee would develop SRTS plans at several schools per year, using City staff, consultants, and/or the MnDOT Planning Assistance Grant process to complete the work. If awarded MnDOT SRTS funding, Saint Paul can accomplish three SRTS Travel Plans per year. The Steering Committee could supplement funding with money from the City budget and/or apply for transportation and health grant funding.

2. **Conduct Walk Audits of all Other Saint Paul Schools:** Utilizing lower cost planning processes like walk audits may enable the Steering Committee to review needs at more schools per year. The City should set a specific goal for audits per year. Minneapolis conducts school transportation audits, and typically completes 10-12 each year using both city staff and consultant assistance.

3. **Integrate SRTS projects into City Plans:** The City has a unique opportunity to leverage the upcoming Pedestrian Plan process set to begin in fall 2017. Planners can conduct specific outreach to schools during the public engagement phase. The Pedestrian Plan could include an "All Ages and Abilities Priority Network" that connects schools, parks, and community centers and identifies recommended improvements to build this network. The City should update the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan recommendations to call out connections to schools and routes that are comfortable for youth, as identified through walk audits and priority school SRTS plans. Some proposed routes may need to be re-routed to include connectivity to schools, and some proposed facilities may need to be modified to a facility type more comfortable for youth.

Create a Network of Suggested Routes to School

Regardless of the approach, analyzing issues and barriers at each school will identify routes to schools that are more comfortable for youth. The City, County, and SPPS should identify a preferred network of walking routes to schools. The City could create and publish a map of these suggested routes to school, as the City of Minneapolis did with its "Walking Routes for Youth" map. The map could show how these walking routes also connect to other destinations for youth such as parks, libraries, and community centers, enhancing the map's usefulness for all youth, not just ones who live close enough to walk to school.

Store and Catalogue Infrastructure Recommendations in a Geospatial Database

All SRTS infrastructure recommendations should be digitized and stored in a geodatabase for reference on other projects. This should be integrated into the City's ArcGIS mapping database and into Compass. Compass is a geospatial database used to provide information to city staff to support planning and engineering.

Minneapolis
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Minneapolis City of Lakes   MPS MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

U.S.Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administratio

1/4 mile

Mississippi River

SAINT PAUL

Hiawatha
Northrop
St. Helena
Minnehaha Academy Lower
Hiawatha School Park
Minnehaha Park
Longfellow Gardens
Wabun Picnic Area
Minneapolis Academy
Nokomis Library
Morris Park
Hiawatha Leadership Academy
Bossen Field
North Star
MN Veterans Home
VA Medical Center
Coldwater Spring
Ford Bridge
Ford Dam
Ford Plant Fields
Hidden Falls Park
Dog Park
Hillcrest Park
Homecroft
Homecroft Park

Walking Routes for Youth Map

The City of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Public Schools collaborated to create a Walking Routes for Youth map to help youth and families navigate their neighborhoods. The map shows preferred walking routes to key destinations such as schools, parks, recreation centers, and libraries. The Walking Routes for Youth is available in both print and mobile format and has been translated into Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. It is a valuable resources for communication with students and families and planning SRTS activities and infrastructure improvements.

INTEGRATION WITH CITY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Street reconstruction projects are labor- and material-intensive and are often planned several years prior to construction, with project budgets that allow room for including pedestrian improvements. By contrast, street resurfacing project budgets are limited to the street resurfacing and striping, and often do not have room to integrate pedestrian improvements. Reconstruction and resurfacing projects must therefore be considered differently in integration of SRTS projects.

Identified routes to schools should be considered when reconstruction or resurfacing projects move forward. Special attention should be paid to projects impacting identified walking routes to schools. Coordination for safety improvements during resurfacing or reconstruction projects in these areas will have the greatest impact for student safety and comfort. During review of upcoming resurfacing or reconstruction projects, City staff should prioritize SRTS improvements as part of projects on defined walking routes.

Street Reconstruction Projects

Table 2 describes how Saint Paul and District staff should collaborate to integrate SRTS improvements into capital projects to reconstruct a street. In general, it should be the responsibility of City staff to engage school and District contacts in the project planning process. If the project impacts a defined walking route, the Project Manager should coordinate directly with the impacted schools during project scoping and preliminary design, utilizing the SRTS Steering Committee as a resource in this process. It is important to share information to ensure a reconstruction project incorporates opportunities to improve walk and bike safety and access to schools.

It is important to acknowledge that not all schools have defined specific walking routes, and it is not reasonable to expect a Project Manager to work with the school to identify walking routes as part of all reconstruction projects. Storing identified walking routes in a geospatial database will allow Project Managers to easily recognize which projects will impact schools.

Table 2. Workflow Recommendations for City-SPPS Coordination on City of Saint Paul Transportation Projects

CITY OF SAINT PAUL	SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Capital Improvement Budget and Program request (Capital budgeting process input phase): Biannual process	
Proactively advocate for inclusion of SRTS improvements identified through transportation planning in the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) and in the Public Works Department five-year capital plan. Highlight opportunities to provide input on list of anticipated projects that are included in the CIB and in the Public Works Department five-year capital plan. Provide SRTS Steering Committee with list of anticipated projects for input	Provide input on projects and funding programs included in the CIB and in the Public Works Department five-year capital plan that the school district would like to see in the City's budget. The CIB process is currently being updated, so the mechanisms for input may shift. The City should consider mechanisms for SRTS Steering Committee input as the new CIB process is developed. Propose projects through the CIB process and in the Public Works Department five-year capital plan.
Project scoping and preliminary design	
Provide a list of City projects that are currently in the scoping and preliminary design phases to be shared at proposed SRTS steering committee meetings. City Project Managers should work with the SRTS Steering Committee to coordinate with schools when transportation projects impact identified walking routes to school or are located in an SRTS priority area. Project Managers should encourage the school community to participate in outreach activities planned for the project. Keep SPPS staff informed of project milestones.	Request list of projects in scoping and preliminary design phases to be shared at regular SRTS steering committee meetings. Provide feedback on City projects, as requested by City staff and/or individual schools. Encourage families from affected schools to attend project meetings and provide input.
Final design	
Coordinate with SPPS school administration regarding construction timing and potential impacts to school transportation and walk/bike activities.	School administration should coordinate with City staff to understand construction timing and potential impacts to a specific school's transportation and school walk/bike activities.

Street Resurfacing Projects

In the case of street resurfacing projects, limited funding presents a challenge to implementing pedestrian and bicycle improvements beyond striping. However, it may be possible to leverage the resurfacing project to provide valuable improvements if additional SRTS funding is available.

The City SRTS Coordinator should review the annual list of resurfacing projects to identify opportunities to consider SRTS improvements as part of street resurfacing. SRTS improvements might include striping changes or more extensive changes (such as crossing improvements) if SRTS dollars are available. Resurfacing is an important time to revisit crosswalk markings in general, being deliberate about which crosswalks are restriped and where high-visibility crosswalks are added. It could be advantageous to coordinate SRTS improvements while crews are resurfacing.

SRTS INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT FUNDING

Because SRTS improvements are also needed on streets not scheduled for reconstruction or resurfacing, the City should establish a dedicated SRTS fund to enable implementation of standalone SRTS projects. This funding could also be used as a match for state and federal SRTS grants.

Some cities are creating new sources of funding to support SRTS. The City of Portland passed a gas tax ballot measure in 2016 to create a local funding source dedicated to street improvements, and has dedicated $8 million of the projected $64 million raised through this measure over the next four years to SRTS. The City of Seattle passed a major transportation levy in 2015 that allocates $800,000 to SRTS per year for nine years. It includes a total of $206 million for general safe routes projects (not necessarily school-specific) over the nine-year period, or about $22 million per year.

A possible funding source would be camera speed and red-light enforcement fees (technology not currently allowed under MN state law). These fees could be directed towards SRTS.

LAND USE REGULATION

The City can support biking and walking to schools through review of rezoning applications. On occasion, schools may request rezoning to permit relocating a school to an area not zoned for school use. During rezoning discussions related to school location, it is critical that the challenges and opportunities for biking and walking to school be considered. The City should communicate these challenges to schools, and communicate that limited SRTS resources mean that the City is not likely to be able to make improvements to support walk and bike access to schools in industrial areas. The City SRTS Coordinator should be consulted during review of school rezoning and conditional use permit requests.

It is especially important to consider student bike and walk opportunities when schools request rezoning in industrial areas. Transportation to and from school may be impacted by the decision to locate a school in an industrial area, as students may encounter barriers to walking and biking to school such as lack of sidewalks and inadequate crosswalk markings and signage. These barriers present a significant concern to student safety, especially considering that heavy vehicles are likely to use streets in industrial areas.

POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Police Officers and Firefighters are valuable partners in improving the safety and comfort of people walking and biking to school. Both encouraging active transportation and engineering streets to improve safety are important, but the enforcement of safe behaviors will be necessary to achieve the vision of SRTS.

In future traffic safety campaigns, police should integrate information related to school safety. Police can help to teach children to be aware of their surroundings and understand traffic signals and vehicle behavior. Police can educate families and residents about safe walking, biking, and driving around schools and ways to pick-up and drop-off children that increase safety for students who are walking and biking, as well as addressing parent concerns about safety.

Saint Paul Police Department staff are currently involved in Saint Paul SRTS activities, collaborating on targeted enforcement, bike/walk events requiring police presence, and public engagement. They should continue to stay involved to ensure safety near school is prioritized.

Fire Department staff are also a resource for SRTS. The Fire Department currently supports bike/walk to school events, serves on the advisory board for the Safe Kids Greater East Metro/St. Croix Valley Coalition, and acts as a lead coordinating agency in an annual summer safety camp. In 2017, the Fire Department is launching a series of Summer Safety Fairs which will prominently feature bike safety.

COMMUNICATION WITH CHARTER AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

To support safe and comfortable transportation for all students in Saint Paul, the City must also consider coordination with charter and private schools that are not a part of the Saint Paul Public School District. The City's SRTS Coordinator should reach out to organizations such as the MN Association of Charter Schools and the MN Association of Independent Schools on an annual basis to invite charter and private schools to participate in the SRTS steering committee. Through this outreach, the SRTS Coordinator could direct charter and private schools to a publicly available SRTS toolkit that they could use to support walking and bicycling to school.

One way in which these types of schools may be different than public schools is that they often attract students from a larger geographic area than neighborhood public schools. The Coordinator can offer several ideas, such as encouraging parents to park at a nearby church or community center and then walking to school.

SRTS Integration into County Operations

Integrating SRTS into County operations is especially important for student safety, as County streets often have higher speed limits, more traffic lanes, and heavier traffic volumes than many City streets. Many of the recommendations for SRTS integration into County operations mirror recommendations for the City, including: identifying a countywide SRTS Coordinator, integrating SRTS into transportation planning and design, and establishing dedicated SRTS funding in the County's budget. Additionally, the County's Public Health department should continue to engage with SRTS projects.

INTEGRATION WITH TRANSPORTATION PLANS

As funds become available for infrastructure improvements, Ramsey County staff should implement recommendations for active transportation improvements in existing plans. When the County updates these plans as needs and priorities change, it should include SRTS improvements around schools.

The County should reference the following plans when choosing projects, and update each plan to prioritize projects that increase safety and comfort for people walking and people biking near schools.

- *Ramsey County All Abilities Transportation Network Policy* outlines a modal hierarchy on streets.

- *Ramsey County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* calls for connections to schools.

- Walk audits (recommended on page 22).

- School-specific SRTS plans.

INTEGRATION WITH COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Street reconstruction projects are labor- and material-intensive and are often planned several years prior to construction, with project budgets that allow room for including pedestrian improvements. By contrast, street resurfacing project budgets are limited to the street resurfacing and striping, and often do not have room to integrate pedestrian improvements. Reconstruction and resurfacing projects must therefore be considered differently in integration of SRTS projects.

Identified routes to schools should be considered when reconstruction or resurfacing projects move forward. Special attention should be paid to projects impacting identified walking routes to schools. Coordination for safety improvements during resurfacing or reconstruction projects in these areas will have the greatest impact for student safety and comfort. During review of upcoming resurfacing or reconstruction projects, County staff should prioritize SRTS improvements as part of projects on defined walking routes.

Street Reconstruction Projects

It is important for the County and School District to collaborate to ensure reconstruction projects incorporate opportunities to improve walk and bike safety and access to schools. **Table 3** describes how Ramsey County and District staff should collaborate to integrate SRTS improvements into capital projects to reconstruct a street. In general, it should be the responsibility of County staff to engage school and District contacts in the project planning process.

Table 3. Workflow Recommendations for Ramsey County-SPPS Coordination on Ramsey County Transportation Projects

RAMSEY COUNTY	SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Capital Improvement Program request (Capital budgeting process input phase): Biennial process	
Proactively advocate for inclusion of SRTS improvements identified through transportation planning in the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB). Highlight opportunities to provide input on list of anticipated projects that are included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) . Include a County Commissioner Aide as part of the SRTS Steering Committee.	Provide input on projects and funding programs included in the CIP that the school district would like to see in the County's budget. The County's Capital Improvement Program Citizen's Advisory Committee may be one avenue for input.
Project scoping and preliminary design	
Provide a list of County projects within 0.5 miles of an elementary school or 1 mile of a middle or senior high school that are currently in the scoping and preliminary design phases to be shared at SRTS steering committee meetings. County Project Managers should work with the SRTS Steering Committee to coordinate with schools when their walk zones overlap with a transportation project. Keep SPPS staff informed of project milestones.	Request list of projects in scoping and preliminary design phases to be shared at bi-monthly SRTS steering committee meetings. Provide feedback on County projects, as requested by County staff and/or individual schools.
Final design	
Coordinate with SPPS school administration regarding construction timing and potential impacts to school transportation and walk/bike activities.	School administration should coordinate with County staff to understand construction timing and potential impacts to a specific school's transportation and school walk/bike activities.

Street Resurfacing Projects

In the case of street resurfacing projects, limited funding presents a challenge to implementing pedestrian and bicycle improvements beyond striping. However, it may be possible to leverage the resurfacing project to provide valuable improvements if additional SRTS funding is available.

The County should review the annual list of resurfacing projects to identify opportunities to consider SRTS improvements as part of street resurfacing. SRTS improvements might include striping changes or more extensive changes (such as crossing improvements) if SRTS dollars are available. It could be advantageous to coordinate SRTS improvements while crews are resurfacing.

ESTABLISH DEDICATED SRTS FUNDING IN THE COUNTY BUDGET

The County should establish dedicated SRTS funding in the County budget to allow for implementation of standalone SRTS projects, which may be needed on streets not planned for reconstruction or resurfacing. This County funding could also be used as a match for state and federal SRTS grants.

INTEGRATION WITH SAINT PAUL – RAMSEY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

The County has an additional resource to bring to bear on SRTS in Saint Paul: the Saint Paul Ramsey County Public Health department. With data, funding, partnerships, and expertise that differs from that available in Public Works, Public Health can support SRTS in multiple ways. Public Health should continue to participate in SRTS steering committee meetings, participate in engagement and outreach activities across Ramsey County, and promote SRTS initiatives at Public Health-led events. Public Health staff can support SRTS work through analysis of how program and infrastructure improvements near schools improve health and recommend prioritization of schools based on health data. Public Health should continue to seek opportunities to support SRTS through county, state, and federal public health funding and collaborate with City, County Public Works, and schools on walk audits and SRTS events like bike/walk to school days.

SRTS Integration into SPPS Operations

COMMUNICATE ABOUT SRTS WITH INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS

Every spring and fall, the District SRTS Coordinator should check in with each school across the district to assess the challenges and opportunities at each school related to walking and biking to school. This communication can be informal; it can be as simple as a phone call or email. This dialogue will be critical to establish an avenue through which school administration can receive information on District-wide SRTS initiatives so that they can easily participate in events like Bike Walk to School Day. In addition, District staff can use this as a chance to learn about issues faced by staff and students, which they can then bring forward to inform planned reconstruction and resurfacing projects and to request stand-alone improvements.

IMPROVE SCHOOL FACILITIES TO SUPPORT WALKING AND BIKING

SPPS has the ability to improve conditions for walking and biking on its property. Using school walk audits, SPPS should prioritize improvements on campuses that make biking and walking to school safer and more comfortable. Increased and higher quality bicycle parking and better pedestrian connections across campuses are two examples of how the District can promote biking and walking to school.

LEAD SRTS PROGRAM INITIATIVES AT SPPS

The District SRTS Coordinator, with help from school and other District staff, should take the lead on programs to promote walking and biking to school. Coordination between law enforcement and City/County staff will be necessary for some programs (such as Bike Walk to School Day). The District SRTS Coordinator should engage the school board and principals in SRTS programs to demonstrate the value of SRTS.

SEEK FUNDING TO SUPPORT SRTS PLANNING, PROGRAMS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The School District should seek funding to support SRTS planning and programming from MnDOT Planning Assistance Grants, State SRTS grants, the State Health Improvement Program, the Regional Solicitation for federal transportation funding, and Public Health funding. The District should also collaborate with the City and County to apply for state and federal funding to support SRTS infrastructure projects, potentially using SRTS dollars from the City and County budgets as a match for these grants.

SRTS Integration Across Agency Boundaries

Successful integration of SRTS requires close coordination across school, City and County agency boundaries. Building relationships, coordinating work plans, and sharing resources will make the program most successful. Some specific recommended approaches are outlined below.

HOLD MONTHLY OR BI-MONTHLY SRTS STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Proposed steering committee composition: Having a diverse group of stakeholders will strengthen relationships within and across the City, County, and SPPS.

Meeting structure: The steering committee should meet regularly, ideally on at least a bi-monthly basis throughout the school year. Regular meetings will strengthen collaboration. A collaborative relationship between cities and school districts is also beneficial when seeking SRTS grant funding. Discussion items could include:

- SRTS related programs and needs at individual schools.

- Infrastructure needs at individual schools.

- Annual Capital Improvement Budget process.

- Upcoming resurfacing and reconstructions.

- Regular review of and implementation of the recommendations from the SRTS Policy Plan.

- SRTS Coordinator work plans.

The steering committee should include the representatives from:

- SPPS: SRTS Coordinator, SHIP Coordinator, Facilities or security staff, transportation staff, School Board member.

- City of Saint Paul: SRTS Coordinator, Public Works Staff, Planning staff, Pedestrian Safety Advocate.

- Saint Paul Police Department: representative, Student Resource Officers Coordinator.

- Saint Paul Planning Commission Transportation Committee member.

- Ramsey County: SRTS Coordinator, Ramsey County Public Works staff, Saint Paul SHIP Coordinator, County Commissioner Aide.

04

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Community Engagement Strategies

The goals of SRTS communications and community engagement recommendations include: increasing walking and bicycling to/from school, getting more residents involved with street design, engaging new community members, and promoting neighborhood schools.

Communications for individual schools should highlight the school's SRTS program, which may include a wide variety of education, enforcement, and encouragement activities, such as:

- Organizing school bus stop and walk.

- Organizing walking school buses.

- Distributing bike lights.

- Hosting a bike safety event or bike repair clinic.

- Expanding or starting a school patrol program.

- Conducting walk audits.

- Gathering parent feedback on infrastructure improvements.

- Participating in national walk and bike to school days.

- Offering anti-bullying and youth violence prevention education.

- Educating parents and students on the benefits of an active commute.

- Recruiting parent and community volunteers to provide adult supervision on routes to school.

- Monitoring numbers of students walking and bicycling to schools.

- Procuring and maintaining a school bike fleet.

The recommendations in this chapter will assist the City, County, and Saint Paul Public Schools in communicating with parents and students about SRTS programs and recruiting volunteers to assist in activities and events.

Goals for Improving Community Engagement

Agency staff would like to educate more parents and students about commonly-used walking routes to schools and provide more opportunities for members of the public to be involved in street design and transportation planning. In general, staff would like to reach a wider, more diverse population in their engagement efforts. City staff also identified public libraries and community centers as underutilized resources in communicating with families and youth about transportation safety.

Communications and Messaging Recommendations

There is room to expand City, County, and SPPS communication with the public around transportation safety. Communications can provide information about the benefits of walking and bicycling, resources for selecting the best routes, and offer ways to get involved in City planning efforts.

SRTS COORDINATORS

Currently, the City of Saint Paul has a designated point-of-contact for families to contact about SRTS activities and transportation issues near schools, but has not defined a clear set of roles related to SRTS for that staff member. SPPS and Ramsey County do not have designated points of contact for SRTS.

A paid City SRTS Coordinator with an SRTS workplan, an SPPS SRTS Coordinator, and a County SRTS Coordinator would be valuable positions to provide consistency and synchronize messaging and outreach between the City, County, SPPS, families, and individual schools. The SPPS SRTS Coordinator could establish a formal SRTS Champion program and assist volunteers who want to get more involved in SRTS activities and events.

SRTS WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The City and SPPS provide information about SRTS on their websites, however both pages are difficult to find and could include a more robust set of resources. Additional resources to include on the pages are existing local and best practice SRTS resources, upcoming events and information for interested parents seeking to establish SRTS activities and events. The updated pages should include links and examples of SRTS efforts.

Both the City and SPSS have a Facebook and Twitter presence. Staff working on SRTS activities should work with the agency's communications staff to distribute press releases and invitations to SRTS events, such as Walk Bike to School Day. They could also post information about the benefits of walking and bicycling and provide updates about their work on SRTS initiatives.

SRTS COMMUNICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Recommendations for improving SPPS communications around SRTS include:

- Incorporate SRTS messages and publicize SRTS activities and events in existing communications, including social media, SPPS website, the Happening Now newsletter, school busing information post card, and automated calls, texts, and emails.

- Promote Walk/Bike to School Day through standard communication channels.

- Develop a brochure or flier with information about SRTS, including tips for walking and bicycling, and local resources. This could be the back side of the Suggested Route Maps.

- Highlight transportation options in school choice materials to promote neighborhood schools.

- Publicize walking and bicycling options and the benefits of active transportation at the beginning of the school year, including working with the police to send a letter about transportation safety home to all families. Communication about walking and biking to school needs to emphasize not only safe transportation routes, but also must explain to parents the importance of encouraging children to walk and bike to school. This type of communication could also encourage parents to send their children to neighborhood schools rather than those too far to bike or walk.

- Formally include walking and bicycling recommendations in bus safety trainings, effectively transitioning to transportation safety trainings, for all schools.

- Share positive walking and bicycling messaging with all schools, so that it can be integrated into school-led communications.

- Continue and expand the parent surveys to evaluate parents' priority concerns about school transportation, and address these issues through messaging.

SRTS COMMUNICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Specific recommendations for improving City communications around SRTS include:

- Tie the "Stop for Me" campaign to the City's other SRTS efforts, highlighting how the campaign is one of several efforts to make the school commute safer.

- Expand the Stop for Me campaign to focus on school travel during back-to-school times and when Daylight Savings time ends.

- Develop a transportation safety campaign or a neighborhood yard sign campaign with messaging such as "Drive Like your Kids Live Here," MnDOT's **Share the Road campaign**, Vision Zero, **StreetSmarts**, or similar messaging.

- Work with SPPS to develop Suggested Route Maps for each school and publicize the recommended walking and bicycling routes to school, as well as safety tips and contact information for the SRTS program.

- Provide information and handouts to the public about safe walking, bicycling, and driving behaviors through libraries and community centers.

SRTS COMMUNICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RAMSEY COUNTY

Recommendations for improving Ramsey County communications around SRTS include:

- Develop a transportation safety campaign or a neighborhood yard sign campaign with messaging such as "Drive Like your Kids Live Here," MnDOT's **Share the Road campaign**, Vision Zero, **StreetSmarts**, or similar messaging.

- Provide information and handouts to the public through libraries and community centers.

- Reach out to schools when conducting community engagement for plans and projects near schools.

- Set up an SRTS page on the County website.

Community Engagement Recommendations

Currently, neither the City or SPPS have established avenues for seeking volunteers to get involved in activities. Below are recommendations to expand youth and family engagement in SRTS and transportation planning and projects in Saint Paul.

REGULAR MEETINGS FOR THE SRTS STEERING COMMITTEE

The City and SPPS currently have a SRTS steering committee, made up of key individuals involved with SRTS activities. The group should establish a regular meeting schedule, such as monthly or quarterly, to share experiences and talk through challenges group members encounter.

SRTS ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

- Develop a clear process for informing relevant SPPS staff about upcoming transportation improvement projects.

- Clarify the point-of-contact for families providing school transportation safety concerns.

- Invite parents and members of the school community to participate in walk audits/ assessments to evaluate the traffic conditions around the school and to identify necessary improvements.

- Engage with youth and families in city transportation planning and projects by inviting students to participate in walk audits and mapping exercises, and by inviting students to speak at council and community meetings.

- Engage community members in SRTS through neighborhood beautification projects like intersection painting and clean ups.

SRTS ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAINT PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Work with the City to boost outreach around upcoming transportation improvement projects that will impact students and families.

- Announce the need for Walk/Bike to School Day volunteers starting at the end of the previous school year, and provide technical assistance for schools participating.

- Establish a School Champion program for parents or other community members to volunteer regularly and work with the City and SPPS to host SRTS activities and events at individual schools.

- Work with middle and high school environmental clubs or bike groups to inform students about SRTS, encourage them to organize events like Walk/Bike to School Day, invite them to participate in SRTS planning processes, and ask them to support SRTS work at other schools.

- Work with neighborhood watch, anti-bullying, and youth violence prevention programs to support student personal safety while walking and biking to school. A potential partner would be the Gang Reduction and Intervention Program (GRIP) at Neighborhood House on the West Side of Saint Paul.

- Recruit parent and community volunteers to serve as Corner Captains in areas where student personal safety is a concern. Corner Captains are stationed at hot spot locations and provide increased adult presence along routes to school, discouraging bullying and other unsafe behaviors.

- Partner with other community institutions for support in SRTS education and encouragement. Regions Hospital, for example, offers School Age Safety Programming for first graders in the St. Paul Public and Charter School system. The program covers bicycle and pedestrian safety, and reached 1,000 elementary school students during the 2016-2017 academic year.

05

ACTION PLAN + NEXT STEPS

Action Plan + Next Steps

This section summarizes all recommendations presented in this plan to guide action over both the short and long term, prioritizing actions using the criteria of safety, equity, and timeliness. It identifies key first steps and near-term time sensitive actions for the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, and SPPS. It also identifies longer term actions to incorporate SRTS in regular processes, policy changes, and actions to take as opportunities arise. The overall action plan follows the following points; each agency will carry out specific actions to support this plan:

- Create SRTS Coordinator positions.

- Address critical policy gaps.

- Evaluate infrastructure and facilities, identify needs.

- Integrate SRTS into capital project planning, implementation, and organizational operations.

- Fund engineering solutions.

- Promote walking and biking to school.

- Fund improvements, link funding with prioritization criteria that acknowledge proximity, equity, and needs.

City of Saint Paul

KEY FIRST STEPS

- Identify work plan for City SRTS Coordinator.

- Facilitate close coordination across school, City and County agency boundaries by holding monthly or bi-monthly SRTS steering committee meetings.

- Decide preferred approach for identifying issues within School Walk Zones: school transportation assessments of areas near schools, incorporating the identification of issues near schools into the upcoming citywide Pedestrian Plan, or completing school-based SRTS plans on a regular basis.

- Identify SRTS priority areas to help the City focus staff time on planning, design, education, and enforcement for areas with the greatest SRTS needs.

- Establish a map of suggested routes to school to prioritize infrastructure, connectivity and maintenance improvements along those routes.

- Develop a clear and transparent process for prioritizing implementation of SRTS infrastructure.

NEAR-TERM TIME-SENSITIVE ACTIONS

- Incorporate SRTS in upcoming Comprehensive Plan update.

  - Adopt a goal for bicycle and pedestrian mode share for students travelling to school.

  - Require that new school development has high quality bike and pedestrian accessibility.

  - Include walking and biking to school in the Vision Statement.

  - Develop a land use policy promoting infill development near schools to integrate new development into the existing residential area instead of allowinf residential growth in industrial districts.

  - Include policy that supports biking and walking to school such as, "construct missing sidewalks and upgrade street crossings within school walking zones to provide school children and those who walk with them safe and enjoyable walking routes to school" and "conduct an ongoing safe bicycle route to school program including semiannual bicycle safety educational programs for children and adults."

  - Add a school facility plan that includes requirements for bike parking, connectivity to the bike and pedestrian networks, and location.

- Include bicycle safety in the "Stop for Me" campaign and include school-specific safety elements into the campaign. Coordinate with the police department to provide consistent messaging. Alternatively, develop a companion campaign focused on safely walking and biking to schools.

- Integrate SRTS recommendations in the upcoming Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan.

ACTIONS TO INTEGRATE SRTS IN REGULAR PROCESSES

- Consider bike and pedestrian safety and accessibility in the development review process for proposed charter schools.

- Coordinate with charter and private schools that are not a part of the Saint Paul Public School District.

- Consult the City SRTS Coordinator during review of school rezoning requests.

- Store and catalogue infrastructure recommendations in a geospatial database.

- Consider key routes to school when planning reconstruction or resurfacing projects to leverage those investments.

POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Safety & equity policy priorities

- In coordination with the County, create a simplified unsignalized crossing guidelines flowchart, with a design guideline matrix to identify specific recommended treatments if the flowchart indicates pedestrian crossing improvements are appropriate.

- In coordination with the County, create a crossing evaluation flowchart and design treatment matrix specific to school crossings. This would help establish consistency in school crossing treatments and help City staff prioritize school crossing improvements.

- Develop guidelines for signage and RRFBs at crosswalks in school zones and guidelines for school speed zones in coordination with the County.

- Address equity in enforcement by working with the Saint Paul Police Department to adopt a policy of warnings and education for all but the most egregious offenses. Consider community service and volunteering in lieu of paying a fine.

- Support adoption of a City Vision Zero program to create and implement policies that complement SRTS by working to eliminate traffic fatalities, prioritizing engineering improvements and outreach activities near schools, where some of the most vulnerable populations travel.

- Adopt a policy for installation of refuge medians, RRFBs, and HAWK signals similar to the existing curb extension and traffic circle policies.

- Adopt a specific policy for pedestrian crossings at signalized intersections. It is recommended that the policy include the following:

    - All legs of a signalized intersection should have marked high-visibility crosswalks. Where space allows, consider curb extensions to reduce crossing distances for pedestrians.

    - A policy preference for short signal cycles (a current practice among Saint Paul staff that is not codified).

    - A policy that forbids pedestrian timings that require/result in multi-stage pedestrian crossings.

    - Restrict left-turning movements, create left-turn bays, or install left-turning signals at intersections near schools.

    - Implement automatic leading pedestrian intervals at signals within a half-mile of schools.

Additional policies

- Requiring yearly evaluation of the Complete Streets Design Guides' performance measure: the number of students who walk and bike to school in the City of Saint Paul.

- Coordinate with SPPS to create school siting and closure criteria that factors in land use and street design for people walking and biking. Policy should discourage school siting in industrial areas, encouraging schools to be built in residential or mixed-use areas.

- Implement the Complete Streets Action Plan requirement that school development projects require pedestrian impact studies and improvements and examine the impact on bicyclists.

- Establish dedicated SRTS funding in the City budget to enable implementation of standalone SRTS projects.

ACTIONS TO TAKE AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE

- Adopt the Saint Paul SRTS Plan into the Bike Plan. Add a section to the Bike Plan about SRTS summarizing relevant design and safety guidelines and using the route maps in facility prioritization.

- Update Saint Paul Street Design Manual and Complete Streets Action Plan with attention to SRTS.

- Support an adult crossing guard program for SPPS in collaboration with Ramsey County, Saint Paul Police Department, and SPPS.

- Fund outreach for SRTS and safety education.

- Work with schools to develop SRTS plans that are consistent with City policy.

- Support school patrol programs and enforcement activities.

- Conduct transportation/walk assessments.

- Include pedestrian and bicycle rules of the road and safety in public traffic safety campaigns and adult crossing guard trainings.

- Publish a map of suggested routes to schools.

- Engage Saint Paul Planning Commission Transportation Committee in SRTS and invite Committee members to join SRTS Steering Committee.

ACTIONS TO CONTINUE

- Involve the Saint Paul Police Department in Saint Paul SRTS activities, collaborating on targeted enforcement, bike/walk events requiring police presence, and public engagement. Support SRTS equity goals through encouraging police to educate people who violate traffic laws before ticketing or fining them.

- Participate in bike/walk to school days.

- Support student safety patrol programs.

Ramsey County

KEY FIRST STEPS

- Identify Countywide SRTS Coordinator.

- Collaborate with the City to evaluate county roads within a mile of schools to identify and prioritize improvements to walking and bicycling infrastructure.

ACTIONS TO INCORPORATE SRTS IN REGULAR PROCESSES

- Evaluate progress towards *Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan* goals through an annual report that summarizes investments made and measures increases in walking and biking.

- Reference the following plans when choosing transportation projects:

  - *Ramsey County All Abilities Transportation Network Policy* outlines a modal hierarchy on streets.

  - *Ramsey County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* calls for connections to schools.

  - Transportation/walk assessments.

  - School-specific SRTS plans.

- When planning reconstruction or resurfacing projects move forward in the county, consider key routes to school to leverage these investments.

POLICY CHANGES

Safety & equity policy priorities

- Implement MN MUTCD reduced speed limits in school zones on county roads within the City of Saint Paul.

- Develop guidelines for signage and RRFBs at crosswalks in school zones.

- Start a Vision Zero program to promote policies that complement SRTS by working to eliminate traffic fatalities, prioritizing engineering improvements and outreach activities near schools, where some of the most vulnerable populations travel.

Additional policies

- Establish Dedicated SRTS Funding in the County Budget.

ACTIONS TO TAKE AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE

- Adopt the County-specific recommendations of the Saint Paul SRTS Plan in the Ramsey County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP).

- Update plans to prioritize projects that increase safety and comfort for people walking and people biking near schools.

- Public Health should continue to seek opportunities to support SRTS through county, state, and federal public health funding and collaboration on walk assessments and SRTS events.

ACTIONS TO CONTINUE

- Public Health should continue to participate in SRTS steering committee meetings, participate in engagement and outreach activities across Ramsey County, and promote SRTS initiatives at Public Health-led events.

Saint Paul Public Schools

KEY FIRST STEPS

- Identify districtwide SRTS coordinator.

- Educate School Board about benefits of SRTS and how it can support School Board goals.

NEAR TERM TIME-SENSITIVE ACTIONS

- Incorporate SRTS in the procedures section of the District Policy that is currently under development.

ACTIONS TO INCORPORATE SRTS IN REGULAR PROCESSES

- Integrate lessons from the Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum developed by MnDOT as part of Bus Safety Week and as part of regular instruction to get students excited and prepared to bike and walk to school from the start.

- Every spring and fall, the District SRTS Coordinator should check in with each school across the district to assess the challenges and opportunities at each school related to walking and biking to school.

- The District SRTS Coordinator, with help from school and other District staff, should take the lead on programs to promote walking and biking to school.

- Prioritize improvements on campuses that make biking and walking to school safer and more comfortable using school walk assessments.

- Invite a School Board member to join the SRTS Steering Committee.

POLICY CHANGES

Safety & equity policy priorities

- Establish a districtwide SRTS Policy that elevates walking and biking as healthy, fun, useful alternatives to driving and taking the bus that help students pay attention in class and meet physical activity goals.

- Amend "Transportation Due to Extraordinary Hazardous Traffic Conditions" policy to establish a clearer link between the criteria and solutions.

- Establish district guidelines for quantity, quality, and location of school bike racks and locks. Currently, SPPS considers bike storage on a school-by-school basis.

- Incentivize walking and biking to school and minimize dangers from cars by adopting early dismissal guidelines that allow students who walk and bike to school to leave before those who are taking the bus or traveling by car.

- The district should fund and support school programming and infrastructure developments on school property outlined in school-specific SRTS plans.

- Fund an adult crossing guard program.

Additional policies

- Include criteria about SRTS, such as street design, surrounding land use patterns, and proximity to homes, into procedures for school siting and closures.

- Address how to design for bikes and pedestrians in facility plans, including information about bike parking in front of schools and open unfenced campuses.

- Adopt an evaluation policy to track SRTS program participation by school in the fall and spring by collecting student tallies and parent surveys. Use the National Center for SRTS parent survey, available in English and in Spanish and in on-line and print versions. Schools with SRTS programs will prepare a yearly progress report for the district and update their SRTS plans every 5 years.

ACTIONS TO TAKE AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE

- Create district-wide parent handbook boilerplate language that includes information about SRTS and communicates the benefits of walking and bicycling.

- Update SPPS district and school SRTS plans to adopt the prioritization recommendations developed through the SRTS Policy Plan.

- Seek funding to support SRTS planning, programs, and infrastructure.

ACTIONS TO CONTINUE

- Support student school patrol program.

- Work with Saint Paul Police Department on education and enforcement activities. Support SRTS equity goals through encouraging police to educate people who violate traffic laws before ticketing or fining them.

- Participate in Bike Walk to School Day. The District should establish Bike Walk to School Day, Winter Walk to School Day, and other biking and walking days as regular events.
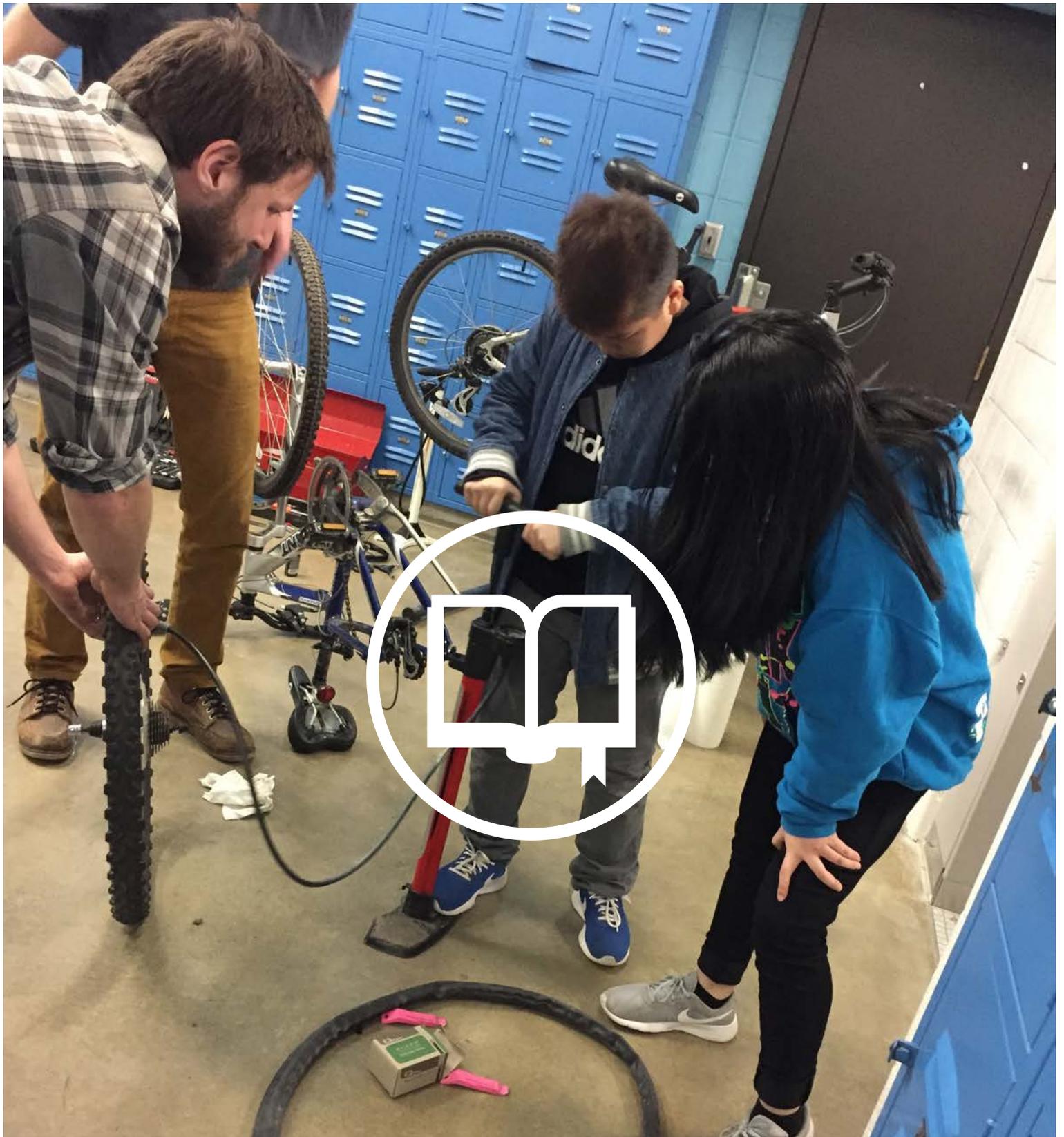
Appendix A. Lessons from Peer Cities

Cities face similar challenges and opportunities to planning, implementing, and sustaining successful and effective SRTS programs. **Table 1** identifies common obstacles and opportunities for City-led SRTS programs, addressing challenges with coordination, infrastructure improvements, and non-infrastructure activities. These best practices inform plan recommendations.

Table 1. Obstacles and Opportunities for Citywide SRTS Programs

TYPICAL OBSTACLE	OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIES
Obstacles to Coordination	
Lack of staff resources at both city and district level.	Work with schools to form transportation safety committees, which can update infrastructure needs and promote outreach activities.
	Pursue grant funding opportunities: Cities may be eligible for more sources than districts, schools, parents, or community organizations but may need to partner with schools or community organizations to administer a grant-funded program or to increase grant scoring.
	Use city planning and transportation projects as opportunities to implement SRTS: Taking a SRTS lens to planning and transportation projects by considering school access during every stage of the planning process results in many opportunities to implement SRTS improvements at no or minimal additional cost.
Lack of consistent commitment, strong working relationships, and effective communication and collaboration between city, district, and other partners.	Form a working group that meets regularly to discuss upcoming opportunities, projects, and challenges while building relationships between staff.
	Develop a program brochure that communicates the benefits of the program, using local data and success stories as much as possible.
	With school districts, include community-based organizations in SRTS strategy sessions and clearly define key roles for partnerships to share the responsibility for implementation and build the "brand" with minimal effort from city/district staff.
	Leverage strong school relationships with the community: Cities can partner with schools to extend the reach of community engagement.
Obstacles to SRTS Infrastructure Improvements	
Lack of clear direction on infrastructure projects to implement.	Designate a citywide School Commute Network to focus infrastructure improvements on key school access needs.
	Conduct GIS evaluation of SRTS needs and hold community meetings and walkabouts to identify potential SRTS projects with multiple schools at once.

TYPICAL OBSTACLE	OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIES
Lack of funding for implementing infrastructure improvement projects.	Apply for grant funding to supplement staff time and fund individual implementation activities and infrastructure projects.
	Implement SRTS improvements as part of other roadway projects.
	Promote creative initiatives to implement small infrastructure projects, such as temporary or "pop-up" traffic calming treatments.
	Recruit the community to work on community "intersection repair" or Paint the Pavement projects.
Lack of community support for improvements (i.e. neighborhood doesn't want sidewalks or slower speeds).	Communicate the benefits of SRTS projects through brochures, community meetings and walkabouts.
	Have student-led outreach about SRTS projects. This can help personalize SRTS challenges and help residents better understand SRTS needs and benefits.
City policies don't allow for preferred designs (i.e. policies may not allow school speed zones).	Reevaluate policies after communicating the importance of SRTS investments to local policy makers.
Obstacles to Non-Infrastructure SRTS Activities	
Lack of staff resources at both city and district level.	Partner with community-based organizations that can lead specific implementation activities and leverage their existing outreach activities.
	Contract with outside organizations to administer education and encouragement activities, or with consultants for administration, evaluation, and project identification/prioritization.
	Coordinate with school districts, who can also integrate SRTS activities into existing staff's daily activities, such as teachers collecting hand tally data, P.E. teachers teaching bike and pedestrian safety classes, parents organizing walking school buses, classroom teachers including active transportation consideration into curriculum.
	Add additional staff at the City and District with dedicated time to SRTS and Vision Zero.
Lack of parent involvement and school participation.	Develop a strategy to articulate the many benefits of SRTS to a broad audience. Some example messages: SRTS can promote academic success as a small amount of exercise at the beginning of the day has been shown to improve students' attention span; walking can provide an opportunity for families to spend time together; and biking can give middle school students more independence.
	Seek out and partner with community-based organizations who are already active in the community. Staff can work to develop SRTS support with these groups by participating in existing meetings where possible. Provide food, translation services, and childcare, when applicable.
	Work with school districts to develop a SRTS Champion toolkit, website, or school recognition program to guide schools and leaders in knowing which activities to focus on, and to provide resources for implementing program activities.

Appendix B. Pedestrian Crossing Guidance

This Appendix presents recommendations based on existing City and County policy, practice, and desired outcomes for pedestrian crossing guidance and policy, emphasizing engineering improvements.

The recommendations below will help the City and County move from a request-based system for stand-alone pedestrian and bicycle improvements to a more systematic and proactive approach, as desired by City and County staff.

The recommendations below should be considered as the City begins work on the Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan. Crossing policy revisions and design guidance could be integrated into the planning process.

FLOWCHART FOR PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS AT UNSIGNALIZED LOCATIONS

The City of Saint Paul should create a simplified guidelines flowchart, with design guideline matrix, for general use at unsignalized locations within the City of Saint Paul. The flowchart and matrix would be valuable tools for use by City and County staff. The flowchart and matrix would also help staff in communicating their decision-making process to residents and elected officials. The flowchart and matrix should be consistent with the MN MUTCD.

The City should work with Ramsey County so that that the flowchart can be applied on both City and County roadways within Saint Paul. This will require resolving tension between the City's goal of policy that applies across County and City roads and the County's goal of policy that applies across all cities.

The City's flowchart should be grounded in a commonly agreed upon understanding about the purpose of crosswalks. For example, Portland's focus on crosswalks as safety tools resulted in a different flowchart than San Francisco, which has a focus on crosswalks as pedestrian channelization devices.

The flowchart should recommend when to consider pedestrian crossing improvements at an uncontrolled location based on elements such as vehicle speeds and volumes, pedestrian volumes, number of lanes, and intersection control. The City could consider establishing a minimum traffic volume threshold for installing crossing improvements.

The design guideline matrix should identify specific recommended treatments if the flowchart determines that pedestrian crossing improvements are appropriate. Recommended treatments should be based upon traffic speeds, volumes, and number of lanes. Higher levels of improvements should be recommended in locations with higher speeds, volumes, and number of lanes. The City should consider the following design treatments and thresholds, drawn from the City of Portland's practice, as the design guideline matrix is developed:

- Installation of lower cost traffic control devices like crosswalk signage, speed limit signs and PED XING pavement markings on roadways with a posted speed of 30 mph or less and traffic volumes under 12,000 ADT.

- Consider installation of higher cost traffic control devices like curb extensions, HAWK signals, and road diets on roadways with a posted speed of 35 mph or less and traffic volumes over 12,000 ADT.

- Installation of a marked high-visibility crosswalk with enhancements and active warnings (islands and RRFBs) on three-lane roadways with a raised median with a posted speed of 40 mph or greater and two-lane roadways with a posted speed of 40 mph or greater, regardless of traffic

volumes.

- Installation of marked crosswalk and HAWK signal or full signal on three-lane roadways without a raised median, or multilane without a median, and a posted speed of 40 mph or greater, regardless of traffic volumes

- Restrict parking within 20-50 feet of a mid-block crossing.

The design guideline matrix should also establish consistency in what is considered a marked crosswalk. The guidance should clearly address when the City installs crosswalk pavement markings, and when the City installs crosswalk signage in addition to pavement markings.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING POLICY AT SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

The City should develop specific policy for pedestrian crossings at signalized intersections. It is recommended that the policy include the following:

- All legs of a signalized intersection should have marked high-visibility crosswalks. Where space allows, consider curb extensions to reduce crossing distances for pedestrians. Also consider optimizing the signal timing to be more pedestrian-friendly. Specifically, do not make pedestrians cross a signalized intersection in two stages and limit the delay pedestrians experience. A long delay leads pedestrians to cross illegally, while a long signal cycle promotes vehicle speeding. Two policies that could come out of this are:

  - A policy preference for short signal cycles (a current practice among Saint Paul staff that is not codified).

  - A policy that forbids pedestrian timings that require/result in multi-stage pedestrian crossings.

- Restrict left-turning movements, create left-turn bays, or install left-turning signals at intersections near schools.

- Implement automatic leading pedestrian intervals at signals within a half-mile of schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Schools can assist the City and County in improving student safety when traveling to school by establishing recommended walking routes and recommended school crossing locations. Identifying these routes will assist students and parents in making transportation decisions and will support City and County efforts to prioritize infrastructure projects and enhance crossings used by vulnerable pedestrians. Schools can do this as part of a SRTS plan, a walk audit, or more informally.

Schools should also consider installing adult crossing guards at key school crossing locations to further enhance the effectiveness of engineering improvements.

GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL CROSSINGS

The presence of vulnerable populations, including children, lowers the thresholds for crosswalk installation and increases the need for crosswalks and additional measures (such as curb extensions, additional pavement markings, signage, and adult crossing guards). Current guidelines allow categorical flexibility for school crossings, providing limited guidance for decision making. This can create challenges for City and County staff as they evaluate requests for school crossing improvements.

The City should create a crossing evaluation flowchart and design treatment matrix specific to school crossings. This would help establish consistency in school crossing treatments and help City staff prioritize school crossing improvements. The flowchart and matrix should be designed in coordination with changes to SPPS policy on "Transportation Due to Extraordinary Hazardous Traffic Conditions" such that treatments to provide safe crossings on designated hazardous roads are prioritized and result in the elimination of hazard bussing areas. The flowchart and matrix

should address the following topics and design treatments, including:

- Whether the crossing is on an identified route to school.

- Minimum vehicle traffic volume threshold for installation of marked crosswalks.

- Marking and signing high-visibility crossings near schools even if no school patrol is present.

- Flexibility in the installation of marked high-visibility crosswalks, enhanced/active warnings (median refuge islands and RRFBs), HAWK signals, and full traffic signals on multi-lane crossings (3-5 lanes) near schools.

Beyond crosswalk markings, the City of Saint Paul could pursue additional strategies to improve pedestrian safety when crossing streets near schools, such as:

- Shorten crossing distances by installing curb extensions and medians or by narrowing streets.

- Undertake a city-wide process to develop a school walking paths map to identify locations that would be prioritized for school crossing improvements.

- Work with schools to develop SRTS plans that are consistent with City policy.

- Adopt a policy for installation of refuge medians, RRFBs, and HAWK signals similar to the existing curb extension and traffic circle policies.

- Support crossing guard and school patrol programs and enforcement activities.

Appendix C. School Prioritization Recommendations

In designating SRTS priority areas, the City should consider health and demographic data as well as the locations of schools and youth destinations and crash history. In prioritizing implementation of SRTS projects, the City should develop a clear process that takes into consideration factors like equity, documented concerns, and technical feasibility.

Recommended data sources are included in parentheses.

- School location ([School Program Locations Dataset published by MN Department of Education](#))

    - Bike and pedestrian crash history (Pedestrian and Bike Crash Dataset beginning in 2016 available at information.stpaul.gov; MnDOT crash data beginning in 2006 available at http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/crashmapping.html)

- Demographics (Census and American Community Survey data):

    - Percent of residents age 18 or younger

    - Income

    - Race/ethnicity

    - Access to vehicles

    - Use of SNAP benefits

- Destinations for youth:

    - Parks (Saint Paul Parks and Rec Department; [OpenRamsey Parks Dataset](#))

    - Libraries (Public buildings dataset available at information.stpaul.gov)

    - Community centers (Public buildings dataset available at information.stpaul.gov)

- Health Data (Available at census tract level from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [500 Cities Project](#)):

    - Obesity

    - Heart disease

    - Asthma

    - Diabetes

While obesity and asthma are common health concerns for youth, heart disease and type 2 Diabetes are less common among youth. These health factors should still be taken into consideration because these diseases often have their roots in childhood patterns of behavior and environments.