

Aitkin Safe Routes to School

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

Aitkin, Minnesota | Fall 2018



Made possible by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, Minnesota Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

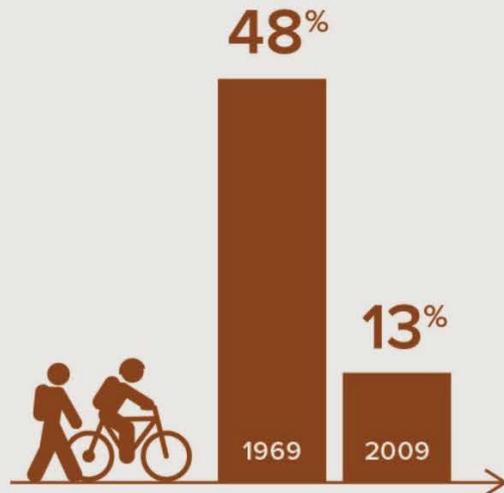
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Introduction + Context

Why Safe Routes to School?



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



MOST KIDS ARE NOT GETTING ENOUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



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

KIDS WHO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL:



Arrive alert and able to focus on school



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



Are more likely to be a healthy body weight



Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance*



Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety

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

Fewer students walking & biking to school

More parents driving children to school

Rising concern about safety of walking & biking

Increased traffic at and around school



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



Introduction to Safe Routes to School

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 'E's".

Equity

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

Education

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

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

Law enforcement strategies aimed at improving driver behavior near schools and ensuring safe roads for all users.

Evaluation

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



NAVIGATING THIS PLAN

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

Programs

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

Infrastructure

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

How to get involved

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

Appendices

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

The Vision

The vision of the Aitkin Safe Routes to School Team is a network of individuals who raise awareness about Safe Routes to School and voice support for programs and infrastructure that enable and encourage students to walk and bicycle to Aitkin Schools.

As a result of their work together, the Team envisions Aitkin to be a community where students can safely and independently get from one place to another because well-planned, well-designed, and well-maintained sidewalks and trails create a safe, connected community.

SMART Goals

This plan will offer recommendations for programs and infrastructure that are consistent with the concept of SMART Goals, which provide a framework for an effective and sustainable SRTS plan. SMART Goals for this plan will be:

Specific: the recommendations will communicate what needs to be accomplished and by whom.

Measurable: the outcomes from the recommendations will be quantifiable.

Attainable: the recommendations will be ambitious but reasonable.

Relevant: the recommendations will be responsive to the needs of the school and community.

Timely: the recommendations will have a specific timeline.



School in Context

This plan addresses students walking and bicycling in Aitkin to Rippleside Elementary School (K-6) and Aitkin Secondary School (7-12), which are both part of the Aitkin Public School District (ISD #1).

Approximately 650 students are enrolled at Rippleside Elementary, and approximately 550 students are enrolled at Aitkin Secondary.

Both schools are in residential areas of the city and within a half-mile from each other, though separated by rail line and river corridors that run through the center of town.

Both schools connect to the rest of town with walkable infrastructure (sidewalks and trails), though gaps in the sidewalk system and sidewalks only on one side of a street appear intermittently throughout the walk zone of both schools.

According to a 2018 survey of Rippleside Elementary students, approximately 2% of students walk to school, and approximately 5% of students walk to their after-school destination. Approximately 1.5% of students bike to school.

At Aitkin Secondary, approximately 10% of students walk to school, and approximately 15% of students walk to their after-school destination. Less than 1% of students bike to or from school.



Programs

Introduction to Programs

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

While engineering improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways are important, equally important are education programs to give children and families basic safety skills, encouragement programs to highlight walking and bicycling to school as fun and normal, enforcement against unsafe and illegal motorist behavior, and evaluation of the impact of investments and non-infrastructure efforts. Often, programs that help to get more kids walking and biking lead to increased public support for infrastructure projects - they can be an important first step towards building out the physical elements that make walking and biking safer and more comfortable. And relative to certain infrastructure projects, most programs are very low cost.

Existing Programs

Aitkin's first experience with Safe Routes to School came in 2010, when the community developed a School Routing Plan. As of 2018, a handful of programs in Aitkin support students walking and bicycling to school. These programs are listed below.

City or County led:

- Kindergarten Community Safety
- 5th Grade Bicycle Safety
- Aitkin Bike Day
- Sidewalk Snow Clearing Enforcement
- School Streets Parking Enforcement
- Traffic Patrolling on Minnesota Avenue South
- Crosswalk Maintenance

Community or School led:

- Walk to School Day
- Rippleside Crossing Guard Program
- Safety Town

Program Recommendations

In Fall 2018, Safe Routes to School stakeholders in the Aitkin community gathered to identify issues and barriers for students to walk or bicycle to school as well as action items to overcome these issues and barriers.

On the following pages, each recommended program shows the "E" it falls under, plus suggested lead, support, and priority.

Recommended Programs List:

- Aitkin "Web" of SRTS Contacts
- Safety Town
- Safe Routes for Gobblers
- Safe Routes to School Parent Outreach
- Rippleside Walking Club
- Park Dedication Fee Program
- Safe Routes to School Evaluation Program

TABLE 1. RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS LIST

PROGRAM	WHICH "E"?	PROGRAM LEADER(S)	PROGRAM SUPPORT	PRIORITY
"Web" of SRTS Contacts	All "E"s	"Go-to" people at multiple agencies	Elementary School, Secondary School, District, City, County, etc.	Short term (1-2 years)
Safety Town*	Education	Community Education	Women of Today	Short term (1-2 years)
Rippleside Walking Club	Encouragement	Community Education	County/Statewide Health Improvement Partnership	Short term (1-2 years)
Safe Routes for Gobblers*	Education	Aitkin Athletics	Athletic Director, Coaches	Short term (1-2 years)
Safe Routes to School Parent Outreach	Education	County/Statewide Health Improvement Partnership	City, Secondary School, Elementary School	Short term (1-2 years)
Park Dedication Fee Program*	Enforcement	City	County	Medium term (2-4 years)
Safe Routes to School Evaluation Program	Evaluation	District	Elementary School, Secondary School, City, County/Statewide Health Improvement Partnership	Medium term (2-4 years)

Notes

- The recommended programs listed above should be considered while existing programs listed on the previous page are still offered. The education and encouragement events already taking place are important to maintain.
- Program recommendations related to Equity are identified above with a (*).

Ongoing evaluation

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

- Parent Surveys: Recommended to be done once every 2-3 years. A hard copy survey or link to the survey can be sent to parents which asks their perceptions of walking and biking to school.
- Student Travel Tally: Recommended to be done fall and spring of every year. These in-class tallies ask students how they travel to and from school.
- More information on both the parent survey and the student travel tally can be found at <http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/evaluation/>

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

“Web” of SRTS Contacts

Capacity of recruiting and sustaining a volunteer base was identified as a barrier for the Aitkin community. To maintain the Safe Routes to School program, the Safe Routes to School Team identified that a “web” of people from leading organizations in the community should be aware of Safe Routes to School and lend this perspective to each decision being made – whether it be about a streets project, school district curriculum, budgets, etc. At a minimum, this “web” may include identified individuals at Rippleside Elementary, Aitkin Secondary, School District, City of Aitkin, Aitkin County, and more; additional individuals and agencies should be identified as implementation takes shape. These individuals will also be “go-to” people for anyone curious about Safe Routes to School at their respective agencies.

Safety Town

Safety Town is a program for children that teaches safety lessons about fire, pedestrians/traffic, water, guns, and poisons/drugs. In Aitkin, Women of Today has hosted the Safety Town program in previous years, and Aitkin Community Education is interested in keeping this tradition alive. Historically, the program has been held in the summer. Scheduling this program during the school year (perhaps on a day off) would be a move to reach more students with an equitable approach.

Additional Resources: [Naperville, Illinois Safety Town](#)

Rippleside Walking Club

Rippleside Elementary has several students who must wait between being dropped off in the morning and school starting. To ready these students’ brains for learning, a walking club with an adult leader is being considered in a partnership between Aitkin Community Education and Aitkin County Public Health.

Safe Routes for Gobblers

One concern for independent student transportation in Aitkin is the walk or bike from Aitkin Secondary School to the school athletic fields on the west side of town. Safe Routes for Gobblers could include mapping the safest route for student athletes to take, including language about safe walking and biking practices into the school sports eligibility packet, and making team coaches responsible for distributing the information to their athletes.

Safe Routes to School Parent Outreach

For multiple components of Safe Routes to School, a barrier in Aitkin is community understanding of what Safe Routes to School is and why it is important. To address this barrier, the Safe Routes to School “web” in Aitkin will table at parent entrance conference and be consistent with language about Safe Routes to School in materials, surveys, or other materials sent out from school or via social media.

Additional Resources: [Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center](#)

Park Dedication Fee Program

The most effective way to make people want to walk is by designing sidewalks like parks, with grass, trees, and other things to look at on either side of the path. The City of Aitkin is pursuing development of ordinances about park dedication fees, which could benefit sidewalk development or maintenance.

Safe Routes to School Evaluation Program

Safe Routes to School evaluation traditionally includes classroom surveys to identify how students are getting to and from school as well as parent surveys to identify how community perceptions about walking and biking.

Additional Resources: [Safe Routes to School Guide - Evaluation](#)



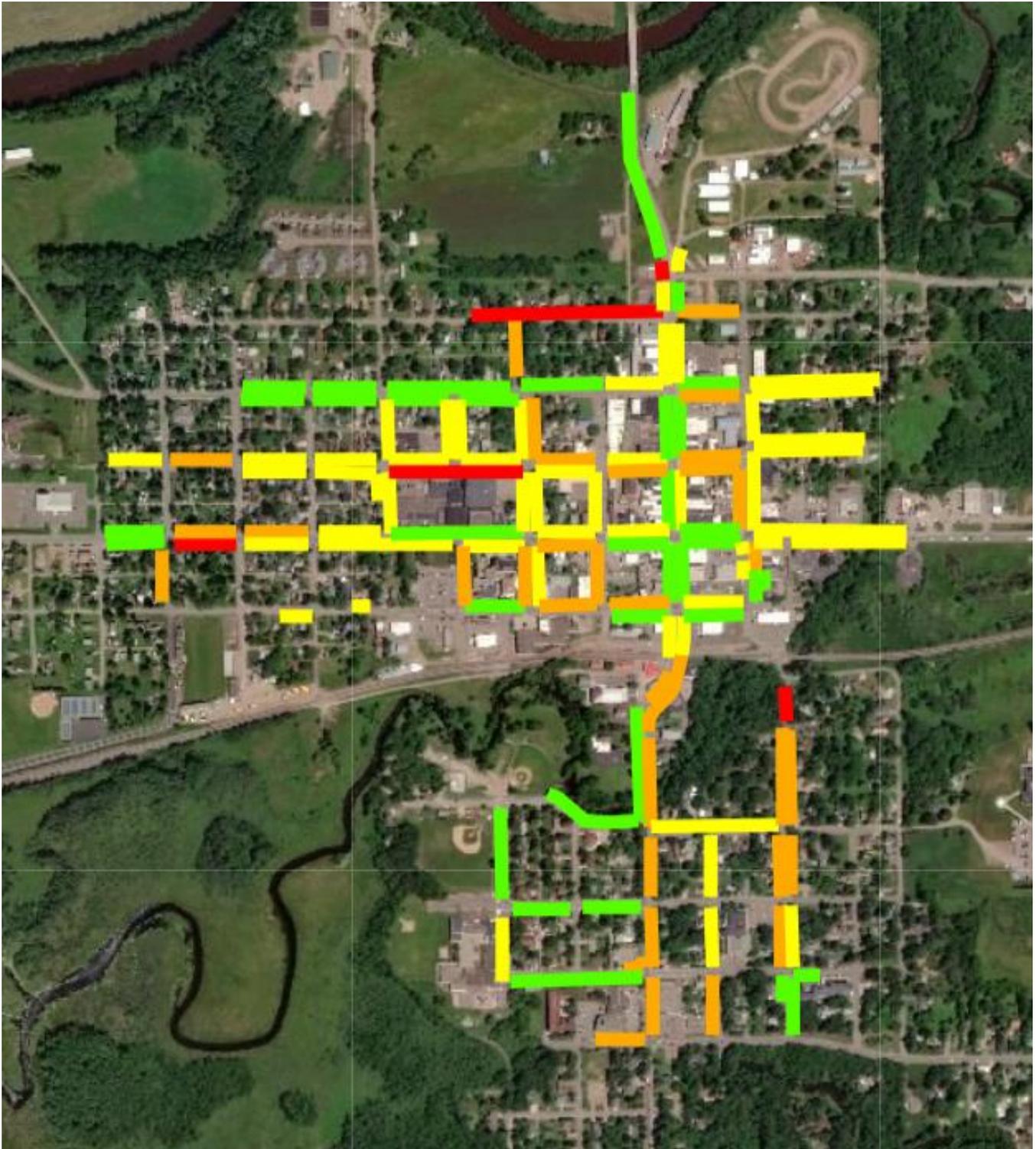
Infrastructure

Introduction to Infrastructure

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

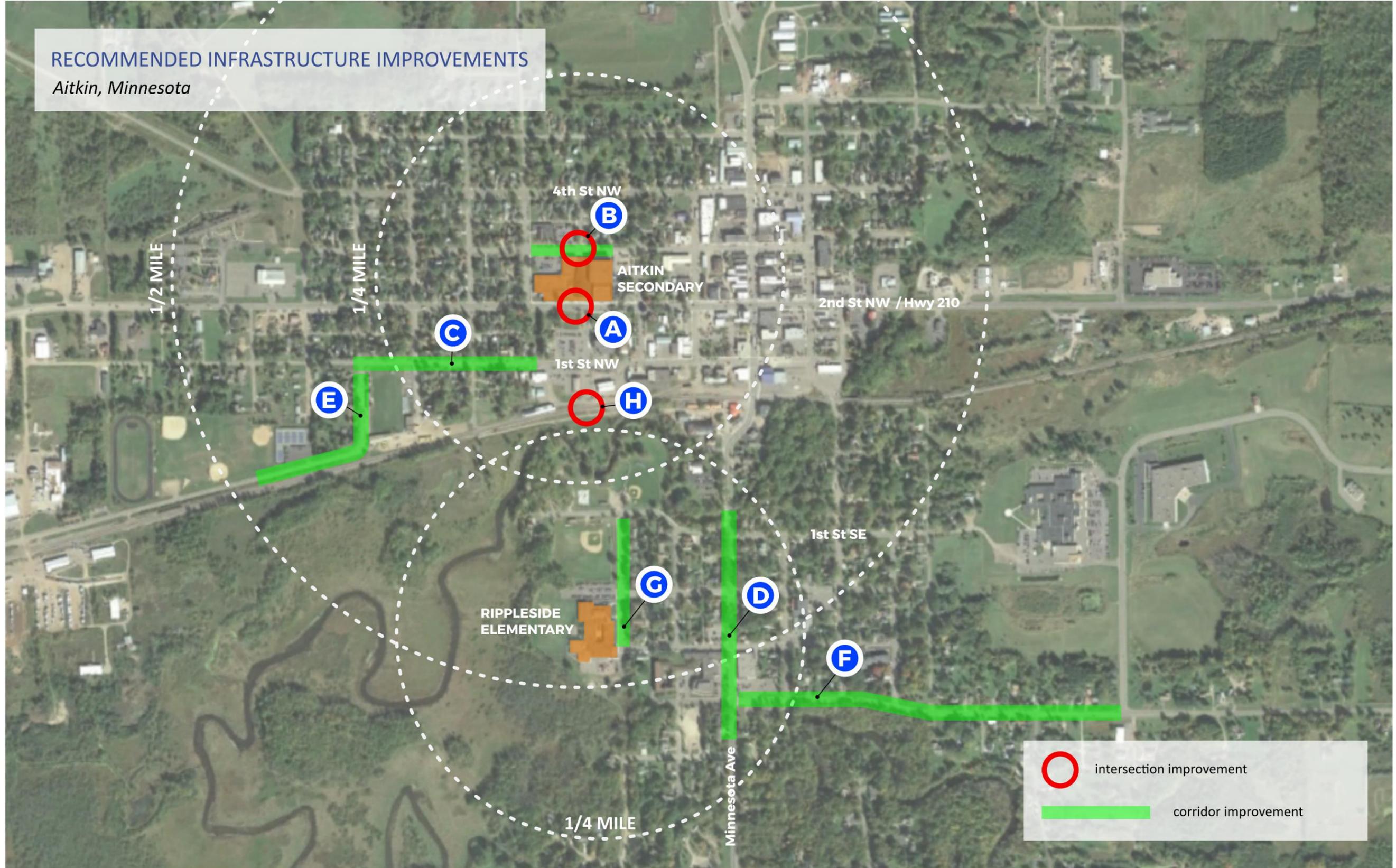
Programs are an integral part in encouraging children and families to safely walk and bike to school, but engineering improvements such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways are important to make safe walking and biking for students possible. Infrastructure changes are often seen as a true sign of progress for community walkability and bikeability due to their visual impact and permanence. While costly, the safety and comfort well-designed pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure provide can serve as the ultimate encouragement for people to be more physically active and choose their own shoes or a set of non-motorized wheels instead of a private vehicle.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE



Above: The City of Aitkin includes 8 miles of pedestrian infrastructure in the form of sidewalks. This map demonstrates where these sidewalks are located and their condition. Green is excellent, yellow is good, orange is fair, and red is poor.

RECOMMENDED INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS
Aitkin, Minnesota



 intersection improvement

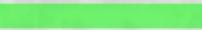
 corridor improvement

TABLE 2. INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATION LIST

#	LOCATION	PROBLEM/ISSUE	POTENTIAL SOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	2 nd Street NW	Unsafe mid-block crossings, potential changes in pedestrian traffic due to county building project on south side of road	Two options: 1) Remove one of the two mid-block crosswalks and install a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) at the remaining crossing, or 2) remove mid-block crosswalks.	Two options: 1) Simplified and more visible pedestrian crossing that accommodates pedestrian travel patterns, or 2) removal of dangerous mid-block crossings.	Minnesota Department of Transportation	High
B	3 rd Street NW	Lacking ADA compliance on intersection corners, poor sidewalk condition on south side of street	Construct curb ramps and truncated domes at the intersection of 3 rd St NW and 3 rd Ave NW, install one crosswalk on the west leg of the intersection (let others fade), and repair concrete sidewalk on south side of the 200 and 300 blocks of 3 rd St NW.	Safer crossing for student drivers accessing the student parking lot on the north side of 3 rd Ave St NW.	City of Aitkin	High
C	1 st Street NW	Lack of walking facilities along high use connection between school and athletic fields	Construct concrete sidewalks on the south side of the 400-700 blocks of 1 st St NW.	Separate student athletes walking from the secondary school to the school athletic fields from vehicular traffic on 1 st St NW	City of Aitkin	High
D	Minnesota Avenue S	Motorist behavior issues (dangerous passing) resulting from backups when northbound vehicles try to turn left, dangerous situation for students crossing the road	Remove parking along Minnesota Avenue (from 4 th St SE to bridge crossing of Ripple River) and install center left turn lane.	Relieve corridor congestion and mitigate adverse effects of vehicle backups during school traffic times for through-drivers.	Minnesota Department of Transportation	Medium
E	7 th Ave NW/Pacific Street NW	Lack of walking facilities along connection between school and athletic fields	Construct a bituminous trail on the west side of the 000 block of 7 th Ave NW and to the tennis courts parking lot on the north side of Pacific St NW.	Separate student athletes walking from the secondary school to the school athletic fields from vehicular traffic.	Aitkin County	Low
F	4 th St SE/Hwy 47	Lack of walking facilities along connection between residences and community pedestrian network	Construct concrete sidewalks on the north side of the 000 block to 500 block of 4 th St SE, from Minnesota Ave S to Bunker Hill Drive.	Separate students walking from high speed vehicular traffic.	Minnesota Department of Transportation	Low
G	2 nd Ave SW	Recent changes to student drop-off zone configuration, hazardous drop-off areas for students walking or biking	Monitor the effectiveness of recent student drop-off zone configuration changes on 2 nd Ave SW.	Ensure the drop-off/pick-up zone is a safe environment for students walking or biking to or from school.	City of Aitkin	Low
H	Rail line near Aitkin City Park	Social crossing of rail line due to direct connection between traveler origins and destinations	Communicate about a desire to formalize crossing with a crossing arm if BNSF initiates safety concerns.	Increase safety of the social pedestrian crossing.	City of Aitkin/BNSF Railway	Low



Above: Example of a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB). Lights flash on the crosswalk signage when a pedestrian hits a button at the bottom of the pole, prompting greater visibility of the crosswalk and increased adherence to laws about vehicles stopping for pedestrians in a crosswalk.



How to Get Involved

Using This Plan

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

This plan provides an overview of Safe Routes to School with specific recommendations for a 6 E's approach to improve the safety and the health and wellness of students. The specific recommendations in this plan are intended to support improvements and programs over the next 5 years. These recommendations include both long- and short-term infrastructure improvements as well as programmatic recommendations.

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



WHO ARE YOU?

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

I AM A PARENT

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

I AM A COMMUNITY MEMBER

Community residents, even if they don't currently have children enrolled in school, can play an important role in supporting implementation of the plan. They can use this report to better understand where there may be opportunities to

participate in programming initiatives and infrastructure improvements. Community members, including seniors or retirees who may have more flexible schedules than parents with school-aged children, may volunteer in established programs or work with school staff or community partners to start new programs recommended in this plan.

I WORK FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

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

I AM A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

School administrators have an important role in implementing the recommendations contained within this SRTS plan. For a plan to succeed, the impetus for change and improvement must be supported by the leadership of the school. School administrators can help with making policy and procedural changes to projects that are within school grounds and by distributing informational materials to parents within school publications.

Please read the SRTS Facts for School Communication in Appendix B.

I AM A TEACHER OR OTHER STAFF MEMBER

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

I WORK FOR THE CITY OR COUNTY

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

- MnDOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grants
- Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grants
- Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)

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

WORK FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police department staff can use this report to understand issues related to walking and bicycling to school and to plan for and prioritize enforcement activities that may make it easier and safer for students to walk and bike to school. The Police Department will be instrumental to the success of the enforcement programs and policies recommended in this plan. The Police Department will also have a key role in working with school administrations in providing officers and assistance to some of the proposed education and encouragement programs.

I WORK IN PUBLIC HEALTH

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



Appendices

Appendix A: Parent Survey Form

Parent Survey about Walking and Biking to School

Directions

Rippleside Elementary wants to learn your thoughts about students walking and biking to and from school. While this may not be an option for many households due to distance, please answer as many questions as possible. For households with more than one student at the school, please fill out and submit only one survey for your household. If you have a multi-student household, it will help to have one student in mind as you answer some of the questions.

The survey will take about 5-10 minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept anonymous. After you have completed the survey, submit this sheet to the school office (or as the school otherwise directs) by **Friday, May 25**.

List the grade(s) of K-6 students in your household: _____

Travel to School

On most days, where are students in your household coming from when they arrive at school?

- Home
- Home of relative or friend
- Child care center
- Off-campus activity (i.e. sports practice)
- Place of employment
- Other: _____

Approximately how far is the school from the before-school location selected above?

- Less than ¼ mile
- ¼ mile up to ½ mile
- ½ mile up to 1 mile
- 1 mile up to 2 miles
- More than 2 miles

On most days, how do students in your household get to school?

- Walk
- Bike
- School bus
- Transit (i.e. city bus)
- Multi-family carpool
- Personal/single family vehicle
- Other: _____

Using the mode of transportation selected above, how long does it take students in your household to get to school from their before-school location?

- Less than 5 minutes
- 5-10 minutes
- 11-20 minutes
- More than 20 minutes

Travel from School

On most days, where are students in your household going when they leave school?

- Home
- Home of relative or friend
- Child care center
- Off-campus activity (i.e. sports practice)
- Place of employment
- Other: _____

Approximately how far is the after-school destination selected above from the school?

- Less than ¼ mile
- ¼ mile up to ½ mile
- ½ mile up to 1 mile
- 1 mile up to 2 miles
- More than 2 miles

On most days, how do students in your household get to their after-school destination?

- Walk
- Bike
- School bus
- Transit (i.e. city bus)
- Multi-family carpool
- Personal/single family vehicle
- Other: _____

Using the mode of transportation selected above, how long does it take students in your household to get from school to their after-school destination?

- Less than 5 minutes
- 5-10 minutes
- 11-20 minutes
- More than 20 minutes

Flip for additional questions →

Outlook on Walking to School

In your opinion, how much does the school encourage or discourage walking to and/or from school?

Strongly Encourages 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Discourages

In your opinion, how much fun is walking for students in your household?

Very Fun 1 2 3 4 5 Very Boring

Factors for Walking to School

Circle **Y** or **N** – Have students in your household expressed interest in walking to and/or from school?

What are your **THREE** biggest concerns for students in your household walking to and/or from school?

- Amount of traffic along route
- Behavior of drivers along route
- Bullying from other students
- Driveway crossings
- Inclement weather
- Lack of a walking partner
- Lack of adult supervision
- Lack of maintenance on sidewalks or pathways
- Lack of sidewalks or pathways
- Limited time
- Long distance
- Road crossings
- Speed of traffic along route
- "Stranger danger"

Circle **Y** or **N** – If the concerns you selected above can be resolved, would you be more likely to allow students in your household to walk to and/or from school?

Please provide any comments about walking to and/or from school you want to share below.

Outlook on Biking to School

In your opinion, how much does the school encourage or discourage biking to and/or from school?

Strongly Encourages 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Discourages

In your opinion, how much fun is biking for students in your household?

Very Fun 1 2 3 4 5 Very Boring

Factors for Biking to School

Circle **Y** or **N** – Have students in your household expressed interest in biking to and/or from school?

What are your **THREE** biggest concerns for students in your household biking to and/or from school?

- Ability to ride a bike
- Amount of traffic along route
- Behavior of drivers along route
- Bullying from other students
- Cost of owning a bike
- Inclement weather
- Limited time
- Long distance
- Driveway crossings
- Lack of adult supervision
- Lack of a biking partner
- Lack of maintenance on pathways
- Lack of pathways
- Lack of secure bicycle parking
- Road crossings
- Speed of traffic along route
- "Stranger danger"

Circle **Y** or **N** – If the concerns you selected above can be resolved, would you be more likely to allow students in your household to bike to and/or from school?

Please provide any comments about biking to and/or from school you want to share below.

Thank you!

Appendix B: Classroom Survey Form

Classroom Tally of How Students Travel to and from School

Directions

- Conduct the counts on both **Tuesday, May 15**, and **Wednesday, May 16**. Please conduct these counts regardless of weather conditions (i.e. ask on rainy days, too).
- Conduct the counts **first thing in the morning**, or during “first hour” for secondary schools (even if alternate-day schedules mean you are reporting on a different classroom of students).
- Ask your students as a group, “How did you arrive to school today?” Read each possible answer out loud and instruct students to each raise a hand for only one option. Reread the question and tally the response in the appropriate table below as you reread each option.
- Follow the same procedure when you ask, “How do you plan to leave school today?”
- After you have completed both days of tallies, submit this sheet to the school office by **Friday, May 18**.

Teacher Name:

Grade(s) (PK,K,1,2,3...):

Tues., May 15, 2018	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Transit (i.e. city bus)	Personal/Family Vehicle	Multi-Family Carpool	Other
How did you arrive to school today?							
How do you plan to leave school today?							

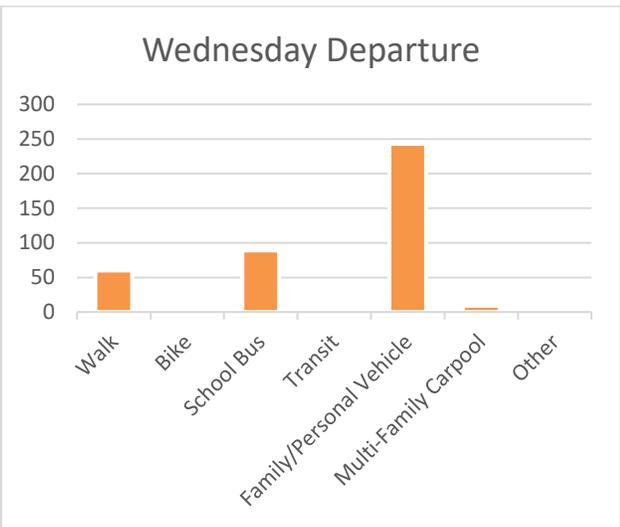
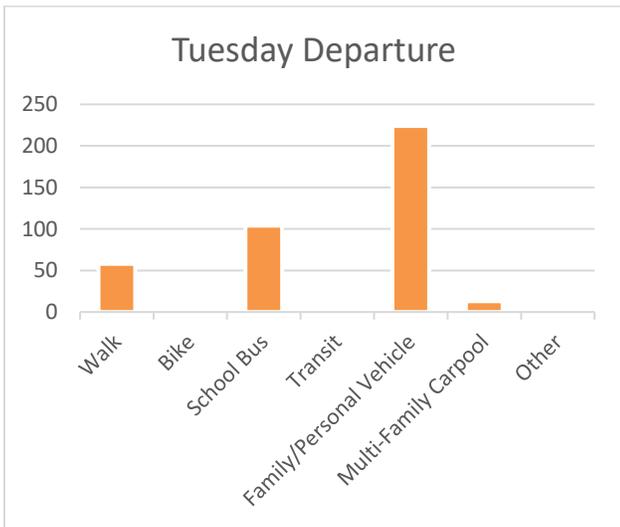
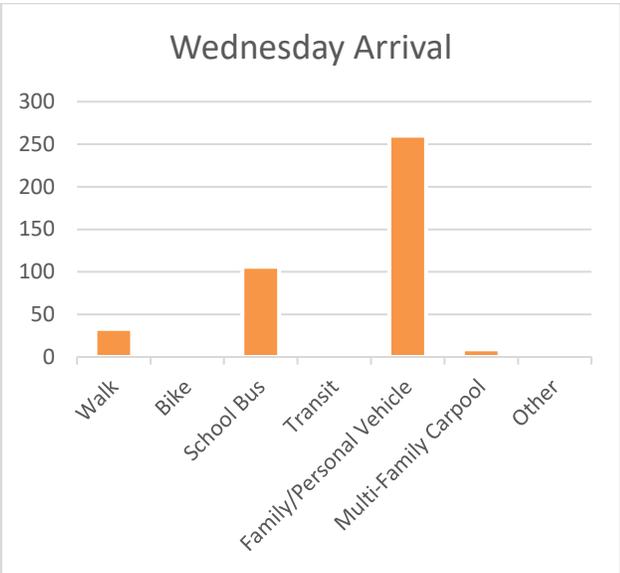
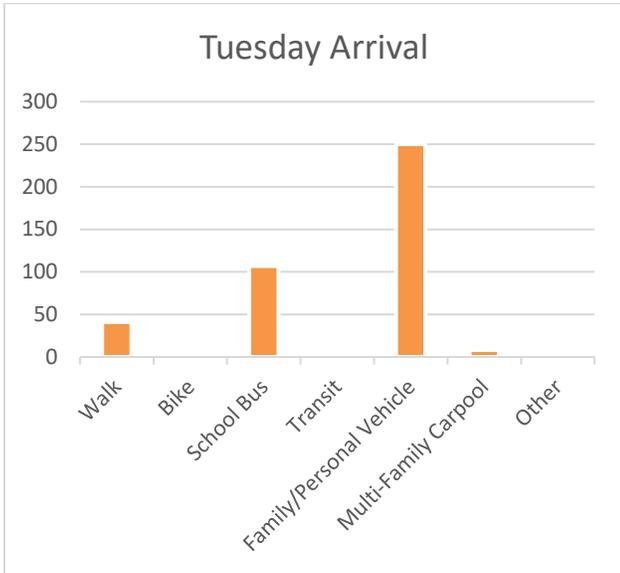
Wed., May 16, 2018	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Transit (i.e. city bus)	Personal/Family Vehicle	Multi-Family Carpool	Other
How did you arrive to school today?							
How do you plan to leave school today?							

Please list any unusual travel conditions impacting the count below.

Appendix C: Survey Results

In May 2018, Rippleside Elementary School and Aitkin Secondary School administered a SRTS Parent Survey (Appendix A) and a SRTS Classroom Survey (Appendix B) to its parents and student, respectively. The results of these surveys are provided on the following pages.

Classroom Tally Results – Aitkin Secondary (May 15-16, 2018)



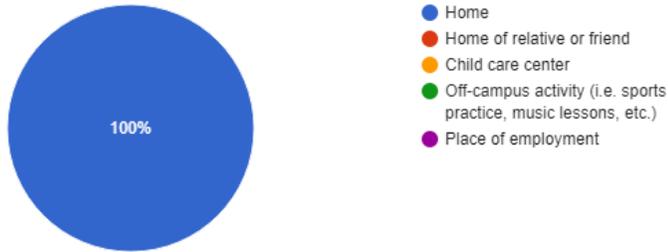
Parent Survey Results – Aitkin Secondary (May 2018)

Respondents: 47

Travel to School

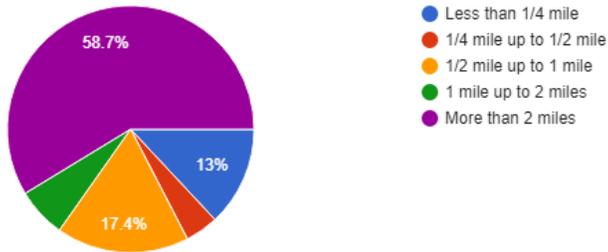
On most days, where are students in your household coming from when they arrive at school?

46 responses



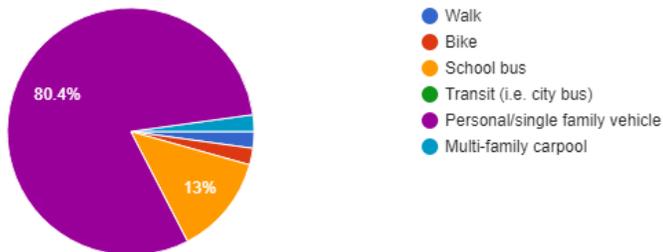
Approximately how far is the school from the before-school location selected above?

46 responses



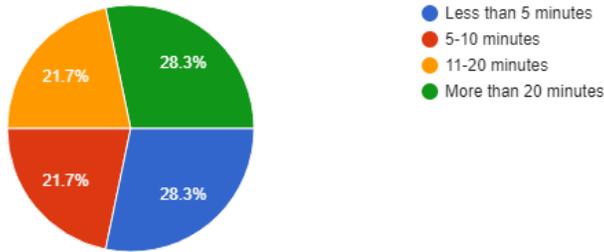
On most days, how do students in your household get to school?

46 responses



Using the mode of transportation selected above, how long does it take students in your household to get to school from their before-school location?

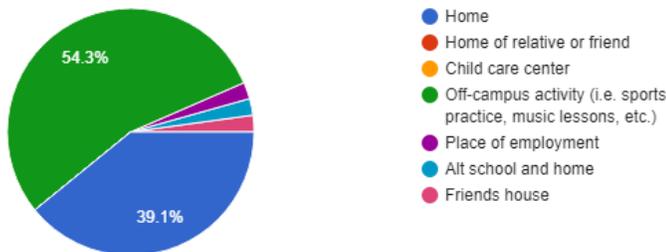
46 responses



Travel from School

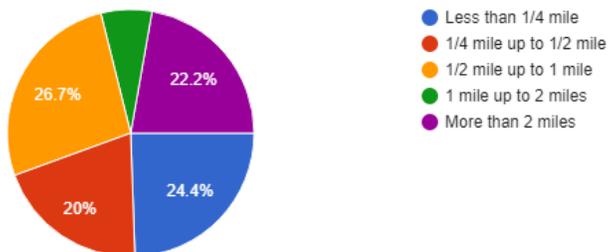
On most days, where are students in your household going when they leave school?

46 responses



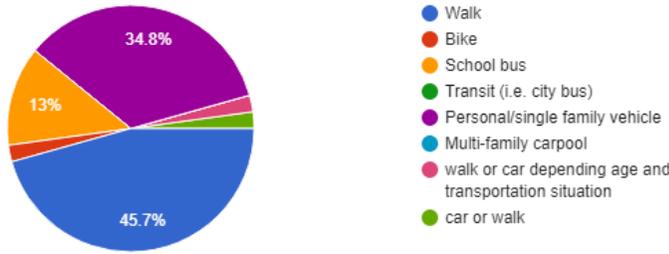
Approximately how far is the after-school destination selected above from the school?

45 responses



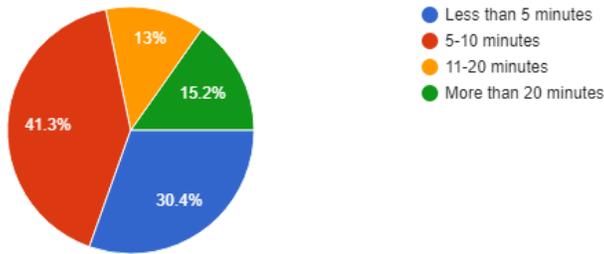
On most days, how do students in your household get to their after-school destination?

46 responses



Using the mode of transportation selected above, how long does it take students in your household to get from ...hool to their after-school destination?

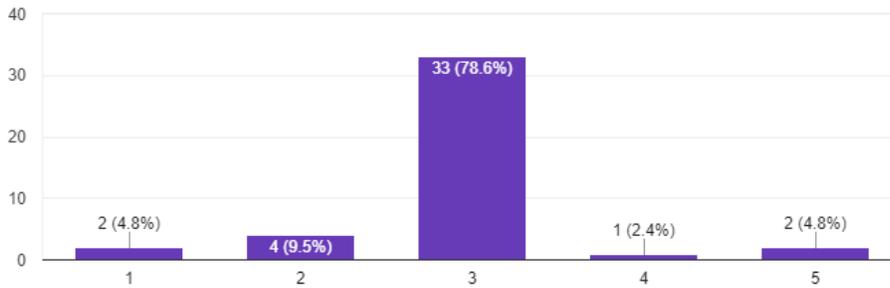
46 responses



Outlook on Walking to School

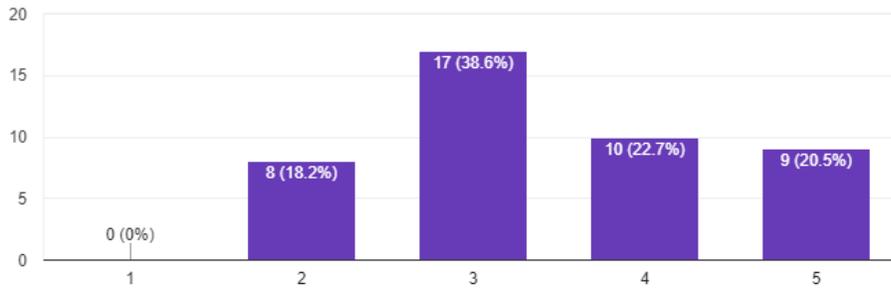
In your opinion, how much does the school encourage or discourage walking to school?

42 responses



In your opinion, how much fun is walking for students in your household?

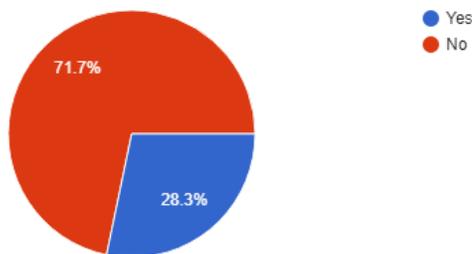
44 responses



Factors for Walking to School

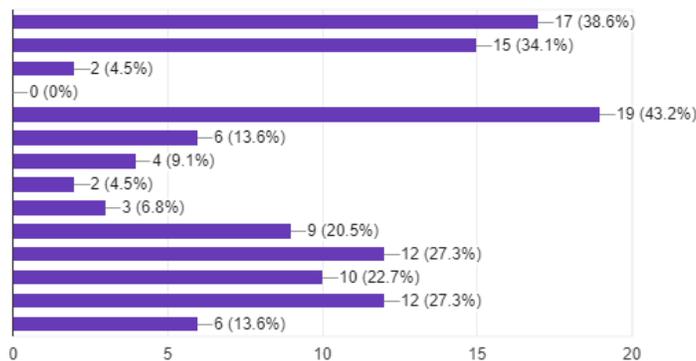
Have students in your household expressed interest in walking to and/or from school?

46 responses



What are your THREE biggest concerns for students in your household walking to and/or from school?

44 responses



Concerns listed in order (those in **bold** are top three responses): **Amount of traffic along route**, **Behavior of drivers along route**, **Inclement weather**, Lack of a walking partner, Lack of adult supervision, Lack of maintenance on sidewalks or pathways, Lack of

sidewalks or pathways, Limited time, Long distance, Road crossings, Speed of traffic along route, "Stranger danger"

Comments about Walking

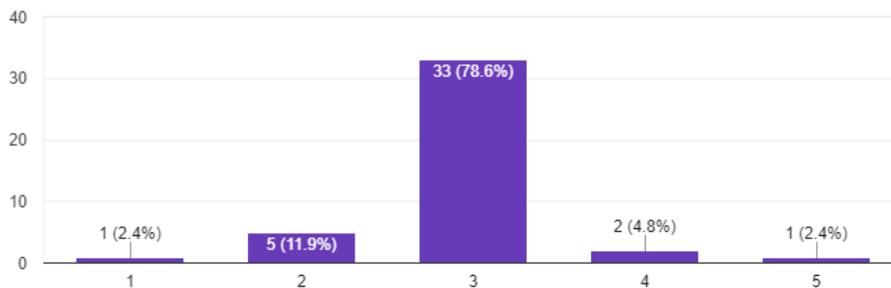
- Some questions need more than one answer with multiple students
- I would allow my child to bike more often if there was a safer place to place the bikes. my family bikes often and spend money on our bikes and there isn't much of a safe place to store them. also, if the student does sports the bike is left overnight unless a parent can pick it up with the student. I wish there was something easier and safer for bike storage other than a small bike lock.
- With all the problems in Aitkin, why in the world are you wasting time with this! Typical Aitkin!
- Crossing and Walking on hwy 47 is what I don't like
- It would be nice to have a crosswalk to get to the bike path on 169 from Maryhill Lane and Ripple Lane.
- It is ridiculous that kids are walking all over town for athletic events. Not only do we get out later than other schools, there is travel time which adds to the difficulty of succeeding in sports for many programs. On top of that, I highly question the safety of kids running around town to get to practice. And by the way, isn't the school responsible for the safety of our kids during these times. How is it staff can protect unsupervised children. Perhaps the athletic director should try doing his job.
- We live too far out to realistically walk. It is insane the amount of time the kids spend walking to sports around this town. Sometimes the kids aren't even heading to the right location. I think a lot of that is because of the athletic director. The AD is the one responsible for getting athletes places in time and safely. Aitkin should think about the lives endangered when a job isn't done right.
- to school is not an option - we are disappointed about the after school situation - this hasn't changed since our older kids were around - maybe hire an AD who is smart enough to figure it out - stop making kids suffer - obviously the board doesn't care about facilities being close together as they decided to put on a roof instead
- There is a major problem with the crossing on the south side of the HS. Just the other day my son was in the crosswalk when a car rear ended the truck that had stopped for him and some teammates. This crossing is is nothing short of a death trap to anyone that tries to cross. The school or the state need to add more signs along the sidewalk to alert people of the crossing. The city needs move the distance people can park.
- my kids would have to cross hwy 169
- We live out of town but are concerned about crossing 210 for practice at Rippleside, the softball fields, tennis courts, track and football field. Almost had kids injured last week - guess it takes a near miss like that for concern and surveys.
- I guess the beef that I have had is the after school stuff. When my daughter was in softball she walked to Rippleside which is plain silly because there is nothing there for practice facilities. (equal opportunities for girls???) Then you have the haul to who knows where for the high school spring sports. I find that irritating. I think that it would be wise to have an activities director that had the skills to handle the spring mess rather than making a bigger one. Not sure why - with all that is falling apart in our schools - you are worrying about this. Since when does anyone around there care about what parents think?
- Highway 210 in front of the high school is very dangerous. Too many vehicles driving too fast. Last fall there was a near miss accident after football practice. I find it baffling that there is not a crosswalk with traffice lights for a school crossing. Waiting until an accident happens is too late.

- This survey is silly and does not pertain to those who live outside of city limits in my opinion. We are 30 minutes away on a good day, add 15 for winter road conditions, because we are 20 miles out of town. There's no feasible way my kids would be able to walk to school.
- More than 20 mile walk
- We will determine our own walking route (s) on public/city streets.
- The kids need a safe way to cross the highway. The signs are not enough for the distracted drivers. I believe a crosswalk light would be a good solution that would keep our kids safe and get drivers' attention without having to have a stoplight.
- I do not feel that our intersection is safe with all the distractive driving issues. There are many times that I see people walking across in the crosswalk and drivers are almost getting hit. I also do not like the fact that drivers do not stop for people in the crosswalk and when they do you have to worry about them getting rear ended. I do not want to get that call that my student was hit crossing at a crosswalk so for that reason I drive my child to school.
- We are about 10 miles from the school, walking really isn't an option.
- You can't control the weather.

Outlook on Biking to School

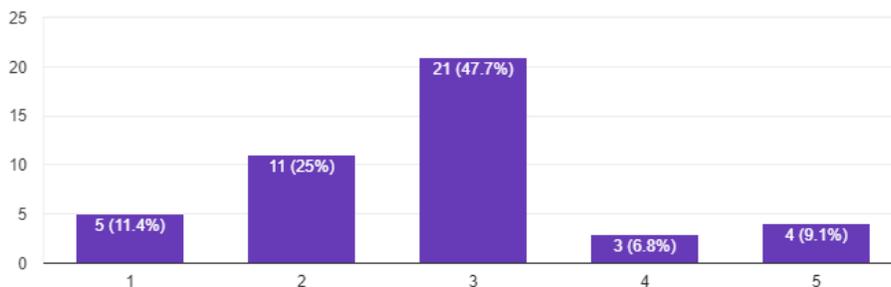
In your opinion, how much does the school encourage or discourage biking to school?

42 responses



In your opinion, how much fun is biking for students in your household?

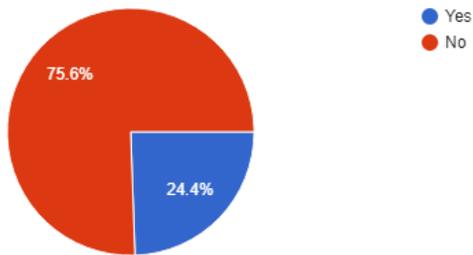
44 responses



Factors for Biking to School

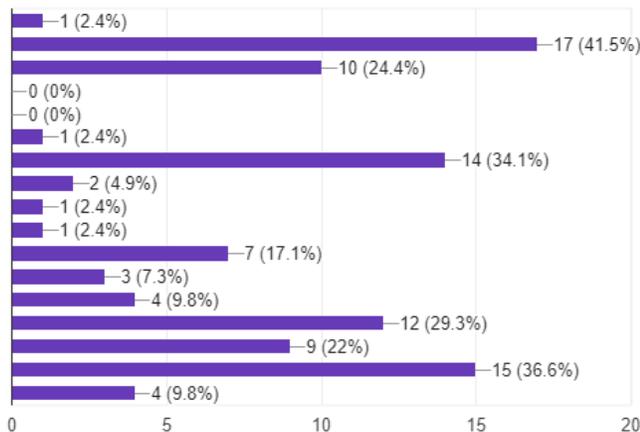
Have students in your household expressed interest in biking to and/or from school?

45 responses



What are your THREE biggest concerns for students in your household biking to and/or from school?

41 responses



Concerns listed in order (those in **bold** are top three responses): Ability to ride a bike, **Amount of traffic along route**, Behaviors of drivers along route, Bullying from other students, Cost of owning a bike, Driveway crossings, **Inclement weather**, Lack of a biking partner, Lack of adult supervision, Lack of maintenance on pathways, Lack of pathways, Lack of secure bicycle parking, Limited time, Long distance, Road crossings, **Speed of traffic along route**, "Stranger danger"

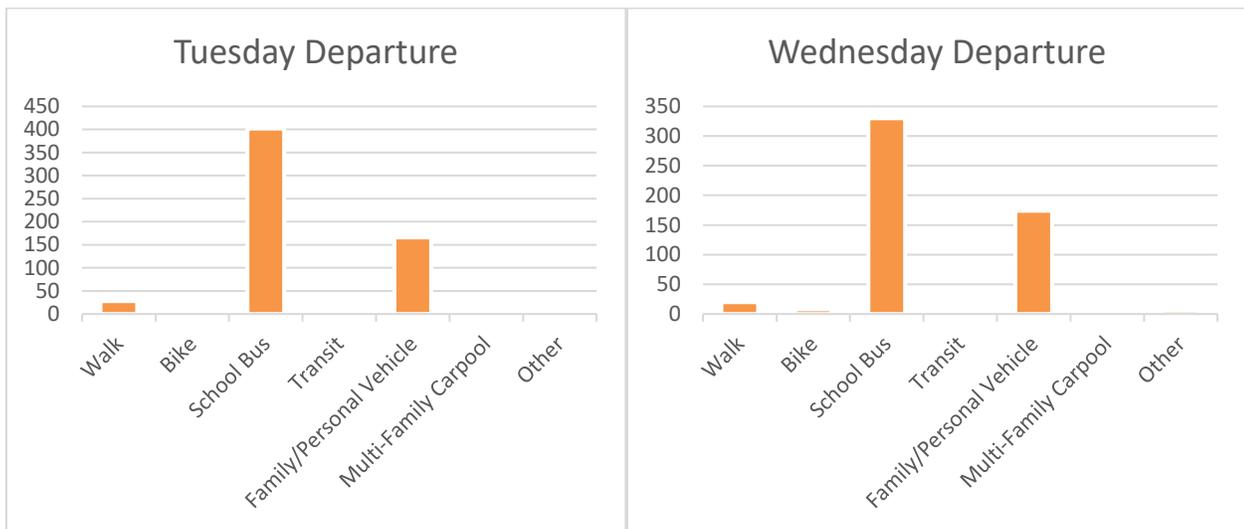
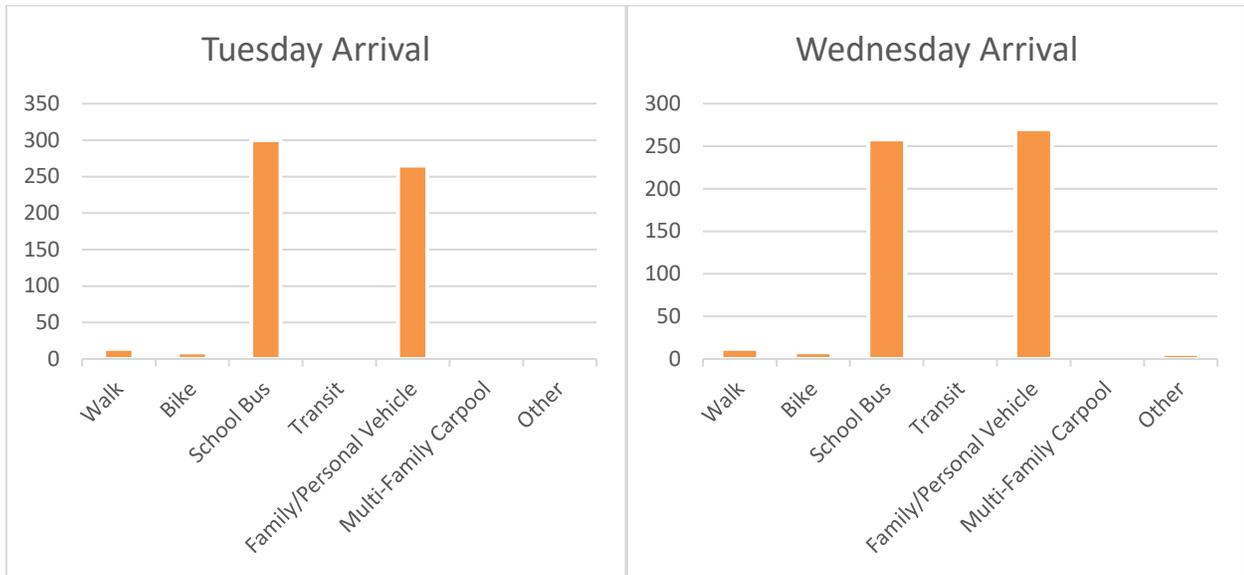
Comments about Biking

- Pointless to bike, live so close.
- Again, with all the problems in the school, why in the world are you bothering with this?!?!?!?!?
- Biking on and Crossing HWY 47
- See concern regarding walking
- I am not sure that riding a bike would be safer than walking. I feel this way in getting to school as well as to sports. The kids have to cross too many busy streets in town for the time of day that they get out of school to head to practice. Recently a number of kids witnessed an accident in

front of them - it could have easily been the kids hit vs a car!!! I would suggest letting the athletes who walk to sports out in that I.S. time so they can get out of school and through the crossings before things get too busy. Teachers don't coach anyway so it is not like that part should matter.

- I am not even sure if there is a place to keep bikes at the high school, let alone various sports fields.
- Wish the school folks would realize that this travel stuff is an important factor in why we need a new school.
- I am sure there is people who could help figure it out, but generally those are the ones who leave.
- South crossing needs to be addressed before someone dies.
- my kids have to cross hwy 169
- We live too far from town to bike to school
- More than 20 miles
- Keep bicycles off the public roadways - they do not mix well with vehicular traffic. Not safe. Encourage use on bike paths ONLY.
- We live too far without any safe trails to bike.
- We are about 10 miles away from the school, so biking to school really isn't an option.
- My student is 16 so walking/biking to school is not an interest. In the past before drivers license they would bike and walk often when weather provided.
- You can't control the weather.

Classroom Tally Results – Rippleside Elementary (May 15-16, 2018)



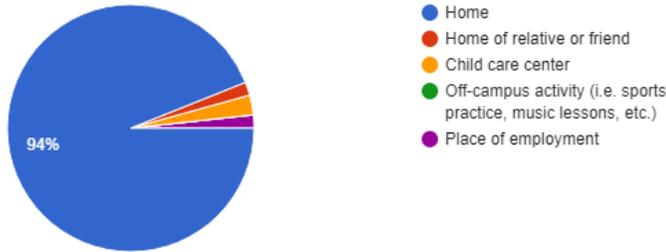
Parent Survey Results – Rippleside Elementary (May 2018)

Respondents: 117

Travel to School

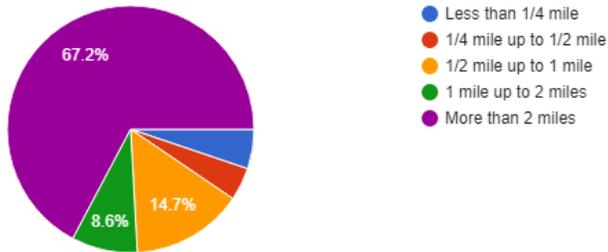
On most days, where are students in your household coming from when they arrive at school?

116 responses



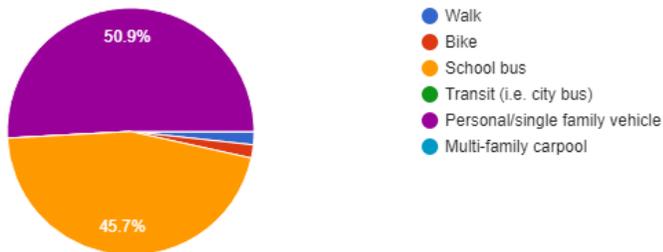
Approximately how far is the school from the before-school location selected above?

116 responses



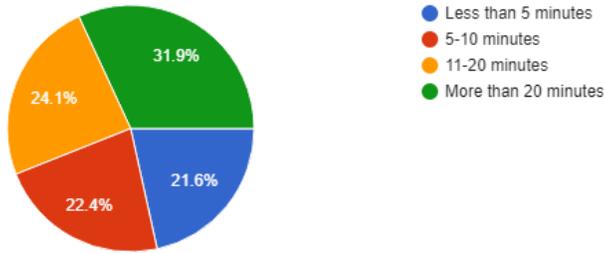
On most days, how do students in your household get to school?

116 responses



Using the mode of transportation selected above, how long does it take students in your household to get to school from their before-school location?

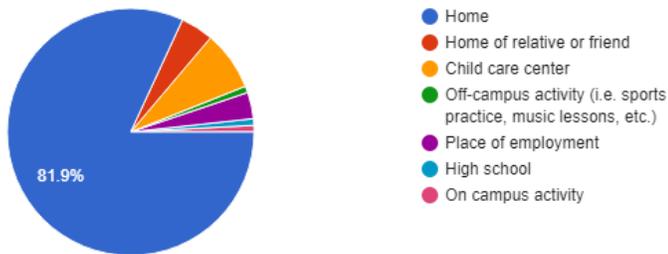
116 responses



Travel from School

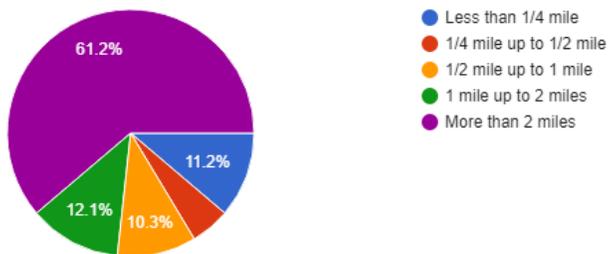
On most days, where are students in your household going when they leave school?

116 responses



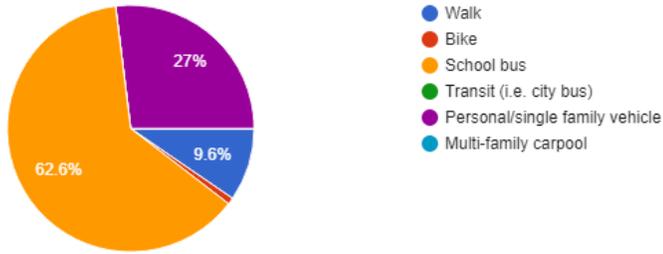
Approximately how far is the after-school destination selected above from the school?

116 responses



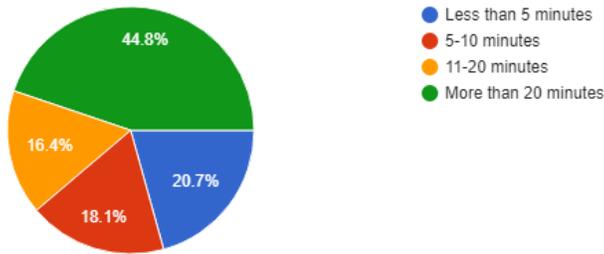
On most days, how do students in your household get to their after-school destination?

115 responses



Using the mode of transportation selected above, how long does it take students in your household to get from ...hool to their after-school destination?

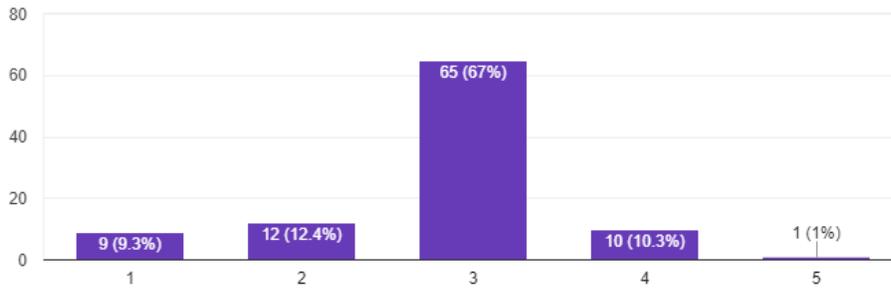
116 responses



Outlook on Walking to School

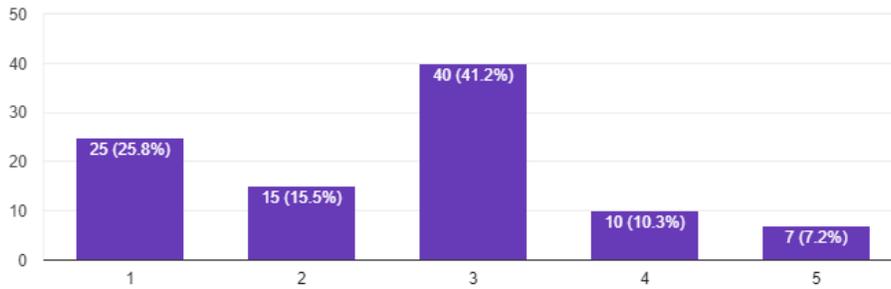
In your opinion, how much does the school encourage or discourage walking to school?

97 responses



In your opinion, how much fun is walking for students in your household?

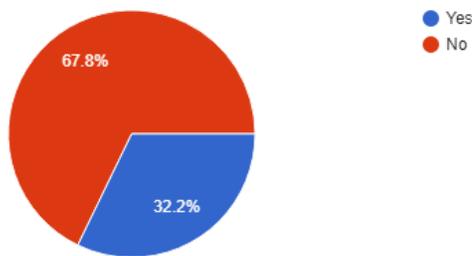
97 responses



Factors for Walking to School

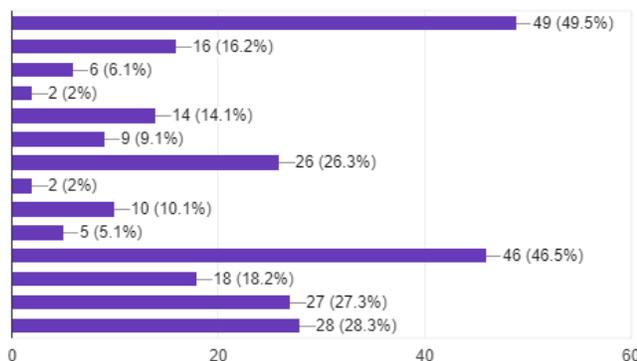
Have students in your household expressed interest in walking to and/or from school?

87 responses



What are your THREE biggest concerns for students in your household walking to and/or from school?

99 responses



Concerns listed in order (those in **bold** are top three responses): **Amount of traffic along route**, Behavior of drivers along route, Bullying from other students, Driveway crossings, Inclement weather, Lack of a walking partner, Lack of adult supervision, Lack of maintenance on sidewalks or pathways, Lack of

sidewalks or pathways, Limited time, **Long distance**, Road crossings, Speed of traffic along route, **“Stranger danger”**

Comments about Walking

- Too far (2)
- Maybe not as a kindergartener but as she is older.
- There is no sidewalks along hwy 47 nor is there even a shoulder for walking/biking. Also, high traffic w/high speed drivers are often driving unresponsibly by speeding, texting etc. Hwy 47 should be more patrolled either by city police or state patrol during high traffic hours- (beginning of school and end of school day or work day).
- Not possible for us as we are in Palisade.
- They are too young to walk alone. Not until they are older.
- Too many kidnappings & other threatening situations are taking place in this day and age for young children to be walking or biking to or from school unsupervised. Distance is a huge factor. Traffic & wild drivers are also important factors. Maybe for teens this isn't as concerning as is for young kids, but still concerning nonetheless.
- No- too far
- We live too far away from school- 15 miles.
- Maybe- at first grade she is too young to travel to school alone.
- Too far for my kids to walk.
- If we lived closer to town I would love for our kids to walk to school. Our family enjoys walking for recreation and exercise.
- My children "walk" to my classroom after school. They aren't leaving the building to do this.
- More walking paths.
- We live close to high school. The traffic after school is crazy. We also live on a corner with a stop sign, people don't even stop they roll right through it.
- We live on 169
- We live 30 minutes away.
- Not an option
- If my child had a partner to walk with and a police officer helping cross 169 it would be easier to have them walk. It is about a 20 minute walk. We are thankful to be on the bus route and live by the tire barn.
- Aitkin is a very rural community. Many of our students live outside of city limits which excludes them from being able to walk. I would also be concerned about students crossing intersections in town. Stoplight crossing can be confusing and the intersection near school rarely has presence lately.
- Aitkin does nothing well.
- We live on 2nd Avenue Northeast. We use the crosswalks across 169 a lot! We have taught our kids to stay on the sidewalk until all moving cars have stopped because there has been 4 incidents in which a car has passes on the right and/or swerved towards us on the sidewalk to not rear-end a stopped car at the crosswalk. At the high school just this week (we have a 7th grader, too) he was crossing at the south entrance across 210/169. a truck was stopped and was rear-ended by a driver who didn't stop and the truck was pushed into the crosswalk where my son and his baseball teammates were walking. We have expressed our safety concerns to city council members about a tree that is planted in a crosswalk on 169 (by the city park) that obstructs north traveling drivers

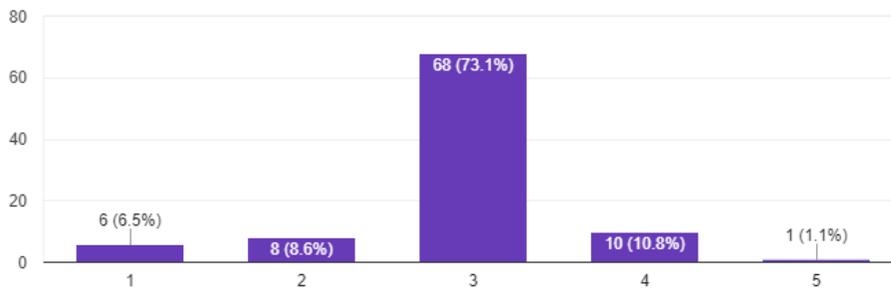
view of pedestrians. The city workers deemed it was not an obstruction (Hello! trees grow bigger...) Our pedestrian crosswalks are so unsafe.

- We live too far out of town to make this feasible.
- At his age I don't want him walking alone. We often walk to and from school together and we enjoy it. But, most often drive to weather and running a little late in the morning. I am what some call an over-protective mom, but yes.... we love to walk to school when we can.
- We live 8 miles from town so walking is not an option.
- We live 10 miles away walking is not an option.
- Our issues cannot be resolved. I won't let my kids walk five miles to school on a busy road with inattentive (sic) drivers.
- Daughter is not mature enough to walk by herself. Hoping in the next year she can do this.
- No traffic/weather can be resolved
- Out of town, bus needed.
- The problem is we live in Minnesota. most of the walks would occur in cold weather.
- Does not apply to this household. Seeing as they can never walk or bike to or from school
- We live 12 miles from town.
- In my opinion- Elementary School Aged students are not old enough to be out around town without an adult with them at all times.
- We live an hour away.
- We live 11.5 miles from town.
- We live too far out of town.
- Better crosswalks at the high school and from Rippleside on 169 & 201. Many towns like Glencoe-Silver Lake have flashing lights at their school crosswalk. These are on side streets, not even on streets as busy as 210 & 169! Also, better parking options at high school - very hard to see kids crossing when cars are lined up and down the streets.
- Too Far
- We live 7+ miles from town.

Outlook on Biking to School

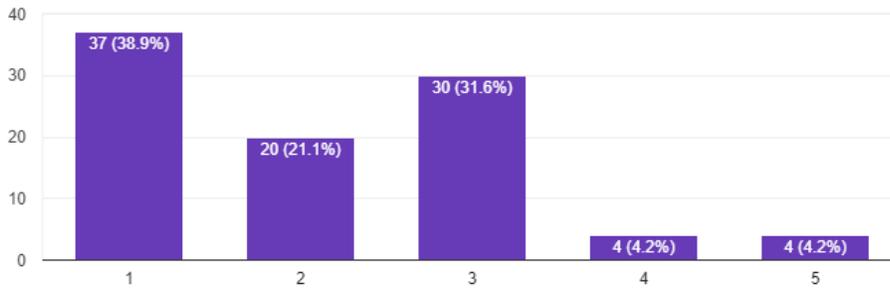
In your opinion, how much does the school encourage or discourage biking to school?

93 responses



In your opinion, how much fun is biking for students in your household?

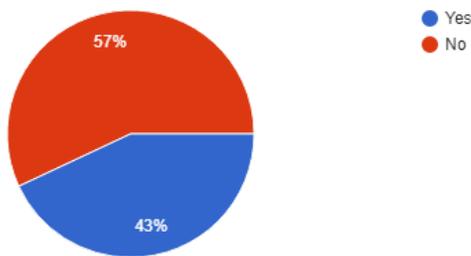
95 responses



Factors for Biking to School

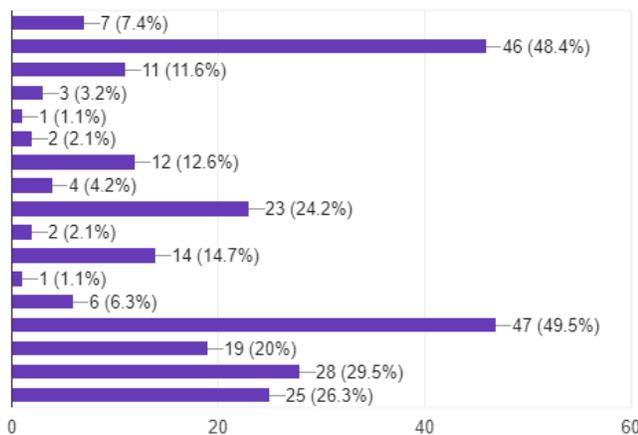
Have students in your household expressed interest in biking to and/or from school?

79 responses



What are your THREE biggest concerns for students in your household biking to and/or from school?

95 responses



Concerns listed in order (those in **bold** are top three responses): Ability to ride a bike, **Amount of traffic along route**, Behaviors of drivers along route, Bullying from other students, Cost of owning a bike, Driveway crossings, Inclement weather, Lack of a biking partner, Lack of adult supervision, Lack of maintenance on pathways, Lack of pathways, Lack of secure bicycle parking, Limited time, **Long distance**, Road crossings, **Speed of traffic along route**, "Stranger danger"

Biking Comments

- Too far (2)
- Need safer route along highway 47!
- We live too far out of the town of Aitkin for the kids to walk and/or bike to school.
- Not unless there is some kind of bike path or bridge from the high school to Ripplside.
- Please refer to comments in the box to the left. Those refer to both walking and biking to and from school. Thank you.
- No- too far
- Too young to travel via bike alone.
- Too far to bike to school.
- If we lived closer to town I would love for our kids to walk to school. Our family enjoys walking for recreation and exercise.
- More bike paths.
- We live on 169.
- We live 30 minutes away.
- Not an option
- Great bike paths but he doesn't like the bugs and I worry about him crossing a highway by himself with no crosswalk. Plus 1/2 of school year it's -28 below zero here. We are thankful for the bus service.
- I would love to see mandatory bike safety course taken by any student wanting to ride bike unsupervised to school.
- Too far out of town.
- Same as previous comments for walking. I believe at this age he is too young. We want to bike, but are not sure how safe bikes are at school. but we will likely bike to school soon too. Love to do both when we can.
- Again we live 8 miles from town.
- Only if bike path did not cross city streets.
- I won't let my kids bike five miles to school on a busy road with inattentive (sic) drivers.
- Daughter is beginning to master riding bike. Hoping in the next year she can do this.
- No traffic/weather cannot (sic) be resolved.
- Out of town, bus needed.
- Does not apply to this household. Seeing as they can never walk or bike to or from school
- We live 12 miles from town
- In my opinion- Elementary School Aged students are not old enough to be out around town without an adult with them at all times.
- We live 11.5 miles from town.
- We live too far out of town.
- Too Far