



# Safe Routes to School

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

Grand Marais, MN | May 2020

Sawtooth Elementary School – Great Expectation Elementary School



**ARDC**  
**Planning**  
A Division of ARDC





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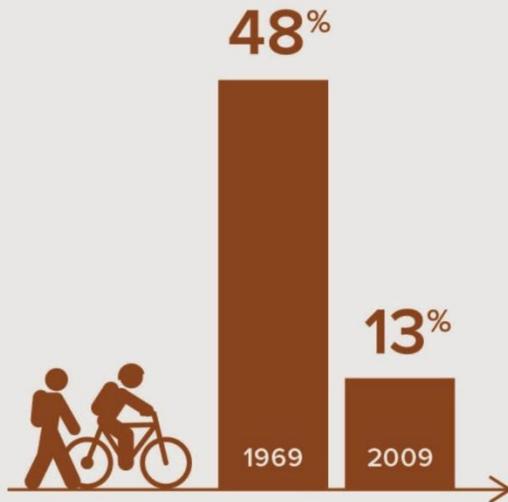
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# Introduction + Context

# 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 the Es. 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 Mission

Where it is safe, get kids walking and biking. Where it's not safe, make changes.

## The Vision

Children are walking and biking safely, achieved through a supportive partnership between families, community, and schools.

## Core Values

1. Involvement of key stakeholders is important in our SRTS work; Parents, Students, Professionals, Elected leaders and Community all need to have a role.
2. To be successful, our efforts will address education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, equity, and evaluation (the 6 Es).
3. Evaluation and assessment will be used to measure project effectiveness and to tell the story of our work

## 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.

## SRTS Team Goals

1. Maintain and grow opportunities for all students to walk and bike to/from school safely year-round.
2. Students have access to bike and walk education and practice, in and out of school.
3. Improve the safety for students walking and biking to/from school.
4. Increase public awareness of the local Safe Routes to School program and the role it plays in creating a safe and healthy environment for students.
5. Help public policy and infrastructure planning incorporate Safe Routes to School experiences and priorities.
6. Safe Routes to School program is equitable and sustainable.



## Cook County ISD and Great Expectations School

Grand Marais is approximately 120 miles north of Duluth, Minnesota on the shore of Lake Superior with a land area of 2.7 square miles and a population of 1,418 permanent residents. Due to its scenic beauty and thriving artistic community the City experiences temporary population increases and therefore traffic congestion during the summer and early fall months. Although students are not in school for the summer months, it is a concern for the SRTS committee, since students are walking and biking throughout the City during those months.

The Cook County Independent School District encompasses 1,607 square miles with an enrollment of 525 students. The District's three schools are Sawtooth Elementary (K-5th grade), Cook County Middle School (6th-8th grade) and Cook County High School (9th-12th grade). The schools are located in Grand Marais, the County seat, and housed together on one campus along County Truck Road 7 (5th Street).

Great Expectations School, a charter school also located on 5th Street, enrolls 103 students. The School is located at the corner of 5th Street and Gunflint Trail, five blocks east of the Cook County School District campus.

The School District and Great Expectations coordinate school bus transportation. Because of the coordinated busing and similar safety concerns for students walking and biking, both the School District and Great Expectations participated in the Safe Routes to School Program planning process as they have historically.

Approximately 23% percent of the Sawtooth Elementary K-5<sup>th</sup> grade students and 26% of Great Expectation students live within one-mile of the two schools during the 2019/2020 school year.



# 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.

# Action Plan

## EDUCATION

1. Continue and expand as needed school patrol education, done annually by school.
  - a. Explore opportunity to integrate student into school patrol.
2. Continue to organize Walking School Buses in the fall (September and October), winter (February) and spring (May) each year.
3. Continue to Host Annual Bike Safety Rodeo Each May
4. Look to integrate Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum into ongoing programming at the school or identify additional programming events.
5. Utilize social media site to continually update families with education and related activity opportunities to encourage walking and biking to school year-round.
6. Continue to send one-page informational flyer home to parents to educate about safe walking and biking practices

## ENCOURAGEMENT

1. Continue and possibly expand walk n roll Wednesdays. Not happening during winter as of now. March 3<sup>rd</sup> start in Spring.
2. Utilize small bike fleet to coordinate additional Walk! Bike! Fun! Related events with locally trained instructors.
3. Continue coordinating snow removal between City, County, and School District.
4. Continue to partner with law enforcement to provide incentives/awards when observing good behavior.
5. Walk to school with emergency personnel and community leaders could be integrated into event.

## ENFORCEMENT

1. Explore steps to designate official school zone throughout County Road 7 Corridor.
2. Continue to partner with law enforcement to have presence during arrival and dismissal times.
  - a. Continue to use County Sheriff's driver feedback speed trailer at the beginning of the school year to raise awareness of vehicle driving speeds and student safety.
3. Distribute signage for slow down campaign, "Slow Down and Smile. Kids on the Move." signs, at the start of school each year and place around the schools and other high student pedestrian traffic areas.
4. Implement temporary speed feedback trailer in locations to be determined.
  - a. Gun Flint Trail and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave W are ideal locations.
5. Coordinate with Sheriff Department to consider additional Cross walk enforcement

TABLE 1. RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS LIST

PROGRAM	WHICH “E”?	PROGRAM LEADER	PROGRAM SUPPORT	PRIORITY
Walking School Bus	Encouragement	SRTS Coordinator	District, parents, SHIP	Short term (1-2 years)
May Bike Rodeo	Education	SRTS Committee/SHIP	School District, City, Emergency Personnel	Short term (1-2 years)
Walk n Roll Wednesdays	Encouragement	SRTS Committee/SHIP	Parents, School District	Short term (1-2 years)
Good Behavior Incentives	Encouragement	Emergency Personnel, SHIP	District	Short term (1-2 years)
Use bike fleet for additional events	Encouragement and Education	School District/SHIP	SHIP	Medium term (2-4 years)
Designate School Zone	Enforcement	County	Emergency Personnel, SHIP	Medium term (2-4 years)
Integrate Walk, Bike, Fun, into curriculum	Education	School District	SHIP	Long term (4+ years)

Equity

1. Promote adaptive bike fleet equipment in order to provide education/training opportunities to those without equitable bicycle access.
2. Continue to seek funding for helmets, reflectors, red/white lights for handlebars and other similar items to provide incentives and access to all.
3. Strive to be inclusive when developing events to include persons who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

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/>
- Meet routinely (quarterly) as a committee to evaluate SRTS program activities and ensure participation of representatives from the City, County Highway and Sheriff departments, and EMS/Hospital.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

### Walking School Bus

Organized walking school bus events occur each season to encourage walking and biking to school. Designated routes are established in the community, and volunteers organized to 'pick up' kids along the way. Flyers with maps are distributed and an example is included in Appendix D. Integrating remote drop off opportunities for students busing in to participate with the 3 or 4 organized walking events each year could expand reach of program.

### May Bike Rodeo

The SRTS team collaborates to put on a Bike Rodeo in May every year. The team uses the Community Center parking lot to teach safety skills and provide a obstacle course for young riders to learn skills in a controlled environment. The bicycle fleet is available for additional to allow those without bicycles to participate. The rodeo sees good attendance and has been a valued event in the community. Past funding allowed for helmets to be provided to those without, but no longer is a part of the event currently.

### Walk n Roll Wednesdays

The SHIP Coordinator and other parents organize a walking school bus type of event for interested students every Wednesday during the fall and spring. Coordination and communication of the event happens through word of mouth, correspondence, and a Facebook page (linked below).

Additional Resources:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/grandmaraisaferoutestoschool/events/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/grandmaraisaferoutestoschool/events/?ref=page_internal)

### Provide Incentives for Good Behavior

The Cook County Sherrif Department partners with SHIP to provide incentives for good behavior. Past practices have included providing a gift certificate to award good examples of bicycle or pedestrian behavior like crossing at a marked intersection or wearing a helmet.

### Use Bike Fleet for Additional Event/Programming

The Cook County Bicycle fleet provides a unique opportunity to provide safety skills to students who may not have access to a bicycle. Continue to seek ways to expand inventory to provide more opportunities to potential riders and unreached students.

### Designate School Zone

County Road 7/5<sup>th</sup> Street that provides access to both the Cook County ISD campus and Great Expectation Elementary school has not been officially designated a school zone. A school zone designation can allow for lower speed limits and additional enforcement opportunities for local law enforcement. Official designation steps began during this planning process.

### Integrate Walk, Bike, Fun into the Curriculum

There are local Walk! Bike! Fun! trained ambassadors in the community. Through partnership with the School, continue to seek ways to integrate Walke! Bike! Fun! elements into the regular school curriculum. The goal is to reach students who may not seek out or have access to existing programming outside of the school day.

Resource: <https://www.bikemn.org/education/walk-bike-fun/srts-education-curriculum>



# Infrastructure

# Introduction-Engineering

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

## ENGINEERING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Coordinate with City in April to paint crosswalks as outlined in map..
2. Designate official school zone for County Road 7 Corridor in 2020.
3. Utilize opportunity of temporary controlled intersection at 5th avenue west and Road 7 (as part of Road 61 reconstruction project in 2020 and possibly 2021) to evaluate intersection control improvements to consider in conjunction with the upcoming 5th Ave. W. reconstruction project..
  - a. Evaluate the need for a Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) at any of the identified hazardous crossings including 5th Ave. W.
4. Utilize results of Engineering Grant to implement a corridor wide improvement plan to improve safety for students attending both school campuses as outlined in study.
  - a. Consider using temporary materials to demonstrate improvements of design to evaluate prior to long term investment/installation.
  - b. Install permanent speed feedback awareness signage in locations to be determined through the engineering study.
  - c. Map the locations for painted crosswalk improvements.
5. Conduct a before and after intersection evaluation of new trail construction and signage improvements at Road 7 and Gunflint Trail in 2021.
6. Continue to partner and advocate for the City and County to implement improvements as outlined in the pedestrian plan completed in 2018.

## EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Below are images identifying some of the existing conditions along the County Road 7 corridor.



*Figure 1:* Kids crossing the 1st Ave E/Co Rd 7 intersection. Of note is the low light conditions as well as the lack of cross walk infrastructure.



*Figure 2:* Another example of an unmarked crossing. Additionally, you can see the speed feedback and additional signage system located along the County Road 7 Corridor.

# Grand Marais Safe Routes to School: Existing Conditions



0 0.07 0.15 0.3 Miles

- Crosswalk Sign
  - Speed Feedback Sign
  - Speed Limit Sign (20 MPH)
  - Great Expectations: Student and Bus Pickup/Drop Off
  - Student Drop Off/Pickup Area
  - Hazardous Intersection
  - ▭ Gunflint Undesignated Parent Drop Off
- 

TABLE 2. INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATION LIST

#	LOCATION	PROBLEM/ISSUE	POTENTIAL SOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	Hazardous Intersections identified on map.	Limited or no pedestrian facilities (i.e. cross walks).	Develop Crosswalk map and provide to City for spring painting.	Pedestrian facilities at identified hazardous intersections.	City of Grand Marais, SRTS Team.	High
B	Entire County Road 7 corridor.	Not a designated school zone. Impacts speed limit and enforcement opportunities.	Designating corridor as a school zone.	Lowered speed limits and improved enforcement.	Cook County Highway Dept, SRTS Team as needed.	High
C	5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue West and Road 7 intersection.	2 way stop, high speeds up and down the hill.	Utilize opportunity of temporary controlled intersection at site (as part of Road 61 reconstruction project in 2020 and possibly 2021) to evaluate intersection control improvements to consider in conjunction with the upcoming 5 <sup>th</sup> Ave. W. reconstruction project.	Improved pedestrian conditions, considerations for long term change.	Cook County Highway Dept, SRTS Team	Medium.
D	Entire County Road 7 Corridor	Missing crosswalks, high speeds, large traffic volume, limited crossing infrastructure.	Utilize results of Engineering Grant to implement a corridor wide improvement plan to improve safety for students attending both school campuses as outlined in study. Grant awarded in 2020.	Possible improvements could include: Permanent speed feedback awareness signs, RRFB, high visibility cross walks, signage, or other improvements.	Cook County Highway Dept, City of Grand Marais, SRTS Team	Medium
E	Gun Flint Trail and County Road 7 intersection	Uncontrolled pedestrian intersection with high speeds.	Evaluate at intersection activity before and after construction of new trail and signage improvements set for 2021,	Evaluate improvements to see impact and if facilities are being used or if additional measures are needed at critical intersection.	Cook County Highway Dept, SRTS team, City of Grand Marais	Medium
F	County Road 7 Corridor and City of Grand Marais	Missing connections of sidewalk system and dangerous intersections elsewhere in community.	Partner and advocate for City and County to implement improvements outlined in the 2018 Pedestrian Plan	Construction of missing sidewalk segments, improved intersections, signage, and snow removal.	City of Grand Marais, Cook County Highway Dept.	Low

# Grand Marais Safe Routes To School: Proposed Crosswalks



0 0.07 0.15 0.3 Miles

— Regular Crosswalk  
— High Visibility 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

## A: Meeting Summaries

Grand Marais Safe Routes to School Plan Update  
SRTS Team Kick-off Meeting  
November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 9:00 a.m.  
Grand Marais City Hall, Conference Room

## SUMMARY

1. Introductions- Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves briefly and the organization representing, and how long they'd been involved in the Grand Marais SRTS team.

Present: See attached sign in sheet.

2. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Overview

Justin Otsea, Senior Planner at the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), explained the basis of Safe Routes to School, noting its six “E”s: education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, evaluation, and equity. Equity being the newest of E’s which hadn’t been included in the previous plan. Through an interactive powerpoint presentation. He highlighted the benefits of encouraging students to walk or bike to school and outlined the planning process ahead, which will span the 2019-20 academic year. The planning process is funded by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Andrea Orest, Cook County SHIP Coordinator/Sawtooth Mountain Clinic noted that Grand Marais applied for this planning assistance in early 2019 and that this plan will build off previous work completed by the SRTS team in the past.

3. Issues and Concerns for Grand Marais and Great Expectations School Campuses

Otsea then facilitated a discussion regarding the ongoing programming happening with SRTS efforts already and led participants through a map exercise to identify issues/concerns in the built environment. Feedback was documented on the map, by comment, and through worksheets in team members packets.

The following issues and concerns were collected during the exercise, broken down by the “E”s of the Safe Routes to School Program (noting equity spans all of the other “E”s):

### *Education*

- Desire for more walk, bike, fun curriculum implementation throughout the year. (Orest just became certified. trainer)
- While some education is already happening, a desire for more repetition throughout the year was identified in order to make the lessons ‘stick’ a little better. Walking lessons should be included in this.
- Of note, third graders already receive some formal education already.

- Bike rodeo occurs end of May and in correspondence with Bike to School Day. 90 Waivers at the most recent one. (Idea, having a wheelchair/walker available for youth to experience the challenges of mobility.)

#### *Encouragement*

- Walk n Roll Wednesdays occurring already. Not during winter months.
- Walk 2 School Day has been ongoing for many years.
- Walking field trips happen at both schools.
- Desire to build more walk/bike education directly into curriculum.
- Great Expectations does early dismissal for walkers/bikers.

#### *Evaluation*

- Tally's and Surveys ongoing.
- Evaluation of demonstration project completed in 2019.
- Ongoing bike/ped counts

#### *Enforcement*

- Police/Sheriff presence along 5<sup>th</sup> street/Co Highway 7.
- School provides crossing guards at multiple locations around campus.
- County Clears snow on sidewalk of 5<sup>th</sup> St. / Co Hwy 7.

#### *Engineering*

- Completed demonstration project in main entrance of Sawtooth Campus. Dropped to one lane, painted bump outs. After evaluation, somewhat successful, but expected the dimensions/design could be improved prior to any permanent improvement.
- Upcoming trail construction and intersection improvement in 2021 along the Gun Flint Trail. Trail, signage, and crosswalks are planned for this intersection adjacent to Great Expectations School.
- Desire to look at entire 5<sup>th</sup> Street/Co. Hwy 7 corridor as part of project in order to outline improvements that benefit both schools.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Ave West and 5<sup>th</sup> Street intersection identified as most critical intersection.

#### 4. What Is Our Vision?

Otsea directed the Team to their packets which included the, Mission, Vision, and Goal statements from the previous plans. Some discussion followed on possible changes to goals, but the overall Mission and Visions statements were approved to stay consistent moving forward with the plan update.

#### 5. Boost Ideas

Discussion around potential ideas for the boost grant solicitation included:

- Bike trailer
- Bike Rodeo funding
- Helmets for loan
- Reflectors for rodeo
- Punch cards

- Expand crossing guards.

## 6. Next Steps

Otsea then outlined next steps for the planning process moving forward including:

- Classroom and Parent Surveys*  
Otsea will work with Orest to insure everything the classroom tallies have been completed and the surveys had already been completed. Results will be reviewed at a later meeting.
- Assessment of Issues and Barriers*  
Otsea will work with Orest (and others as needed) to complete a Safe Routes to School neighborhood assessment.
- Community Outreach and Walking/Biking Audit*  
The Team decided to hold a second Team meeting with a walking/biking audit in Early to Mid-December. Otsea will follow-up with a Doodle poll to select a date for Meeting #2.

## 7. Adjournment

# Grand Marais Safe Routes to School Plan Update

## SRTS Team Meeting #2

December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019, 10:00 a.m.

Sawtooth Elementary School (Walk Audit and Conference Room)

## SUMMARY

- 1. Introductions and Welcome-** Everyone introduced themselves briefly and the organization representing, and how long they'd been involved in the Grand Marais SRTS team.  
Present: Andrea Orest-SHIP Coordinator Sawtooth Mtn Clinic, Heidi Doo-Kirk-County Commissioner, Patrick Knight-City of Grand Marais, Krysten Foster, Cook County Highway Engineer, Megan Myers-ISD 166 Principal, Pat Eliassen-Cook County Sherriff, Tom Nelson, School District Transportation Coordinator, Nikki Boostrom-Citizen
- 2. Review Primary Concerns and Purpose of Walk Audit-**

Justin Otsea, Senior Planner at the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

- 3. Walk Audit-** The group gathered in front of the school and loaded into a short bus provided by the school. Temperatures were well below freezing, so the group elected to bus to the specific intersections and hold conversation on the bus and at the intersection. Otsea started by debriefing attendees to provide input on issues identified as problem areas, potential solutions, and other general context that could be valuable for the planning process. A summary of issues identified at each location includes:

*Stop 1 (5<sup>th</sup> Ave W)*

- 2 way stop
- High speed traffic, specifically downhill on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave W.
- Orange Flags available at stop signs (unavailable due to snowbank size)
- Crosswalk connecting sidewalks on North side (somewhat faded), marked with sign.
- Limited signage on the avenue approaching the intersection from either direction cautioning drivers to slow down.
- Will be a controlled intersection during Hwy 61 reconstruction project.

*Stop 2(3<sup>rd</sup> Ave W)*

- One crosswalk on East side, crossing 5<sup>th</sup> Street
- Noted as highly trafficked pedestrian route, includes access to community center.
- Possibly high visibility cross walk location?

*Stop 3 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ave W)*

- Identified as one of the main downhill routes for walkers.
- Drivers rarely stop for pedestrians here.
- Crosswalks on both East and West side, crossing 5<sup>th</sup> Street (slightly faded)
  - No crosswalk on north side connecting sidewalk
- Some no parking paint around intersection.
- Signed school Crossing
- Exit to YMCA.

*Stop 4 (1<sup>st</sup> Ave W)*

- Main exit from Parking lot
- High visibility crosswalks on all sides
- Signed crossing.
- Location of past demonstration project, with mixed results.
- Functioning fairly-well as is given amount of infrastructure in place.

*Stop 5 (Broadway)*

- Driveway developed in the last three years.
- Identified as highly trafficked pedestrian route.
- Desire identified for new, highly visible, cross walk connecting east side of street to new walkway along driveway.

*Stop 6 (1 Ave E)*

- Signed crosswalk, west side, connects to pathway to parking lot.
- Could improve by having crossings on North and possibly south side of intersection.
- Staffed by crossing guard to mitigate issues, does see pedestrian and bicycle traffic, specifically to elementary school.

*Stop 7 (3<sup>rd</sup> Ave E)*

- Last crossing prior to Greater Expectations school (east bound)
- No cross walk in place.
- No signage in place.
- School bus garage entrance.

*Stop 8 (Gunflint Trail)*

- No crosswalks in place.
- 2-way Controlled intersection (east west)
- Some undesignated drop-off and pickups happen all around intersection.
- Cones used to slow traffic during dismissal and arrival
- Site of upcoming 2021 transportation alternative grant which will provide paved trail up the Gun Flint and include crossing improvements as scope of work.
- Southwest Corner of intersection is Greater Expectation School Campus

4. Debrief After Meeting.

Discussion followed in the School Board Conference Room around potential solutions and recapping the issues discussed on the walk audit included:

- Needs for high visibility cross walks in specific areas
  - Note, balancing high visibility and regular to keep effectiveness.
- Utilize the upcoming construction project where 5<sup>th</sup> Ave West will be a controlled stop (light) to evaluate speeds/improvements and potentially advocate for long term change.
- Discussion around sign budget from county, best opportunity for more effective signs is usually tied to a grant, but budget is available for improvements.
- Corridor doesn't have official school zone designation, and enforcement implications connected to that.
- Desire for completed crosswalk map provided to City by April. City is willing to implement recommendations from plan, just needs map in time to coordinate with other paintings around the community.
- Engineering Grant application submitted for entire corridor which could directly influence design of improvements if awarded.
- Discussion around designed improvements connected to trail construction project set for 2021.

5. Next Steps

Otsea then outlined next steps for the planning process moving forward including:

- d. Develop Existing Conditions memo and Map*
- e. Develop crosswalk painting map*
- f. Develop Action Plan Recommendation Draft*
- g. Review at next Active Living meeting set for Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in the Cook County City Hall.*

6. Adjournment

## Grand Marais Safe Routes to School Plan Update

SRTS Team Meeting #3  
February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 9:00 a.m.  
Grand Marais City Hall-Conference Room

## SUMMARY

8. **Introductions and Welcome-** Everyone introduced themselves briefly and the organization representing, and how long they'd been involved in the Grand Marais SRTS team. See attached Sign-in Sheet.

9. **Walk Audit Debrief**

Otsea referenced meeting members to the meeting summary which outlined existing conditions identified at the walk audit which occurred on December 18<sup>th</sup>. The group met and toured the County Road 7 corridor in a bus, stopping at problem intersections to discuss issues and observations at each site. A summary of issues identified at each location included:

*Stop 1 (5<sup>th</sup> Ave W)*

- 2 way stop
- High speed traffic, specifically downhill on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave W.
- Orange Flags available at stop signs (unavailable due to snowbank size)
- Crosswalk connecting sidewalks on North side (somewhat faded), marked with sign.
- Limited signage on the avenue approaching the intersection from either direction cautioning drivers to slow down.
- Will be a controlled intersection during Hwy 61 reconstruction project.

*Stop 2 (3<sup>rd</sup> Ave W)*

- One crosswalk on East side, crossing 5<sup>th</sup> Street
- Noted as highly trafficked pedestrian route, includes access to community center.
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- High visibility crosswalks on all sides
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- Site of upcoming 2021 transportation alternative grant which will provide paved trail up the Gun Flint and include crossing improvements as scope of work.
- Southwest Corner of intersection is Greater Expectation School Campus

**10. Draft Action Plan Memo Review and Feedback**

Otsea referenced meeting attendees to their packets which contained a draft action plan filled with goal and action statements to guide the SRTS committee’s work under the 6 E’s moving forward. Otsea went through the action plan describing each of the goals and strategies in greater detail and asked for feedback on any of the packet contents to be included the final document including the action plan or the existing conditions map.

Below is a summarized list of topics identified for revision: Use new imagery on maps, highlight 1<sup>st</sup> avenue west as a hazardous intersection, location of Great Expectations drop-off/pickup, Reference County Road 7, signage

locations, integrating students into the school patrol team, law enforcement involvement at specific events as well as cross walk enforcement discussion, input on existing events and possible expansions, among other items. Otsea said he'd make the revisions and send them to the next Active Living/SRTS Committee meeting for review.

#### **11. Cross Walk Map Review**

Otsea completed a similar exercise with the group, asking for feedback on a draft proposed cross walk map to be utilized in partnership with the City this coming spring season. A few revisions were added and would be completed immediately to ensure the updated map would be available for crews to paint the upcoming season.

#### **12. Next Steps**

Otsea would complete make the revisions to the action plan and maps for review at the March meeting and a draft of the final plan document and present it for feedback and revisions at the April Meeting.

#### **13. Adjournment**

# B: SRTS Facts for School Communication Plan

# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

A smart investment for our kids and communities

Safe Routes to School has many benefits for Minnesota, but less than 1 percent of the state's transportation budget is currently dedicated to it. Demand across the state is growing: in 2015, grant applications exceeded available funding by three to one.

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL CAN:

Reduce the risk of  
PEDESTRIAN INJURY BY  
**44 PERCENT**



Help build desirable communities by making it **EASIER AND SAFER FOR FAMILIES** and neighbors to walk and bike to school together.



**BRING MORE RESOURCES**  
to Greater Minnesota communities.

In 2015, **THREE OUT OF FOUR** Safe Routes to School state-funded **INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS** were awarded to communities in Greater Minnesota.

**GET KIDS  
MORE  
ACTIVE**



Students who start walking or biking to school benefit from **47 MORE MINUTES OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PER WEEK.**



Help reduce vehicle congestion & **IMPROVE AIR QUALITY** around schools.



Traffic-related air pollution **INCREASES** a child's risk of developing **ASTHMA.**

## WHAT A \$6 MILLION STATE INVESTMENT IN SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL COULD MEAN FOR MINNESOTA



Leverage an additional  
**\$2.6 MILLION**  
in federal funds



Support implementation  
**IN 96 SCHOOLS,**  
reaching 24,400 students  
in grades K-8



**SAVE \$607,000**  
in environmental costs  
**FROM VEHICLE USE**  
over 10 years



For references and more information, visit [www.health.mn.gov/saferoutestoschool](http://www.health.mn.gov/saferoutestoschool)

# C: Survey and Tally Results

# Grand Marais Safe Routes to School



# 2019 SURVEY RESULTS



## Students Walking or Biking to School



## Reasons Students are not Walking

- Distance
- Supervision
- Time
- Weather
- Safety of Intersections
- Speed/Amount of Traffic

## How SRTS Helps Our Community

Safety Assessments and Community Input



Annual Bike Safety Rodeo

Collaboration with schools, families, officials and stakeholders to increase SRTS in local policy and infrastructure.

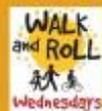


Walking School Buses



Safe Routes to School Map

In-school educational programs and flyers



A Parent-led weekly walking group, Walk and Roll Wednesdays, provides adult supervision Wednesday mornings along a specified route, based on the Safe Routes to School Map, to GES and Sawtooth Elementary.

## 119 Participants

Between March 3rd and May 29th, 2019, the weekly walking group totaled 86 kids and 33 adults walking or biking to school.

### CREATED BY

Andrea Orest, SHIP Coordinator, Sawtooth Mountain Clinic  
[andrea@sawtoothmountainclinic.org](mailto:andrea@sawtoothmountainclinic.org) for further information or if you are interested in joining the local SRTS team or the Walk and Roll Wednesday group.

### SOURCES

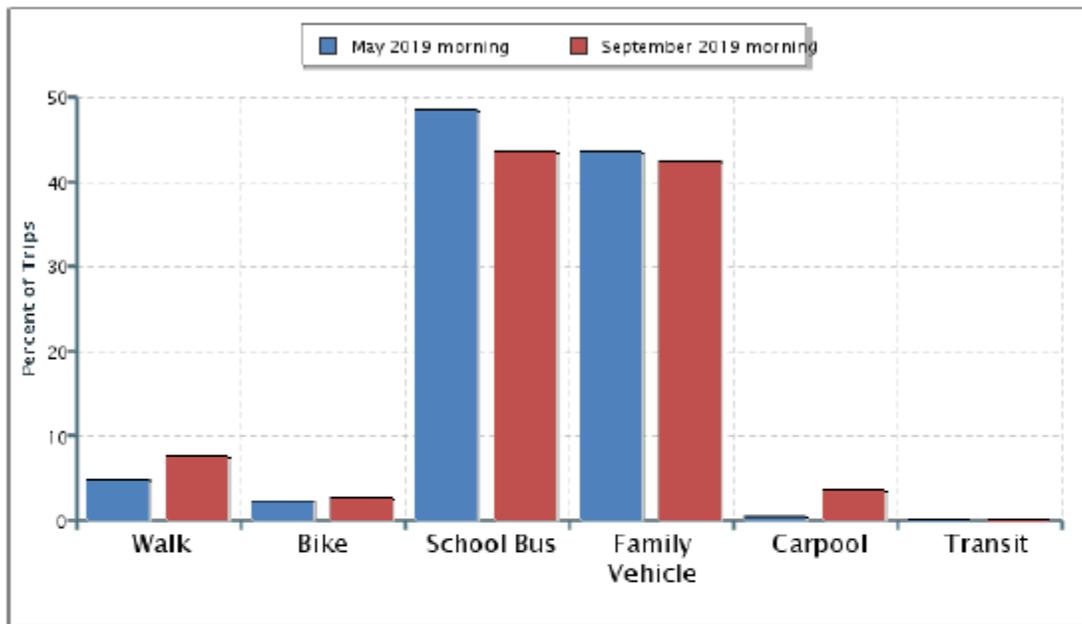
GES and ISD 166 2019 parent surveys, 2019 student travel tallies, direct observation

School Name: Sawtooth Elementary School

School Group: ARDC

	Time 1 Data Collection Period	Time 2 Data Collection Period
Month and year collected:	May 2019	September 2019
School Enrollment:	160	0
% Range of Students Involved in SRTS:	76-100%	
Grade level(s) included in report:	Kindergarten,1,2,3,4,5	
Date report generated:	06/24/2020	

### School Morning Arrival Travel Mode Comparison



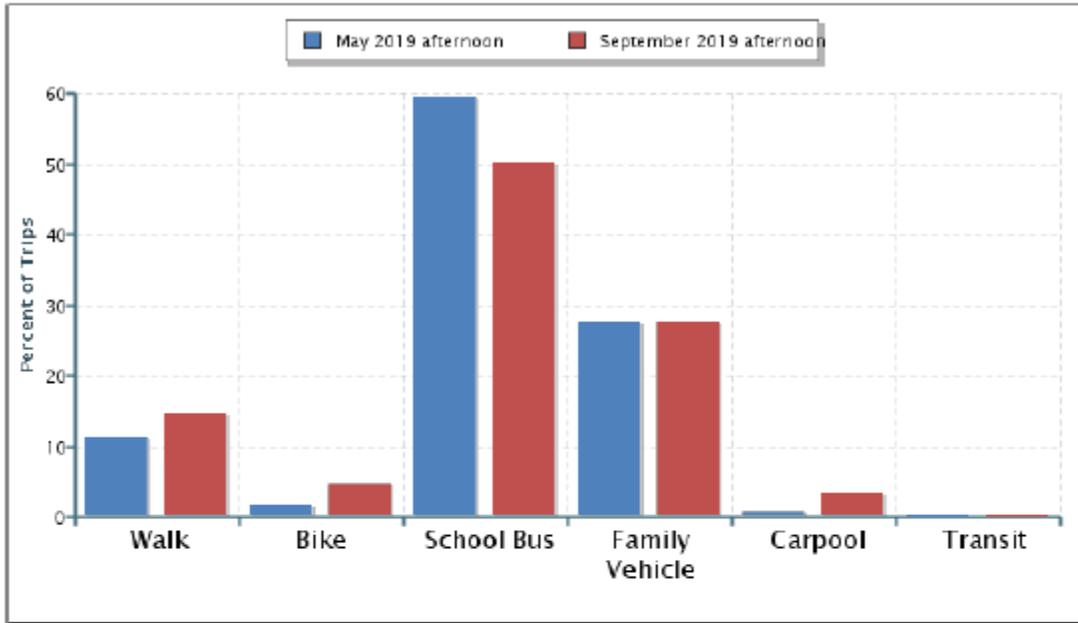
### School Morning Arrival Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit
Time 1: May 2019 morning	369	5%	2%	49%	44%	0.5%	0%
Time 2: September 2019 morning	337	8%	3%	44%	42%	4%	0%

"Other" category not included.

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

## School Afternoon Arrival Travel Mode Comparison

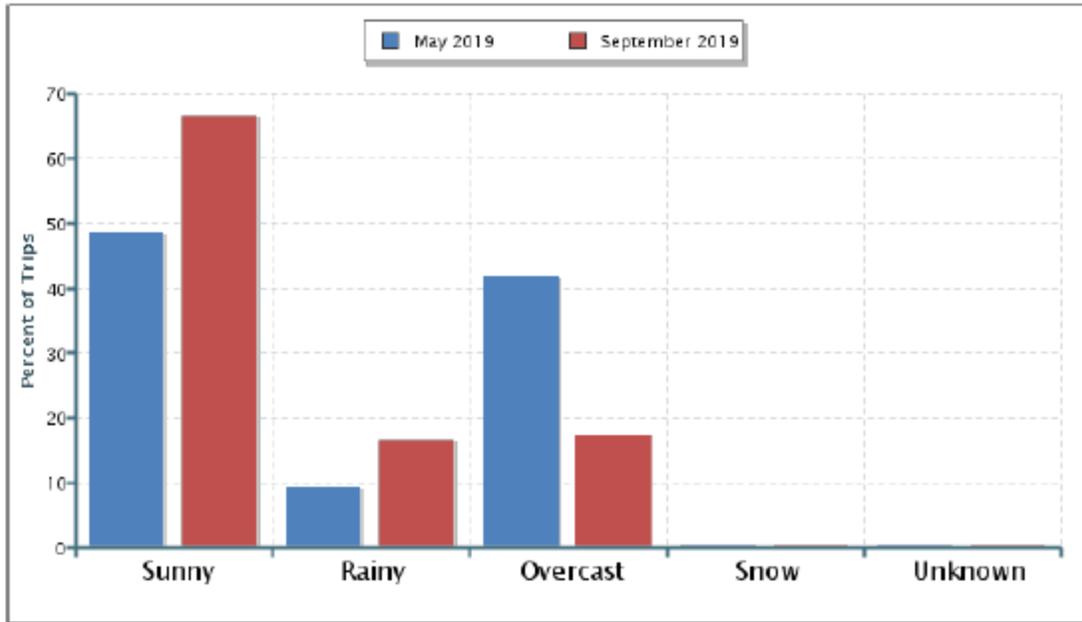


## School Afternoon Arrival Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit
Time 1: May 2019 afternoon	332	11%	2%	59%	27%	0.6%	0%
Time 2: September 2019 afternoon	327	14%	5%	50%	26%	3%	0%

"Other" category not included.  
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

## Trips To and From School by Weather Condition



## Trips To and From School by Weather Condition

	Number of Trips To and From School	Sunny	Rainy	Overcast	Snow	Unknown
Time 1: May 2019	701	49%	9%	42%	0%	0%
Time 2: September 2019	664	67%	16%	17%	0%	0%

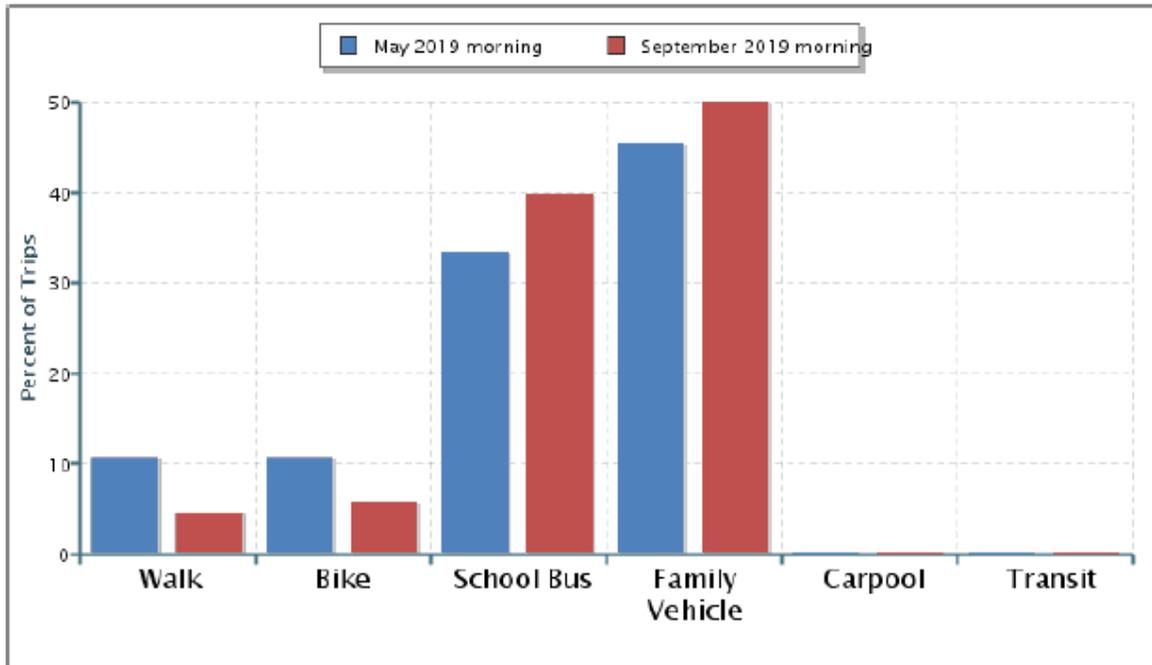
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**School Name:** Great Expectations School

**School Group:** ARDC

	Time 1 Data Collection Period	Time 2 Data Collection Period
<b>Month and year collected:</b>	May 2019	September 2019
<b>School Enrollment:</b>	101	0
<b>% Range of Students Involved in SRTS:</b>	76-100%	
<b>Grade level(s) included in report:</b>	Kindergarten,3	
<b>Date report generated:</b>	06/24/2020	

## School Morning Arrival Travel Mode Comparison



## School Morning Arrival Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit
Time 1: May 2019 morning	66	11%	11%	33%	46%	0%	0%
Time 2: September 2019 morning	88	5%	6%	40%	50%	0%	0%

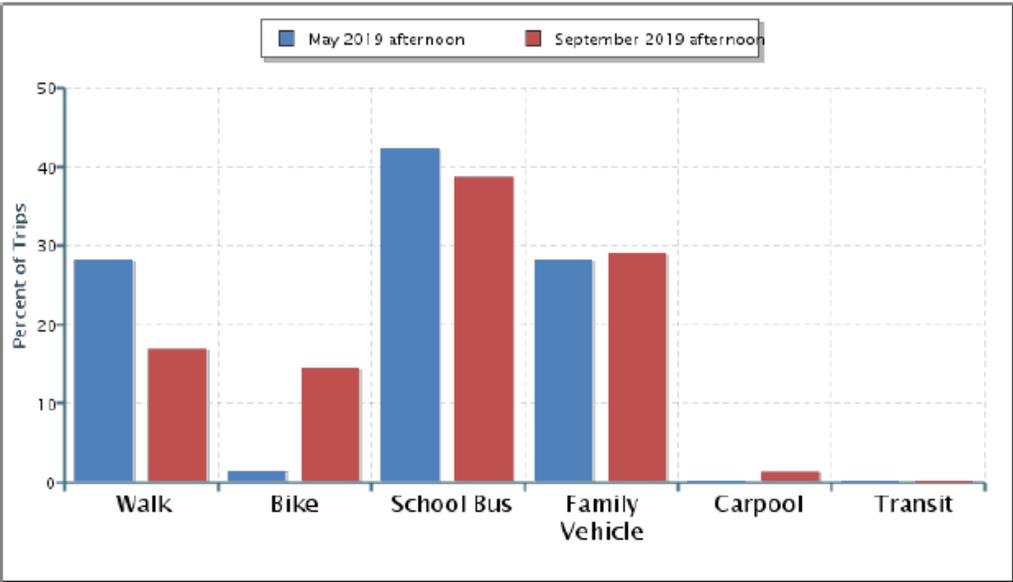
"Other" category not included.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

## School Afternoon Arrival Travel Mode Comparison

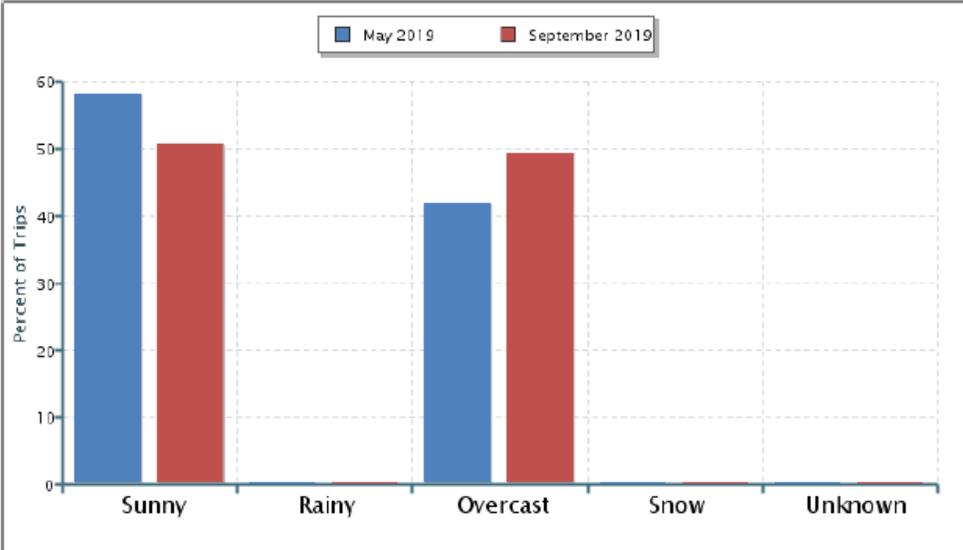
	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit
Time 1: May 2019 afternoon	71	28%	1%	42%	28%	0%	0%
Time 2: September 2019 afternoon	83	17%	15%	39%	29%	1%	0%

"Other" category not included.  
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### School Afternoon Arrival Travel Mode Comparison



### Trips To and From School by Weather Condition



	Number of Trips To and From School	Sunny	Rainy	Overcast	Snow	Unknown
Time 1: May 2019	137	58%	0%	42%	0%	0%
Time 2: September 2019	171	51%	0%	49%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

# D: Walking School Bus/Walk & Roll Wednesday Flyer example

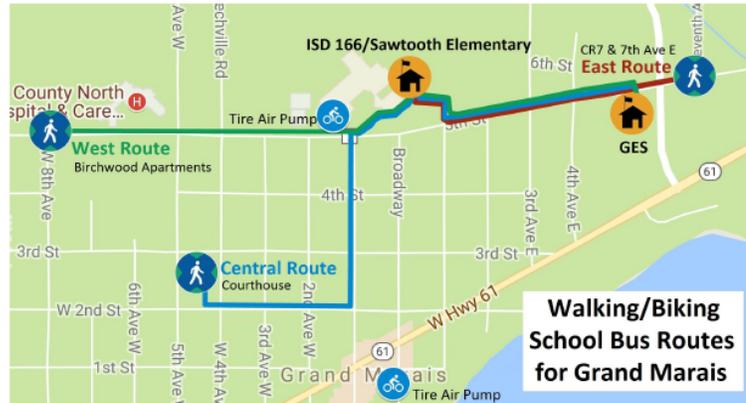
## Walking School Bus (WSB)

Walking School Buses are groups of people walking or biking to school together on specified dates. The WSBs meet at the following locations: West Route (Birchwood Apartments), Central Route (Courthouse), and East Route (CR7 & 7th Ave E). Stay tuned for information on Walk to School Days and Bike to School Day!

## Walking and Roll Wednesdays

While every day is a great day to walk or bike to school, every Wednesday this fall a group led by a parent volunteer will depart from a specified location on the WSB map at 7:30a. Contact Andrea if you are interested in being a parent volunteer or if your child is interested in joining our weekly walking group! You can also follow the group on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/walkandrollwednesdays>



Students wanting to make a connection between their home and the recommended routes (on reverse) are encouraged to walk or bike the route with a parent or guardian. Once a student and guardian set a route, it is best that the student follow it consistently so that an adult knows where the student is traveling. Please note that the Safe Routes to Schools group, Minnesota Department of Health, and Statewide Health Improvement Program work together to encourage walking and bicycling to school, but do not ensure safety or assume liability for anyone's commute to or from school. Your SRTS Coordinator is available to help your family determine the best route as well as provide coaching to students on safe walking and biking techniques, even if they are walking or biking to their bus stop! Contact Andrea for further information. Enjoy a safe and active school year!

Questions or want to be a part of your local SRTS team? Contact Andrea, SRTS Coordinator, at 387-2330 x110 or [andrea@sawtoothmountainclinic.org](mailto:andrea@sawtoothmountainclinic.org)

## Have a low bike tire?

Check out the bike maintenance station in front of the YMCA – complete with air pump and bike tools!



Walk Left ← REMEMBER → Ride Right

# E: Visual Summary

## Grand Marais

# SAFE ROUTES to SCHOOL

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



## PROGRAMS EQUITY + EDUCATION + ENCOURAGEMENT + EVALUATION



### WALKING SCHOOL BUS

**What:** Conduct walking school bus events throughout the year to help encourage walking to school.  
**Who:** SHIP Coordinator, School District, Parents  
**How:** Promote event with map four times a year.  
**When:** September, October, February, May



### WALK! BIKE! FUN!

**What:** Integrate WALK! Bike! Fun! Curriculum elements into regular school curriculum.  
**Who:** School District, SHIP Coordinator  
**How:** Add trained staff and integrate in programming  
**When:** In the next 2-3 years.



### MAY BIKE RODEO

**What:** Bike rodeo allows kids to learn skills through proper instruction and receive proper bike maintenance.  
**Who:** All SRTS Team and Local bike shop  
**How:** Conduct Annual May Bike Rodeo with Partners  
**When:** May



### GOOD BEHAVIOR PERKS

**What:** Award student walking/biking good behavior with items like gift certificates to local businesses.  
**Who:** SHIP and Cook County Sheriff Department  
**How:** Secure gift certificates and hand out.  
**When:** Spring and Fall



### WALKING WEDNESDAYS

**What:** Continue programming of encouraging Wednesday walking events with parent supervision.  
**Who:** SHIP Coordinator and Parents  
**How:** Use existing route and coordinate with parents  
**When:** Wednesday during walking months



### CREATE SCHOOL ZONE

**What:** Designate the area between both schools on County Road 7 as an official school zone.  
**Who:** County Highway Department and School District  
**How:** MnDOT process  
**When:** As soon as possible.



## INFRASTRUCTURE ROUTES + STREET PROJECTS



### INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary infrastructure recommendation from this plan includes painting new regular and high visibility crosswalks as showcased in the map to the right. Additionally, the school and SRTS team was able to secure a MnDOT Engineering grant which should result in additional infrastructure improvement recommendations for the entire County Road 7 corridor and will be completed in the near future.

#### Grand Marais Safe Routes To School: Proposed Crosswalks



### GET INVOLVED

Plan your walking or biking route with your student, watch for students and respect school zone speed limits, and show your support by volunteering! Contact your school principal to learn how you can get involved.

Learn more about Safe Routes to School at:  
[www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/)

### CONTACT

Andrea Orest, SHIP Coordinator  
Sawtooth Mountain Clinic  
[Andrea@sawtoothmountainclinic.org](mailto:Andrea@sawtoothmountainclinic.org)  
218-264-0486

