

Black Hawk County MPO Safe Routes to School Study

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Safe Routes to School Study Complete

In 2008, the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) was awarded a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant from the Iowa Department of Transportation. The purpose of the grant was to facilitate a study of adequacies and deficiencies related to walking and bicycling to school for all elementary and middle/junior high schools in the metropolitan area. INRCOG hired a local consulting firm, AECOM, to conduct the study. Hellman & Associates also participated as a subconsultant for AECOM.

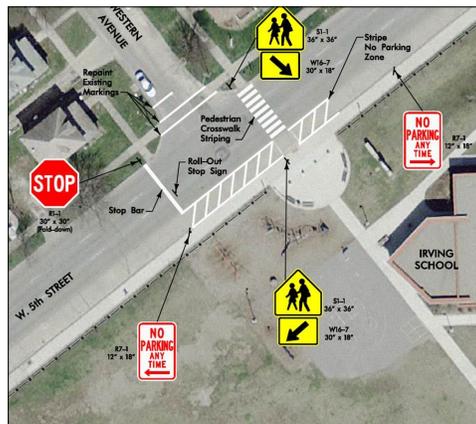
The study reviewed conditions around all K-8 schools in the Cedar Falls, Hudson, and Waterloo school districts, as well as parochial schools in the area. Walking and bicycling conditions were evaluated, as well as issues such as drop-off/pick-up congestion and parking lot configurations. Where appropriate, recommendations for infrastructure projects were made, and cost estimates were given. A summary of infrastructure recommendations are listed on pages 2 and 3.

A separate portion of the study involved an education and encouragement component aimed at working with three target schools to implement strategies to increase the number of children walking and bicycling to school. The report includes a case study from Kingsley Elementary, where the PTO developed a walking school bus program.

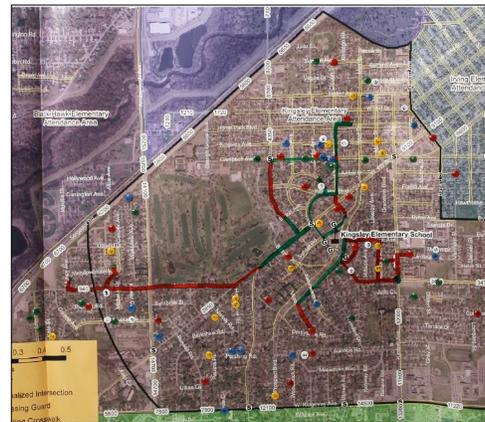
The desired outcome of the study is to utilize it to make infrastructure improvements that encourage children to safely walk and bicycle to school, as well as to provide information to schools to assist in efforts to encourage safe walking and bicycling practices.

Data utilized for the SRTS Study included:

- Principal interviews
- Parent surveys
- Student arrival and departure tally sheets
- Assessment of infrastructure adequacies and deficiencies by evaluating:
 - School boundaries
 - Sidewalks
 - Traffic counts
 - Signal and school crosswalk locations
 - Crossing guard locations
 - Obesity data
 - Number of students in planning areas



Example from the SRTS Report showing an option for pedestrian improvements at Irving Elementary.



Walking school bus routes developed by the Kingsley PTO. This project is shown as a case study in the report.

Summary of Recommendations Proposed in the SRTS Study

Waterloo

Black Hawk Elementary School

- Reevaluate new school configuration for traffic and pedestrian flow.
- Add sidewalk along Sager Ave.; consider new traffic signal along Downing Ave.

Carver Middle School

- Consider adding sidewalk along Louise St. from U.S. 63 to Columbia St.

Central Middle School

- Consider adult supervision (teacher, crossing guard) to ensure proper utilization of pedestrian traffic signals.
- Provide signal heads at the Katoski Dr./Downing Ave. intersection to match the marked school crosswalk.

Cunningham Elementary School

- Sidewalk infill on Mobile St. from Adams St. to Webster St.
- School crossing improvements on Mobile St. at the intersections of Cottage St., Sumner St., and Newell St.

Highland Elementary School

- Sidewalk infill on Polk St., French St., Idaho St., and Adrian St.
- New railroad pedestrian crossing on Idaho St. just north of Dubuque Rd.

Irving Elementary School

- Two options are given to improve conditions for pedestrians crossing W. 5th St.

Kingsley Elementary School

- Updated signal at W. 4th St. and Hubbard Ave.; new school crosswalk on W. 4th St. at Prospect Blvd.
- Add sidewalk from Kimball Ave./Mitchell Ave. intersection to Kingsley Elementary.

Kittrell Elementary School

- Remove pedestrian signal and add school zone and school crossing improvements on Ridgeway Ave.
- School crosswalk improvements at Easton Ave. and Oregon St. intersection.
- Sidewalk infill on Bethel St., Ridgeway Ave., Easton Ave., Mitchell Ave., and Oregon St.

Lincoln Elementary School

- Safety improvements at the Longfellow Ave., Parker St., and Cedar Bend St. intersection.
- Sidewalk infill on Longfellow Ave., Parker St., Newton St., and Cedar Bend St.

Lou Henry Elementary School and Hoover Middle School

- Sidewalk infill, new school crossings, and parking reconfigurations on Hillcrest Rd. and Park Ln.
- Sidewalk infill on Rachael St. and Park Ln.
- School Crossing improvements on Rachael St. at Nancy Rd. and new school crossing on Park Ln. at Colby Rd.

Lowell Elementary School

- Install school crossing at Randolph St. and W. 9th St. intersection.

Orange Elementary School

- Consider constructing sidewalk along Kimball Ave. from school to Sidehill Dr.

Poyner Elementary School and Bunger Middle School

- Sidewalk infill on Grand Blvd., Roosevelt Rd., and Lafayette Ave.
- New school crosswalk on Lafayette Ave. at Roosevelt Rd.



Lack of sidewalks around Highland Elementary.



Pick-up congestion around Lou Henry Elementary and Hoover Middle School.

For more detailed information about the recommendations, view the full report at www.inrcog.org/trans.htm.

Cedar Falls

Cedar Heights Elementary School

- Add sidewalk on Rownd St. and crossing improvements on Hawthorne Dr.

Hansen Elementary School and Holmes Junior High School

- Sidewalk infill on front entrance road, Angie Dr., 3rd St., and Crescent Dr.

Lincoln Elementary School

- Add school crossing at 12th St. and Franklin St. intersection.

Malcolm Price Lab School

- Sidewalk infill on Merner Ave., 18th St., and College St.
- Updated crosswalks on 18th St.

North Cedar Elementary School

- Sidewalk infill on Center St. and Fern Ave.

Orchard Hill Elementary School

- No recommendations.

Peet Junior High School

- Improve school crosswalk on Seerley Blvd. near main entrance.

Southdale Elementary School

- Complete bicyclist/pedestrian improvements at IA 58 and Greenhill Rd. intersection.



Children walking through yards on Rownd St. south of Cedar Heights Elementary.

Hudson

Hudson Elementary School and Hudson Middle School

- Sidewalk infill along IA 58 and Woods St.; underpass of U.S. 63 near Woods St.

Parochial

Blessed Sacrament School

- Sidewalk infill on Shady Ln. and Stratford Ave.; improved school crosswalk on Carriage Hill Dr. at Stephan Ave.

Immaculate Conception School

- Update school crosswalks on 20th Ave. and 14th Ave.; implement student crossing guard program.

Immanuel Lutheran School

- Add signing and pavement markings at Walnut St. and Clay St. intersection.

Sacred Heart School

- No recommendations.

St. Edward's School

- Update existing school crossing signage near school.

St. Patrick's School

- No recommendations.

Waterloo Christian School

- No recommendations.



Students from Immaculate Conception School crossing mid-block between 16th Ave. and 17th Ave.

Questions about the study?

Contact Andrea White, Transportation Planner

Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments
229 E. Park Ave.
Waterloo, IA 50703

Phone: 319-235-0311
Fax: 319-235-2891
E-mail: awhite@inrcog.org



**View the report online at
www.inrcog.org/trans.htm**

More Information on Safe Routes to School

SRTS is a federal program that is administered in Iowa by the Iowa Department of Transportation. Grant applications for infrastructure projects (sidewalks, trails, traffic signals, etc.) and non-infrastructure projects (studies, educational campaigns, etc.) are due each year on October 1. Visit www.iowadot.gov/saferoutes/ for more information.

Additional resources for the SRTS program can be found on the website of the National Center for Safe Routes to School: www.saferoutesinfo.org. This site has a wealth of information about activities and events schools can utilize to encourage children to safely walk and bicycle to school.



Students from Kingsley Elementary completing a gap study at the intersection of W. 4th St. and Prospect Blvd.

SRTS Infrastructure Grants Awarded in 2010 and 2011

While the SRTS Report has been under development during the past two years, preliminary report information has been used to apply for several SRTS infrastructure grants. Four additional SRTS grants have been awarded for improvements in the metropolitan area.

In 2010, Waterloo was awarded \$154,620 for improvements near Lincoln Elementary School. The funding will be used to construct sidewalks on Longfellow Ave., Parker St., and Newton St. and to improve the Longfellow/Parker/Cedar Bend intersection.

Also in 2010, Cedar Falls was awarded \$76,450 for a project near Cedar

Heights Elementary School. The project includes constructing a sidewalk along Rownd St. and implementing crossing improvements on Hawthorne Dr.

In 2011, Cedar Falls received another SRTS grant in the amount of \$63,570 to construct sidewalks on Angie Dr., 3rd St., and Crescent Dr. These improvements will benefit Hansen Elementary School and Holmes Junior High School.

Also in 2011, Evansdale was awarded \$84,220 to construct a sidewalk along Grand Blvd. from Gilbert Dr. to Central Ave. This will benefit students of Poyner Elementary School and Bunger Middle School.



Students running through lawns along Longfellow Ave. after leaving Lincoln Elementary. The SRTS grant awarded in 2010 includes funding for a sidewalk along Longfellow Ave.