City of Dassel
Safe Routes to School Plan

Dassel SRTS Vision Statement:
The City of Dassel and the Dassel Elementary School are committed to work together with stakeholders to establish a Safe Routes to School Program for the community... to mitigate barriers of walking and biking safely.

Prepared by the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission, the City of Dassel, and the Dassel Elementary School.
City of Dassel
Safe Routes to School Plan

~ Table of Contents ~

Chapter One: Introduction to Dassels Safe Routes to School Plan ........................................... 1-1

A. The Purpose of Safe Routes to School Plans ................................................................. 1-1

A Brief History of SRTS Plans .................................................................................. 1-1

Minnesota’s SRTS Program ................................................................................. 1-2

B. The Five E’s of SRTS Planning .................................................................................... 1-3

Education ................................................................................................................ 1-3

Minnesota Walk! Bike! Fun! (textbox) ..................................................................... 1-5

Encouragement ....................................................................................................... 1-6

The History of National Walk to School Days (textbox) ..................................... 1-6

Engineering ........................................................................................................... 1-7

Enforcement ........................................................................................................ 1-9

Evaluation ............................................................................................................... 1-11

C. Dassel SRTS Planning Process ................................................................................... 1-12

Vision Statement ................................................................................................... 1-12

Goals for the Safe Routes to School Program ..................................................... 1-13

D. Dassel SRTS Plan Stakeholders .............................................................................. 1-14

Key Local SRTS Stakeholders ............................................................................... 1-14

Key County and State SRTS Stakeholders ............................................................ 1-15
Chapter Two: City of Dassel Community Profile ................................................................. 2-1

A. Location .......................................................................................................................... 2-1
B. Population ....................................................................................................................... 2-2

   Population Projections ................................................................................................... 2-2
C. Climate ............................................................................................................................ 2-4
D. Natural Resources .......................................................................................................... 2-4
E. Transportation Network ............................................................................................... 2-4

   Functional Classification ............................................................................................... 2-6
   Sidewalks and Trails ..................................................................................................... 2-7
F. Land Use ......................................................................................................................... 2-8

Chapter Three: Dassel Elementary School Profile ........................................................... 3-1

A. Dassel-Cokato School District #466 ............................................................................ 3-1
B. Overview of Dassel Elementary School ....................................................................... 3-3

   Dassel Elementary Student Profile .............................................................................. 3-4
   Transportation Policies ................................................................................................. 3-5
   Other Key School Policies ............................................................................................ 3-6
C. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Surveys ....................................................................... 3-7

   Student In-Class Travel Tally ...................................................................................... 3-7
   SRTS Parent Survey ...................................................................................................... 3-8
   Written Survey Comments .......................................................................................... 3-16
D. Summary of Dassel Elementary School’s SRTS Issues .............................................. 3-18
Chapter Four: Dassel SRTS Implementation Plan ................................................................. 4-1

A. Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps.............................................................................. 4-1
   Goal One: Education ....................................................................................................... 4-2
   Goal Two: Encouragement ............................................................................................ 4-4
   Goal Three: Engineering .............................................................................................. 4-7
   Goal Four: Enforcement ............................................................................................... 4-10
   Goal Five: Evaluation ................................................................................................. 4-11

B. Dassel SRTS Plan Implementation Map ........................................................................ 4-12

Appendices

Safe Routes to School Implementation Matrix ............................................................. Appendix A
Maps ............................................................................................................................... Appendix B
Walk Audit .................................................................................................................... Appendix C
Adoption Resolution ..................................................................................................... Appendix D
Chapter One: Introduction to
Dassel’s Safe Routes to School Plan

Chapter One provides a description of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plans, including an overview of what they include, a description of the national and state’s SRTS programs, and a description of the 5 E’s of SRTS planning (Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation).

A. The Purpose of Safe Routes to School Plans

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plans are developed to encourage walking and biking to school by mitigating the numerous obstacles that discourage students on a daily basis. They include items such as educating students and parents on why walking and biking to school is important, to ensuring that roads and sidewalks are designed to facilitate walking and biking. They also include examining school policies to ensure they too don’t indirectly discourage walking and biking, to creating SRTS maps showing the safest routes for students to get to and from school.

A Brief History of SRTS Plans

The concept of ‘Safe Routes to Schools’ planning has been growing in the United States since the Federal Highway Administration released a study on the safety of children walking and biking to school in 1975. The purpose of the report, “School Trip Safety and Urban Play Areas,” was to develop guidelines for the protection of young pedestrians (ages 5-14) walking to and from school, entering and leaving buses, and at neighborhood play. Many interesting findings from the study include:

1. Young students (ages 5-9) are overinvolved in pedestrian accidents and are unaware of, or do not discriminate between various traffic control devices when compared to older students (ages 10-14);

2. Drivers in school areas do not generally perceive school signs other than the flashing school speed limit signs; and
3. School trip safety programs incorporating walking trip maps [which help] the school and parents to focus on a tangible means of improving student safety.

There were numerous school and community efforts over the next twenty years that could be accredited to SRTS planning, however, the first modern SRTS programs began in 1997 in Bronx, New York. Shortly after, two pilot Safe Routes to School programs were funded by Congress in 1998 in Marin County, California and Arlington, Massachusetts. By the early 2000s, a number of states started developing their own SRTS programs.

Congress passed federal legislation that established a National Safe Routes to School program in 2005, administered by the Federal Highway Administration. The goal was to encourage children and families to travel between home and school by improving the safety of walking and bicycling routes. In July 2012, Congress included SRTS activities with the passage of a transportation bill, “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21).” This made SRTS activities eligible to compete for funding as part of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

**Minnesota’s SRTS Program**

Minnesota’s initial federally funded SRTS program began with passage of the federal transportation bill SAFETEA-LU in 2005. SAFETEA-LU provided funding to all 50 states to increase safety and opportunities for children in grades K-8 to walk and bicycle to school. All projects were funded entirely with federal funds, as SAFETEA-LU did not require a local match. Minnesota’s SRTS program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

In 2012, Minnesota established its own SRTS program with the passage of Minnesota State Statute 174.40 “to provide assistance in capital investments for safe and appealing non-motorized transportation to and from a school.” The law establishes a SRTS account in the bond proceeds fund, as well as an SRTS account in the general fund, although no state funds were allocated for the program at that time. The Minnesota program follows many of the guidelines established in the federal SRTS legislation. The law also provides specific program administration requirements and evaluation criteria, which MnDOT staff has implemented.
According to the *Fiscal Year 2013 Report on Safe Routes to School (November 2013)*, MnDOT has awarded over $15 million to Minnesota Communities for SRTS planning and implementation projects. These projects impacted more than 313 schools, with an annual school population of over 190,000 students in grades K-8. Eighty percent of funds were allocated for infrastructure projects and 20 percent for non-infrastructure projects for the years 2006-13.

MnDOT established an SRTS steering committee to provide guidance and oversight for the program in 2011. The steering committee has 27 members, representing cities, counties, regional planning organizations, non-profit organizations, educators and health professionals. Steering committee members are actively engaged in setting goals for the program, as well as serving on selection committees and providing feedback on statewide initiatives. In 2013, the committee began a strategic planning process to determine the future of Minnesota’s SRTS program. The priorities and goals established during those planning exercises are being used to determine where the new non-infrastructure funds from the state will be spent over the biennium. Top priorities for the state funds include:

1. Implementing the new Walk! Bike! Fun! pedestrian and bicycle safety curriculum statewide *(refer to the text box on page 1-5)*.
2. Providing access to bicycle fleets statewide to implement the curriculum.
3. A statewide resource center, technical assistance and trainings.
4. Safety and encouragement campaigns targeted to children.

**B. The Five E’s of SRTS Planning**

Safe Routes to School Plans have evolved over the past four decades to include implementation activities that go beyond simply addressing the typical pedestrian concerns, such as encouraging communities to maintain sidewalks and proper crosswalks. Implementation programs now incorporate education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, and evaluation into SRTS plans. Collectively these are referred to as the 5 E’s of SRTS programs. Each of these program areas is briefly described *(also refer to appendix A)*:

**Education** – The first of the 5 E’s, *Education*, includes outreach to students, parents, school staff and the community on the importance of walking and biking to school. It is widely believed to be the foundation of all SRTS plans since wanting to walk or bike to school is the first step in achieving results. Many SRTS programs offer bicycle and pedestrian safety training in the
Younger children are simply taught skills such as how to cross streets safely, while older residents are provided a review of pedestrian and bicycle traffic laws. This is a great opportunity for police officers to be proactively involved with community safety issues.

Driver safety campaigns can also shed light on the importance of paying special attention to pedestrians and bicyclists. For example, targeting high school drivers to not text and drive can be incorporated into the SRTS education by showing case studies of fatal accidents that have occurred involving pedestrians. Additional education focused SRTS initiatives include the following examples:

- **Safe Routes to School Map** – SRTS route maps show the school’s location, surrounding streets, the location of sidewalks, and traffic control devices. They can also show crosswalks, crossing guard locations, posted speed limits, and designated walking or bicycling routes. They should also show the school’s designated student walk zone (i.e., where buses don’t pick up students).

- **Classroom Curriculum** – Walk and bike safety lessons can be customized to all grade levels, highlighting key pedestrian and bicycle safety issues in the community. Lessons can be taught as part of many subjects or during special walk or bike events. As part of Minnesota’s SRTS program, the WALK! BIKE! FUN! curriculum was developed by the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota to assist with classroom lessons (refer to text box on page 1-5).

- **Family Biking Class** – School districts and community education programs have been increasingly offering bike safety classes for entire families. This is a great way to help ensure that parents are familiar with bicycle safety issues throughout their community.

- **Idling Reduction Campaign** – car exhaust not only pollutes, it also disproportionately affects the health of exposed children. An anti-idling campaign helps to educate myths about idling cars and encourages drivers to turn off their vehicles while waiting for students. These types of campaigns can include signs, handouts and enforcement in school zones.

**Note:** the above listed implementation ideas are just a few of education-based examples commonly used in SRTS plans (refer to Appendix A for additional SRTS implementation ideas).
WALK! BIKE! FUN! is a comprehensive curriculum that teaches safe traffic behavior life skills through classroom activities and on-the-bike practice. The goals of the extensive lesson plans teach skills to children to walk and bicycle safely – building confidence and helping them. The curriculum was developed by the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota through a federal Safe Routes to School grant provided by the Minnesota Department of Transportation and in collaboration with the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.

WALK! BIKE! FUN! Identifies the following six benefits to walking or biking to school:

1. **To increase academic achievement** – research shows that students who exercise before school concentrate better in class.

2. **To increase happiness** – children that engage in physical activity are more likely to be happy.

3. **To lower your carbon footprint** – a whole school committed to walking and biking can make an enormous impact on reducing carbon dioxide emissions and harmful pollutants.

4. **To help reduce traffic accidents** – the benefits of schools that teach walking and bicycling skills result in up to a forty-nine percent decrease in childhood pedestrian and bicycle collision rates.

5. **To foster independence** – children who walk or bike to school are more likely to walk to other destinations in the neighborhood.

6. **To increase physical activity** – the Center for Disease Control recommends that children get sixty minutes of physical activity every day.

For more information on WALK! BIKE! FUN!, visit the following MnDOT website:

**Encouragement** – The second of the 5 E’s, *Encouragement*, is often closely tied to SRTS educational activities since more SRTS education also encourages walking and biking to school. In addition, encouragement SRTS implementation initiatives include using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling. This helps to generate enthusiasm for the SRTS program with students, parents, staff and citizens actively participating in walking and biking functions. Encouragement-based SRTS initiatives include the following examples (*also refer to Appendix A for more implementation ideas*).

- **Earn-a-Bike Program** – School districts and stakeholders have offered a variety of ways for students to earn a bike through a merit system. Often these programs use refurbished, abandoned or donated bicycles to lower administrative costs. Earn-a-Bike programs can also target providing bicycles to low-income families.

- **Bike Helmet Give-a-Way** – Many stakeholders have donated bike helmets to students, including civic organizations, police departments, and fire and rescue groups. This is a great opportunity for children to interact with safety and law enforcement personal and be properly fitted by a professional. Often these helmets are given away during a special event, such as community bike or sporting event. Other SRTS programs offer bike helmets at greatly reduced costs, such as $5 a piece.

- **Walk and Bike to School Day** – The National Center for Safe Routes to School ([www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)) promotes walking and biking to school by holding a National Bike to School Day in the spring and a National Walk to School Day in the fall each year. Many school districts use these days to implement related walking and biking activities, such as holding a community bike safety event after school. Upcoming National Bike to School Days includes May 10, 2017; May 9, 2018; and May 8, 2019. Upcoming National Walk to School Days includes October 4, 2017; October 10, 2018; and October 2, 2019.

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**The History of National Walk to School Days**

Organized by the Partnership for a Walkable America, Walk to School Day in the USA began in 1997 as a one-day event aimed at building awareness for the need for walkable communities. In 2000, the event became international when the UK and Canada (both of which had already been promoting walking to school) and the USA joined together for the first International Walk to School Day. Growing interest in participation all over the world led the International Walk to School Committee to shifts its promotion to International Walk to School Month for the entire month of October (Source: [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org)).
**Engineering** – The third of the 5 E’s, *Engineering*, refers to making needed operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools, including roadway improvements and official traffic controls (i.e., stop lights, speed zones, etc.). Adding traffic calming improvements, enhanced crosswalks, quality sidewalks and bicycle lanes are all examples of SRTS initiatives that require engineering. Additional engineering-based SRTS initiatives include the following examples (*also refer to Appendix A for more implementation ideas*).

- **School Speed Limit Signs** - School speed limit signs alert drivers when they are entering a school zone and communicate the need to slow down for children during school hours. They can be extremely effective; however, they also require cooperation with local police to enforce the speed limit.

  Flashing speed limit signs have also become increasingly used adjacent to schools. According to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), school flasher speed limit signs that are activated only during school hours are more effective at drawing a driver's attention compared to school flasher speed limit signs that flash throughout the day.

- **Parking Restrictions** – removing parking adjacent to schools to provide clearer site lines for drivers helps to prevent pedestrian and bicycle accidents. In residential neighborhoods, parking restrictions can often become controversial, so limiting parking during school hours can be a feasible compromise. Once again, enforcement is often the key element to properly implementing parking restrictions.
Crosswalk Signs – Installing or upgrading school crosswalk signs is one of the relatively low-cost engineering solutions to SRTS planning. It is especially important to install ‘crosswalk ahead’ signs notifying drivers they are approaching a designated crosswalk.

![Crosswalk Signs](image)

High-Visibility Crosswalks – ensuring that pedestrians have a better chance of being seen while using crosswalks is a good idea wherever they are located, but especially in high traffic areas. The U.S. Department of Transportation authored ‘Pedestrian Crosswalk Case Studies: Richmond, Virginia; Buffalo New York; Stillwater Minnesota’ in August 2001. The report helps to highlight the growing evidence that designated crosswalks are overall safer for pedestrians to use than without marked crosswalks. Part of the study’s findings are summarized below:

“In general, crosswalk markings at unsignalized intersections appear to have several positive effects and no observed negative effects. Specifically, drivers appear to be aware that pedestrians are in a marked crosswalk and drive slightly slower. Crosswalks also have the positive benefit of channeling pedestrians to the intersection. Also, there appears to be no evidence to support the contention that pedestrians feel protected in marked crosswalks and act more carelessly. In conclusion, it appears that marking pedestrian crosswalks at relatively narrow, low speed, unsignalized intersections is a desirable practice (report #FHWA-RD-00-103; page 35).”

![High-Visibility Crosswalks](image)

Sleepy kids are more likely to be struck by cars when crossing streets
(Sleep Magazine; April 23, 2014)
Figure 1A shows six types of crosswalk treatments, with the standard design being used the most. Using one of the other types of crosswalk treatments has been shown in studies to increase the distance of drivers seeing pedestrians (*Crosswalk Marking Field Visibility Study*, FHWA, 2010; *An Empirical Bayesian Evaluation of the Safety Effects of High-Visibility School (Yellow) Crosswalks in San Francisco*, Feldman, Manzi, Mitman, 2010).

**Figure 1A: Crosswalk Treatments**

![Crosswalk Treatments Diagram](image)

**Enforcement** – The fourth of the 5 E’s, *Enforcement*, involves partnering with local law enforcement to ensure that traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools. This includes enforcing speed limits, ensuring that drivers yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, and ticketing vehicles that are parked illegally. It also involves making sure that pedestrians and bicyclists are properly obeying traffic laws. Engaging law enforcement officials in the SRTS planning process helps them to better understand exactly what the safety issues are near schools and throughout the community.

Enforcement strategies often range widely based upon local priorities, but they may also vary by the time of the year. For example, it is common for law enforcement officials to step up their enforcement efforts shortly after school starts in the fall. Another variable that affects enforcement is the community’s overall availability of law enforcement personnel. Some of the smaller communities often don’t have an extensive police department. Enforcement strategies, however, can also include parents, students, crossing guards and residents.

The main goal of all SRTS enforcement strategies is to deter unsafe behavior of all motor vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. One of the biggest issues addressed by enforcement is speeding due to the correlation between speeding and pedestrian fatalities (refer to Figure 1B). Table 1A lists some of the unsafe behaviors commonly addressed by SRTS enforcement strategies. Appendix A contains a list of some of the more common SRTS Enforcement strategies.
Table 1A: Unsafe Behaviors Addressed by SRTS Enforcement Strategies

Unsafe Driver Behaviors
- Speeding (refer to Figure 1A).
- Failing to yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Failure to obey traffic controls (i.e., stop lights, stop signs, etc.).
- Passing stopped school buses.
- Parking or stopping in crosswalks or bus zones.
- Violating school drop-off and pick-up procedures.

Unsafe Pedestrian Behaviors
- Not looking before crossing the street.
- Not crossing the street at a designated crosswalk.
- Darting out between parked vehicles.

Unsafe Bicyclist Behaviors
- Bicycles not obeying traffic laws.
- Not being visible at night when riding on the road.
- Riding against traffic instead of with the traffic flow.

**Evaluation** – The fifth of the 5 E’s, *Evaluation*, involves monitoring and documenting the outcomes of SRTS initiatives. This allows for adjustments to be made based upon how much impact they are having on the desired outcomes. If it is determined the initiatives are not making a difference, SRTS planners then decide if additional measures need to be taken or if the initiative should be abandoned and/or replaced with a different strategy. Some of the benefits of evaluation are outlined below:

- Making sure that the underlying problem is identified so that proper strategies to address the problem are implemented.
- Setting reasonable expectations about what the program can do. By knowing the starting point, SRTS programs can set specific and reasonable objectives.
- Identifying changes that will improve the program. Part of evaluation is monitoring what happens throughout the life of a project so that mid-course corrections can be made, if needed, to improve chances of success.
- Determining if the program is having the desired results. This is a primary purpose of any evaluation and can be used to inform funding sources, the media, and the public to help build support for SRTS.


Deciding how SRTS plans should be evaluated needs to be outlined during the planning development stage. This SRTS plan uses the following five evaluation stages:

1. **Understand** – Begin with a thorough understanding of the School District’s walking and biking data and issues.
2. **Desired Outcomes** – A description of what will be done and what change is expected.
3. **Monitor** – Describe the anticipated methodology used to observe and measure the results.
4. **Interpret** – Describe how the monitoring information will be evaluated.
5. **Modify** – Outline a process that will be used to make the necessary modifications to the SRTS plan.
C. Dassel SRTS Planning Process

Working with the Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC), the City of Dassel with cooperation with the Dassel Elementary School successfully applied to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to create a Safe Routes to School Plan. MMDC then assisted the City and the Elementary School with the development of SRTS plan. A SRTS Task Force was created to help guide the planning process (refer to Table 1B).

**Table 1B: Dassel SRTS Task Force Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Representing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terri Boese</td>
<td>Dassel City Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Scepaniak</td>
<td>Dassel Public Works Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie Morris</td>
<td>Dassel Elementary Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara Nelson</td>
<td>City Council &amp; Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Carlen</td>
<td>School Transportation Special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Erickson</td>
<td>Business Owner, Parent &amp; Citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Staff</td>
<td>Meeker County Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Bondhus</td>
<td>Meeker County Sheriff’s Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck DeWolf</td>
<td>Bolten &amp; Menk (City Engineer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Johnson</td>
<td>Mid-Minnesota Development Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donn Winckler</td>
<td>Mid-Minnesota Development Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vision Statement**

The Dassel Safe Routes to School Task Force created a *Vision Statement* that guided the development of the SRTS Plan for the elementary school.

**Dassel SRTS Vision Statement:**

*The City of Dassel and the Dassel Elementary School are committed to work together with stakeholders to establish a Safe Routes to School Program for the community...to mitigate barriers of walking and biking safely.*
Goals for the Safe Routes to School Program

To help achieve the Vision Statement, the Dassel SRTS Task Force used the following five goals for the development of the Safe Routes to School Plan (notice they purposely coincide with the 5 E’s of SRTS planning):

Education Goal:

“To provide students and parents with the necessary information they need to fully understand how important walking and biking is to their health.”

Encouragement Goal:

“To address the issues that discourage students from walking and biking to and from school.”

Engineering Goal:

“Implement infrastructure changes to maximize the safety of walking and biking throughout the community.”

Enforcement Goal:

“To provide the necessary monitoring and enforcement vehicle and pedestrian activities to ensure a safe environment.”

Evaluation Goal:

“To provide an ongoing process to evaluate and update the SRTS Plan as needed to achieve the Dassel SRTS Vision Statement.”
D. Dassel SRTS Plan Stakeholders

In order to have a successful Dassel SRTS Plan, there are numerous stakeholders who need to be involved with developing and/or implementing the Plan beyond the Task Force. This section provides a brief description of the key stakeholders who directly play a role.

Key Local SRTS Stakeholders…

**Dassel-Cokato School Board** – The Dassel-Cokato School Board consist of six elected members. The Board meets on the fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Dassel-Cokato Board Room at the High School/Middle School Complex on Highway 12 between the two cities.

[www.dc.k12.mn.us](http://www.dc.k12.mn.us)

**City of Dassel** – Due to the vast amount of potential infrastructure improvements need throughout the two communities, the City Councils and city staff play a large part in the successful implementation of the Dassel SRTS Plan. For more information on the City of Dassel, visit their official website at:

**Meeker County Highway Department** - The Meeker County Highway Department is responsible for maintenance and construction of the County’s 272 miles of highways and 92 bridges. Their key role in the Dassel SRTS Plan is they own CSAH 4 (First Street) located adjacent to the elementary school. Ultimately the Meeker County Board, after staff recommendation, will need to support any proposed infrastructure changes. For more information, visit the following website:

[www.co.meeker.mn.us/181/Highway](http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/181/Highway)

**Meeker County Sheriff’s Office** – The City of Dassel currently contracts with the Meeker County Sheriff’s Office to provide local policing services. Moving forward, emphasizing addressing unsafe pedestrian and vehicle behaviors will play a large role in the overall success of Dassel’s SRTS Plan.

**Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)** - MnDOT is the primary stakeholder involved with SRTS planning at the State level. This involves overseeing the development of SRTS plans and administering SRTS grants. Grant opportunities cover a wide variety of SRTS needs, including plan development, mini-grants to support SRTS initiatives, and larger infrastructure grants to improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and traffic controls. MnDOT District 8, located in the City of Willmar, also plays a large role in implementing SRTS plans, especially since MnDOT planners and engineers need to help identify which infrastructure improvements are feasible along State and County State-Aid highways. For more information on MnDOT and their role in SRTS plans, please visit the following website:

[www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes)
Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) – The Minnesota Department of Health houses the Statewide Health Improvement Program. One of the many objectives of SHIP is to help create active communities by increasing opportunities for walking and biking. They are also involved in promoting education on a number of other health-related topics, such as healthy eating, drugs and alcohol prevention, and reducing TV and other screen time. For more information, visit the following SHIP website:

[www.health.state.mn.us/ship](http://www.health.state.mn.us/ship)

A walking school bus…

Meeker, McLeod, Sibley Healthy Communities – The local SHIP Program is called Meeker, McLeod, Sibley Healthy Communities (MMS HC). MMS HC is a collaboration of organizations and individuals partnering together to promote health and well-being within our communities. Created in January of 1995, the MMS HC is supported by the Healthy Communities Leadership Team (HCLT), which meets on a quarterly basis and whose commitment is “to improve the health of our community.” Currently there are four subcommittees in the Healthy Communities Collaborative:

- Emergency Preparedness
- Obesity Prevention
- Mental Health
- Prevention/Wellness

For more information on MMS HC, please visit the following website:

[www.mmshealthycommunities.org](http://www.mmshealthycommunities.org)

Mid-Minnesota Development Commission (MMDC) – The local Regional Development Commission, serving Kandiyohi, Meeker, McLeod, and Renville Counties, is involved with taking the lead in the development of SRTS plans. MMDC staff also works with MnDOT on transportation planning activities and helps local governmental units with technical and grant writing assistance. For more information on MMDC or the Dassel SRTS Plan, visit the following website:

[www.mmrdc.org](http://www.mmrdc.org)
Chapter Two:  
City of Dassel Community Profile

Chapter Two provides a profile of the City of Dassel. Information is included on the city’s location, population (including future population projections), climate, natural resources, transportation network, and land use.

A. Location

The City of Dassel is located in eastern Meeker County, approximately 50 miles west of Minneapolis and 30 miles south of St. Cloud (refer to Map 2A). The community is also located in Dassel Township.

Map 2A:  
The Location of Dassel within Meeker County and Minnesota

Legend
- City of Dassel
- Municipality
- Lake
- Meeker County
- State of Minnesota

U.S. Highway  
State Highway
B. Population

Dassel’s historic population data is presented in Figure 2A beginning with the year 1930. The figure shows that Dassel overall has steadily gained new residents from 785 in 1930 to its 2010 population of 1,469 residents (U.S. Census). As a result, the community’s population nearly doubled over the 80-year period.

Table 2A compares the population data of the City of Dassel, Dassel Township and Meeker County, since 1970. Notice that all three areas have experienced substantial overall growth over the past 40 years. In 2015, the State Demographer’s Office estimated the City’s population to be 1,462, representing a slight drop in residents from the 2010 Census.

**Table 2A:** Population Data since 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Change</th>
<th>Dassel Township</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Meeker County</th>
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<td>1,361</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>22,644</td>
<td>1,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>1,526</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>23,300</td>
<td>656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4,913</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Population Projections*

The historic population information presented in Table 2A helps to establish a reliable range of population projections for the City of Dassel and Dassel Township. Table 2B shows population projections that are based on the City of Dassel’s growth since 1970. Table 2C shows population projections for Dassel Township which are based on Census data since 1970.
Table 2B:
Population Projections for the City of Dassel
(Projected to the year 2030 based upon historic growth rates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,058</td>
<td>1,066</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td>1,233</td>
<td>1,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Projections</td>
<td>2015*</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2025</td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,462</td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td>1,663</td>
<td>1,759</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 2015 population was estimated by the Minnesota State Demographer’s Office.

Table 2C:
Population Projections for Dassel Township
(Projected to the year 2030 based upon historic growth rates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>581</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,361</td>
<td>1,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Projections</td>
<td>2015*</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2025</td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,482</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>1,856</td>
<td>2,021</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 2015 population was estimated by the Minnesota State Demographer’s Office.

Table 2B shows the City of Dassel could realistically have approximately 1,759 residents by the year 2030. This would be an increase of 297 residents between the community’s 2015 population estimate and the year 2030. Similarly, Table 2C suggests that Dassel Township’s population could grow to 2,201 residents by the year 2030, representing an increase of 539 people.

If the population growth estimates from Tables 2B and 2C are combined, the Dassel area could expect to gain approximately 800+ people by the year 2030. There are many variables, however, that could either positively or negatively affect the area’s growth rate. The growth projections are simply based upon what the area has experienced since 1970.
C. Climate

The City of Dassel is located in the continental climate zone, which is characterized by a wide range of weather patterns between summer and winter. In winter, the average temperature for eastern Meeker County is 15 degrees Fahrenheit, while the normal low is 5 degrees Fahrenheit. In summer, the average daily temperature is 70 degrees Fahrenheit, while the normal high is 82 degrees Fahrenheit. Average relative humidity for the area ranges from 60 percent in the midafternoon, to 83 percent during the predawn hours. On average the sun shines 69 percent of the time during the summer months and 51 percent during the winter. The prevailing wind is from the northwest, with the highest wind speeds occurring during the month of April.

Total annual precipitation for the Dassel area ranges from 28 to 30 inches. Approximately 21 inches or 75 percent of the total precipitation falls in the summer months as rainfall. Average annual snowfall for the area is approximately 40 inches. While this total appears to be significant, this form of precipitation represents only a small portion (7 inches) of the area’s total annual precipitation. This is a result of the relatively low moisture content of snow. However, even though only a small portion of the area’s total annual precipitation total actually falls during the winter months, flooding can occur in the spring as a result of a number of factors, including: a deep, late winter snow pack, frozen soil prohibiting the infiltration of water, rapid snow melt due to an intrusion of warm air and heavy early spring precipitation.

D. Natural Resources

The natural resource-base of the Dassel area is extremely diverse. This is primarily because the City of Dassel is situated in the “transitional region” between the predominantly forested area to the north and the predominantly agricultural land that stretches across southern Minnesota. Today agricultural land is found throughout the surrounding area, with many groves of trees that stand as reminders of what once was referred to as the “Big Woods.” The City of Dassel is located within the South Fork of the Crow River Watershed. The surrounding landscape is characterized by rolling wooded hills and vast water resources. The predominate water feature in the area is Lake Washington, which spans 2,639 acres, although the community is located along the shores of Spring Lake, which covers approximately 218 acres.

E. Transportation Network

The layout of streets, highways and one railroad in Dassel have a significant impact on the location of existing land uses and the overall growth of the community. The existing network plays a large role in determining which Safe Routes to Schools engineering projects are needed.
In addition to local streets, Dassel’s major transportation network consists of one railroad and the following county, state and U.S. highways (refer to Maps 2B and 2C):

- **BNSF Railway** – the City of Dassel is located along the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad, which spans 32,500 miles across North America (1,584 miles in Minnesota). The BNSF network is one of the largest freight railroads in North America, second only to the Union Pacific Railroad.

- **U.S. and State Highways** – U.S. Highway 12 and Minnesota Highway 15 intersect at the western edge of Dassel. These highways are transportation routes that provide direct access for local residents to commute to the services and employment opportunities in Litchfield, Hutchinson, St. Cloud, Willmar and the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. As the trend for individuals to commute longer distances to work and as urban sprawl from the Twin Cities continues, upgrades to Highways 12 and 15 will continue to be a priority to the community.

- **Meeker County Highways** – Meeker County Roads 4 and 6 travel through the City of Dassel. County Road 6 and the section of Highway 4 south of Dassel (old Minnesota Highway 15) are nine-ton roads, while Highway 4 north of the City is a five-ton road.

**Map 2B: Dassel’s Rail & Roadway Network**

*Also refer to Map 2C*
**Functional Classification**

The Functional Classification System is a method used to describe the main function each road performs in the highway network (refer to Map 2C). It is essentially a hierarchy of roads using criteria that describes the function that a particular road performs in a highway network (typically access and mobility). There is a general agreement among the public that the responsibility for the most important roads should be assigned to the highest level of government. In this fashion, the greatest resources for road maintenance and construction are devoted to the most heavily traveled roads. It follows that less traveled roads become the responsibility of lower levels of government. These roads are defined as:

1. **Minor Arterial** – These highways link cities, larger towns and other major traffic generators, such as major resort areas, to each other and to principal arterial routes. They form an integrated network which provides for movements within the State and between counties.

2. **Major Collectors** – These routes provide service to the County Seat and larger cities not served by the higher systems. They predominately serve trips within the County and link locally important traffic generators with their service areas and other nearby larger cities with higher order routes.

3. **Minor Collectors** – These routes link smaller cities and locally important traffic generators and provide developed areas reasonable access to a higher functioning roadway.

4. **Local Roads** – The rural local roads primarily service relatively low traffic volumes and short distance trips.

Map 2C: The Dassel Area’s Functional Classification
Sidewalks & Trails

The City of Dassel is similar to many rural communities in that it has an extensive sidewalk network throughout the ‘central’ portion of the community. As the community grew and newer subdivisions were developed, the priority to develop and pay for sidewalks diminished. Map 2D displays a draft sidewalk map that was created in 2013 by the City’s main engineering consultant, Bolton & Menk, Inc. If you are viewing the map in color, the sidewalks are represented in red; the blue lines represent the two trail segments: Spring Lake Park Trail and the Dassel-Cokato Trail. The Spring Lake Park Trail is owned by Meeker County and travels between the city and Spring Lake Park, which is located approximately one mile north. The Dassel-Cokato Trail was constructed in the early 1990s between the two communities along the north side of U.S. 12 (in MnDOT’s right-of-way). The trail is currently managed through a joint powers agreement signed between both cities, Dassel Township, and the school district.

Map 2D: Dassel’s Sidewalks & Trails
F. Land Use

The City of Dassel’s current zoning districts are displayed in Map 2E. The city is dissected into a northern and southern “half” by the presence of U.S. Highway 12, which travels east-westerly through the community. The city’s land use has been developed around the downtown area (zoned C-1 Central Commerce), with residential neighborhoods branching outward (zoned R-2 One & Two Family Residential). The community’s limited industry (I-1) and Fringe & Highway Commerce (C-2) areas are mostly found along U.S. Highway 12. There are pockets of recreational zoned property located throughout the community. The city also has two primary areas zoned for General Industry (I-2). The large light green areas are zoned for agriculture, which are available for development as the community expands in the future. Notice the Dassel Elementary School (represented by the star) is nicely situated near the middle of Dassel’s largest residential neighborhood.

Map 2E: Dassel’s Zoning Districts
~ Refer to Appendix B for a larger map ~
Chapter Three: Dassel Elementary School Profile

Chapter Three provides a profile of the Dassel Elementary School. Information is provided on the Dassel-Cokato School District, the Dassel Elementary School, and two Safe Routes to School surveys, including one completed by the parents of Dassel Elementary K-4 students.

A. Dassel-Cokato School District 466

Dassel Elementary School is part of Dassel-Cokato Independent School District, ISD 466. The School District encompasses the Cities of Dassel and Cokato, along with a large rural area surrounding the communities (refer to Map 3B). The combined population of the two cities is approximately 3,100. According to the school’s web site “The entire school district, which includes many rural and lake homes, has a population of 7,910 residents.” Approximately 2,300 K-12 students attend the three schools. The District employs 350 staff, 141 of which are teachers.

The Mission Statement for the School District is “In partnership with our communities, Dassel-Cokato Public Schools will provide all learners opportunities designed to maximize their potential and promote lifelong learning.”

Dassel Elementary School is one of two elementary schools, the other located in the City of Cokato. Both elementary schools have grades kindergarten through fourth grade. The Middle and High Schools are located together in a complex off of Highway 12, approximately mid-way between Dassel and Cokato (refer to Map 3A).

Map 3A: Dassel-Cokato Middle & High School
Map 3B: Dassel-Cokato School District
~ Please refer to Appendix B for a larger map ~
B. Overview of Dassel Elementary School

The Dassel Elementary School is located in north-central Dassel at 131 William Avenue East (refer to Maps 3C & D). The school is surrounded by William Avenue East to the south; 1st Street to the west (doubles as County Road 4); and Guy Street to the east. Horace Avenue West and East is located to the north, however, the road is not a through-street due to the school’s location (refer to map 3D).

Dassel Elementary School’s mission statement is “Building a better tomorrow.”

Maps 3C (right) & 3D (below) show the location of the Dassel Elementary School in north-central Dassel.
**Dassel Elementary Student Profile**

There are 341 K-4 students who attend Dassel Elementary (2015 data provided by elementaryschools.org). Table 3A shows a breakdown of the school’s enrollment by grade level.

**Table 3A:**
**Dassel Elementary Enrollment by Grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3B shows the student ethnicity breakdown at Dassel Elementary:

**Table 3B:**
**Dassel Elementary Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or more races</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Elementaryschool.org*
Transportation Policies

The school has several transportation related policies. **School District Policy 709** discusses the Student Transportation Safety Program. Much of the policy centers around training K-6 grade students on safely riding and boarding/leaving buses. This includes procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing. The policy also outlines the responsibilities of parents/guardians for transportation safety. The Policy also states that the school district may provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety for students kindergarten through fifth grade.

As the High School and Middle School are located in the country mid-way between the two cities, all students attending this facility are given the opportunity to ride the bus. Rural Dassel Elementary School students ride the bus. In the City of Dassel, elementary children may ride the bus if they live on the south side of U.S. Highway 12 or live greater than one mile from Dassel Elementary. “Hazard riders” are those students who live in an area where they must overcome a hazard, such as crossing U.S. Highway 12 or the railroad, to get to school and live within one mile from the school.

If parents need to pick their children up between 8:15–3:10 from school, they need to come directly to the main office where the child will meet them. If they are picking their children up after school, they are directed to meet them at the school doors. The following **Who? What? When? and Where?** information was provided to parents in the Dassel Elementary Newsletter (October/November 2016):

**Who?** Parents/ Guardians driving students to and/or picking students up at the Dassel Elementary School.

**What?** We need your help to keep Dassel Elementary students safe during loading and unloading times. A.M. – Students should enter the building at the east door. Please do not drop students off in the front of the building as this area is designated as a bus loading and unloading zone. P.M. - Students not riding a school bus will be dismissed on the east side of Dassel Elementary. Students will cross the street to walk home or meet parents, with school patrol assistance, at Guy Street and William Avenue (refer Map 3E) At no time will students be allowed to cross at any location other than a marked crosswalk, unless accompanied by an adult. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to pick students up at the door to safely escort them to a vehicle. Reminder: Please do not park and wait in the middle of the street. Do not park in the yellow curb zone (dotted line on Map 3E) Pick Up Zone during the designated hours.

Map 3E: Pick Up/ Drop Off

---

Dassel Safe Routes to School Plan
**When?** Pick Up Zone Loading & Unloading Times (7:45 A.M. to 8:15 A.M.) and (3:10 P.M. to 3:30 P.M.)

**Where?** In order to safely manage traffic during loading and unloading times we are requesting that parents travel north on Willis Street – West on Horace Avenue – South on Guy Street. This will create a continuous flow of traffic that can utilize the Pick Up Zone (No Parking – dotted line on Map 3E) to ease congestion and concerns regarding student safety.

---

**Other Key School Policies**

The School District has a wellness policy and several transportation policies that impact the SRTS Plan. The District’s Wellness Policy covers nutrition practices and physical activity. SRTS educational and encouragement activities can easily fit into the physical activity steps mentioned in the plan. These steps include:

1. “The school district will provide opportunities for students and staff to be physically active during and outside of school hours (e.g. recess, physical education, community education, latch key and athletics).

2. Health education will reinforce the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle.

3. Opportunities for physical activity will incorporate into other subjects, where appropriate, and

4. Classroom teachers will provide short activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.”

The Wellness plan also discusses supporting parents and guardians with their primary role in promoting and protecting their children’s health and well-being through educational opportunities.
C. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Surveys

In order to help establish baseline data that school districts can use to better understand how many students normally walk or bicycle to school, two types of surveys have been developed by SRTS planners. The first is simply a “Safe Routes to School Students Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet.” The second is a “Parent Survey about Walking and Biking to School.” Both of these have been administered as part of the Dassel Elementary SRTS planning process. The results are presented in this section.

**Student In-Class Travel Tally**

The National Center for Safe Routes to School (www.saferoutesinfo.org) has developed a survey that is administered by teachers in their respective classrooms. The purpose of the survey, referred to as the “classroom tally,” is to determine how many students get to school by walking or bicycling. In addition, the classroom tally can be used to help measure whether SRTS initiatives are making a difference.

The classroom tally comes with a set of instructions for schools and teachers to follow in order to help standardize the results among school districts. School staff are directed to administer the survey over a three-day period during midweek (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday). Teachers are asked to read through all possible answers so they become familiar with the options provided. They then direct the students to only answer once to the following question, “**How did you arrive at school today?**” The following options are provided:

**Tally Options:** Walk ~ Bike ~ School Bus ~ Family Vehicle ~ Carpool ~ Transit ~ Other

The same options are provided with the second question on the classroom tally, “**How do you plan to leave for home after school?**” The teacher simply asks the students to raise their hand and then writes on the tally the number of students counted for each option provided. There is also a place on the tally to describe the weather (i.e., sunny, rainy, overcast, snow) and to list any disruptions to the counts or any unusual travel conditions to/from school on the days of the tally.

Dassel Elementary School administered the SRTS student arrival and departure tallies the week of January 28, 2013. Table 3C and 3D provide a summary of the three-day results.
### Table 3C: Dassel Elementary SRTS
**Morning Arrival by Mode of Travel (Three-Day Totals)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3D: Dassel Elementary SRTS
**Afternoon Departure by Mode of Travel (Three-Day Totals)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Carpool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SRTS Parent Survey

The second survey used to collect SRTS information is referred to as the “parent survey.” This survey asks parents to provide information about what factors affect whether they allow their children to walk or bike to school, the presence of key safety-related conditions along routes to school, and related background information. Specifically, the parent survey has the following introduction for parents:

“Your child’s school wants to learn your thoughts about children walking and biking to school. This survey will take about 10 - 15 minutes to complete. We ask that each family complete only one survey per school your children attend. If more than one child from a school brings a survey home, please fill out the survey for the child with the next birthday from today’s date.

After you have completed this survey, send it back to the school with your child or give it to the teacher. Your responses will be kept confidential and neither your name nor your child’s name will be associated with any results. Thank you for participating in this survey!”

Parent Survey Results

In total, 133 parents completed the Dassel SRTS Parent Survey. The first question on the survey simply asked the respondents what was the grade of the child who brought home the survey. Table 3E shows the breakdown of the number of surveys that were returned from Kindergarten through 4th grade.

Table 3E:
What is the grade of the child that brought home the survey?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question five on the survey asked respondents how far they lived away from school. Table 3F shows that 23% of the respondents live within a ½ mile of Dassel Elementary School. This is considered the normal walking or biking zone for elementary school-aged children. Notice that approximately 54% of the students live over two miles away from the school.

Table 3F:
How far do you live away from school?

Table 3G shows the student’s travel time to and from school in number of minutes. These numbers are consistent with the high number of students taking the bus to and from school.

Table 3G:
Travel time to and from school (in minutes)?
Table 3H shows the percentage of students who walked, biked, rode the bus, or were dropped off by car at school. Table 3I shows the same information for leaving from school. Notice that no percentage of students biked to or from school.

Table 3H:
How did the student arrive to school today?

Table 3I:
How did the student leave from school today?

*Other includes carpool, transit, or by another means not listed.
Table 3J shows that approximately 20% of the parents indicated their student at some point had asked them to walk or bike to school.

Table 3J:
Has your child asked permission to walk or bike to or from school?

![Pie chart showing 20% Yes and 80% No for 133 Responses]

Table 3K shows collectively by third or fourth grade is when most parents feel comfortable letting their kids walk or bike to school.

Table 3K: At what grade will you allow your child to walk or bike to or from school without an adult?

![Bar chart showing percentages of responses by grade]
Contrasting Table 3K, Table 3L shows that 53% of the parents surveyed indicated they would not feel comfortable having their child walk or bike to school at any age. This response rate is similar to the 54% of people who indicated they live two or more miles away from the school (refer to Table 3F).

Table 3L:

“I would not feel comfortable having my child walk or bike at any age?”

Table 3M shows the vast majority (84%) believes that Dassel Elementary doesn’t encourage or discourage walking or biking to school.

Table 3M: How much does your child’s school encourage or discourage walking or biking to or from school?
Table 3N shows that 60% of the parents indicated that distance was the main factor that influenced the decision to have their child walk or bike to school, followed second by weather (34%).

**Table 3N:**
Which factors influence your decision to have your child walk or bike to school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Activities</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks/Paths</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing Guards</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Crime</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3O reveals that, outside of distance and weather conditions, addressing or improving sidewalks/paths (25%), traffic (23%), and safety (23%) concerns were the three issues areas that would influence parents letting their child walk or bike to school.

**Table 3O:**
Would you let your child walk or bike to or from school if this problem were changed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Activities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks/Paths</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing Guards</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence/Crime</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables 3P and 3Q show the responses regarding how ‘fun and healthy’ walking or biking to school is for their children. The majority of parents indicated they were neutral (56%) in regards to how much fun it was for their child. In Table 3Q, however, the majority of parents indicated it was either very healthy (29%) or healthy (36%). Again the high ‘neutral’ response rate in Table 3P closely corresponds with the 54% who indicated they live two or more miles away from school (refer to Table 3F).

Table 3P:
How much fun is walking or biking to or from school for your child?

Table 3Q:
How healthy is walking or biking to or from school for your child?
The last question on the SRTS Parent Survey provided space to “provide any additional comments.” Thirty-six parents provided written comments. Of the 36 comments received, 17 (42%) commented they live too far from Dassel Elementary to allow their students to walk or ride a bike to school. Two additional comments received simply clarified a previous question on the survey. The remaining comments are highlighted below: 1

1. My child doesn’t want to bike to school. I would let him if he wanted to. Fairly safe due to the bike path [survey response #3].

2. I would like my son to walk to/from school [survey response #9].

3. We would not feel comfortable (even if there were changes made) with our children walking/biking to school due to abductions. They would have to be 8th grade or older – depends on each child [survey response #15].

4. **Lack of sidewalks/paths would be our greatest concern in regards to walking to school** [survey response #20].

5. We like knowing our kids arrived to school and left school safely. This is why we bring them. Thank you [Survey response #23]!

6. Walking to school has been a positive experience for our son. The crossing guards are wonderful, especially the a.m. one – Mrs. Hopkins. She goes above & beyond and makes us feel confident sending our son out the door [survey response #27].

7. Walking or biking to school is my personal decision not the schools or governments. They do not need to encourage my children to do so [survey response #35].

8. If there was a way for my child to check in with me that he arrived to school safely, I’d let him go alone. Otherwise I’d need to bike/walk with him there [survey response #54].

9. Would allow 1st grader to bike if with older brother [survey response #63].

10. Our children do not have a safe path in the winter but the school says it is too dangerous to stop buses in front of our house [survey response #78].

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1 The survey response numbers shown after each comment correspond to the number given to each completed survey used for data entry purposes.
11. **My child does walk to school alone at times. I am concerned by this only because of the limited sidewalks in town** [survey response #82].

12. I am a parent who talks of issues with the child, then acts situations out, then for another added guard own an “Amber Alert” chip [survey response #89].

13. We can see our daughter the entire walk to school. If we weren’t in such close proximity, I would never let her walk alone. Though I would allow her to walk/bike in a group that included an older student, most likely [survey response #91].

14. All elementary children should ride buses! All children should have the opportunity to ride the bus because all people pay the same taxes, walker or not. Now days, I do not like sending my children walking down the streets that don’t have sidewalks because they are too young to defend themselves if danger is present [survey response #92]!

15. We live across the street from school so I just watch out the window. It would take longer to drive him. Wouldn’t feel comfortable if I couldn’t see him [survey response #106].

16. In the world we are now living in, it is hard as a parent to let a child walk to/from school. I feel the media is a lot to blame for this! It really is important though to give them the opportunity – kids need to know how to be responsible [survey response #116]!

17. There is no crossing guards where my child crosses to go/come home from school. It is a very busy road, and there is no sidewalk to walk to the next crosswalk/guards to cross the main road (County Road 4) [survey response #120]!

18. I do wish the weather would permit a safe walking environment as well as trusting neighbors enough to let my child walk alone, but since at least three of our neighbors have criminal charges, I would prefer the option of a bus. It is inconvenient to drive and a bus goes down our road [survey response #123].
D. Summary of Dassel Elementary School’s SRTS Issues

Based upon the information collected from the parent surveys, the SRTS Task Force, school staff, and two walking audits of the school neighborhood, the following list summarizes the school’s major SRTS issues:

1. **Lack of sidewalk/trail infrastructure.** The primary Dassel Elementary SRTS issue is the lack of sidewalks and curb-cuts in the surrounding neighborhoods. Even households who are located adjacent to the school do not have the proper infrastructure to walk/bike to school, other than relying on the streets. Although the majority of students are bussed to and from school, it would be a large improvement if pedestrian concerns were addressed within one mile of the school, north of U.S. Highway 12. The lack of infrastructure concerns were echoed largely throughout the SRTS Parent Survey results.

2. **Traffic along U.S. Highway 12.** It is unlikely the school district would change its busing policy if additional safety enhancements were made for pedestrians along U.S. Highway 12 (all students south of Highway 12 are bussed). It might influence more parents, however, to allow their children to walk or bike across the highway if additional crosswalks were installed.

3. **Perceived child safety concerns.** According to the survey results, 29% of the parents indicated safety concerns influences the decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school. Twenty-three percent (23%), however, also indicated they would consider allowing their children to walk or bike to school if safety issues were addressed (refer to Tables 3N and 3O).

4. **Distance/Weather.** With 54% of the surveyed parents living two miles or more from Dassel Elementary, and with weather conditions (i.e., cold, snow, rain) often discouraging walking and/or bicycling for much of the school year, the harsh reality is walking or biking to school is not a viable option even if all of the above issues are successfully addressed. The overall philosophy of Dassel Elementary’s SRTS Plan is “to create an environment where walking or riding a bike to school is a viable option” so that parents and students feel comfortable doing so when favorable weather conditions exist.
This Chapter establishes a SRTS Implementation Plan for Dassel Elementary School and the City of Dassel. The Implementation Plan contains two important components. The first is a series of Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps designed to address the 5 E’s of SRTS planning. As a result, they are organized in Section A with separate goals for Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation. The second component of the SRTS Implementation Plan consists of an implementation map, which appears on the last page of this Chapter. *This Implementation Plan will help guide the City of Dassel and the Dassel-Cokato School District in making decisions and implementing SRTS initiatives from 2017-2022.*

A. Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps

For use in this chapter, goals, objectives and action steps are defined in the following ways (also refer to figure 4A):

**Goal:** An overarching principle that guides decision making or something you are trying to achieve. For example, a city might have the goal of having a safe community.

**Objective:** Support goals by establishing a ‘target’ that can be measured over time. In the previous example, a corresponding objective might be to reduce crime in public areas by 50% over five years.

**Action Step:** A commitment to implement specific activities to achieve a desired goal and objective. To achieve the previous objective example, a community could ensure there is adequate lighting to deter crime at night in city parks.

**Figure 4A:**

Goals, Objectives & Action Steps Hierarchy
Objective A: To teach bike and pedestrian safety laws and skills in a way that is clear, hands-on, and consistent.

1. Continue to host the Annual First Grade Bike Rally (the 8th Annual Rally was held on Friday, May 16th). Helmets are donated on an as needed basis and new bikes are given away in a drawing. The Sheriff’s Office sets up an obstacle course and provides bicycle safety education. The day concludes by riding the Dassel-Cokato Trail. Parents are welcome.
   - **Who:** School District, Sheriff’s Office and parents.
   - **When:** Annually in May.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff time). Helmets are donated by a local civic organization.

2. Continue to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian education within the School’s Safety Patrol program (i.e., ‘crossing guards’) offered to 4th graders. There are currently 45 participants!
   - **Who:** The School District and the Sheriff’s Office.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).

3. Use Minnesota’s Walk! Bike! Fun! as a basis to customize appropriate grade level curriculum. Incorporate into classrooms and during physical education.
   - **Who:** School District.
   - **When:** Begin in the fall 2017. Update after the first year and biannually thereafter.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).
Objective B: To educate students, parents and citizens on key pedestrian and bicycling issues in the community.

4. Continue to separate buses and family vehicles before and after school. Continue to provide handouts at the beginning of the school year explaining busing, parking, walking, and bicycling issues, focusing on safety rules and school policies. Also continue to provide reminders in school newsletters.
   ➢ **Who:** School District.
   ➢ **When:** Annually.
   ➢ **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).

5. Continue to provide one-on-one consulting with new students and their families on customized safe routes to school options (i.e., walking, bicycling, bus options, drop-off and pick-up policies, etc.).
   ➢ **Who:** School District.
   ➢ **When:** Ongoing.
   ➢ **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).

6. Work with the media to highlight key SRTS information, events and initiatives. Target encouraging drivers to slow down and pay attention to bicycles and pedestrians.
   ➢ **Who:** School District and Sheriff’s Office.
   ➢ **When:** Ongoing.
   ➢ **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff and volunteer time).

7. Implement existing teen driver campaigns (i.e., teenSMART, Don’t Text and Drive, or the various programs offered by the insurance agencies) and target information and programs to high school students. Apply for stakeholder funding to enhance the programs and/or to establish an incentive program.
   ➢ **Who:** School District and Sheriff’s Office.
   ➢ **When:** Ongoing.
   ➢ **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing, staff and volunteer time).
8. Incorporate SRTS education into classroom art projects (i.e., posters, paintings, etc.) by emphasizing various SRTS topics (i.e., National Walk or Bike to School Days, Don’t Text and Drive, etc.). Display artwork in hallways and periodically hold an art contest to provide incentives.
   - **Who:** School District.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (supplies, printing, staff time).

9. Educate students on the importance of using designated crosswalks, especially when walking or biking to and from school.
   - **Who:** School District.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).

Goal Two: Encouragement

“To address the issues that discourage students from walking and biking to and from school”

Objective C: To build confidence in students and parents that walking and biking to school and throughout the community is both healthy and safe.

10. Ensure that each classroom (K-4) organizes at least one walking field trip annually (i.e., library, park, trail, etc.). Use the walk as an educational opportunity to teach/strengthen pedestrian skills.
   - **Who:** Dassel Elementary School.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff time).
   - **Who:** School District.
   - **When:** Begin in the fall 2017.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing, staff and volunteer time).

12. Participate annually in the National Bike to School Day (May 10, 2017; May 9, 2018; May 8, 2019). Organize volunteers to assist.
   - **Who:** School District and SRTS Task Force.
   - **When:** Begin in the spring 2017.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (printing, staff and volunteer time).

13. Work with the City of Dassel and the Sheriff’s Office to establish a bicycle fleet using abandoned bicycles.
   - **Who:** School District, City of Dassel, Sheriff’s Office.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff, storage, and transportation).

14. Work with the Dassel-Cokato High School to find a class or after-school function that teaches students how to make repairs to bicycles.
   - **Who:** School District, City of Dassel, Sheriff’s Office.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** $750 for bike repair equipment.

15. Conduct a bike rack assessment, ensuring that key locations (i.e., schools, library, etc.) have quality bike racks. Find sponsors to provide needed bike racks.
   - **Who:** School District, the City of Dassel, and community stakeholders.
   - **When:** 2017 and bi-annually thereafter.
   - **Cost:** $750 per bike rack.
16. Find a stakeholder who is willing to provide bike locks as an incentive to those using their bicycles. Offer them free to students who need one.
   ➢ *Who:* School District and the City of Dassel.
   ➢ *When:* Ongoing.
   ➢ *Cost:* $8 per bike lock.

17. Ask stakeholders to assist with purchasing a bicycle repair station. Place one along the Dassel-Cokato Trail in Breeds Park so it can be easily accessed off the trail and adjacent to Dassel Elementary (across the street).
   ➢ *Who:* The City of Dassel and community stakeholders.
   ➢ *Cost:* $1,200.

18. Continue to host an annual community bicycle ride and 5/1 Mile Run/Walk events during Red Rooster Days.
   ➢ *Who:* The City of Dassel and the Sheriff’s Office.
   ➢ *When:* Annually during Red Rooster Days.
   ➢ *Cost:* Registration fees collected. The Meeker Memorial Clinic also sponsors the events.

19. Examine options for students to “check in” once they arrive to school so that parents have the option of being notified their student arrived to school safely (asked by a couple of parents as part of the SRTS Parent Survey).
   ➢ *Who:* School District.
   ➢ *Cost:* In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).
20. Examine developing a sidewalk snow shoveling assistance program for elderly residents and others who have difficulty shoveling.
   ➢ **Who:** The City of Dassel and community stakeholders.
   ➢ **When:** Ongoing.
   ➢ **Cost:** Volunteers.

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**Goal Three: Engineering**

“Implement infrastructure changes to maximize the safety of walking and biking throughout the community.”

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**Objective D:** To ensure the DASSEL ELEMENTARY School District maintains a safe wake and bike school zone.

   ➢ **Who:** The City of Dassel, Sheriff’s Office and School Staff.
   ➢ **When:** Schedule and make ongoing improvements as necessary.
   ➢ **Cost:** $100,000.

22. Prioritize making sidewalk improvements in the School’s Safety Zone.
   ➢ **Who:** School District and the City of Dassel.
   ➢ **When:** 2017/2018 and ongoing.
   ➢ **Cost:** $50,000.
23. Prioritize making high-visibility crosswalk improvements in the School’s Safety Zone.
   Ensure that crosswalks are painted in the spring and before school starts in the fall.
   
   - **Who:** The City of Dassel, School District and MnDOT.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** $10,000.

24. Install a solar digital radar speed limit sign along County Road 4 to slow traffic coming into the School Safety Zone.
   
   - **Who:** City of Dassel and the Meeker County Highway Department.
   - **When:** As soon as possible or during the CR 4 reconstruction project in 2020.
   - **Cost:** $7,500.

25. Install two reduced speed school zone signs along County Road 4 (one facing north and one facing south). The sign facing south can be combined with implementation step #24 listed above.
   
   - **Who:** City of Dassel and the Meeker County Highway Department.
   - **When:** 2017.
   - **Cost:** $400.

26. Examine restricting traffic to ‘Busses Only’ immediately before and after school in front of Dassel Elementary along William’s Avenue.
   
   - **Who:** City of Dassel.
   - **When:** 2017.
   - **Cost:** $250 plus staff time.
27. Make it a priority to connect the Dassel-Cokato Trail with the Spring Lake Trail, which could occur by simply posting signs and painting ‘share the road’ stencils along a designated on-road route.

- **Who:** City of Dassel and community stakeholders.
- **When:** 2020.
- **Cost:** $5,000.

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**Objective E:** To proactively identify and mitigate pedestrian and bicycle safety issues throughout the City of Dassel.

28. Work with MnDOT and Meeker County to identify and implement traffic calming practices along State and County roads, especially along U.S. Highway 12 and County Road 4.

- **Who:** MnDOT, Meeker County, City of Dassel.
- **When:** Ongoing.
- **Cost:** $25,000.

29. Work with MnDOT, Meeker County and the Sheriff’s Office to examine placing additional high-visibility crosswalks along U.S. Highway 12.

- **Who:** City of Dassel, MnDOT, Meeker County, and the Sheriff’s Office.
- **When:** Ongoing.
- **Cost:** $25,000.
Goal Four: Enforcement

“To provide the necessary monitoring and enforcement vehicle and pedestrian activities to ensure a safe environment.”

Objective F: To ensure that students, parents and citizens understand and follow existing vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle laws.

30. Encourage the City of Dassel and the Sheriff’s Office to adopt a “Zero Tolerance” policy towards vehicles not obeying the law within the School Safety Zone. Also encourage officers and school staff to proactively address unsafe pedestrian and bicycle activities.
   - **Who:** The City of Dassel and the Sheriff’s Office.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff time).

31. Encourage bus drivers, school staff, students, parents, and citizens to report to authorities all unsafe vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle behaviors.
   - **Who:** Sheriff’s Office and community stakeholders.
   - **When:** Ongoing.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff time).

32. Periodically use portable speed limit trailers, especially after school begins in the fall, to remind drivers to keep within the posted speed limits within the School Safety Zone and throughout the community.
   - **Who:** The City of Dassel and the Sheriff’s Office.
   - **When:** Ongoing, but annually target after school starts in the fall.
   - **Cost:** In-kind expenses (staff time and stakeholder’s equipment).
Objective G: To ensure that Dassel’s SRTS Plan is implemented properly.

33. Keep the SRTS Task Force in place to meet semi-annually (or more often as needed) to work on implementing and updating the school’s SRTS Plan.
   ➢ Who: The City of Dassel, School District, and community stakeholders.
   ➢ When: Ongoing.
   ➢ Cost: In-kind expenses (staff time).

34. On a bi-annual basis, conduct classroom student tallies and parent surveys to determine if progress is being made on the number of students walking and biking to school with the SRTS efforts being conducted.
   ➢ Who: School District.
   ➢ When: Ongoing.
   ➢ Cost: In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).

35. Conduct walk audits of the schools on a bi-annual basis.
   ➢ Who: School District, City of Dassel, Meeker County.
   ➢ When: Ongoing.
   ➢ Cost: In-kind expenses (staff time).

36. Review the SRTS Plan annually and revise as needed.
   ➢ Who: School District, City of Dassel, Meeker County.
   ➢ When: Ongoing.
   ➢ Cost: In-kind expenses (printing and staff time).
Map 4A: Dassel SRTS Implementation Plan

- **Existing Sidewalk**
- **New/Updated Sidewalk**
- **Existing Crosswalk**
- **Trail Connection**

**Legend Diagram:**
- **Digital Speed Radar Sign**
- **Portable Busses Only Sign Before/After School**
- **Trail Connecting the Dassel-Cokato and Spring Lake Park Trails**
- **Reduced Speed During School**
- **Safe Railroad Crossing**
- **New/Updated Sidewalks**
- **Existing Pedestrian Activated Crosswalk**
Appendix A:
SRTS Implementation Matrix
## Education Programs Safe Routes to School Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Primary Outcomes</th>
<th>Secondary Outcomes</th>
<th>Resource Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assemblies/ Game Shows</strong></td>
<td>Assemblies grab students’ attention through fun, interactive activities, such as games, skits, or demonstrations. Safe Routes to School assemblies often cover pedestrian and/or bicycle safety, but can also address bicycling skills, the environment, health, and other topics. A game show covering safety questions makes a good format for a smaller group such as a single classroom.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Bus/ Transit; Driving/ Carpool; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Environment; Health</td>
<td>Assembly; Event; Contest/ Competition; Curriculum/ Classroom Activity</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School; Teachers/ Faculty/Staff; Parents; District; Neighbors</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Parent, teacher, or administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bicycle Rodeo</strong></td>
<td>Bicycle Rodeos are events that offer bicycle skills and safety stations for children - and sometimes parents - to visit (e.g., obstacle course, bicycle safety check, helmet fitting, instruction about the rules of the road, etc.). Bicycles rodeos can be held as part of a larger event or on their own, and either during the school day or outside of school. Adult volunteers can administer rodeos, or they may be offered through the local police or fire department.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Family</td>
<td>Assembly; Event; Skills Training/ Hands On Training; Information for Parents</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; Parents</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: PTA/parents, local law enforcement, or bicycling group/enthusiast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bike Mechanic Training</strong></td>
<td>Learning bike repair skills encourages students and families to bike to school and empowers students to take charge of their own transportation. A bicycle mechanic training can be made available to students as a one-time basics lesson or as a multi-session course. This training can be offered after school or on weekends, and can be combined with an earn-a-bike program, bike rodeo, or bicycle safety/skills trainings.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills</td>
<td>Skills Training/ Hands On Training</td>
<td>Middle School; High School</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Vocational Skills</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: PTA or local volunteer/business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Lessons</strong></td>
<td>Safe Routes to School classroom lessons address walking and/or bicycling and other related topics while also meeting state or district curriculum standards. Lessons can be taught as part of many subjects, including math, science, social studies, health, and physical education.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Bus/ Transit; Driving/ Carpool; Safety; Skills; Environment; Health</td>
<td>Curriculum/ Classroom Activity</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School; Teachers/ Faculty/Staff</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Teacher/administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Earn-A-Bike Program</strong></td>
<td>Over a number of sessions, students learn the basics of bike repair and maintenance, bicycle safety, and related topics while refurbishing an abandoned or donated bike. At the end of the program, students earn the bikes they learned to repair.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Environment; Health</td>
<td>Incentive Program; Skills Training/ Hands On Training</td>
<td>Middle School; High School</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Health and Environmental Connections; Vocational Skills</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: PTA or local volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Biking Class</strong></td>
<td>Family Biking Classes are great tools for educating and encouraging families to ride bicycles. Education trainings can cover safety checks, skills instruction, basic bike maintenance, how to carry kids by bicycle, cargo bike demonstrations, bike rodeos, and/or guided bike rides.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Event; Skills Training/ Hands On Training; Information for Parents</td>
<td>Elementary; Parents</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior</td>
<td>Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Parents/PTA or bicycling group/enthusiast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family Biking Guide</strong></td>
<td>This guide is a how-to manual on family biking, including cargo bikes and gear, safety considerations, tips for picking a route, ideas for rides, etc. The guide can be distributed as part of an event or training to interested parents at school.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Information for Parents</td>
<td>Elementary; Parents</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior</td>
<td>Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Parents; PTA or local groups/gov’t. Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; League of American Bicyclists instructors; local business Resources Needed: Time to prepare guide and distribution strategy; platform for posting online or funds for printing copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Idling Reduction Campaign</strong></td>
<td>Car exhaust not only pollutes, it also disproportionately affects the health of exposed children. An anti-idling campaign debunks myths about idling your car and encourages drivers to spare the air by turning off their engines when waiting for student dismissal. The campaign can include street signs, a marketing campaign led by students, and informational materials for parents. Materials may be produced in school, but the campaign will likely take place during pick-up/drop-off or outside of school.</td>
<td>Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Campaign; Information for Parents</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School; Parents; District</td>
<td>Improved Driving Safety Behavior; Health Connections; Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Parents/PTA, local groups/government, or student group Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; public health/local gov’t.; students Resources Needed: Preparation time; informational materials/ signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-School Bicycle Safety Education</strong></td>
<td>Bicycle safety training is most appropriate beginning in or after the third grade. It helps children understand that they have the same responsibility as motorists to obey traffic laws. In-school curriculum often includes three parts: in-class lessons, mock street scenarios, and on-street riding. Various existing curricula are available online from a number of sources at no cost, or schools may choose to develop one on their own.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills</td>
<td>Assembly; Skills Training/Hands On Training; Classroom Activity</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Teacher/administrator Potential Partners: PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; League of American Bicyclists instructors Resources Needed: Curriculum; class time; time for instructor training/preparation, if needed; bicycles, helmets, and safety gear; cones, street signs, and chalk; basic supplies; chaperones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-School Pedestrian Safety Education</strong></td>
<td>Pedestrian safety education aims to ensure that every child understands basic traffic laws and safety rules. It teaches students basic traffic safety, sign identification, and decision-making tools. Training is typically recommended for first- and second-graders and teaches lessons such as &quot;look left, right, and left again&quot;. Curriculum often includes three parts: in-class lessons, mock street scenarios, and on-street practice. Various existing curricula are available online at no cost, or schools may choose to develop one on their own.</td>
<td>Walking; Safety; Skills</td>
<td>Assembly; Skills Training/Hands On Training; Curriculum/Classroom Activity</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Walking; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Teacher/administrator Potential Partners: PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; older students Resources Needed: Curriculum; class time; time for instructor training/preparation, if needed; mock street and street signs; basic supplies; one or more adult chaperones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mock City</strong></td>
<td>A mock city provides a safe environment in which students can learn pedestrian, bicycle, or general traffic safety. A course is built or set up and students walk, bike, or &quot;drive&quot; through to learn appropriate behaviors in various street situations. A mock city requires a lot of work or a partnership with an organization that already has the equipment. This program can take place in or out of school, and is a memorable experience for students.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Skills</td>
<td>Assembly; Event; Skills Training/Hands On Training</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Walking; Bicycling; Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Driving Safety Behavior</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Local law enforcement Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; public health/local gov’t.; local groups/advocates/volunteers; older students Resources Needed: Mock city and curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Since parents are usually the ones deciding whether their children walk or bike to school, a workshop designed for them can provide the tools, resources, and support needed to begin walking or biking for transportation. Topics could include starting a walking school bus, carpool matching, launching a safety campaign, how to be a responsible driver, or organizing an event, such as Walk and Bike to School Day.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Skills</td>
<td>Event; Skills Training/Hands On Training; Information for Parents</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School; Parents</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Parents/PTA or local groups/gov’t. Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; League of American Bicyclists instructors Resources Needed: Presentation/agenda; instructor; materials; handouts; time for preparation and scheduling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walk and Bike to School Route Map</strong></td>
<td>Route maps show signs, signals, crosswalks, sidewalks, paths, crossing guard locations, and hazardous locations around a school. They identify the best way to walk or bike to school. Liability concerns are sometimes cited as reasons not to publish maps, while no route will be completely free of safety concerns, a well-defined route should provide the greatest physical separation between students and traffic, expose students to the lowest traffic speeds, and use the fewest and safest crossings.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Family</td>
<td>Information for Parents</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School; Parents</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use, and Carpooling</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Public health/local government Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; local groups/advocates/volunteers; local law enforcement Resources Needed: Time and technology to prepare map; funds for printing; platform for posting online; approval to distribute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Encouragement Programs Safe Routes to School Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Topics</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After-School Club</td>
<td>An after-school club can take many forms and address many different themes, including bike repair, sport cycling, environmental issues (green teams), community/civic engagement, etc.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Safety; Skills; Environment; Health</td>
<td>Skills Training; Hands On Training; Campaign</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Teacher/parent, local groups/advocates/volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Train</td>
<td>A Bike Train is very similar to a Walking School Bus: groups of students accompanied by one or more adults bicycle together on a pre-planned route to school. Routes can originate from a particular neighborhood or, in order to include children who live too far to bicycle the whole way, begin from a park, parking lot, or other meeting place. Bike trains help address parents' safety concerns while providing a chance for students and their families to socialize and be active.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Event; School Journey; Pick-up and Drop-off</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; Parents</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: PTA/parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition/ Challenge</td>
<td>Competitions and contests reward students by tracking the number of times they walk, bike, carpool or take transit to school. Contests can be individual, classroom competitions, school wide, or between schools. Students and classrooms can compete for prizes and bragging rights. Inexpensive incentives - such as shoelaces, stickers, bike helmets, or class parties - can be used as rewards for participation. Examples include a Golden Sneaker Award classroom competition or a Walk and Bike to School Day challenge. See also: Trip/Mileage Tracking Program</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Bus/ Transit; Driving/ Carpool; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Event; Contest/ Competition</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; High School</td>
<td>Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Faculty/staff or PTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Bike Ride</td>
<td>A family bike ride will generally take place in the evening or on a weekend, and is designed to give students and their family members an opportunity for safely giving bicycling a try and socializing with other families. Rides often have themes, always have a pre-planned route and designated route leader, and offer safety checks and basic skills reinforcement.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School; Parents</td>
<td>Increased Bicycling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior</td>
<td>Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: Parent or local group/volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Walk and Bike to School Day</td>
<td>Walk and Bike to School Day is an international event that attracts millions of participants in over 30 countries in October. The event encourages students and their families to try walking or bicycling to school. Parents and other adults accompany students, and staging areas can be designated along the route to school where groups can gather and walk or bike together. These events are often promoted through press releases, backpack/ folder/electronic mail, newsletter articles, and posters. Students can earn incentives for participating or there is a celebration at school following the morning event.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Event; School Journey; Pick-up and Drop-off</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School</td>
<td>Increased Walking and Bicycling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: PTA/parents or local groups/ volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Walk and Bike to School Days</td>
<td>Ongoing walk and bike to school days are organized events encouraging students to walk or bicycle to school. These events can be held monthly, weekly, or even on an ongoing basis, depending on organization capacity, the level of support, and school interest. Like Walk and Bike to School Day, incentives or celebrations recognize students' efforts. See International Walk and Bike to School Day for more information.</td>
<td>Bicycling; Walking; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family</td>
<td>Event; School Journey; Pick-up and Drop-off</td>
<td>Elementary; Middle School</td>
<td>Increased Walking and Bicycling; Youth Empowerment</td>
<td>Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections</td>
<td>Potential Lead/Champion: PTA/parents or local groups/ volunteers</td>
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### Encouragement Programs Safe Routes to School Matrix

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<th>Program Name</th>
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| Park and Walk                 | This program is designed to encourage families to park several blocks from school and walk the rest of the way to school. Not all students are able to walk or bike the whole distance to school; they may live too far away or their route may include hazardous traffic situations. This program allows students who are unable to walk or bike to school a chance to participate in Safe Routes to School programs. It also helps reduce traffic congestion at the school. | Walking; Bus; Transit; Driving; Carpool; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family | Event; School Journey/ Pick-up and Drop-off | Elementary; Middle School; Parents | Improved Walking; Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections | Increased Walking; Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections | Potential Lead/Champion: PTA/parents  
Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; local businesses/celebrities  
Resources Needed: Coordination/recruitment time; promotional materials, such as flyers/posters; supplies/materials, if needed |
| Poster, T-Shirt, or Video Contest | These types of activities are great for engaging middle and high school students in Safe Routes to School efforts. Students can get creative for a cause by designing and producing posters, t-shirts, videos, or other materials that communicate about active transportation. A contest like this can be combined with any type of campaign, like a school safety campaign or anti-idling campaign. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus; Transit; Driving; Carpool; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Environment; Health | Contest/ Competition; Campaign; Information for Parents | Elementary; Middle School; High School | Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment | Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections; Youth Empowerment | Potential Lead/Champion: Teacher/parent  
Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local law enforcement; local business; students  
Resources Needed: Materials/equipment as needed; promotional materials; oversight time; class time (if desired); funds for production/printing |
| Trip/ Mileage Tracking Program | A trip or mileage tracking program can be implemented as an opt-in club, a classroom activity, or a collaborative school-wide event. Students track trips or mileage made by walking, bicycling, transit, and/or carpools with some type of goal or culminating celebration or reward. Students can work towards a certain milestone to earn a prize or raffle entry, or they can track their individual or group progress as miles across their town, the state of Minnesota, or the United States. Example programs include Pollution Punchcards or Walk Across America. See also: Competition/Challenge. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus; Transit; Driving/Carpool; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family | Event; Incentive Program | Elementary; Middle School; High School | Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Youth Empowerment | Health and Environmental Connections | Potential Lead/Champion: Faculty/staff or PTA  
Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; local groups/advocates/volunteers; older students; local business  
Resources Needed: Coordination time; promotional materials, such as flyers/posters; program materials, such as punchcards or classroom posters for tracking; rewards or prizes |
| Walk/Bike Field Trip          | A field trip made by foot or by bicycle gives students a supportive environment in which to practice their pedestrian safety or bicycling skills and showcases the many benefits of walking and bicycling for transportation, including health and physical activity, pollution reduction, and cost savings. The destination of the field trip may vary, or the field trip could be the ride itself. | Bicycling; Safety; Skills; Environment; Health | Event | Elementary; Middle School; Teachers/ Faculty/Staff; Parents | Increased Bicycling; Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment | Health and Environmental Connections | Potential Lead/Champion: Teacher/parent  
Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local groups/advocates/volunteers  
Resources Needed: Coordination time; bicycles, helmets, and safety gear; permission slips; basic repair tools; adult chaperones |
| Walking School Bus            | A Walking School Bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. Parents can take turns leading the bus, which follows the same route every time and picks up children from their homes or designated bus stops at designated times. Ideally, buses run every day or on a regular schedule so families can count on it, but they often begin as a one-time pilot event. A Walking School Bus can be as informal as a few parents alternating to walk their children to school, but often it is a well-organized, PTA-led effort to encourage walking to school. | Walking; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Skills; Incentives; Environment; Health; Family | Event; School Journey/ Pick-up and Drop-off | Elementary; Middle School; Parents | Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections | Increased Walking; Driving Safety Behavior; Health and Environmental Connections | Potential Lead/Champion: PTA/parents  
Potential Partners: Teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; school district; public health/local gov’t.; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; local businesses/celebrities  
Resources Needed: Coordination/recruitment time; promotional materials, such as flyers/posters; supplies/materials, if needed |
### Enforcement Programs Safe Routes to School Matrix

| Program Name                  | Description                                                                 | Topics                                                                 | Format                                                                 | Target Audience          | Primary Outcomes                                 | Secondary Outcomes                          | Resource Notes                                                                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        |                                                                                  |
| Automated Enforcement        | Some types of enforcement do not require the presence of a law enforcement officer and are automated. Photo detection, radar trailers, or speed feedback signs are examples of automated enforcement. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Family       | Campaign; Information for Parents                                      | Elementary; Middle School; High School; Parents; Neighbors | Improved Driving Safety Behavior           | Increased Walking and Bicycling                                                   | Potential Lead/Champion: Local law enforcement                                |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; public health/local gov’t; PTA/parents; local groups/advocates/volunteers |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Resources Needed: Funding for police overtime (not always required, but can be helpful); equipment; promotional/educational materials (if desired) |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        |                                                                                  |
| Crossing Guards              | Crossing guards are trained adults, paid or volunteer, who are legally empowered to stop traffic to assist students with crossing the street. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety              | Skills Training/Hands On Training; School Journey/Pick-up and Drop-off | Elementary; Middle School; Parents; Neighbors                 | Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Improved Driving Safety Behavior | Increased Walking and Bicycling                                                   | Potential Lead/Champion: School district, school administration, local law enforcement, or PTA |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; public health/local gov’t; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Resources Needed: Training materials; funding to pay crossing guards; safety vests and stop signs |
| Drop-off Student Valet Program| In a valet program, students, teachers, or volunteers are trained to assist with drop-off and pick-up procedures to expedite and standardize the process. This allows students to get in and out of cars safely and quickly, discouraging parents from unsafe behaviors and reducing hazards for students arriving or leaving school. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety              | Skills Training/Hands On Training; School Journey/Pick-up and Drop-off | Elementary; Middle School; Parents                                  | Improved Driving Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment       | Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Environmental Connections       | Potential Lead/Champion: School district, school administration, or PTA     |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; public health/local gov’t; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; older students |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Resources Needed: Training materials; supervision/oversight; safety vests          |
| Law Enforcement               | Enforcement tools are aimed at ensuring compliance with traffic and parking laws in school zones. Enforcement activities help to reduce common poor driving behavior, such as speeding, failing to yield to pedestrians, turning illegally, parking illegally, and other violations. Law enforcement actions include School Zone Speeding Enforcement and Crosswalk Stings. Other enforcement actions can be led by the school administration, such as parking lot citations. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety              | Campaign; Information for Parents                                      | Elementary; Middle School; High School; Parents; Neighbors            | Improved Driving Safety Behavior           | Increased Walking and Bicycling                                                   | Potential Lead/Champion: Local law enforcement, school district, or administration |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; public health/local gov’t; local law enforcement; PTA/parents; local groups/advocates/volunteers; local businesses |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Resources Needed: Funding for police overtime (not always required, but can be helpful); equipment; promotional/educational materials (if desired) |
| School Safety Campaign        | A safety campaign is an effective way to build awareness among students walking and biking to school and to encourage safe driving behavior among parents and passersby. A School Traffic Safety Campaign can use media at or near schools – such as posters, business window stickers, yard signs, and/or street banners - to remind drivers to slow down and use caution in school zones. This type of campaign can also address other specific hazards or behaviors, such as walking or bicycling to school, school bus safety, and/or parent drop-off and pick-up behavior. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety; Safety; Family | Campaign; Information for Parents                                      | Elementary; Middle School; High School; Parents; Neighbors            | Improved Walking/Bicycling and Driving Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment       | Increased Walking, Bicycling, Transit Use and Carpooling; Health and Environmental Connections | Potential Lead/Champion: School administration or PTA |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; public health/local gov’t; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; students; local businesses |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Resources Needed: Promotional materials and collateral; advertising (if desired); time to supervise/oversight student efforts |
| School Safety Patrols         | School safety patrols are trained student volunteers responsible for enforcing drop-off and pick-up procedures and assisting with street crossing. They do not stop vehicular traffic, but rather look for openings and then direct students to cross. Student safety patrols increase safety for students and traffic flow efficiency for parents. | Bicycling; Walking; Bus/Transit; Driving/Carpool; Safety              | Skills Training/Hands On Training; School Journey/Pick-up and Drop-off | Elementary; Middle School                                               | Improved Walking/Bicycling Safety Behavior; Improved Driving Safety Behavior; Youth Empowerment | Increased Walking and Bicycling; Environmental Connections                   | Potential Lead/Champion: School district, school administration, or PTA     |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Potential Partners: School district; teachers/administrators/staff; PTA/parents; public health/local gov’t; local law enforcement; local groups/advocates/volunteers; older students |
|                              |                                                                             |                                                                      |                                                                       |                          |                                                        |                                        | Resources Needed: Training materials; supervision/oversight; safety vests          |
Appendix B: Maps
Appendix C:
SRTS Walk Audit
**Walkability Project**

Miranda Chitwood, Jonathan Hansen, Briana Hince, Cassandra Linz, Jacob Lowe, Emily Miller, Anna Palm, Lindsey Schoenecker, & Kalie Wieber.

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**What makes a walkable neighborhood?**

The Meeker County Public Health Community Health Representative requested a walkability study completed for assessment of child safety in routes to school and on school grounds. This neighborhood surrounding the elementary school is where residents can safely walk to and from the town of Dassel’s amenities with a focus on children going to Dassel Elementary School. This survey provides the opportunity to assess strengths of the area surrounding the school.

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**Strengths**

The area surrounding the elementary school presented with some strengths. The crosswalks are well defined, there is school patrol with an adult monitor at 1st Street North and Horace Avenue West in the morning as well as at Guy Street and Williams Street in the afternoon. The crossing guards were well marked wearing a safety vest and there were orange cones in place on the sidewalk.

Another strength noted near Dassel Elementary is that the buses pull right up to the building to drop-off and pickup students. At the drop-off/pickup location, there is a yellow line that the children must wait behind keeping them at a safe distance away from traffic.

For the children living across Highway 12, transportation is offered to decrease accidents from children attempting to cross the highway. The children that receive rides to and from school have a designated spot for parent dropoff/pickup keeping the children from having to cross the street to school.

Students were not visualized entering or loitering around establishments such as a grocery store, post office, or café.

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**Areas for Improvement**

Children began arriving at school between 7:15-7:20 AM. These children are running unsupervised outside the school. In many cases, children were playing at the park and loitering around the school and streets prior to school hours.
There are no “reduce speed during school hours” signs posted around the school. Several cars were spotted driving carelessly through William Avenue and First Street N. Also, there are no wheelchair access areas directly in front of the school entrance. The only wheelchair access is located on the East and West side of the building. There does not appear to be a safe route of entrance/exit for people requiring use of a wheelchair.

Approximately 25 parents or guardians picked up children from school. Approximately 15-20 children road bikes to school and 30 walked to school. Observations also included older students getting on the school bus to travel home and then getting off the bus and walking into the surrounding neighborhood.

Another observation noted were 11 children crossing Highway 12 at the end of the school day.

**Recommendations**

Due to high volume of traffic on First Street N. and Williams Avenue E., a four-way stop should be considered. Cars heading east do not stop for pedestrians. Children waiting to cross the street must wait until cars are absent. Implementing a four-way stop would allow the children to cross the street safely.

There are no “Reduce speed during school hours” flashing signs near or around the circumference of the school. Implementing “reduce speed” signs would reduce the speed of traffic, allowing the upmost safety for children walking or biking to and from school.

The only school patrol prior to school is located on First Street N. and Horace Avenue W. A large portion of traffic crosses through First Street N. and William Avenue E. Implementing more student patrols at higher traffic areas would provide safer traveling routes.

Many students walk in the street on First Street N. because there are no sidewalks available along that street. Implementing a bike path or side walk would reduce the risk of injury and increase the safety for students.

Children began to arrive at school between 7:15-7:20 in the morning. These children were loitering in the streets without supervision. Enforcing arrival at 7:45a.m., or having a before school program for children that must arrive early would provide adequate supervision.
Appendix D:
SRTS Adoption Resolution
CITY OF DASSEL

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES GRANT APPLICATION
DASSEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Dassel supports the Transportation Alternatives grant application made to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for the Dassel Elementary School Pedestrian Improvement Project. The application is to construct paved trails, concrete sidewalks and safety improvements for the City of Dassel and the Dassel Elementary School. The City is committed to the local match requirements and hereby agrees to assume full responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the facilities constructed as part of the project for their useful life.

Motion by Nelson, seconded by Bjork, the resolution was adopted and unanimously carried, this 19th day of December, 2016.

ATTEST:

Jeffrey Putnam
Mayor

Terri Boese
City Clerk/Treasurer

I, Terri Boese, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted, and on file in my office, by the Dassel City Council at the meeting held on December 19, 2016.

Terri Boese, City Clerk/Treasurer