

Safe Routes to School

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

LA CRESCENT, MINNESOTA

La Crescent-Hokah Elementary
La Crescent-Hokah Secondary
La Crescent Montessori and STEM School
Crucifixion School



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

INTRODUCTION + CONTEXT 4

The Vision.....	7
La Crescent Schools in Context.....	8
Community Engagement.....	10

02

PROGRAMS 12

Introduction to Programs.....	13
Recommended Programs.....	14

03

INFRASTRUCTURE..... 20

Introduction to Infrastructure.....	21
Existing Issues and Conflicts.....	22
La Crescent Hokah Elementary Infrastructure Recommendations.....	28
La Crescent Hokah Secondary/ Montessori & STEM School Infrastructure Recommendations.....	30
Crucifixion Elementary Infrastructure Recommendations.....	32

04

HOW TO GET INVOLVED..... 34

Using this Plan.....	35
Final Thoughts.....	39

A

APPENDICES..... 41

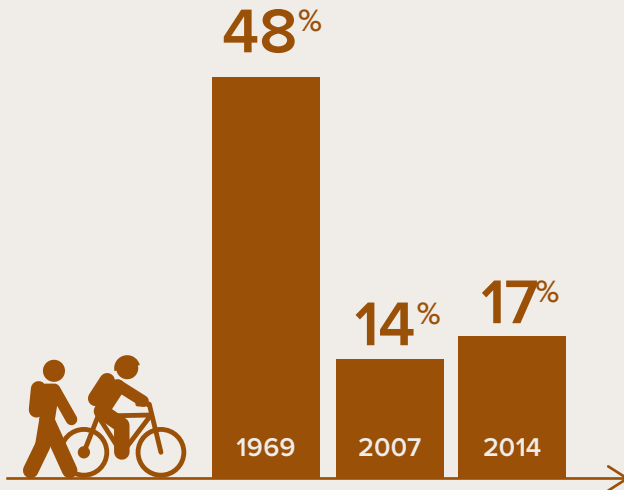
Appendix A. For More Information.....	43
Appendix B. SRTS Facts for School Communication.....	44
Appendix C. Summary of Planning Process.....	47
Appendix D. Existing Conditions.....	49
Appendix E. Student Residences.....	52
Appendix F. Parent/ Caregiver Survey.....	56
Appendix G. Student Hand Tally.....	120
App. H. Environment & Policy Assessment.....	136
Appendix I. Engagement Summary.....	138
Appendix J. Infrastructure Toolbox.....	142
Appendix K. Bike Parking for Schools.....	150
Appendix L. Maintenance Planning.....	152
Appendix M. Equity in SRTS Planning.....	153



01

INTRODUCTION + CONTEXT

Why Safe Routes to School?



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



MOST KIDS ARE NOT GETTING ENOUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



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

KIDS WHO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL:



Arrive alert and able to focus on school



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



Are more likely to be a healthy body weight



Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance*



Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety

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



Fewer students walking & biking to school

More parents driving children to school

Rising concern about safety of walking & biking

Increased traffic at and around school

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

THE SIX E'S

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs use a variety of strategies to make it easy, fun, and safe for children to walk and bike to school. These strategies are often called the "Six E's."

EQUITY

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



EDUCATION

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



ENFORCEMENT

School based strategies to improve driver behavior near schools and ensure safe roads for all users.



ENCOURAGEMENT

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



EVALUATION

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



ENGINEERING

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

NAVIGATING THIS PLAN

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



PROGRAMS

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



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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



INFRASTRUCTURE

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



APPENDICES

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



The Vision

Walking and biking to school is safe, comfortable, and fun for all students in La Crescent.

In the summer of 2019, the City of La Crescent was awarded a Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning assistance grant to hold a planning workshop and create a plan for four schools in La Crescent. La Crescent-Hokah Elementary and La Crescent-Hokah Secondary are part of La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools (ISD 300). In addition to these two public schools, recommendations can be found in this plan for La Crescent Montessori and STEM School and Crucifixion Catholic School.

La Crescent has a history of supporting walking and biking in their community, and more specifically, SRTS initiatives. In 2007, the City received an Active Living Grant that helped the community fund several programs and events to support SRTS. The funding allowed a staff person to focus some of their capacity on these initiatives — something that has shown to be critical in a sustainable SRTS program. That funding eventually stopped and some of the momentum built in previous years did, too. However, the strong history of SRTS in La Crescent led local city and partner agency staff to pursue the grant that led to the recommendations in this plan.

In the planning assistance grant application, the City discussed a student wellness plan at ISD 300 that supports physical activity as part of a balanced and healthy lifestyle. Along with the district wellness plan, the City recently completed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that identifies a network of connected bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The City has already started to implement this plan and is planning to continue expanding this network.

The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe partners with ISD 300 Community Education to teach community members how to maintain their bicycle, and offers Learn to Ride Without Training Wheels classes for adults and students. This community resource prioritizes children and families who otherwise can not afford the services offered.

The La Crescent SRTS Team (made up of community members, local agency staff, and advocates) envisions a plan and a broader SRTS program that considers the needs of all La Crescent students and families — not just those that attend one of the two ISD 300 schools. Indeed, the Montessori and STEM School and Crucifixion bring another network of passionate parents and caregivers to this city-wide effort.

La Crescent's vision for a sustainable SRTS plan calls for both programmatic and engineering improvements — one that uses all 6 E's. This will require a commitment by a broad group of stakeholders. This planning process has brought together engineers, planners, public health staff from the City, State, and Houston County, as well as school and district staff to identify issues, opportunities, and solutions to make walking and biking for all students safe and comfortable. The local planning team also turned to the community for input, too. A number of community and family events gave people in La Crescent the opportunity to share their ideas about walking and biking to school. Their input will be discussed throughout this document.

This plan was made possible with support from MnDOT and developed in coordination with the City of La Crescent, Houston County, and the four schools. It is the product of meetings and visits with staff, community members, and youth in La Crescent.

The following pages identify program and infrastructure recommendations to support a safe and comfortable environment for people walking and biking to schools in La Crescent. All recommendations are intended to be on an approximate five-year timeline. While not all of these recommendations can be implemented immediately, it is important to achieve shorter-term successes while laying the groundwork for progress toward some of the larger and more complex projects.

La Crescent Schools in Context

The four La Crescent schools are located in Houston County in far southeastern Minnesota on the border with Wisconsin, and roughly 20 miles north of the Iowa border. Directly across the Mississippi River from La Crescent is the La Crosse, Wisconsin urban area, where many La Crescent residents work. Most students attending one of the two La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools (ISD 300) live in La Crescent, with a population roughly 5,000. Other students commute from nearby Hokah (population 600, six miles southwest), Neither Crucifixion School nor La Crescent Montessori and STEM School have district boundaries, which allows students to enroll freely, regardless of location. However, most students attending these two schools live in La Crescent or the neighboring towns of Hokah and Brownsville. Interstate 90 runs east and west two miles north of downtown La Crescent. It connects southern Minnesota with Wisconsin and beyond. State Highway 16 and U.S. Highways 61 and 14 run through town and nearby all four schools. The map below provides additional context along with the description to the right.





LA CRESCENT-HOKAH ELEMENTARY

La Crescent-Hokah Elementary serves over 400 students in grades K-4. The school is located just west of U.S. Highways 61 and 14 and south west of downtown La Crescent. The school shares grounds with two ball fields and is surrounded by a largely single family residential neighborhood. An addition and site redesign is planned for the summer of 2020, which will change the family drop off and pick up procedure and other school circulation patterns. Future commercial development is likely for the intersection of S 3rd St and S Oak St, which may change traffic patterns in the area. It will be important to consider the needs of people walking and biking as development and growth in the area occurs.



LA CRESCENT-HOKAH SECONDARY

La Crescent-Hokah Secondary houses both middle school (grades 5-8) and high school (9-12) students. The campus is home to over 830 students and is located on the south end of La Crescent. The majority of residences are north of the campus, which includes baseball and softball fields, a track, and the Lancer football stadium. Lancer Blvd, 14th St, and 11th St are the main connections to Oak St and Highway 16, which further connect students coming from and going to the north of town.



LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI AND STEM SCHOOL

The Montessori and STEM School is focused on community service, leadership, and environmental education using a Montessori method of instruction and curriculum. The charter school was founded in 1999 and has a student enrollment of 88 in grades K-12. It is located on Oak St on the south end of La Crescent, just up the hill from Highway 16. The school shares a city block with various businesses and facilities roughly one-quarter mile east of the Secondary.



CRUCIFIXION SCHOOL

Crucifixion School lies a few blocks north of the Elementary and is home to 130 students in grades PreK-6. It is across S 2nd St from the Church of the Crucifixion and just one block west of downtown La Crescent. The school is surrounded by mostly single family residences and city service facilities.



Community Engagement

Many people helped develop the recommendations found in this plan. Besides stakeholders listed in the acknowledgments section above, project staff engaged the local community through a variety of tools described in the table below. This information came from people who know the issues faced better than anyone else — those who walk and bike in La Crescent and Houston County.

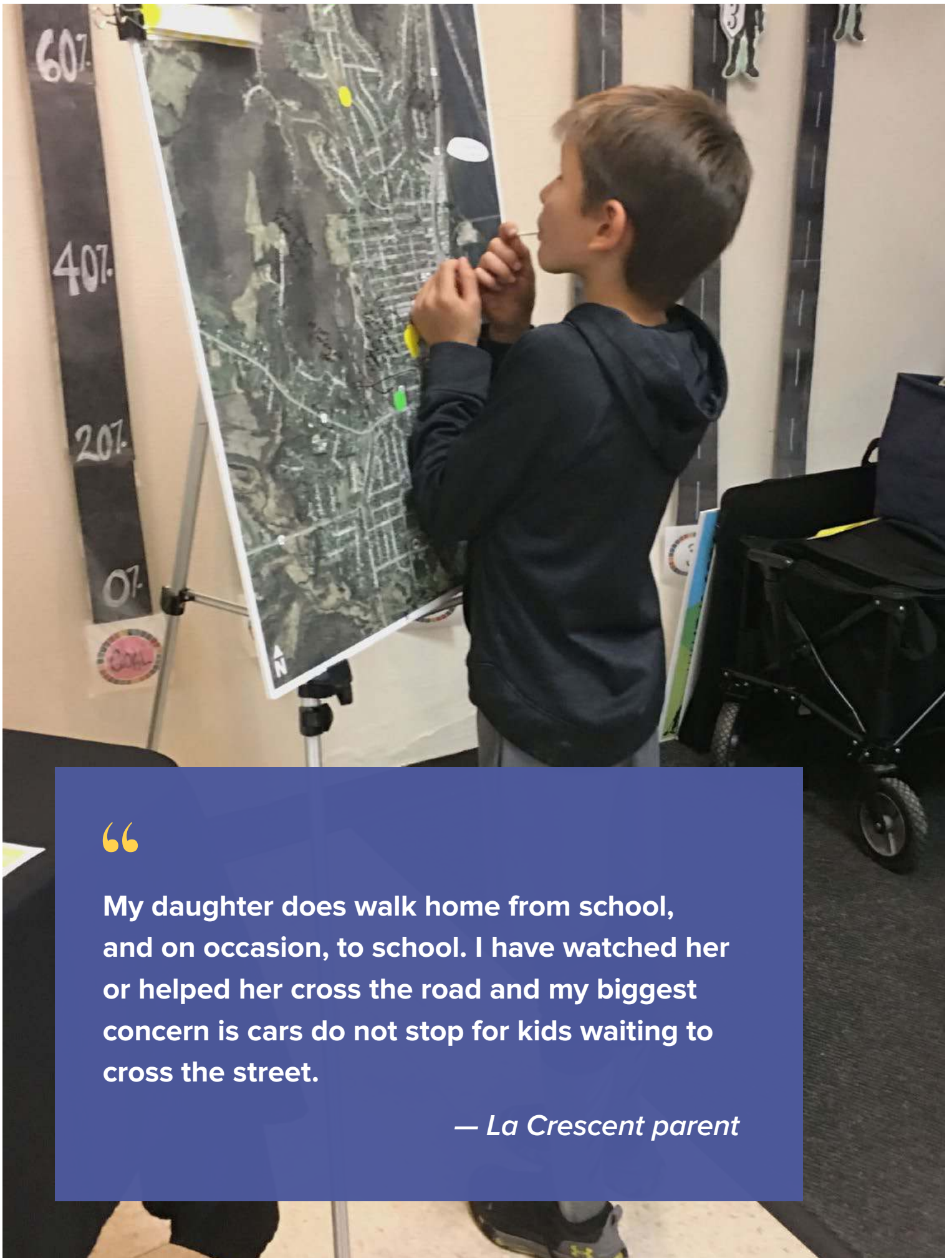
For more information related to engagement results and early data collection including the School Zone Hazard Observation Assessment and Student Travel Tally, see the Appendix section that accompanies this document.

ENGAGEMENT TOOL	GROUP ENGAGED; PROJECT TIMING	FEEDBACK GATHERED
<p>Parent Survey</p> <p>An online survey sent to families that asks parents and caregivers how they feel about their child walking and biking to school.</p>	<p>Parents and caregivers of students</p> <p>Fall 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike to school day and walking school bus are popular amongst families • Fear of student drivers being reckless or not watching for people walking • Better crossings are needed at the Secondary School along Lancer Blvd and 11th St • There is a desire for more sidewalks in the City
<p>Administration Survey</p> <p>An online survey sent to principals and administrators that asks about school and district policies or practices that support walking and biking to school. It also asks about the physical and built environment surrounding school.</p>	<p>School principals and administrators</p> <p>Fall 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school policy to promote walking and biking exists at the Montessori and STEM School • Policies do not exist at the Elementary School that promote walking and biking to school • The Elementary School does not formally partner with law enforcement, but the Elementary places a staff member at the crossing of 3rd St and Oak St during arrival and dismissal. This adult crossing guard has collected data on walkers and bikers at this intersection
<p>Pop up engagement tabling</p> <p>In-person events held at schools or community events where project staff talk with families about ways to improve comfort while walking and biking to school.</p>	<p>Students, parents, caregivers, families</p> <p>Fall 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other destinations in town include the Aquatic Center/Pool and Old Hickory Park • Walking and biking on and across Elm St and 3rd St can be a challenge • Driver yielding compliance is an issue near schools and in the community • Even with the Elm St bike lane, students still feel unsafe because of driver speeds and separation from traffic
<p>Student conversations</p> <p>In person conversations with students about their experiences walking and biking in the community.</p>	<p>La Crescent students</p> <p>Fall 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students driving, biking, and walking use the Oak St corridor to connect to destinations in La Crescent • Students informally participate in SRTS programs like walking school buses and bike trains by traveling together in groups

EQUITY IN SRTS

Equity in SRTS means that every student is able to safely, comfortably, and conveniently walk and bike to school, regardless of race, cultural identity, tribal affiliation, immigrant or refugee status, language, gender or sexual identity, income, religion, and whether or not a student receives special education, has a physical or mental disability, or is homeless or highly mobile.

An equity approach requires working with local partners to tailor programs and allocate resources to meet the unique needs of the community.



“

My daughter does walk home from school, and on occasion, to school. I have watched her or helped her cross the road and my biggest concern is cars do not stop for kids waiting to cross the street.

— La Crescent parent





Introduction to Programs

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

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

The La Crescent community has a rich history of supporting a healthy and active student population. Schools have participated in state and national Walk and Bike to School Days and Walk! Bike! Fun! curriculum delivery for seventh and eighth grade ISD 300 students. The District also has a bike fleet available at the Secondary school for Explore the Driftless field trips and other bike rides around town. The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe provides classes to children and adults and organizes group rides. Law enforcement partners with schools and the City to identify locations and deploy a mobile speed feedback trailer. City police and County Sheriff have also been involved with bike safety training videos in the past. The elementary school has stationed an adult staff member at the corner of S 3rd St and Oak St to help students cross this busy roadway. The staff person has collected data on the number of students using that crossing on a daily basis.

It is important that the events and activities listed above are continued! The momentum that has been built from these existing programs will allow future programming and SRTS efforts to be successful.

When planning and implementing SRTS programs, it is important to design events and activities that are inclusive of students of all backgrounds and abilities. Language and cultural barriers, race, physical abilities, personal safety concerns, and infrastructure barriers can all create potential obstacles to participation. Creative outreach, low-cost solutions, and flexible implementation can help overcome obstacles and enable more students and families to participate. See Appendix M.

Recommended Programs

To increase the number of students walking and biking to school, the following programs are recommended for the four schools in La Crescent. In order for a program to be successful and sustainable, a network of support within and outside school is necessary. The programs listed below were recommended after conversations with school and district staff, parents, students, community members, and city and county staff. The team discussed existing resources at schools, in the district, and within the community that might support programs to ensure they succeed. The following programs are recommended:

- Walk and Bike to School Days
- Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum
- Remote Drop / Park & Walk
- School Communication
- Crossing Guards
- Local / Regional SRTS Coordinator
- Bike Drive / Swap
- Traffic Safety Campaign
- Walking Route Maps
- Walking School Bus
- Bike Mechanic Training
- Traffic Garden

On the following pages, additional information is provided for programs listed above - a brief description, a suggestion for who should lead the program, a suggested timeline, the schools within La Crescent that the program would be best for, and rationale to support its recommendation.



WALK/BIKE TO SCHOOL DAYS

National Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day attracts millions of students and families to try walking and biking to school every October and May. In addition, Minnesota celebrates Winter Walk to School Day in February. Additional education, encouragement, and enforcement programming can be used to promote the event, increase awareness, and expand participation. Walk/bike to school days can also take place more frequently (e.g., Walking Wednesdays) if there's interest and capacity.

Program lead/partners: Elementary School PTO and other school leaders, community partners like the Rotary Club

Timeline: Immediately

Why we recommend it: Walk/Bike to School Days are already taking place in La Crescent. Consider expanding these events to every fall, winter, and spring (to match events held statewide). Additional programs discussed below can also be piloted alongside Walk/Bike to School Days. Students can be engaged in promotional activities leading up to events.



WALK! BIKE! FUN!

Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum is a two-part curriculum designed specifically for Minnesota's schools. It is structured to meet Minnesota education standards and is an important part of the Safe Routes to School Program in Minnesota. Walk! Bike! Fun! helps children ages five to thirteen learn traffic rules and regulations, the potential hazards to traveling, and handling skills needed to bike and walk effectively, appropriately and safely through their community.

Program lead/partners: ISD 300, school leadership at Montessori & STEM School and Crucifixion Elementary

Timeline: Immediately

Why we recommend it: Walk! Bike! Fun! is already being taught to seventh and eighth graders in ISD 300 and a bike fleet is available for use in the District. The program could be expanded to physical education classes at the Elementary School and at the Montessori & STEM School and Crucifixion. Although a formal curriculum training for staff is encouraged, it is not required. ISD 300 staff who have completed the training could share resources and lessons learned with other staff at the District and Montessori and STEM and Crucifixion. Consider speaking and coordinating with neighboring communities and school districts to organize and host a WBF! training. The La Crescent Community Bike Shoppe could be a source for bicycle loans for training or group rides following completion of the curriculum by students. Older students interested in leading and supporting the programs could complete the Walk! Bike! Fun! ambassador training and receive People Friendly Driver training through drivers education.



REMOTE DROP / PARK & WALK

During a remote drop-off or park and walk, bus drivers and caregivers drop students at a designated off-campus location and students walk the rest of the way to school. Remote drop-off events can help reduce drop-off congestion on campus and provide students who live further from school with an opportunity to walk to school.

Program lead/partners: ISD 300, school leadership and transportation office at Montessori & STEM School and Crucifixion Elementary

Timeline: Immediately

Why we recommend it: This program was identified during the Rapid Planning Workshop. A Remote Drop / Park & Walk program would allow students who live outside of La Crescent to walk to school. Potential drop sites include the Aquatic Center & Swimming Pool, the Ice Arena, and Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Communication could come as a paper or electronic newsletter or school social media blast describing safe transportation practices in and around school, making sure to elevate walking and biking as an option. Inform parents of safe crossings and how to dress appropriately for the weather. Information could describe where parking for bikes is located at each school as well as other resources on site. The communication could also highlight SRTS news and efforts to date and advertise any upcoming events related to walking and biking.

Program lead/partners: ISD 300, school leadership at Montessori & STEM School and Crucifixion Elementary

Timeline: Immediately

Why we recommend it: Keep the momentum from the planning process going with ongoing communication and promotion of the completed plan. Schools in La Crescent already communicate with families electronically; adding success stories and helpful tips to these existing channels is a great way to continue talking and thinking about SRTS in the community. It will be important to communicate the importance of safe driving near school as site changes to the Elementary School begin. Focus on communication in the fall, where students and families are “starting fresh”. Habits are more likely to form following this “fresh start” behavior change principle.



PROGRAMS

FURTHER READING

For a complete list of all potential programs and descriptions, see <http://mndotsrts.altaprojects.net/>

Crossing Guard Info 2019-2020

Date	AM		PM		Date	AM		PM	
	S	C	S	C		S	C	S	C
9/13/19	5	3	13	5	9/13/19	3	0	5	2
W	1	3	7	4	W	4	0	4	2
Th	2	2	8	1	Th	5	1	9	0
F	7	4	13	3	F	2	1	3	0
9/19/19	5	4	8	2	9/19/19	6	1	6	0
Tu	2	1	8	5	Tu	3	0	6	1
W	2	1	4	7	W	7	0	4	2
Th	3	2	4	2	Th				
F	5	4	10	3	F				
9/26/19	1	5	11	2	9/26/19	0	0	13	3
Tu	6	7	7	1	Tu	3	0	7	0
W	5	2	1	0	W	5	0	7	0
Th	0	0	7	1	Th	N/A		9	3
F	5	5	8	3	F	6	1	8	0
9/30/19	4	3	13	5	M	3	1	7	0
Tu	4	4	7	1	Tu	3	0	6	0
W	7	1	6	0	W	3	0	2	0



CROSSING GUARDS

Crossing guards are trained adults, paid or volunteer, who are legally empowered to stop traffic to assist students with crossing the street. Student crossing guards can also be used at corners after they have received safety training from a certified youth crossing guard trainer.

Program lead/partners: Elementary School PTO and other school leaders, community partners like the Rotary Club

Timeline: Immediately

Why we recommend it: Adult crossing guards are a vital resource already used in La Crescent to help students cross S 3rd Street and Oak Street. Many families expressed the need for crossing guards at additional locations in the parent and caregiver surveys sent home in Fall 2019. If possible, crossing guards should be partnered with road improvements to decrease the speed of traffic and improve visibility. Currently, adult crossing guards in La Crescent track the number of students crossing throughout the year (see photo above). This data collection provides valuable information to evaluate trends in walking and biking and can make the case for additional resources. Consider partnering with Crucifixion to ensure adult crossing guards at critical intersections (S 3rd St and Oak St; crossings of Elm St) is a sustainable program.

LOCAL / REGIONAL SRTS COORDINATOR

The best way to implement programs described above and below is to have an additional staff member devoted to promoting walking and biking to school in La Crescent. The staff member could coordinate with ISD 300, think about grant opportunities, and engage with community members through events and communication opportunities.

Program lead/partners: City of La Crescent, ISD 300

Timeline: Short term (1-2 years)

Why we recommend it: In 2007, La Crescent received an Active Living grant that spurred many SRTS initiatives. This funding allowed a staff person to devote more time to SRTS programs and infrastructure. Unfortunately, that funding expired and many of the initiatives did as well. Stakeholders in La Crescent saw the importance of having a local “point person” for SRTS activities and projects. The recommendations from this planning process could serve as a work plan for a part-time or full-time staff member. Consider partnering with another nearby community to fund the position.



BIKE DRIVE / SWAP

A bike drive is an event where bicycles are donated, collected, repaired, and given away to students who do not have access to them. A bike drive can be hosted and organized by a school district, police department, or any other community group. These events can also take the form of a bike swap, where families trade different sized bicycles once one child has outgrown a certain bike. A trained bicycle mechanic should always be on site to ensure any bike is safe to ride before leaving with a family.

Program lead/partners: Community Bike Shoppe, ISD 300 Community Ed

Timeline: Short term (1-2 years)

Why we recommend it: La Crescent already has many elements in place for a successful bike swap event. The Community Bike Shoppe has tools, storage, and skills to host something like a bike swap. Bikes from the Shoppe could even be loaned out for school field trip rides or Walk Bike Fun! training. Consider publicizing a Drive/Swap as part of a spring “clean out your garage” to remove old and unused bikes.



TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN

A safety campaign is an effective way to build awareness around students walking and biking to school and to encourage safe driving behavior among parents and others driving in the area. A campaign can use media at or near schools - posters, business window stickers, yard signs, and/or street banners - to remind drivers to slow down and use caution in school areas. This type of campaign can also address other specific behaviors, such as walking or bicycling to school, school bus safety, and/or parent drop-off and pick-up behavior.

Program lead/partners: Student leadership groups, local law enforcement, Elementary School PTO and other school leaders

Timeline: Short term (1-2 years)

Why we recommend it: La Crescent law enforcement continue to show support for safe walking and biking by partnering with the city on speed monitoring and crosswalk enforcement. A safety campaign can further these efforts by bringing awareness to the importance of safe behaviors. This will be critical as site changes are made at the Elementary School. Student groups can take the lead in promoting the campaign to reach student drivers. Reductions to speed limits should always be considered in combination with changes to road design. See the infrastructure section of this plan for ways to reduce driver speeds by changing the design of the roadway.



SUGGESTED ROUTE MAPS

A bicycling or walking route map shows safe and low stress routes and crossings for students and families walking or biking to school.

Program lead/partners: City of La Crescent

Timeline: Short term (1-2 years)

Why we recommend it: Some families in La Crescent may not know how close to school they actually live and the best way to travel to and from it. Walking and/or biking route maps can be used as an encouragement tool as well as an education tool. MnDOT has a create-your-own suggested route map on the Minnesota SRTS Resource Center that can be customized and updated as La Crescent grows and infrastructure changes are made to improve safety and comfort.

SURVEYS AND TRAVEL TALLIES

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

Parent & Caregiver Surveys: Recommended once every 2-3 years. A hard copy survey or link to an online version can be sent to parents and caregivers to gather their perceptions of walking and biking to school. Surveys can be distributed through newsletters, school websites, or at conferences.

Student Travel Tally: Recommended in fall and spring of every year. In-class tallies ask students how they traveled to and from school on a given day.

WALKING SCHOOL BUS

A walking school bus is a group of children who walk to school along a designated route, typically with the help of one or more adults. Older students or “walking buddies” may also help chaperone a walking school bus with support from an adult. Chaperones can take turns leading the bus, which follows a set route and picks up students at designated times. Ideally walking school buses run on a regular schedule (daily, weekly, or monthly), but they may start as a one-time event.

Program lead/partners: Student leadership groups, Elementary School PTO and other school leaders, community partners like the Rotary Club

Timeline: Short term (1-2 years)

Why we recommend it: In the survey sent home to families in Fall 2019, parents and caregivers often mentioned they’d be more willing to let their children walk and bike to school if it was done so in a group or with a trusted adult. La Crescent has many strong community partners (e.g., retirees, service groups/clubs) that could consider “leading” a Walking School Bus route. Consider trying it once as part of a Walk/Bike to School Day and evaluating and expanding it if possible.



BICYCLE MECHANICS TRAINING

Bike mechanics classes provide students with hands-on skills to identify issues and fix bicycles. Classes can be offered as an after-school extracurricular class or as an elective similar to shop classes. Earn-a-Bike programs are bike mechanic classes where students get to keep the bike they fix when the class is complete.

Program lead/partners: Community Bicycle Shoppe, ISD 300 Community Ed

Timeline: Short term (1-2 years)

Why we recommend it: The Montessori & STEM School is based on hands-on learning and interaction to promote science, technology, engineering, and math. A mechanics training would be a great opportunity to expose students to lifelong skills. La Crescent already has a functioning community bicycle shop that would be the perfect venue for an extracurricular club or class. Older students in ISD 300 and at the Montessori & STEM School could bring in old bikes and fix them up for community giveaways.



TRAFFIC GARDEN

A traffic garden or bicycle playground is a miniature town with streets where children can learn about roadways, traffic, and safety in an enclosed and controlled space. Often painted on repurposed spaces like tennis courts or parking lots, students can walk and bike in a traffic garden. It can be used by schools or community organizations to teach children early on about the importance of walking and biking, and how to safely interact with other road users.

Program lead/partners: City of La Crescent

Timeline: Medium term (3-4 years)

Why we recommend it: With Walk! Bike! Fun! curriculum already being taught, a traffic garden would be an excellent community resource to show the importance of safe walking and biking and practice the skills taught through the curriculum. The traffic garden would be a physical symbol of how much the community values and supports walking and biking and Safe Routes to School in La Crescent. Consider working with the City and the schools to identify opportunities for a traffic garden when schools plan reconstructions of their sites.





UPCOMING PROJECTS

► WAGON WHEEL TRAIL BRIDGE CROSSING OF US 61 / US 14

The City of La Crescent is in the process of planning and designing a pedestrian and bicycle bridge over US 61 / US 14. The truss style bridge would generally connect S 1st St where it currently dead-ends on the west, over the highway to the intersection of Main St and S Chestnut St on the east side. The bridge and trail approaches would connect to the existing Wagon Wheel Trail on the east side of US 61 / 41. The new bridge will provide a more comfortable and convenient connection to the manufactured homes along Sycamore St east of the highway.



► SCHOOL SITE REDESIGNS & ADDITIONS

La Crescent and ISD 300 are currently implementing and considering several changes to the Elementary and Secondary schools, ranging from parking lot redesigns to school additions. The maps and recommendations described and included in this plan were current and relevant as this document was being written. Planned or future changes to any school facilities should consider and prioritize the needs of people walking and biking to school.

Introduction to Infrastructure

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

The initial field review and subsequent meetings yielded specific recommendations to address the key barriers to walking and bicycling in the areas surrounding the four schools in La Crescent.

This plan does not represent a comprehensive list of every project that could improve conditions for walking and bicycling, but rather the key conflict points and highest priority infrastructure improvements to improve walking and bicycling access to the school. The recommendations range from simple striping changes and school signing to more significant changes to the streets, intersections and school infrastructure.

All engineering recommendations are shown on the Recommended Infrastructure Improvements maps and corresponding tables on pages 27-32. It should be noted that funding is limited and all recommendations made are planning-level concepts only. Additional engineering studies will be needed to confirm feasibility and final costs for projects.

Before recommendations are presented, pages 22-26 show and discuss conditions currently existing in La Crescent. These observations were made during walk assessments, a process of walking the streets surrounding the schools to assess and observe the barriers and challenges faced by people walking and biking. The La Crescent Safe Routes to School team performed a walk assessment led by consultants in the fall of 2019.

Existing Issues and Conflicts

This section highlights some of the major issues surrounding the four La Crescent schools. The photos and observations described below were made during the fall of 2019, when the La Crescent SRTS team performed a walk assessment of the area surrounding the schools. A walk assessment allowed the team to experience the conditions faced by people who walk and bike in the area. More observations and recommendations to improve conditions can be found on the pages following this overview.

LA CRESCENT-HOKAH ELEMENTARY

S 3rd St and Oak St

This crossing separates students and families living north of 3rd St and the Elementary. 3rd St connects to all major routes in and out of La Crescent and to La Crosse, Wisconsin, so it experiences high traffic volumes, especially during the morning and evening commutes. The crossing of four lanes is quite wide. Although there is an RRFB, high visibility crosswalks, and an adult crossing guard, students and families expressed their discomfort with the crossing.



S 4th St and Elm St

This crossing is typical of several crossings of Elm St in the area of the Elementary school and Crucifixion. Students and families are faced with long crossing distances and drivers failing to yield as they make their way to S 3rd St. A curb side bike lane is present on the east side of Elm St, but a parking lane on the west side would provide room for curb extensions along the corridor and would calm traffic along and across La Crescent's main north-south bikeway.



Oak St south of S 3rd St

It was reported that drivers often use Oak St as a north south connection through town, especially when accessing Highway 16 is difficult because of traffic. Because of this, walking and biking on Oak St south of S 3rd St can be a challenge for students and families. The recent addition and extension of a sidewalk on the east side of Oak St gives a space to people walking, but further traffic calming and diversion could be considered.





Where 6th St S meets Aquatic Center/Pool

The Aquatic Center/Pool is a common destination during the school year, but also during the summer and on weekends. It can be accessed via 6th St S, but people walking and biking encounter a fence that is unwelcoming and difficult to navigate. Once through the fence, there is no formal path down the hill to the Aquatic Center.

LA CRESCENT-HOKAH SECONDARY



Lancer Blvd and S 12th St

Many students living to the north and west of school use this intersection before and after school, when the road is shared by drivers exiting the parking lot, school buses, people walking and biking, and driver pick ups and drop offs along Lancer Blvd. Updated high visibility crosswalks were recently painted, but the crossing distances are long, and the relative chaos at arrival and dismissal makes some vehicle movements unpredictable and visibility of people walking and biking low.



S 14th St and parking lot exit

Students and staff crossing S 14th St at this location must contend with drivers accessing the parking lot, as well as those traveling along S 14th. This is a common crossing coming from and going to the athletic facilities. The current marked crosswalk is in the path of left turning drivers out of the parking lot, and in order to reach the crossing, students must first cross the driveway apron, then cross S 14th.

S 12th St between Lance Blvd and Skunk Hollow Rd

S 12th St is a common route for drivers looking to connect to and from Skunk Hollow Rd and County Road 25. It is also a common walking and biking connection for students living north and east of campus. The street is relatively wide for a residential street, which allows drivers to move quite quickly along it.



Lancer Blvd and S 14th St

This location is the intersection of two of the major roads in the area. While the majority of housing is north of this crossing, students often use it to reach athletic fields and homes to the west of campus. The crossing is wide and traffic volumes can be high, especially during arrival and dismissal.



LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI AND STEM SCHOOL

Oak St midblock crossing outside Montessori and STEM

The recently added sidewalk on the east side of Oak St is a comfortable connection to the north and south of the Montessori and STEM school. However, reaching the sidewalk requires students and families to cross Oak St, which can experience high traffic volumes at certain times of day. There are no signs or crosswalk markings to alert drivers, and unless a driver is familiar with the area, seeing students crossing Oak St isn't expected.





S 14th St and Oak St

This crossing is the logical connection from Oak St to the Secondary and Montessori and STEM school. The painted bike lane on S 14th St also connects to the school. But because it is adjacent to the Highway 16 access, some drivers may not expect to see people walking and biking. The curb radii are wide and the crossing is long.



11th St between Cedar Dr and Oak St

North of the S 14th St intersection of Oak St is 11th St. It provides another connection to the Secondary campus. Because of the road geometry and slope of the road, visibility of people walking and biking is limited. And with no separated pedestrian space on this stretch until Cedar Dr (Elm St on the north side of 11th), students and families are forced to walk in the road.

CRUCIFIXION SCHOOL



S 2nd St and Elm St

This crossing with direct access to the Crucifixion campus is typical of many crossings along Elm St. A curb adjacent bike lane is painted on the east side of Elm, but a parking lane on the west side would permit curb extensions to narrow the roadway and calm traffic. Calming traffic along Elm St would provide additional comfort for people crossing the street as well as people using the bike lane along it.

Parking lane along S 2nd St

South 2nd St is very wide at this location, which allows for perpendicular parking along the school side of the street. However, because there is no curb along the pedestrian space, drivers unknowingly pull their front end past the “curb” and into the sidewalk space. While this limits sidewalk space, there is also a possibility of conflict between a small student and a driver attempting to park.



S 1st St and Elm St

High visibility crosswalks and the painted bike lane narrow the roadway and help improve visibility of people walking and biking along and across Elm St. However, the street could be narrowed further to provide additional comfort for La Crescent residents and the school community.



WINTER MAINTENANCE

FURTHER READING

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In colder climates, it is important to consider how winter can affect the safety and comfort for youth walking and biking to school. See Appendix L for information related to winter maintenance that will allow kids to stay active and healthy year round.



APPENDIX

FURTHER READING

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For a complete list of infrastructure to increase bicyclist and pedestrian safety and comfort, turn to Appendix J. The toolkit found here will help you brainstorm additional improvements for La Crescent.

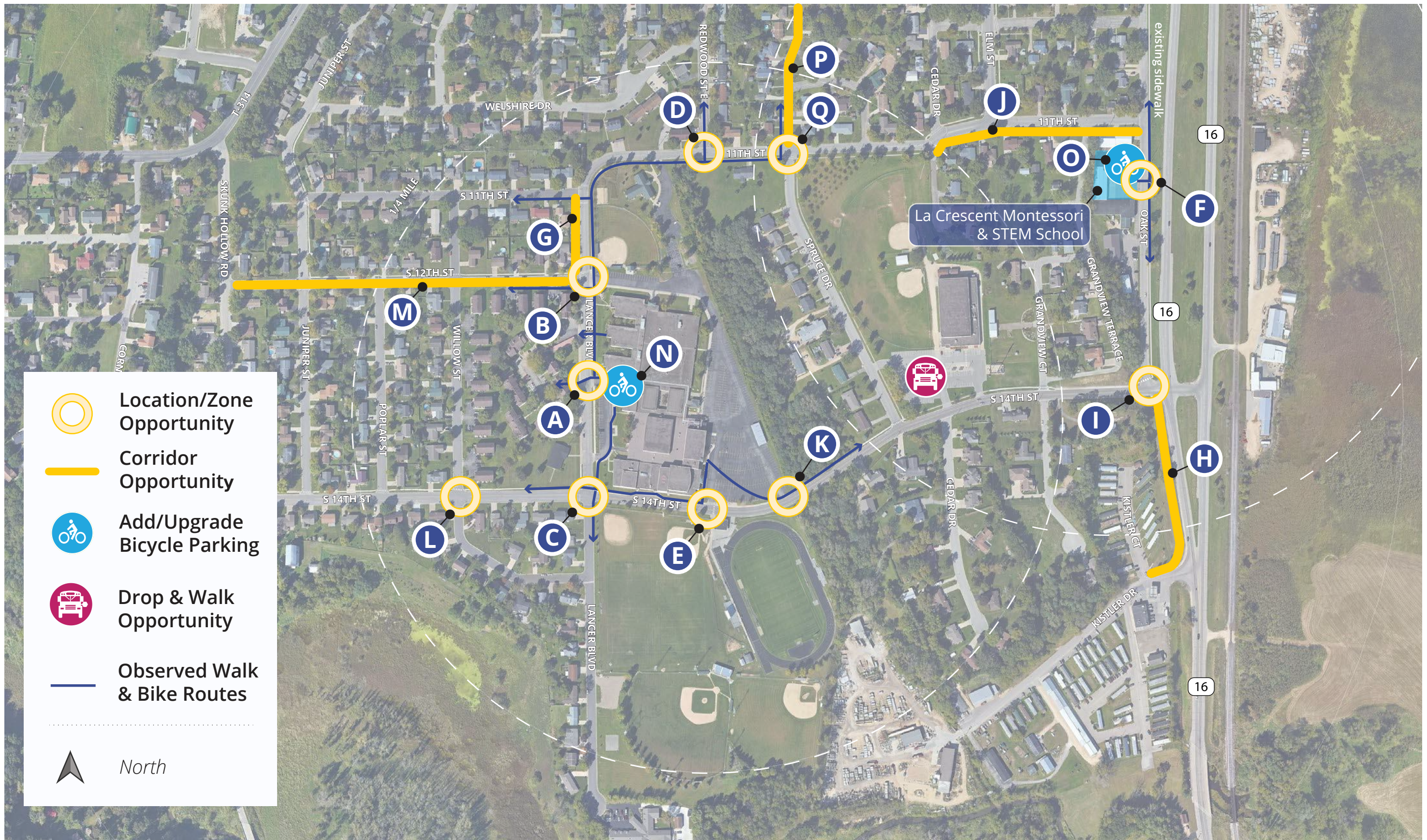


LA CRESCENT HOKAH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LA CRESCENT, MN

La Crescent Hokah Elementary Infrastructure Recommendations

	LOCATION	PROBLEM/ISSUE	POTENTIAL SOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	S 3rd St and Oak St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior; high traffic volumes and speeds, especially during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions; install advance yield lines on S 3rd St; coordinate with location D; install forward stop bars on S Oak St	Increased comfort for people crossing S 3rd St	MnDOT; Houston County; City of La Crescent	Medium
B	Oak St south of S 3rd St	Drivers often use Oak St as a cut through to avoid Hwy 16, leading to an uncomfortable experience for people walking and biking to school	Install traffic calming along Oak St corridor including raised crossings, chicanes, curb extensions, neighborhood traffic circles, or diverters. Coordinate with future development at S 3rd St.	Slower vehicle speeds; less vehicle traffic; increased comfort for people walking along Oak St	City of La Crescent; MnDOT	High
C	Alley south of campus	Currently used as a drop off and pick up for drivers, resulting in potential conflicts and uncomfortable conditions	Install temporary gate or barrier to restrict access to cars during pick up and drop off; coordinate with redesign of Elementary School	More comfortable space for people walking and biking	ISD 300; City of La Crescent	Low
D	S 3rd St between Elm St and Walnut St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior; high vehicle speeds and volumes as drivers travel to and from S 3rd St and Hwy 14/16/61	Consider reducing S 3rd St from four lanes to three; coordinate with locations A and H	Increased comfort for people crossing S 3rd St	MnDOT; Houston County; City of La Crescent	High
E	6th St S and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior; poor visibility; high traffic volumes and speeds, especially during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm St; maintain trees and vegetation on the west side of Elm St; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing; install forward stop bars	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St	Houston County; City of La Crescent	High
F	S 4th St and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior; poor visibility; high traffic volumes and speeds, especially during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm St; maintain trees and vegetation on the west side of Elm St; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St	Houston County; City of La Crescent	High
G	S 5th St and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor driver yielding behavior; poor visibility; high traffic volumes and speeds, especially during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm St; maintain trees and vegetation on the west side of Elm St; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing; install forward stop bars	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St	Houston County; City of La Crescent	Low
H	S 3rd St and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor visibility; high traffic volumes and speeds, especially during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm S and on S 3rd St; coordinate with location D; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St and S 3rd St	MnDOT; Houston County; City of La Crescent	Medium
I	7th St S and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; poor visibility; high traffic volumes and speeds, especially during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm S; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St	Houston County; City of La Crescent	Low
J	Playground area, back of school	No high quality bicycle parking	Install high quality bicycle parking described in Appendix K	More students biking to school	ISD 300	Medium
K	Where 6th St S meets Aquatic Center/Pool	Fence is difficult to navigate with bicycle; no formal path down hill	Install shared use path down hill to Aquatic Center/Pool; install gate that allows people on bikes to pass through comfortably	More students biking from neighborhoods west and south of 7th St S and Elm St	City of La Crescent	Low

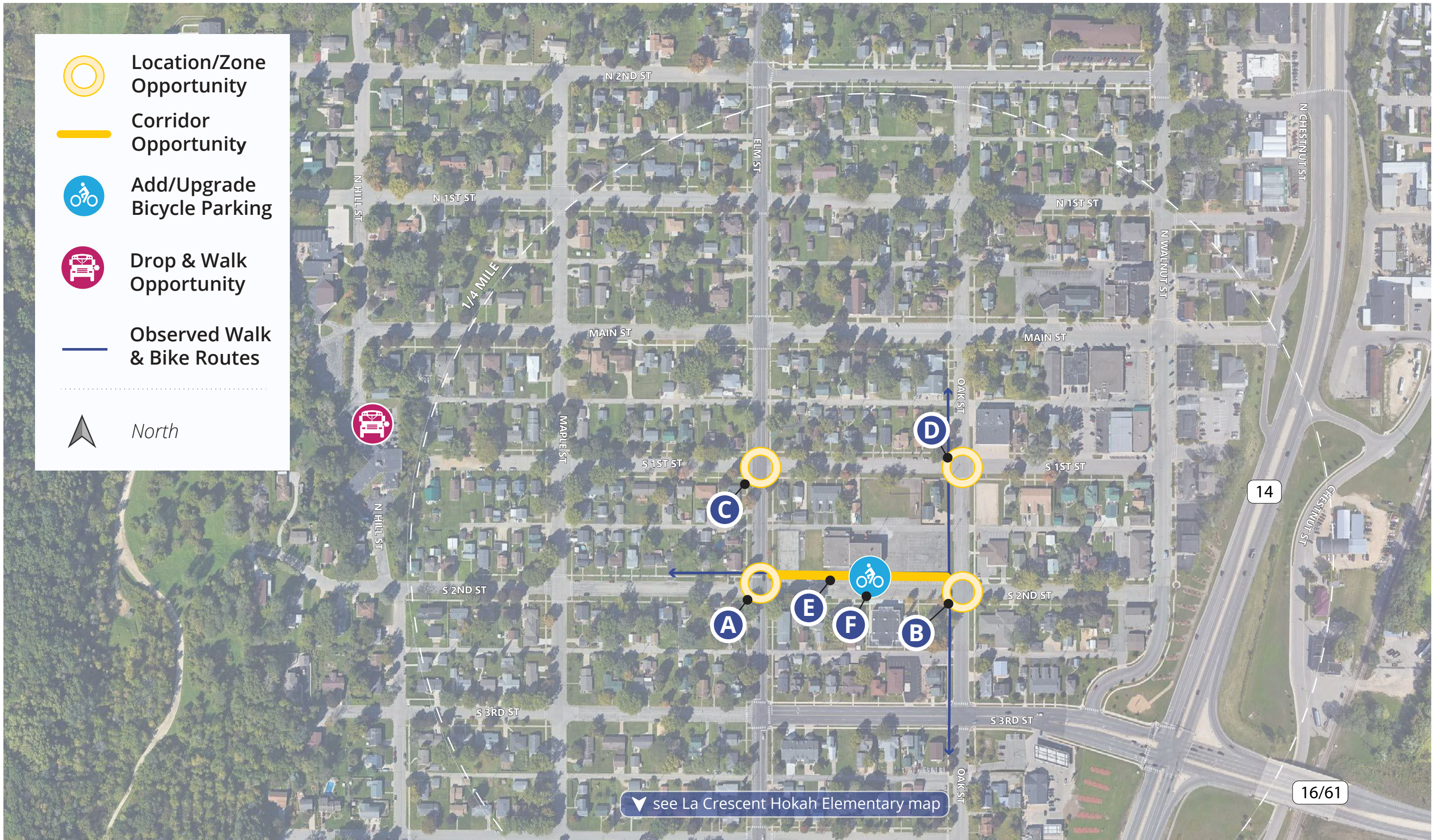


LA CRESCENT HOKAH SECONDARY/MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL

LA CRESCENT, MN

La Crescent Hokah Secondary/Montessori & STEM School Infrastructure Recommendations

	LOCATION	PROBLEM/ISSUE	POTENTIAL SOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	Lancer Blvd at parking lot access	No pedestrian crossing improvements; poor visibility; high traffic volumes during arrival and dismissal times; most direct crossing for people living in residences directly west of school	Install midblock crossing improvements including curb extensions or median refuge island, crossing signage, high visibility crosswalk, or raised crosswalk; install yield lines	Slower vehicle speeds on Lancer Blvd; increased visibility and more comfort for people walking	City of La Crescent	Medium
B	Lancer Blvd and S 12th St	Poor visibility at intersection used for cars and buses; high traffic volumes during arrival and dismissal; missing ADA compliant curb ramps	Install curb extensions or median refuge island; install high visibility crosswalks, install ADA compliant curb ramps; install forward stop bar	Slower vehicle speeds on Lancer Blvd; increased visibility and more comfort for people walking	City of La Crescent	High
C	Lancer Blvd and S 14th St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; large curb radii that encourage high turning speeds; missing ADA compliant curb ramps	Install curb extensions or a median refuge island; install ADA compliant curb ramps	Slower turning speeds; increased visibility and more comfort for people walking	City of La Crescent	Medium
D	11th St and Redwood St E	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; missing ADA compliant curb ramps; poor visibility because of road geometry to the west	Install curb extensions or median refuge island; install crossing signage; install high visibility crosswalk; install ADA compliant curb ramps	Increased visibility and comfort for people walking	City of La Crescent	High
E	S 14th St and parking lot exit	Drivers exiting parking lot turn directly into crosswalk; missing ADA compliant curb ramp on south side of S 14th St	Consider moving the designated crossing at this location to the west of the driveway apron (on the school access side) and installing sidewalk on the south side of S 14th St from the new crossing to the entrance to athletic fields	No need for students to cross driveway apron; increased visibility and more comfort for people walking	ISD 300; City of La Crescent	Medium
F	Oak St midblock crossing outside Montessori & STEM	No formal crossing to reach sidewalk on the east side of Oak St; high traffic volumes during arrival and dismissal; poor visibility of people wanting to cross	Install curb extension on east side of Oak St; install high visibility crosswalk; install crossing signage. Consider installing traffic calming along Oak St to the north and south, including chicanes, curb extensions, etc.	Improved visibility and comfort for people walking; slower vehicle speeds	City of La Crescent	High
G	Lancer Blvd between S 12th St and S 11th St	No separated space for people walking and biking to the northwest of school	Install sidewalk on west side of Lancer Blvd	Separated space for people walking north of school; increased comfort	City of La Crescent	High
H	Connection between Kistler Ct and S 14th St	No connection between mobile homes and streets directly connected to schools	Install path to connect S 14th St and Kistler Ct; coordinate with Location I	More students and families walking to and from Kistler Ct	City of La Crescent	High
I	S 14th St and Oak St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; legibility of intersection is low; high traffic volumes during arrival and dismissal	Install curb extensions on Oak St; install high visibility crosswalks to indicate preferred crossings; coordinate with Location H; install forward stop bars	Increased visibility and comfortable connections to Kistler Ct	City of La Crescent	Medium
J	11th St between Cedar Dr and Oak St	No separated space for people walking and biking	Install sidewalk on south side of 11th St	More students walking from the area east of Cedar Dr	City of La Crescent	Medium
K	S 14th St and east parking lot access	High traffic volumes entering and exiting during arrival and dismissal; poor visibility of people walking and biking	Narrow driveway apron to accommodate only one vehicle (currently marked as ENTER ONLY)	Increased comfort for people walking along S 14th St	ISD 300	Low
L	S 14th St and Willow St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; missing ADA compliant curb ramps on the south side	Install curb extensions on the south side of S 14th St; install high visibility crosswalk	More students walking from homes on Willow St	City of La Crescent	Low
M	S 12th St between Lancer Blvd and Skunk Hollow Rd	High traffic volumes and speeds at arrival and dismissal; no separated space for people walking and biking on the south side of S 12th St	Install sidewalk on the south side of S 12th St; consider installing traffic calming along S 12th St, including midblock chicanes	Improved visibility and comfort for people walking; slower vehicle speeds	City of La Crescent	High
N	Front of Secondary	Low supply of high quality bike parking	Install high quality bicycle parking described in Appendix K	More students biking to school	ISD 300	Medium
O	Front of Montessori & STEM	No high quality bike parking	Install high quality bicycle parking described in Appendix K	More students biking to school	Montessori & STEM	Low
P	Spruce Dr between 11th St and 7th St	No separated space for people walking; frequent route between Secondary school and Aquatic Center/Pool	Install sidewalk on east side of Spruce Dr	Increased comfort for people walking to and from the north	City of La Crescent	High
Q	11th St and Spruce Dr	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; missing ADA compliant curb ramps; high traffic volumes during arrival and dismissal; frequent route between Secondary school and Aquatic Center/Pool	Install curb extensions or median refuge island; install high visibility crosswalk; install ADA compliant curb ramps; coordinate with Location D	Increased visibility and comfort for people walking	City of La Crescent	Medium

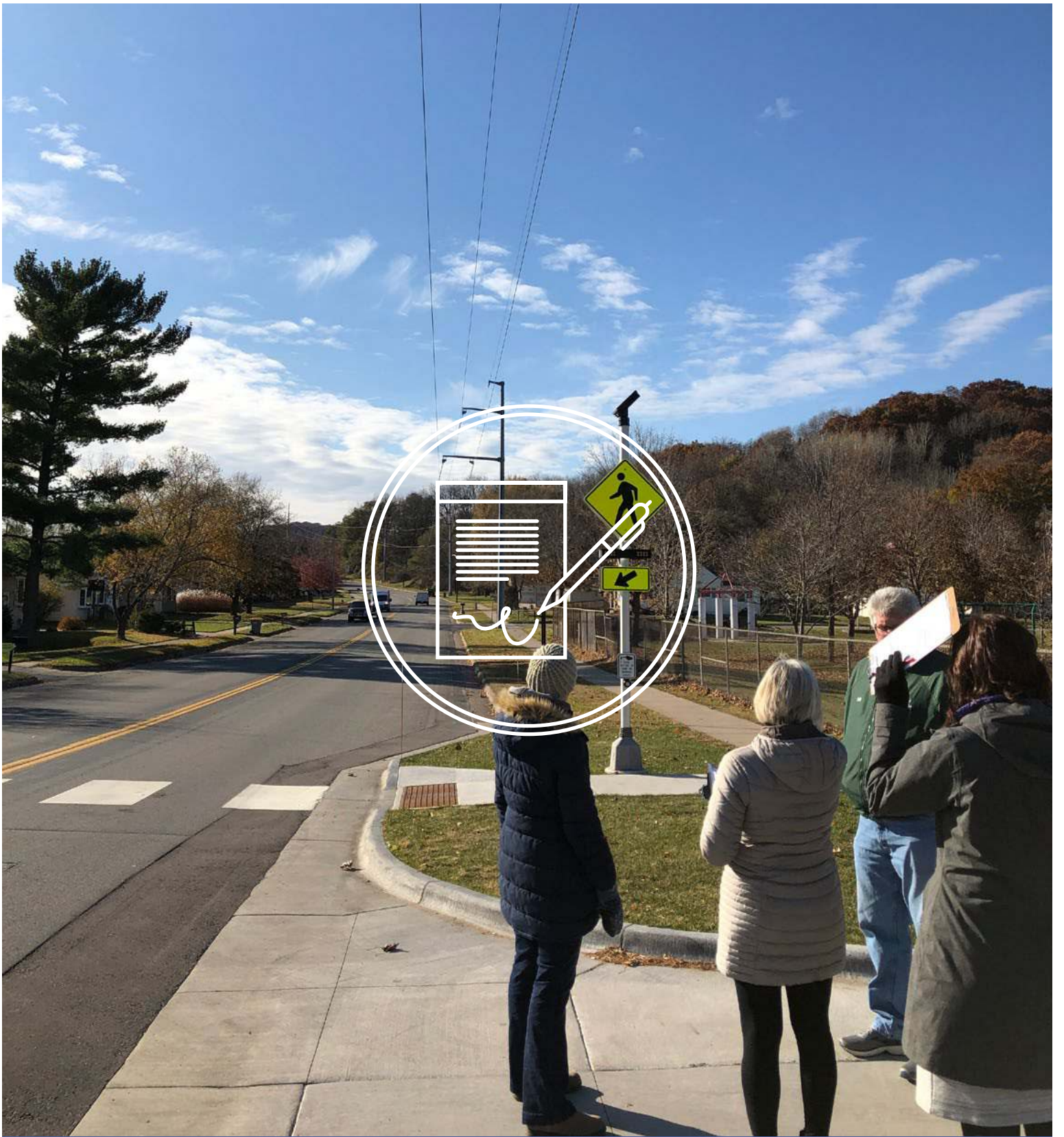


CRUCIFIXION ELEMENTARY
LA CRESCENT, MN

Crucifixion Elementary Infrastructure Recommendations

	LOCATION	PROBLEM/ISSUE	POTENTIAL SOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION	ANTICIPATED OUTCOME	LEAD	PRIORITY
A	S 2nd St and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; high vehicle volumes, especially during arrival and dismissal; poor visibility; missing ADA compliant curb ramps	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm St; maintain trees and vegetation on the west side of Elm St; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing; install forward stop bars	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St	Houston County; City of La Crescent	High
B	S 2nd St and Oak St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; missing ADA compliant curb ramps	Install curb extensions past parking spaces on S 2nd St or prohibit parking in the two spaces closet to crosswalk on northwest corner; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing; install forward stop bars	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing	City of La Crescent	Medium
C	S 1st St and Elm St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; high vehicle volumes, especially during arrival and dismissal; poor visibility; missing ADA compliant curb ramps	Install curb extensions on the west side of Elm St; install high visibility crosswalks; install ADA compliant curb ramps where missing; install forward stop bars	Improved visibility, and increased comfort for people crossing Elm St	Houston County; City of La Crescent	High
D	S 1st St and Oak St	Long and uncomfortable crossing distances; missing ADA compliant curb ramps	Install curb extensions; install high visibility crosswalks; install ADA compliant curb ramps; install forward stop bars	Improved visibility and increased comfort for people walking	City of La Crescent	Low
E	Parking lane along S 2nd St	Parked vehicles encroach on the sidewalk space	Install curb to delineate parking space extent	Fewer vehicles encroaching on pedestrian space; increased comfort for people walking along S 2nd St	Crucifixion Elementary	Low
F	Outside front door on S 2nd St	No high quality bike parking	Install high quality bicycle parking described in Appendix K	More students biking to school	Crucifixion Elementary	Low

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Using this Plan

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

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

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

MN SRTS Resource Center

There are many great resources already available on the Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center. You can find answers to many common questions, information about upcoming events, and even promotional material that can easily be customized for your community's SRTS event.

The MN SRTS Resource Center is a great way to stay engaged throughout the year!

mnsaferoutestoschool.org

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

FURTHER READING

Demonstration projects are short term, low-cost, temporary roadway projects used to pilot potential long-term design solutions to improve walking, bicycling and public spaces

Many infrastructure improvements near schools can start as demonstration projects in order to test installations and build support for more long term improvements. More information about demonstration projects near schools can be found at the link below.

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/documents/mndot-demonstration-project-implementation-guide-final.pdf>



WHO ARE YOU?

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

I AM A STUDENT

Students can have incredible influence when advocating for change in their school and broader community. There are many ways that students can support and lead SRTS initiatives including: encourage safe walking, biking, and driving to, from, and near school; develop campaigns to generate enthusiasm and improve social conditions for SRTS; volunteer time to lead a Walking School Bus or organize a bike drive; promote SRTS activities through newspaper and media courses; advocate for funding and infrastructure improvements at City Hall, and more.

I AM A PARENT/CAREGIVER

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

I AM A COMMUNITY MEMBER

Community residents, even if they don't currently have children enrolled in school, can play an important role in supporting implementation of the plan. They can use this report to better understand where there may be opportunities to participate in programming initiatives and infrastructure improvements. Community members, including seniors or retirees who may have more flexible schedules than parents and caregivers with school-aged children, may volunteer in established programs or work with school staff or community partners to start new programs recommended in this plan.

I WORK FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

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

I AM A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

School administrators have an important role in implementing the recommendations contained within this SRTS plan. For a plan to succeed, the desire for change and improvement must be supported by the leadership of the school.



School administrators can help with making policy and procedural changes to projects that are within school grounds and by distributing informational materials to families within school publications. Please read the SRTS Facts for School Communication in Appendix B.

I AM A TEACHER OR OTHER STAFF MEMBER

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

I WORK FOR THE CITY OR COUNTY

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

- MnDOT SRTS grants
- Federal SRTS grants
- Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP)

For all infrastructure recommendations, a traffic study and more detailed engineering may be necessary to evaluate project feasibility. Additional public out-

reach should be conducted before final design and construction. For recommendations within the public right-of-way, the responsible agency will determine how (and if) to incorporate suggestions into local improvement plans and prioritize funding to best meet the needs of each school community.

I WORK IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police department staff can use this report to understand issues related to walking and bicycling to school and to lead and support education, encouragement, and enforcement activities that make it easier and safer for students to walk and bike to school. Enforcement efforts should focus on traffic safety education, rewarding positive behavior, and supporting school walk and bike events. Law enforcement representatives should be mindful of strategies that may disproportionately and negatively affect students and families of color, low wealth, or marginalized populations.

I WORK IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health staff can use this report to identify specific opportunities to collaborate with schools and local governments to support safety improvements and encourage healthy behaviors in school children and their families. They are advocates for healthy living and programs that get people moving in the community. Public health staff play a key role by connecting different stakeholders for positive change.



Final Thoughts

This process brought together local stakeholders with a shared vision for students traveling to school by foot and by bicycle.

The information and recommendations in this plan are merely a starting point. Though implementing them may seem overwhelming, the important thing to remember is that anything you can do to make it safer and more comfortable for walking and biking in La Crescent, no matter how small, is a step in the right direction. Here are some things to remember:

THINK ABOUT EQUITY

Some students and families experience more barriers than others to walking and biking to school. When thinking about improvements and programs, make sure to consider this and prioritize investments and resources to give the most vulnerable students a safe and comfortable walk and roll to school.

TALK ABOUT SRTS

A lot of people don't know about SRTS. And that's okay! Continue talking about it and telling people why it's important. There are talking points in Appendix B for reference.

CELEBRATE SUCCESS

When staff, a parent or caregiver, student, or community member takes a positive step towards more walking and biking to school, recognize them for it! This encourages others to do the same while giving the person a pat on the back.

PARTNER WITH EXISTING ACTIVITIES

Don't feel like you have to do it alone! There are many great community events that relate to walking and biking in La Crescent. These are great opportunities to promote SRTS without organizing an event of your own.

CONTINUE TO EVALUATE

Evaluation is the best way to understand the impacts of your efforts. Talking to parents and community members about new improvements, activities, and programs will tell you if you should stay the course or change direction.

CONTINUE MEETING AS A SRTS TEAM

One of the best ways to continue momentum is meet as a team — even twice a year would be a way to check in with others and learn of successes. Sharing stories inspires others to do good and allows for collaboration and teamwork.

