DULUTH SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

A project examining the safety in accessing five urban elementary and middle schools in Duluth, MN

July 2006

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Prepared by the

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Duluth and Superior urban area communities
cooperating in planning and development
through a joint venture of the
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
and the
Northwest Regional Planning Commission

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DULUTH-SUPERIOR METROPOLITAN INTERSTATE COUNCIL

Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

What is the MIC?

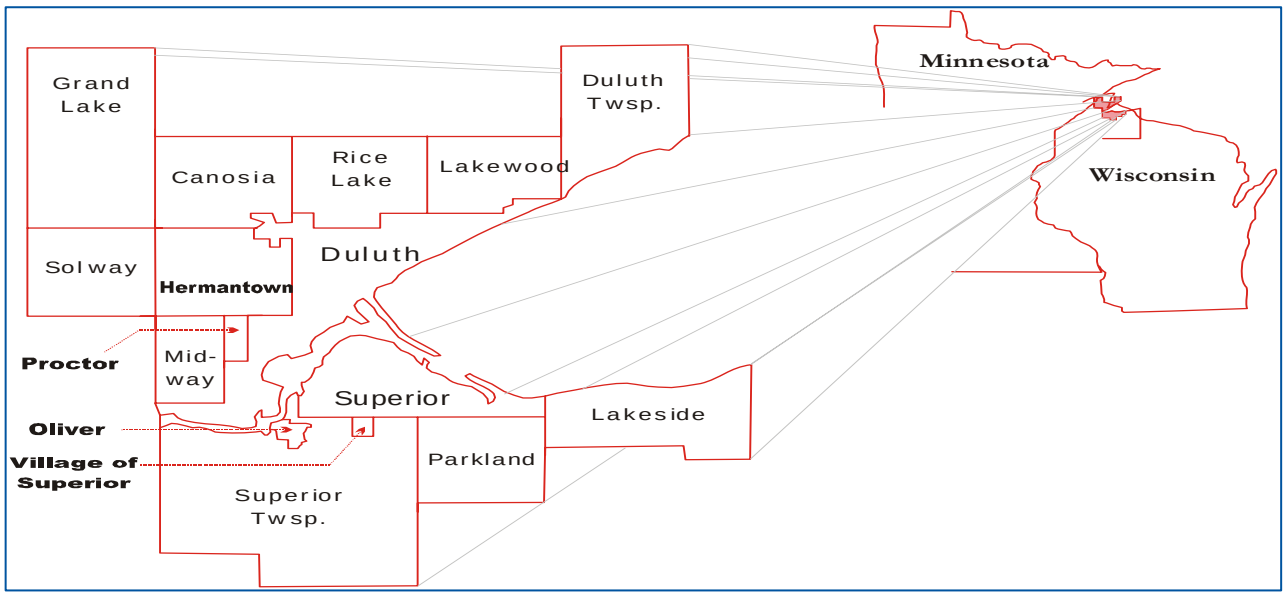
The MIC is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth-Superior area. MPOs were created by the federal government to ensure that infrastructure investments are analyzed from a metropolitan-wide perspective. MPOs provide a comprehensive, cooperative, inter-agency transportation planning process for population areas over 50,000. The MIC provides leadership and technical support to all local jurisdictions within the metropolitan area.

The Duluth-Superior MIC was created under a joint agreement between the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) in Minnesota and the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NWRPC) in Wisconsin.

History

Under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) of 1996 and current federal legislation, MPOs were given greater authority to fund and implement transportation projects in urban areas. Each MPO develops an annual set of approved projects through its Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. MPOs also emphasize public participation in the development of these projects and programs.

MIC Planning Area



Objectives

The Metropolitan Interstate Council Policy Board represents all local units of government in the Duluth-Superior area and provides cooperative leadership to meet the following objectives:

To address major transportation issues and solve problems that affect multiple jurisdictions or agencies within the Duluth-Superior metropolitan area.

To develop detailed transportation information that will encourage decisions to enhance livability and optimize the movement of people and goods throughout the metropolitan area.

To improve the comprehensive transportation network so that it is safe and fully integrated.

To gain the maximum benefit from each public transportation investment.

To attain an effective transportation planning process that is inclusive and responsive to the needs and interests of the area's residents, units of government and affected agencies.

Council Structure

The MIC policy board has a total of 18 votes, split evenly between both states:

Minnesota (9 votes)	Wisconsin (9 votes)
4 City of Duluth representatives (1 citizen, 2 city councilors, 1 DTA Board member)	**4** City of Superior representatives (1 citizen, 3 city councilors)
1 City of Hermantown representative (elected official)	**4** Douglas County representatives (4 county board supervisors)
1 City of Proctor representative (elected official)	**1** representative from the suburban villages and townships
3 St. Louis County representatives (1 county board member, 2 suburban township elected officials)	

Duluth-Superior Urban Area Communities Cooperating in Planning and Development through a Joint Venture of

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
an economic development district

and

ARDC ARROWHEAD REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Planning...Success

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Map Disclaimer

The information contained in the following maps is a compilation of data from various federal, state, county, regional, and municipal sources. Geographic information has limitations due to the scale, resolution, date and interpretation of the original source materials. Users should consult available data documentation (metadata) to determine limitations and the precision to which the data depicts distance, direction, location or other geographic characteristics. These maps and/or data are not legal survey documents to be used for describing land for the purpose of ownership or title.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Duluth Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan

This Safe Routes to School (SRTS) study involved working with a diverse and committed steering committee representing the city, school district, police department, principals, health officials, bicycle advocates, parents, teachers, children, and elected officials to identify obstacles along primary routes to school and to propose recommendations to improve safety. Additionally, the study aimed to promote public and student safety education regarding bicycle and pedestrian laws.

Five urban Duluth schools, elementary and middle, with large walking boundaries were analyzed in this study including Lester Park, Congdon, Laura MacArthur, and Stowe Elementary; and Lincoln Park School (K-8). The study goal was *"to provide safe and adequate routes leading to Duluth schools so that more students are able to safely walk to school."* Students and parents were surveyed to identify safety issues around each of the five schools examined in the plan. Recommendations were proposed to address each of these safety issues. Some of the primary study recommendations address school site traffic circulation, pedestrian crossing amenities to increase visibility, traffic calming measures on nearby roads, and the importance of sidewalk snow removal.

Billboards were posted in three Duluth locations for the month of May, 2006 as part of the SRTS public awareness campaign

Student walking and biking routes to school were devised by examining techniques used by other communities who have conducted SRTS plans (i.e. Putnam Heights Eau Claire, WI) and also by working closely with local police to ensure that children are routed safely on roads and through neighborhoods. Student routes to school converge with:

- Crossing guards
- Traffic Controls
- Sidewalks/Trails
- Main student routes & densities

A Safe Routes to School **plan** is separate from conducting a school SRTS **campaign**. Campaigns must start within each school and be embraced by the administration, parents, and students. Walk to School Week was May 15th – 19th 2006 for schools involved in this study. Several schools established "walking school buses" and conducted bicycle and pedestrian education programs. MIC staff and the Duluth School District posted three public awareness billboards along major road corridors to heighten public awareness for this planning effort.

Having completed this plan, the Duluth School District and City of Duluth have placed themselves in excellent position to apply for federal Safe Routes to School funds being administered by MnDOT. Local financial partnerships will be essential to successful implementation of proposed recommendations to improve the safety along major routes leading to Duluth schools.

CHAPTER 1 / INTRODUCTION

National Trends

In 1969, approximately half of all U.S. schoolchildren walked or bicycled to or from school, and 87% of those living within 1 mile of school walked or bicycled. Today, fewer than 15% of children and adolescents use active modes of transportation to access school. Parents report the primary barriers to their children aged 5--18 years walking to or from school as (1) distance to school and (2) traffic-related danger. Therefore, comprehensive SRTS initiatives address behavioral, environmental and policy strategies to address these barriers in an effort to increase the percentage of children who walk and bike to school. The U.S. began researching children walking and bicycling to school in the 1970's which culminated in the 1975 report "School Trip Safety and Urban Play Areas."

Obesity

During the past 20 years, obesity among adults has risen dramatically in the U.S. as the National Center for Health Statistics shows that 30 percent of U.S. adults 20 years of age and older (over 60 million people) are obese. This increase has been even more dramatic in young people who are overweight, which has more than tripled since 1980. Among children and teens aged 6–19 years, 16 percent (over 9 million young people) are considered overweight. These increasing rates raise concern because of their implications for Americans' health. Being overweight or obese increases the risk of many diseases and health conditions (hypertension, dyslipidemia, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea and respiratory problems, and cancers such as endometrial, breast, and colon).

Physical Activity

The United States has seen a decrease in the number of children who are physically active and an increase in the number of children who are overweight. Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report nearly half of young people aged 12-21 years in the U.S. are not vigorously active on a regular basis and 14% of young people report no recent physical activity. The fact is that overweight children are more likely to become obese adults at risk for a variety of diseases.

Based on successes in Europe and the drastic decline in the number of U.S. students who are walking and biking to school as their parents once did, the CDC and other

groups across the nation have been promoting "Kids Walk-to-School" programs that encourage physical activity as an integral part of a child's daily routine. It assumes that teaching children the importance and pleasure of walking and bicycling to and from school may help to increase the likelihood that they will engage in other forms of physical activity. In addition to the physical benefits, data shows that physical activity may improve academic performance and alertness in youth.

Traffic Safety

The number one reason parents do not allow their children to walk to school is a fear for their safety. The safety of children as pedestrians is a real concern. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that one-fourth of child fatalities between the ages of 5 and 9 in 1998 were pedestrians. Children in this age group have not developed the skills and experience to navigate traffic safely and judge speed and distance. Therefore, it is important to teach and practice safe pedestrian skills with our children as well as provide responsible adult supervision as they travel to and from school.

Why Safe Routes to School (SRTS)?

Safe Routes to School Programs strive to improve the health of kids and the community by making walking and bicycling to school safer, easier and more enjoyable. Programs involve parents, community members, school staff, traffic engineers, city planners, law enforcement officers, community leaders and many others. Planning efforts assess the safety of school travel routes; make changes such as building crosswalks or adding crossing guards; educate students and drivers about safe travel and encourage walking and biking to school. Some programs expand to promote safe walking and bicycling throughout the community.

European Roots

"Safe Routes to School" terminology was first used in Denmark in the late 1970s as part of their campaign to reduce the number of children involved in crashes while walking and bicycling to school. The concept then spread internationally throughout Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and then the United States. The first U.S. SRTS program was initiated in 1997 in Bronx, NY. In 1998, Congress funded two pilot SRTS programs through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issuing $50,000 each to Marin County, California and Arlington, Massachusetts. From 1998 onward other grassroots efforts spread.

School Zone Traffic Separation and Traffic Calming

Schools now face the demands of students arriving by bus and an increasing population of parents who choose to drop off their children at the front door. Traffic separation (buses, teachers, parents, bicyclists, pedestrians) around schools addresses the functionality of traffic circulation as well as critical safety measures for students.

To address increased traffic around schools, particularly elementary and middle, several communities that have conducted SRTS studies have chosen to implement traffic calming measures to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Controlling traffic speed around schools, through traffic calming measures, is perhaps one of the most critical things to do as 89% of pedestrian and bicycle crashes result in fatalities when struck at 35 mph or greater.

As defined in *Traffic Calming: State of the Practice* (ITE, 1999), "traffic calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users." The report discusses three main traffic calming distinctions: (1) measures are self enforcing (unlike traffic controls which are regulatory), (2) measures rely on physics and not human psychology to slow traffic (street elements such as trees, lighting, street furniture, and streetscaping complement traffic calming but do not directly slow drivers), and (3) measures modify driver routing options (do not change driver behaviors such as speed just options). These three elements in combination affect traffic volume and speed, are self-enforcing, and are engineered. For specific image examples of traffic calming measures or to get a full copy of the above referenced report, visit: http://www.ite.org/traffic/tcstate.htm.

Volume Control Measures

The purposes of volume control measures are to discourage or eliminate through traffic. Examples include:

- **Street Closures:** Full Street Closures i.e. cul-de-sacs, dead ends; Half Street Closures i.e. partial, one-way
- **Diverters:** Semi-Diverters i.e. full-lane bulb out; Diagonal Diverters i.e. full diverters, diagonal road closures
- **Median Barriers:** Median Diverters; Forced Turn Islands; Island Diverters
- **Forced Turn Islands:** Forced Turn Channelization, Pork Chops, Right Turn Islands
- **Other Volume Control Measures:** Various other names and designs

Speed Control Measures

The purpose of speed control measures is to slow traffic. Examples include:

Vertical Measures

- **Speed Humps:** Road humps, undulations
- **Speed Tables:** Trapezoidal humps, speed platforms
- **Raised Crosswalks:** Raised crossings, sidewalk extensions
- **Raised intersections:** Raised junctions, intersection humps, plateaus
- **Textured Pavements**

Horizontal Measures

- **Neighborhood Traffic Circles**: Intersection islands
- **Roundabouts**: Rotaries
- **Chicanes**: Deviations, serpentines, reversing curves, twists
- **Lateral shifts**
- **Realigned intersections**: Modified intersections

Narrowings

- **Neckdowns**: Nubs, bulb outs, knuckles, intersection narrowings, corner bulges, safe crosses
- **Center Island Narrowings**: Midblock medians, median slowpoints, median chokers
- **Chokers**: Pinch points, midblock narrowings, midblock yield points, constrictions
- **Other Speed Control Measures**: Various names and designs
- **Combined Measures**

Planning Process

As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Duluth Superior Metropolitan area, the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) has spurred Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning initiatives in the area. In January 2005, MIC formally approved the Safe Routes to School in Superior, WI, a plan that examined safety issues and identified walking and biking routes to six schools in Superior, WI. MIC staff worked with the offices of area Congressmen Dave Obey (7th District WI) and Jim Oberstar (8th District MN) to co-support the funding for SRTS improvements in Superior in the federal transportation bill. This plan was successfully funded with federal High Priority Demonstration Funds and is in the process of being

programming and implemented. Having the prior knowledge of conducting a SRTS plan for Superior, MIC staff approached the Duluth Public School District's Transportation Director in the spring of 2005. The District expressed interest in developing a SRTS plan for selected urban schools with fewer busing options and large walking area boundaries.

Study Goal

To provide safe and adequate routes leading to schools so that more students are able to walk or bike to school.

Steering Committee

Membership of the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee was broadened and strategically selected. One of the key lessons learned in the Superior SRTS process was getting the Police Department and local Health Departments involved in the project. Another key lesson learned was inviting school principals to participate in the Steering Committee meetings if they chose to do so. A total of six steering committee meetings were held from August 2005 – May 2006, committee membership was comprised of:

Duluth Safe Routes to School Steering Committee Members		
Jurisdiction Staff		
Chuck Froseth		City of Duluth Senior Planner
Bill Hanson		Duluth School District Business Services
Tom Hustad		Duluth School Board President
Susan Koschak		Duluth Bicycle Representative
Sharon Montgomery		Duluth Police Department
Don Ness		Duluth City Council President
Paul Scanlan		City of Duluth Engineering
Jim Skoog		St. Louis County Community Health
Ann Wasson		Duluth School Board
Ken Willms		Duluth School District Transportation
School Principals/Staff		
Terry Cottingham		Stowe Principal
Eric Kaiser		Lincoln Park School Principal
Gregg Maus		Lincoln Park School Assistant Principal
Deb Rickard		Congdon Park Elementary Principal
Deb Sauter		Laura MacArthur Elementary Principal
Tom Threinen		Lester Park Elementary Principal

School Liaison/PTAs		
Julie Johnson		Lincoln Park School Community Liaison
Kim LeDoux		Stowe PTA President
Rosie Loeffler-Kemp		Lester Park PTA President
Pete Reynolds		Laura MacArthur PTA President
Cherri Sandbulte		Congdon Park PTA Member

Selecting Appropriate Schools

The Duluth School District covers 337 square miles along the Lake Superior Shoreline, operates more than 25 facilities and serves approximately 11,200 students in grades pre-Kindergarten through 12. The district's staff includes approximately 2200 full and part-time employees. Over 1,500 community volunteers donate their time to Duluth schools every year.

After describing the intent of SRTS projects in promoting walking and bicycling to school, the Duluth Public Schools Transportation Director suggested five walkable urban elementary schools and one middle school as good fits for this type of study. The Duluth School District has open enrollment across the city which impacts some schools more than others. Existing "magnet" (city-wide enrollment) and parochial schools are primarily bused or driven and many high schoolers are driving based on extra curricular activities.

Currently, Duluth students who live beyond the listed radiuses from school are allowed to be bused to school; otherwise, if a student is within the listed distance from school, they must walk or find alternative (vehicle) transportation. The following Duluth busing radii for students are: 0.5 mile for kindergarten, 0.7-mile for 1st-2nd grades, 1-mile for 3rd-6th, 2-mile for 7th-12th grades. Suggested schools for examination included:

Study Schools		
1	Stowe Elementary (K-5)	715- 101st Avenue West
2	Laura MacArthur Elementary (K-5)	727 North Central Avenue
3	Lincoln Park School (K-8)	2424 West 5th Street
4	Congdon Park Elementary (K-5)	3116 East Superior Street
5	Lester Park Elementary (2-5)	315 North 54th Avenue East

Other District elementary and middle schools had large rural busing areas and sparse walking boundaries around school. What was important to MIC staff was

the geographic representation from across the city in diverse neighborhoods. MIC staff contacted each school's principal to assess their interest in participating in this type of study. All schools were interested in participating. MIC staff devised a scope of work which was formally approved in July 2005 and was presented to the Duluth School Board in August 2005.

Study Objectives

- **To collect pertinent background information** including, but not limited to: sidewalks (condition, continuity and obstacles), bike routes and street network conditions surrounding schools. Along critical routes surrounding schools examine: posted speed limits (and actual speeds), signage, pavement markings, signalization, lighting, and site visibility (including shrubbery). Examine local charter and public transit routes and policies. Additionally, inventory existing land uses and zoning surrounding schools.
- **Organize a SRTS Steering Committee** comprised of school district staff, interested parents/PTA, community residents, police, public works engineers, teachers, children, bike/pedestrian interest groups and others (such as elected officials).
- **Utilize Steering Committee members to help identify** safety issues around schools through field observations. Areas to focus on include school parking lots where parents drop children, bus drop/pick-ups, and nearby intersections used by pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **To identify the primary routes students use**, or could use if they existed, to access local schools.
- **To make specific recommendations** which will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety access to Duluth schools.
- **Identify costs and potential funding sources** for proposed recommendations.
- **To build public awareness for pedestrian and bicycle laws**, especially as they apply to school zones.
- **To educate students about Minnesota bicycle and pedestrian rules** and helpful safety pointers.

Background Data Collection

- Map five targeted Duluth Elementary School locations, highlight participating schools

- Map school district boundaries for each participating school
- Street Network (including posted/actual speed limits, signage, pavement markings, signalization, lighting, etc.)
- Land Use and Zoning
- Sidewalks
- Bike Paths
- Charter Bus Routes and DTA Routes
- Traffic counts (current and historical)
- Accident history (Duluth bike/pedestrian accidents and deaths; MN annual bike/pedestrian accidents and deaths; National statistics)
- Research Minnesota pedestrian and bicycle laws
- Research City of Duluth pedestrian and bicycle ordinances (such as snow removal etc.)

Steering Committee Meeting(s)

- Present background data
- Determine study schools
- Refine study goals and objectives
- Solidify technical data to be collected
- Determine the forum for data collection at schools

Student/Parent/School Data Collection & Education

- Go to schools and have students map their address and route to school
- Identify primary routes students are utilizing
- Have students identify problem areas along routes
- Educate students about MN bike/pedestrian rules and safety pointers
- Survey parents to identify attitudes, behaviors, and safety concerns
- Survey principals to identify specific school site safety concerns

Technical Data and Analysis

- Display primary school routes and conditions

- Note access barriers and safety issues (including site visibility issues such as shrubbery)
- Identify high bike/pedestrian accident areas
- Photograph problem areas

Steering Committee Recommendation Setting Meeting(s)

- Develop recommendations which may include: infrastructure improvements (such as instituting traffic calming measures), and increased school crossing guards or policing
- Develop cost estimates for infrastructure improvements
- Identify potential funding sources for improvements

Public Outreach

- Hold a kick-off event such as the "International Walk to School Day" in early October and disseminate SRTS information
- Conduct a public education campaign to raise awareness through SRTS brochures in utility bills, public service announcements, billboards and TV ads (mainstream stations and Public Access Community Television also a resource) etc.
- Find co-sponsors to further expand the public relations effort (local bike/pedestrian groups, PTA etc.)
- Present plan recommendations to PTA, school board and/or city council

School Locations

Map 1 displays the locations of the five schools that were selected for examination in this study.

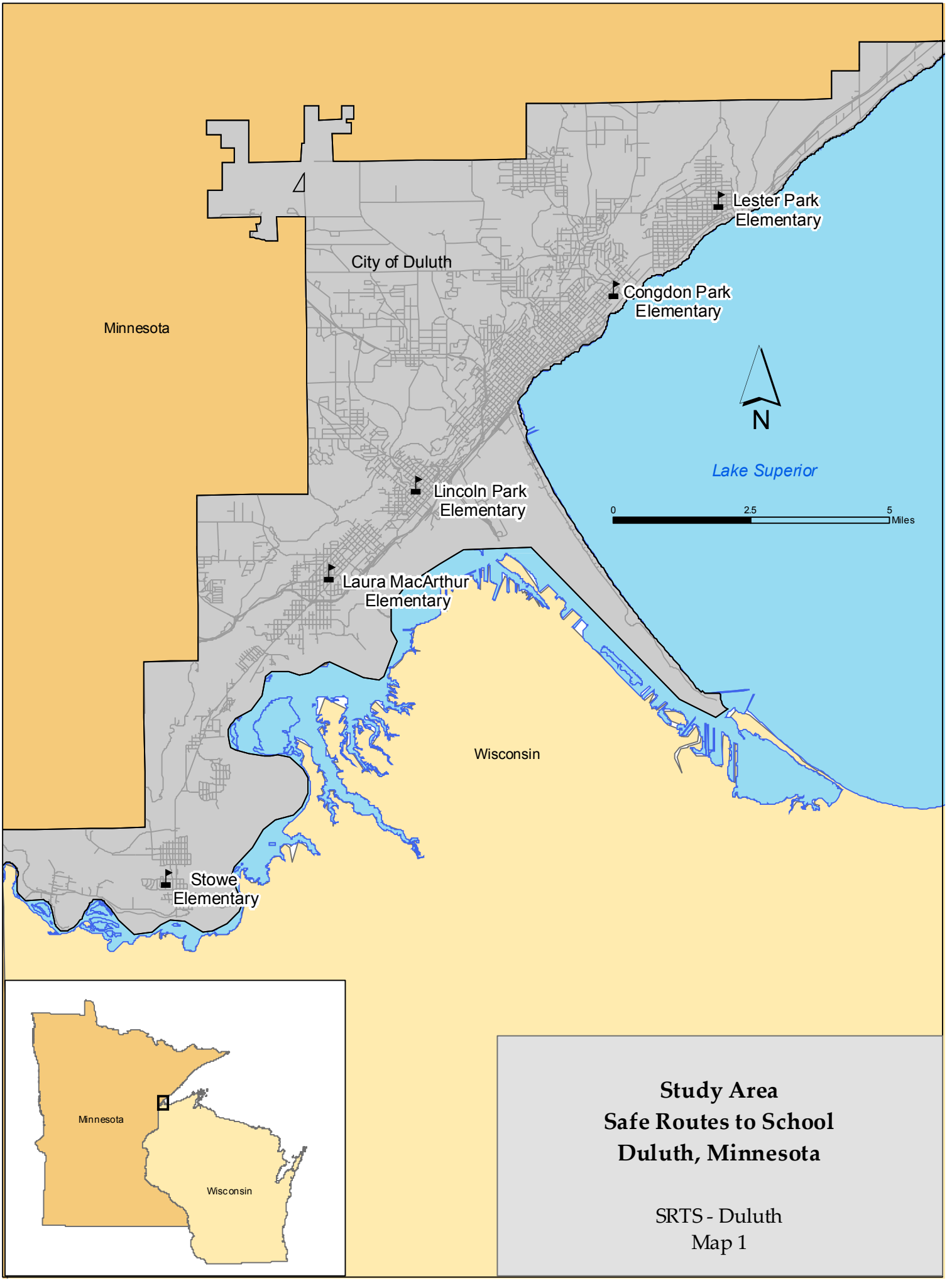
***Stowe Elementary School (K-5th** grades)*
At 715 - 101st Avenue West, Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary School is located in the southwestern part of Duluth near the St. Louis River. Stowe serves a predominantly blue-collar community and 600 preschool through fifth grade students. In 1914 "Old Stowe" was built and during the fall of 1994 "New Stowe" was built on the same site on Stowe Street and 101st Avenue West with architecture designed to enhance the school's environmental theme. Stowe Elementary School is considered an "environmental magnet school."

***Laura MacArthur Elementary School (K-5th** grades)*
Laura MacArthur Elementary School is located in West Duluth at 727 North Central Avenue. Approximately 450 students and 90 full-time and part-time staff comprise the school learning environment. Laura MacArthur Elementary School was built in 1914 as the original Denfeld High School and later became West Junior High in the 1920's. An elementary wing was added in the 1950's and it's transformation into an elementary school became complete in the 1970's. Laura MacArthur serves Duluth neighborhoods from 34th Avenue West to 75th Avenue West.

Lincoln Park School (K-8th grades)
Located at 2424 West 5th Street, Lincoln Park School serves approximately 600 kindergarten, elementary and middle school students. The school was constructed in 1889 and has had twelve additions since that time. This historic building also serves as a neighborhood center and is home to a variety of non-school programs including Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE), Boys and Girls Club of Duluth for kids ages 6-18 (after school and summer programs), and Head Start.

Congdon Park Elementary (K-5th grades)
Congdon Park Elementary School, located at 3116 East Superior Street, was constructed in 1929 and has had two additions since that time. The school is located in the Congdon neighborhood in East Duluth at the intersection of Superior and Hawthorne Streets.

Lester Park Elementary (2nd-5th grades)
Lester Park Elementary serves students in second through fifth grades in a historic building. The school first opened its doors in this established neighborhood in 1918. The school is located at 315 North 54th Avenue East in East Duluth.


Lester Park Elementary
City of Duluth
Congdon Park Elementary
Minnesota
N
Lake Superior
Lincoln Park Elementary
0
2.5
5
Miles
Laura MacArthur Elementary
Wisconsin
Stowe Elementary
Minnesota
Wisconsin
Study Area
Safe Routes to School
Duluth, Minnesota
SRTS - Duluth
Map 1

CHAPTER 2 / PRESENT CONDITIONS

Pedestrian Facilities

Good pedestrian facilities serve everyone. Whether you walk to your car, to the bus stop, or even to your destination, you are at some point utilizing a pedestrian facility. For every trip a community can get someone to walk, there is one less car on the road and less congestion for those who do choose to drive. Walking is also a pleasant form of exercise for many and encourages social interaction with others in the community. Communities can only benefit by ensuring that pedestrian facilities are not a secondary issue, but an equally important part of the transportation system.

Walkable communities have been shown in studies to be friendlier and safer places to live. When streets and roads are safe and comfortable, communities enjoy an enhanced quality of life. Of special importance is the role sidewalks play in the lives of the community's children. Children must utilize sidewalks to get to all of their destinations such as neighborhood homes and schools. A safe facility in good condition encourages kids to stay on the sidewalk and provides a barrier (generally a boulevard) from traffic in the street. Unfortunately, many communities that were at one time "walkable" are becoming less friendly for pedestrians through neglect and improper redevelopment that fails to take pedestrians into account. Modern day development has shifted from a multimodal approach to serving the automobile almost exclusively. A traditional neighborhood is highlighted by small lot sizes connected with a network of walkways. In contrast, many new developments have large lots, wide streets, and no sidewalks for the community to travel on.

The same can be said of commercial development. Old commercial districts at one time were built with storefronts directly abutting the street, and all were connected by walkways that separated stores from the street. Pedestrians could access these areas easily and safely. Now commercial development has shifted to large buildings fronted not by sidewalks or streets, but by large fields of asphalt parking lots that are many times difficult if not impossible for a pedestrian to cross without any concerns for safety.

School Zone Speed Limits—Minnesota Law

Each road authority can establish school zone speed limits on roads under their jurisdiction. Minnesota law requires a traffic investigation prior to establishing a school zone speed limit. A school zone is defined as roadway sections that abut

school grounds, or where there is an established school crossing with advance school signs to define the area. If a reduction in school speed limits is warranted it can not be more than 30 MPH nor lower than 15 MPH. Speeding violations in a school zone are subject to a double fine.

Pedestrian Crashes

A Minnesota study revealed 88% of pedestrian crashes occurred more than one block from school. Statistics indicate that location is not the predominant factor, safety education for pedestrians has the greatest impact for improvement since they can use it at all locations. School age crash information:

- Most occurred when a child dashed from behind parked cars
- Many crashes occur mid-block
- K – 3rd grade have difficulty understanding traffic control devices

School Route Plan

Minnesota recommends three distinct components be addressed in a school traffic investigation: a school route plan, hazard identification, and education. Establishes walking routes that minimize the number of streets crossed and maximize the safety of approved crossings used by children on the entire trip to school.

Hazard Identification

Examines nine issues utilizing the school route plan and evaluates each street for potential safety improvements along planned routes. Issues to examine include:

- Roadway geometry: crossing narrower roads in straight sections with good sight distance increases pedestrian safety
- Traffic volume: low volume roads are safer to cross. High volume roads require adult crossing guards for maximum safety.
- Pedestrian volumes: the number of pedestrians can determine signal timing or necessitate additional traffic control.
- Parking: should be banned in the immediate area of any school crossing
- Traffic Control Devices: should be reviewed to verify they are operating correctly and that signs are not hidden by vegetation
- Sidewalks: children walking in the street is dangerous. Continuous sidewalks that do not disappear and force children into the road are best.
- Fencing: strategically placed fencing can change walking patterns and prevent dangerous mid-block crossing. At playgrounds, it prevents errant kick-balls from rolling into the street and causing children to chase them from between parked cars.

- Crash History: crash investigation can reveal locations where remedial measures may not be working and pedestrians should be routed away from these areas.
- Speed zones: if all other measures have been addressed and a reduced speed is still required to safely navigate the school zone, then a school zone speed limit should be considered. Trained engineering personnel should design speed limits based on the limiting criteria and arbitrary blanket values should be avoided.

Education

Engineering and planning efforts will be lost if pedestrians are unaware of safe routes and safe practices. Children are rarely involved in crashes while crossing properly. Education is not the singular responsibility of one group or person, it is a broad partnership and commitment.

School Crossing Warrant for Signal

The school crossing signal warrant is intended for application where the fact that school children crossing a major street is the principal reason to consider installing a traffic control signal.

Standard

The need for a traffic control signal shall be considered when an engineering study of the frequency and adequacy of gaps in vehicular traffic stream, as related to the number and size of groups of school children at an established school crossing across the major street, shows that the number of adequate gaps in the traffic stream during the period when the children are using the crossing is less than the number of minutes in the same period and there are a minimum of 20 students during the highest crossing hour. Before a decision is made to install a traffic control signal, consideration shall be given to the implementation of other remedial measures, such as warning signals and flashers, school speed zones, school crossing guards, or grade-separated crossing.

The school crossing signal warrant shall not be applied at locations where the distance to the nearest traffic control signal along the major street is less than 300 feet unless the proposed traffic control signal will not restrict the progressive movement of traffic.

Guidance

If this warrant is met and a traffic control signal is justified by an engineering study, then:

- If at an intersection, the traffic control signal should be traffic-actuated and should include pedestrian detectors.
- If at a non-intersection crossing, the traffic control signal should be pedestrian-actuated, parking and other sight obstructions should be prohibited for at least 100 feet in advance of and at least 20 feet beyond the crosswalk, and the installation should include suitable standard signs and pavement markings.
- Furthermore, if installed within a signal system, the traffic control signal should be coordinated.

Duluth Sidewalk Inventory 2002

The goal of the Duluth Sidewalk Inventory was to assess the condition of all sidewalks in the City of Duluth and identify those areas that are most critical to maintain in good condition as well as gaps in the sidewalk network. Data collection began in the summer of 2000 and was verified over the summer of 2001. To identify the most highly used sidewalks in the poorest condition, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) computer technology was used. Ten land use characteristics that generate pedestrian traffic were used as criteria to determine sidewalk usage. These criteria included: roadway functional classification, schools, churches, parks, clinics/hospitals, community centers, senior centers, retail, transit routes and transit shelters. Using GIS computer technology, a two-block buffer was placed around each of these criteria. This analysis generated maps displaying locations with concentrated pedestrian destinations. Poor sidewalk conditions within these locations were recommended for improvement. Additionally, gaps in the city's sidewalk network were examined. The basis for recommending sidewalk construction in locations where there are currently gaps included improved neighborhood connectivity and establishing a comprehensive neighborhood sidewalk system. The plan is organized by city planning districts and will be a useful tool for the city's comprehensive plan update and for neighborhood organizations.

Duluth Sidewalk Replacement Policy

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding has helped fund sidewalk replacement projects in one or more eligible neighborhoods annually. Eligible Duluth neighborhoods include: East and Central Hillsides, Lincoln Park, West

Duluth and Morgan Park. These areas are determined by census tracts and block groups with populations over 51% low to moderate income. These funds are granted to central cities (of metropolitan areas) of 50,000 or more in population to revitalize neighborhoods. Eligible activities include improving affordable housing, economic opportunities, community facilities and services.

On state or federal aid street projects, sidewalks are eligible for either replacement or new installation. The City of Duluth is adding and repairing sidewalks wherever possible using these funds. The City also coordinates with St. Louis County and MnDOT on projects within Duluth to include sidewalks where needed.

The city's residential Street Improvement Program (SIP) began in 1994. For the first six years of this program, sidewalk replacement was done only at the request of property owners and assessed to them directly at 100% of the cost. SIP street projects were subsidized by the city so that the property owners pay only 25% of the street improvement cost. This policy was also unsuccessful and few sidewalk system improvements were made.

The sidewalk replacement policy was refined in 1999 to allow sidewalk improvements to be incorporated into SIP cost estimates. The sidewalk costs are now included into the overall SIP for the year and add a minimal amount to the overall budget. Sidewalk improvements are socialized into the overall program, everyone pays the same cost per front foot whether or not their sidewalk is replaced. With this policy, property owners now pay just 25% of the total improvement cost (both street and sidewalk). This program has been successful as residents have been getting a better final product and failing infrastructure is being tended to.

Duluth Sidewalk Snow Removal Policy

Snow removal is a problem during winter months not only for those who are elderly or in wheelchairs, but also for pedestrians. Snow can easily become packed down by pedestrians and can quickly turn into ice creating hazards on Duluth's hills. This becomes a liability for abutting sidewalk property owners and the city. When snow accumulation becomes significant, pedestrians are often forced to use roadways.

Failure to remove snow is a violation of city code, but it is rarely enforced in Duluth unless there are several complaints about a specific location. Duluth has the following measures in place regarding sidewalk snow removal:

- *Sidewalk Snow Removal Hotline*: to issue complaints about problematic sidewalk locations.

- *Volunteer Snow Angels:* assist those Duluth residents that are not able or need assistance in removing snow (contact city hall).
- *Street Snowplowing Hotline:* to issue complaints about streets that have not been plowed.

After a complaint is issued, a city official will check on the sidewalk. If it is in need of clearing, a letter will be written to the property owner giving them 24 hours to clear the sidewalk. If it is not cleared, a second letter is written to the property owner. If it is still not cleared, the city will hire it to be done at the cost of the property owners (an assessment is made and levied against the property).

Commission on Disabilities

Annually, the Commission on Disabilities stresses the importance of the city's snow removal policy. The Commission has stressed the importance of publicizing the snow removal ordinance to the general public during winter months to educate or remind them of the city's policy. In Minneapolis, the snow removal ordinance is posted in newsletters throughout winter months as well as other media outlets (e.g. television). The Commission has suggested that effective media is a necessity and recommended radio, television (also during weather forecasts), and Public Access Community Television (PACT) television as potential outlets.

Duluth U.S. Postal Service

During winter months, U.S. Postal Service carriers in Duluth are told to use their best judgement in terms of examining the accessibility of both roads and sidewalks. If streets and sidewalks are not safely accessible to deliver mail, due to snow and/or ice accumulation, the mail carrier will do one of two things:

- Post a small card that reads "In order to receive mail, you need to clear sidewalks of ice and snow."
- Will simply not deliver mail and will hold it at the post office until it is accessible and safe to deliver mail.

The post office stated there are several problematic homes along their routes that remain inaccessible throughout the winter months. The post office does not have ticketing or police power, the only "teeth" they have to influence the snow removal policy is to not deliver mail and post reminders that residents are required to remove snow and ice.

Bicycle Trails and On-street Bike Routes

The focus on bicycling as a mode of transportation has taken on greater significance in the last decade due to a number of reasons, not the least is the growing health concerns in the United States. Encouraging bicycling has been regarded as one way to encourage people to live a more active lifestyle and hence live healthier lives. National and statewide trends show that the rates of obesity continue to increase each year at alarming rates. Even more cause for concern is the increasing rate of obesity among children, which has created an impetus for increasing awareness of the benefits of exercising in general and bicycling in particular.

Map 2 illustrates that the existing bike network is an interconnected but incomplete system of on-street designated bike routes and off-street multiple use recreational paths. Over the past 10 years, much work has been focused on implementing a complete on-street bike route system within the region. On-street bike routes have been designated and signed in Duluth and Hermantown, only a part of the planned regional system. Biking to school is not supported by the Duluth School District nor are bike racks generally provided.

Duluth Public School District Bike Policy (Student Driving and Parking Vehicles at School)

The principal of each school is given the authority and responsibility to regulate and control the use of automobiles and other vehicles of transportation by students going to and from school during the school day. Students shall not bring skis, wagons, skateboards, sleds, bicycles, motorcycles, snowmobiles, or scooters to the school building or grounds except by permission of the principal (Adopted June 1970, Revised June 1995).

Local Bicycle Planning Activities

Over the past 10 years, the region has made bikeway routes an integral component of its transportation system. Since the completion of the Lakewalk, bikeway

planning activities have increased exponentially, from creating a regional bike map, placing signs to mark the designated on-street bike route network, and examining options to connect the Munger Trail to Canal Park, the Lakewalk, and downtown Duluth.

Much of the bikeway planning focus of the last few years has been on examining and properly designating on-street routes to accommodate the cycling public. While off-street paths are a good way to accommodate bikers, the trails are not widespread enough nor do they lead to many of the region's attractions. In addition, nearly all of the trails in the area are multi-use trails, which inherently have safety issues due to the incompatibility of bicyclists, pedestrians, and in-line skaters. Recent project examples include:

Duluth-Hermantown Bike Route Project – Phase I (2002)

On-Street Bike Route Signage – index of streets, designation of bike routes, and placement of wayfinding signs in Duluth and Hermantown.

Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Bike Map (2003)

An area wide map detailing both the on-street and off-street bikeway system.

Duluth, Proctor, & St. Louis County Bike Route Project – Phase II (2004)

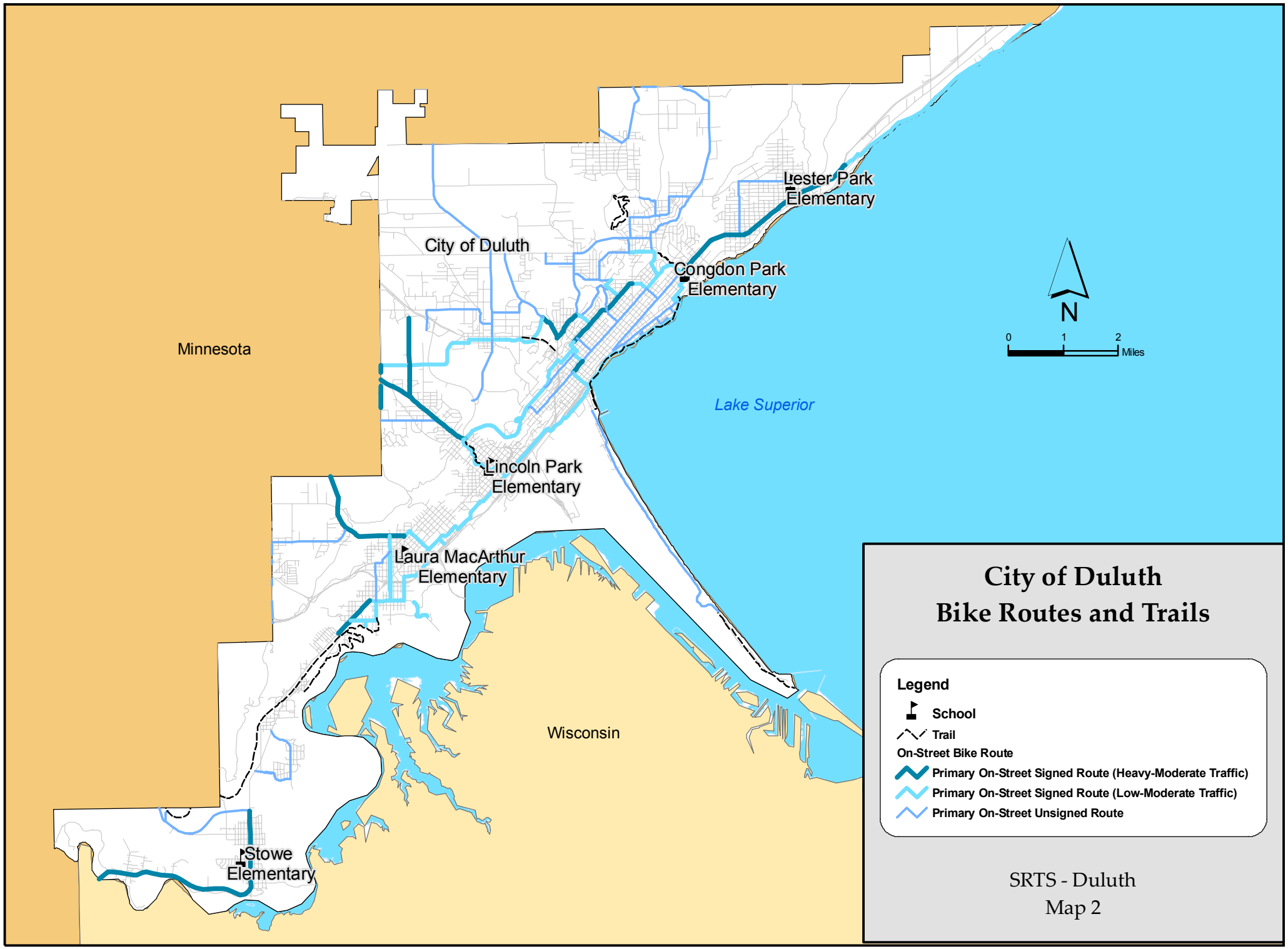
On-Street Bike Route Signage – continuation of indexing streets, designation of bike routes, and placement of wayfinding signs in Duluth, Proctor, Hermantown and St. Louis County.

Munger Trail Extension (2006)

An 8-mile section to connect the existing trail to the Lakewalk and downtown Duluth. The Munger and other paved routes will eventually connect St. Paul to downtown Duluth.

Superior Bike Route Project – Phase III (2006)

On-street bike route signage project that will entail developing an index of streets, designating bike routes, and placing wayfinding signs in Superior.


Lester Park Elementary
City of Duluth
Congdon Park Elementary
N
0
1
2
Miles
Minnesota
Lake Superior
Lincoln Park Elementary
Laura MacArthur Elementary
Wisconsin
Stowe Elementary
City of Duluth
Bike Routes and Trails
Legend
School
Trail
On-Street Bike Route
Primary On-Street Signed Route (Heavy-Moderate Traffic)
Primary On-Street Signed Route (Low-Moderate Traffic)
Primary On-Street Unsigned Route
SRTS - Duluth
Map 2

Transit

Public transit is an important component of any urban transportation system. Traditionally, public transit has served two primary purposes. First, to provide a basic level of mobility to all citizens, particularly to those unable to drive or those without access to other modes. Second, transit serves those that may have another means but for a variety of reasons choose to use public transit (i.e. commuters). Public transit helps employers minimize valuable parking spaces near businesses, provides transportation for employees, and can serve as a business tax incentive with programs such as Commuter Choice. Commuter Choice is a program that allows employers to offer transit as a benefit to employees, while deducting the cost to employees using transit.

Network Characteristics

Map 3 displays DTA services in Duluth; other cities served include Superior and Proctor. The DTA operates 17 fixed routes, a seasonal port town trolley tourist route, and operates extensive STRIDE paratransit services. Additionally, DTA provides service to four area colleges and universities by administering three U-Pass programs and serving the fourth with a current fixed route. The DTA maintains two Park and Ride Lots at the end of the Woodland route located at Calvary Road and Chicago Avenue and on the Piedmont route at Haines Road and Piedmont Avenue.

All DTA buses are seasonally equipped with bike racks, free of charge. For the safety and security of its passengers, DTA buses and the downtown transit center are constantly monitored by security cameras. The DTA also offers unlimited-ride monthly passes for adults and teens, and employer-subsidized Commuter Pass Programs.

<u>STRIDE (Special Transit Ride) Paratransit Services</u>

The DTA operates STRIDE for persons unable to ride regular route DTA buses because of physical or cognitive disabilities. STRIDE is a curb-to-curb service operated within the city limits of Duluth, Proctor, and Superior. A licensed physician must certify STRIDE Riders before they are eligible to ride. Advance reservations are required. STRIDE service hours are 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. during the week, and from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends.

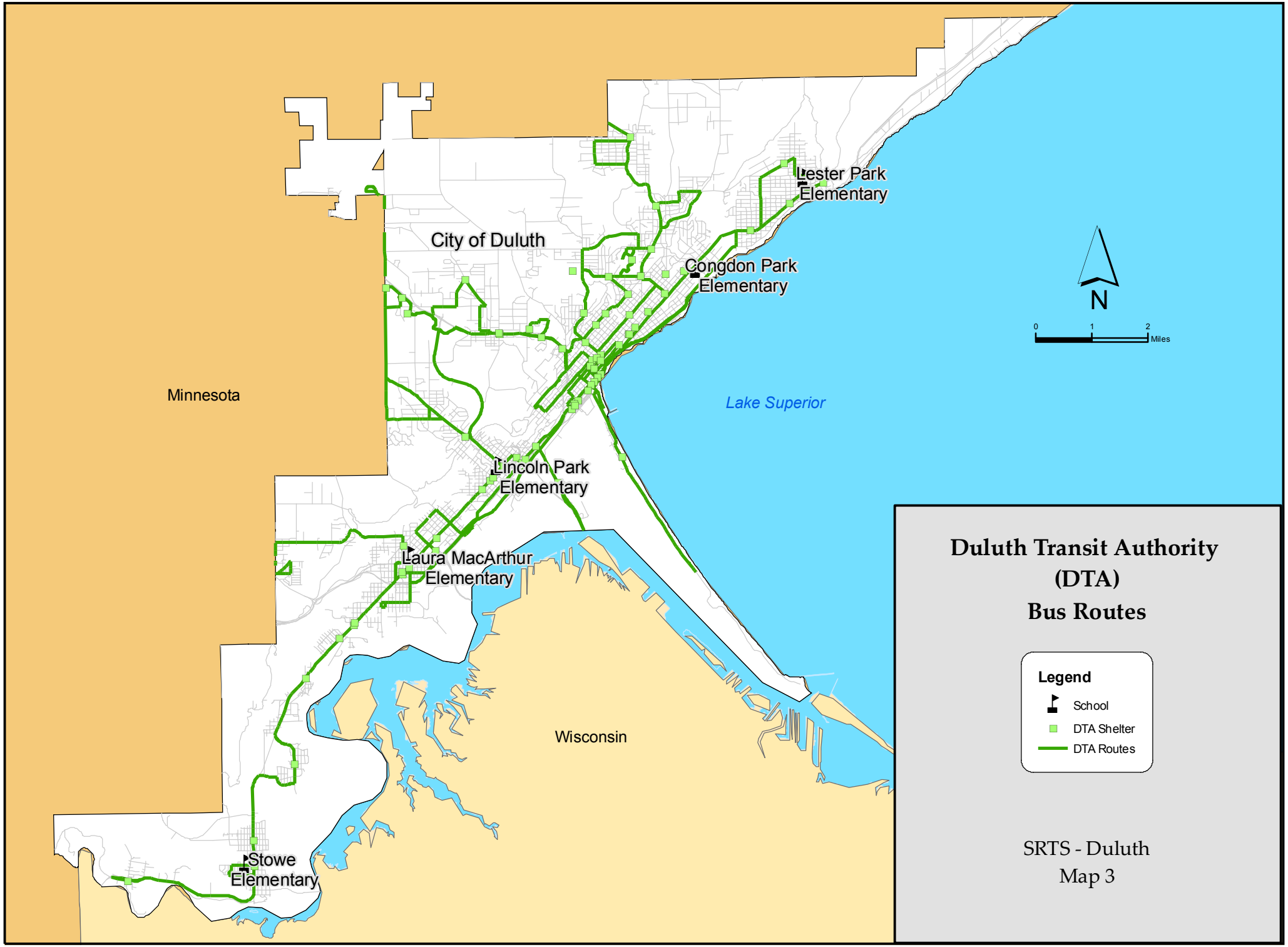
<u>Regular Route Service</u>

All DTA buses are equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps. Many DTA buses

are also equipped with kneelers. The fronts of these buses lower to allow the front door steps to be closer to the curb to allow easier boarding access.

School Bus Service

Through June 2003, the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) held the school contract to assist in providing transportation services for Duluth Students. Busing is now provided by Voyageur Bus Company. Teen DTA bus passes are also sold and routes available to serve students in need of transportation. DTA transportation is important for many of the schools; Lincoln Park School students utilize this service.


Lester Park
Elementary
City of Duluth
Congdon Park
Elementary
N
0
1
2
Miles
Minnesota
Lake Superior
Lincoln Park
Elementary
Laura MacArthur
Elementary
Wisconsin
Stowe
Elementary
Duluth Transit Authority
(DTA)
Bus Routes
Legend
School
DTA Shelter
DTA Routes
SRTS - Duluth
Map 3

CHAPTER 3 / IDENTIFYING SAFETY ISSUES AND PRIMARY ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Several methods were employed to identify safety issues and to determine the most commonly-used walking and biking routes to school.

Student & Parent Surveys

The week of October 10th 2005, 1,400 student and parent surveys were administered to 3rd through 8th grade students and their parents in each study school. A copy of the student and parent surveys can be found in the Appendix of this plan.

As previously mentioned, students who live outside the district-defined distances from school are allowed to be bused to school; otherwise, students must walk or find alternative (vehicle) transportation. Those students who stated they walked or biked to school were asked to draw in their routes to school on maps attached to their surveys.

To promote the surveying and SRTS study effort, Congressman James Oberstar as well as MIC Staff submitted school newsletter articles for each school's October newsletter (see Appendix).

Administering Surveys

MIC staff determined the number of elementary (3rd through 5th) and middle (6th through 8th) school students by contacting each school. MIC staff then devised "teacher instructions" on how to administer the student surveys in class and mapping of routes to school for those students who walk or bike to school. Parent surveys had a cover letter attached to them from each school principal requesting that parents have their child return the form to their teacher by the end of the week or mail to MIC staff. After student and parent survey results were compiled, MIC staff wrote a school specific results school newsletter article for the January issues (see Appendix).

PTA Outreach

During January and February 2006 MIC staff presented the student and parent survey results to each school's PTA. Staff then asked for input from each PTA on safety issues around schools. Parent concerns were written up and shared with the Steering Committee prior to formulating safety recommendations (see Appendix).

School Site Traffic Observations

School site traffic observations were also conducted by MIC staff during the week of October 10th in an effort to examine parent's traffic behavior, the functionality of bus zones, and the ease of kids walking to school. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Duluth School District policy 5095 gives each school principal authority and responsibility to regulate and control the use of automobiles and other vehicles of transportation by students going to and from school during the school day. Students shall not bring bicycles to the school building or grounds except by permission of the principal. Therefore infrastructure such as bicycle racks are not provided at Duluth Elementary schools.

Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary School

Survey Synopsis

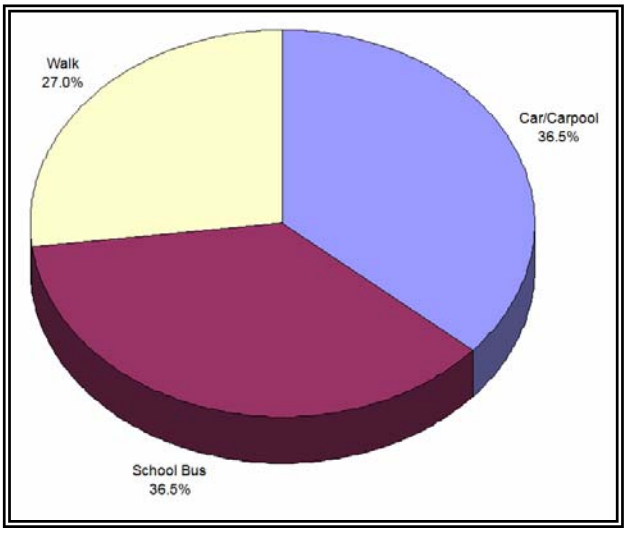
There are approximately 200 third through fifth grade students at Stowe Elementary School, whose behaviors were examined in this study. Map 4 displays that Stowe Elementary is located one block off of MnDOT Trunk Highway 23 (Commonwealth Avenue) in the Duluth neighborhood of Gary-New Duluth. The walking boundary for third through fifth grade children living in the vicinity of school is a one-mile radius around school. The percentage of third through fifth graders within the one-mile school district walking boundary is 46.11%, looking farther out, 53.89% of third through fifth graders live within a two-mile radius of school.

The intersection of Stowe Street & Commonwealth Avenue (T.H. 23)

Parent Response

The Parent return rate for Stowe surveys was 37%. Parents said their child's transportation to school was: 27% by walking, 36.5% by carpool, and 36.5% by bus. Parents noted the dangerous school crossings on Trunk Highway (T.H.) 23 at Stowe and Fillmore Streets. Parents suggested a legal school zone with increased visibility and traffic calming measures as potential solutions.

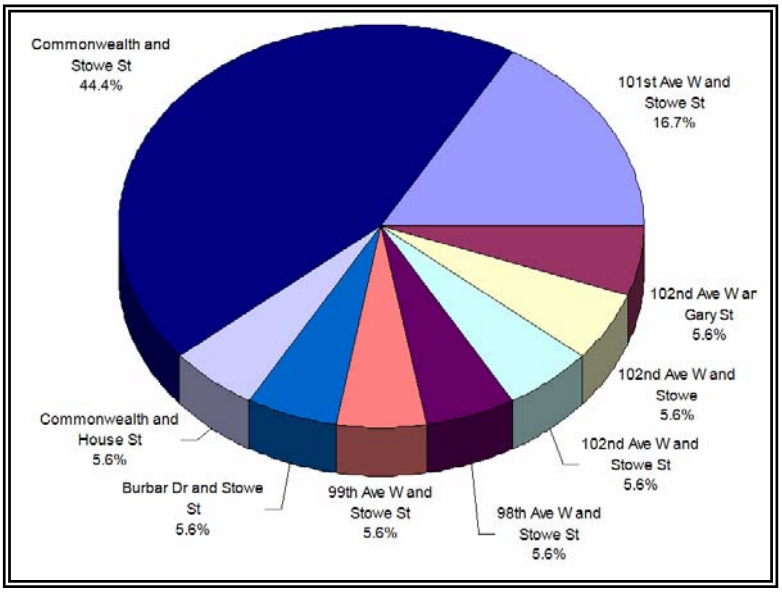
Parents answered that 57% of students use sidewalks in the winter and 69% of these respondents mentioned that sidewalks are not shoveled, are icy, and that kids are forced into the street. If a school coordinated walk to school program were established at Stowe Elementary, 48% of parents would allow their children to participate with 22% answering that they would maybe allow their children to participate (if adult volunteers were safety checked on criminal history).



Stowe Parent Response: How does your child get to school?

Student Response

The student survey return rate for Stowe Elementary was 78.5%. Students noted that the busiest intersections to cross were T.H. 23 at Stowe Street and 101st Avenue West at Stowe Street. Student suggested improvements for safer access to school included more stop lights and stop signs, enforcement of snow removal policy and de-icing of sidewalks, walking in groups, building sidewalks, and having adult crossing supervisors. Students mentioned that the best part of walking to school is that it's fun exercise to wake up in the fresh air (43.3%) and its fun being with friends (43.3%).



Student-identified unsafe intersections to cross

PTA Input

On February 7, 2006 MIC staff presented the results of the student and parent surveys to the Stowe PTA. Some of the key input received included:

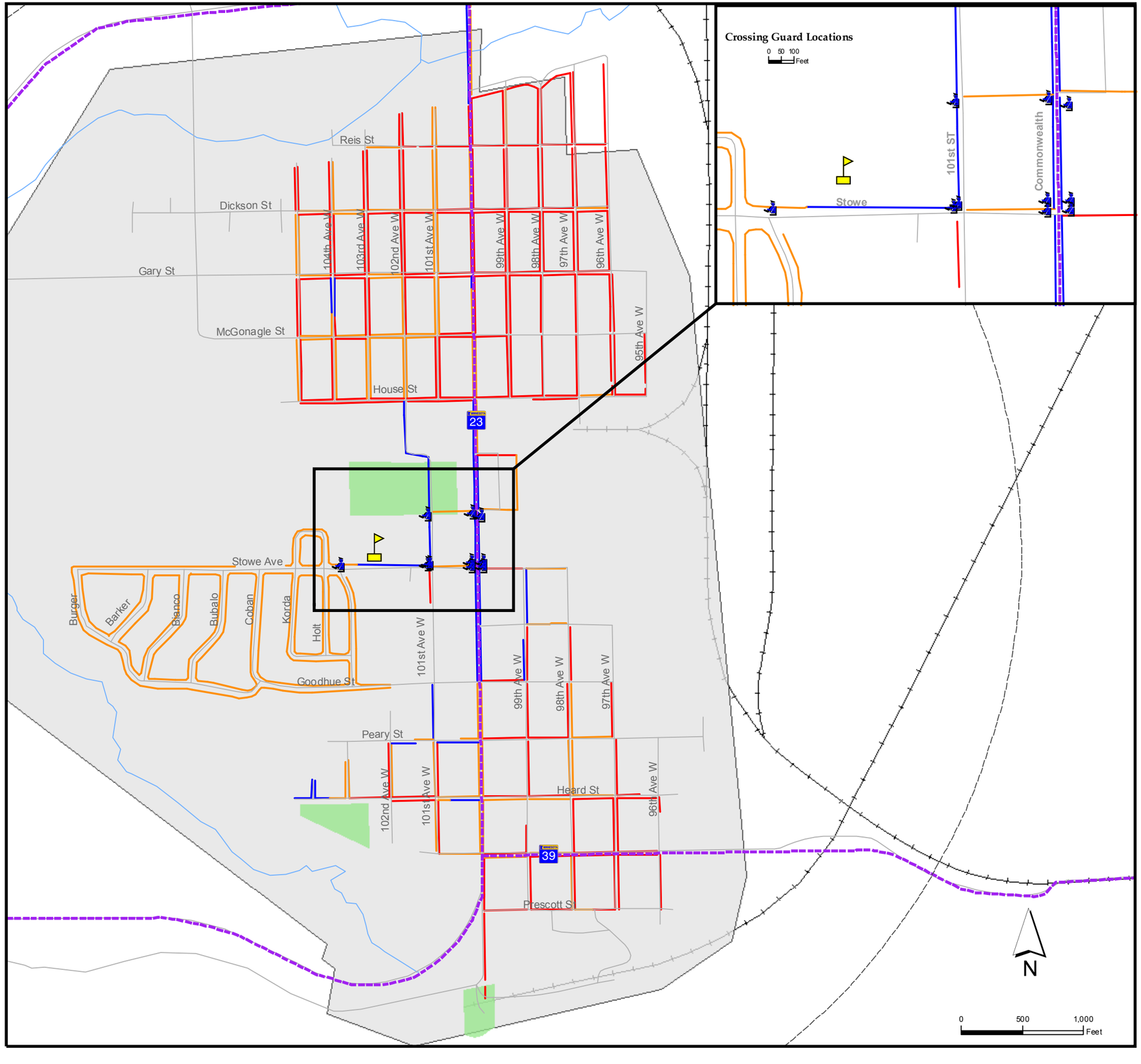
- **Students are not allowed inside the building until 7:50am** which is problematic for parents who have to be to work by 8am. Parents are forced to leave kids out in the cold.
    - **Gary Street is dangerous to cross**
    - **Commonwealth Avenue has snow piled along the sidewalks** which should be bumped back by MnDOT plows.
    - **The Gary-New Duluth neighborhood is poorly lit**.
    - **Parents do not like different walking boundaries for different grades**, it creates a situation where transportation is available to one sibling but not the other, and because parents are then torn, and wind up driving them to school.
    - **Kids are crossing T.H. 23 in the business district** area, which is dangerous, and kids are hard to see.

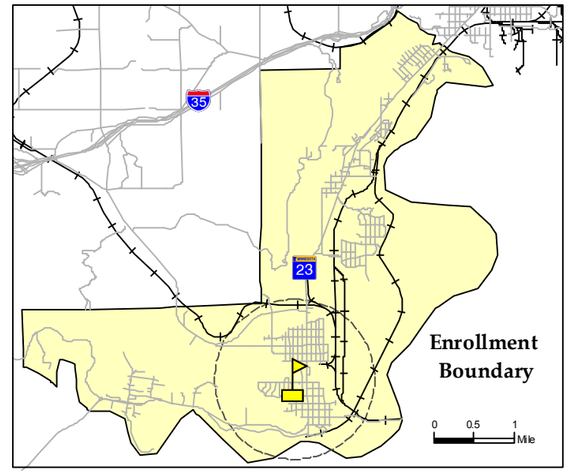
School Site Traffic Observations

The week of October 10th 2005, MIC staff observed morning and afternoon traffic dynamics around Stowe Elementary School. Major issues noted by MIC staff included:

- **Kids walking in the street on 101st Avenue West south of Stowe Street** due to lack of sidewalks.
- **Poor lighting around school and at school crossings** along Commonwealth Avenue (T.H. 23) and Stowe Street

Lack of sidewalk on 101st Avenue West south of Stowe Street





Stowe Elementary

Enrollment Boundary and Functional Classification

Legend

- Stowe Elementary

Crossing Guards

- Adult
- Student
- Enrollment Boundary
- Walking Boundary
- 1-Mile Radius
- Functionally Classified Road

Sidewalk Condition

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Streams
- Parks
- Rail Road Tracks

SRTS - Duluth
Map 4

- **Parent congestion** in front loop including parents parking and walking kids into school.
- **Poor school crossing visibility** (signage and markings) on T.H. 23 and on Stowe Street at 101st Avenue West.
- **Lack of tree trimming** around school-tree branch covering stop sign at Stowe Street and 101st Avenue West.
- **Kids walking to school before crossing guards are out to assist them.**

Laura MacArthur Elementary School

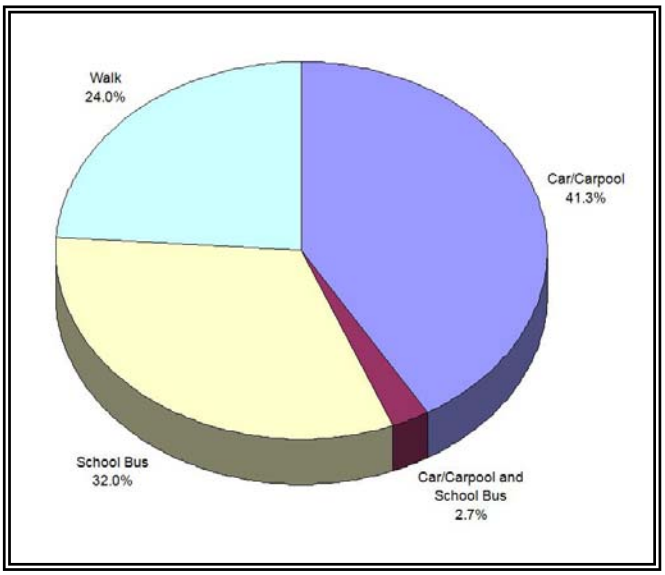
Survey Synopsis

In front of Laura MacArthur Elementary on Central Avenue

There are approximately 210 third through fifth grade students at MacArthur Elementary school, whose behavior was examined in this study. Map 5 displays the location of Laura MacArthur Elementary in the neighborhood of West Duluth on Central Avenue, a functionally classified roadway. The walking boundary for third through fifth grade children living in the vicinity of school is a one-mile radius around school. The percentage of third through fifth graders within the one-mile school district walking boundary is 64.90%, looking farther out, 91.83% of third through fifth graders live within a two-mile radius of school. West Duluth is a neighborhood that is eligible to receive CDBG funding as it has census tracts/block groups with populations over 51% low to moderate income.

Parent Response

The parent survey return rate was 36% for MacArthur Elementary School for parents of 3rd through 5th graders. Parents said their child's transportation to school was: 24% by walking, 41.3% by carpooling, and 32% by bus. Parents noted the dangerous school crossings of 6th Street and Central, Central and Grand, Central and Elinor, and 57th Avenue West and Elinor. Parent suggestions for improvement included creating a legal school zone with increased visibility and traffic calming measures, and the need for more stop signs, four-way stops,

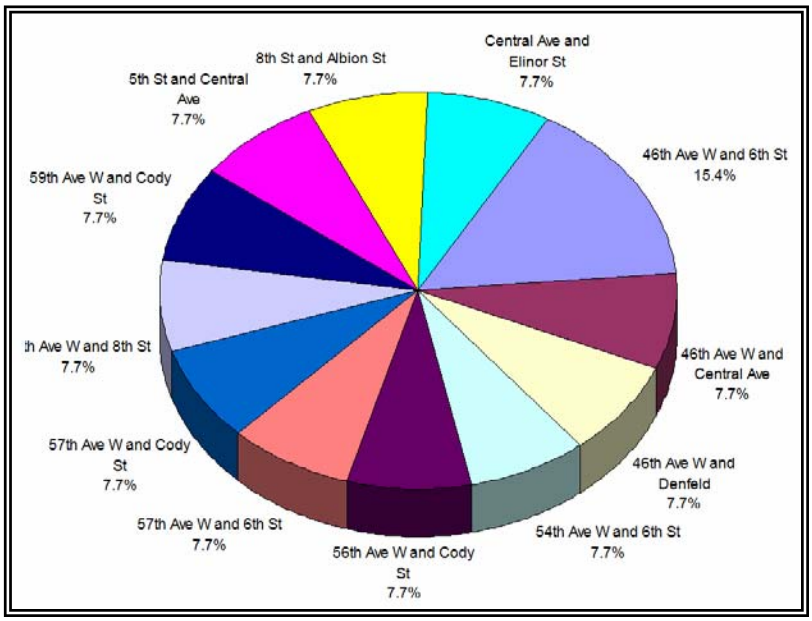


MacArthur Parent Response: How does your child get to school?

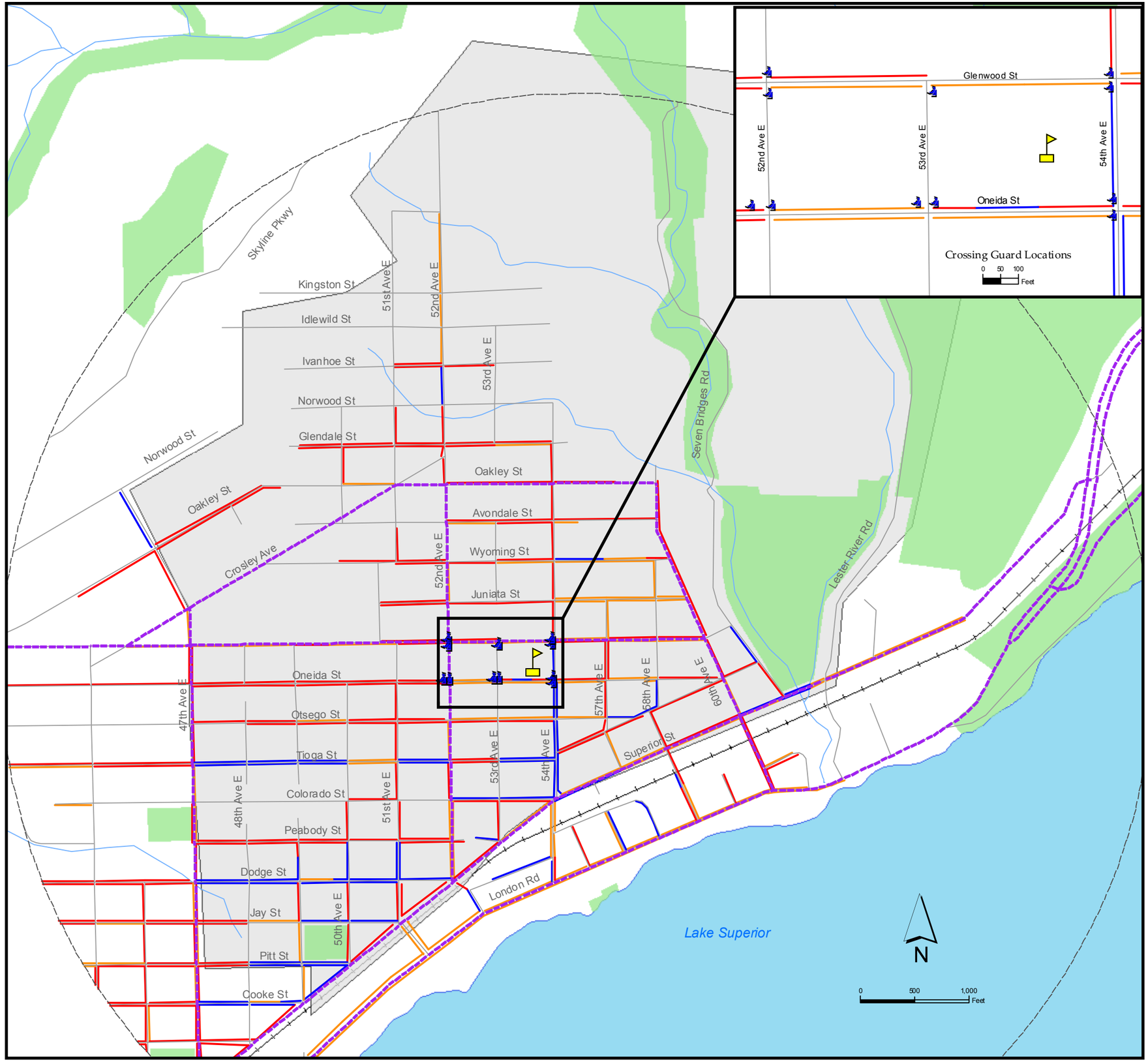
or signals. Parents answered that 57% of students use sidewalks in the winter and 37% of these respondents mentioned that sidewalks are not shoveled, are icy, and that kids are forced into the street. If a school coordinated walk to school program were established at MacArthur, 52% of parents would allow their children to participate with 20% answering that they would maybe allow their children to participate (if adult volunteers were safety checked on criminal history). Parent surveys indicated that 56% of parents would not allow their child to bike to school.

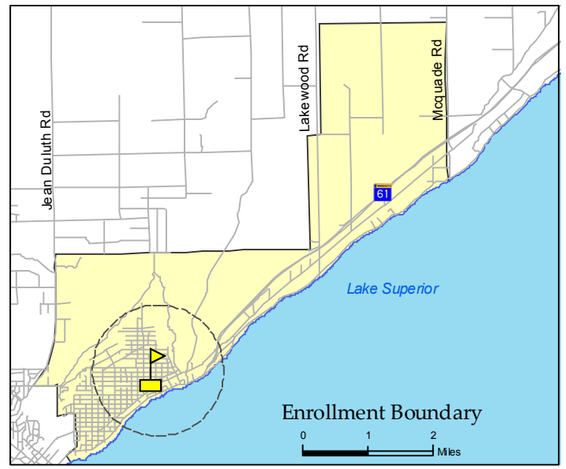
<u>Student Response</u>

The student survey return rate for MacArthur was 47%. Students noted that the busiest intersection to cross was 46th Avenue West and 6th Street near Denfeld High School. Suggested improvements for safer access to school included more crossing guards that are out earlier and stay later, slower speeds, driver education to watch for kids, and more stop signs and signals. Students mentioned that the best part of walking to school is that it's fun exercise to wake up in the fresh air (48%), it's fun being with friends (20%), and being independent (20%).



Student-identified unsafe intersections to cross





Lester Park
Enrollment Boundary and Functional Classification

Legend

- Lester Park Elementary

Crossing Guards

- Adult
- Student
- Enrollment Boundary
- Walking Boundary
- 1-Mile Radius
- Functionally Classified Road

Sidewalk Condition

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Streams
- Parks
- Rail Road Tracks

SRTS - Duluth
Map 8

PTA Input

On January 10th MIC staff presented the October student and parent transportation survey results to the MacArthur PTA. Key input received from the MacArthur PTA included:

- **Very poorly trained crossing guards** with zero adult supervision to aid them, young children wait to be crossed and guards do not always help, and they are out late and come in early. Student crossing guards (3rd-5th graders) are congregating on the same corner when they are supposed to be stationed on separate corners. School crossing guard coordinators are teachers in the classroom and are not out on the street helping the kids. There is need for an adult crossing guard supervisor like Congdon Elementary and Ordean Middle School.
- **Allow biking to school** in the long term which many parents would support.
- **Congestion and chaos in front** of MacArthur school on Central Avenue; all buses, parents, and walkers are exiting in the same location, and parents are crossing Central Avenue mid-block dodging traffic because they are parking in the teacher's lot, the only place available. Additionally, there are no traffic calming measures, no school zone visibility with flashing lights or posted speeds along Central Avenue, and no school zone police enforcement of speeding. Add this all together and it is a disaster waiting to happen. Parents want and need a separate parent drop off area that is away from the buses and walkers, where their kids don't have to cross a busy street to access them.

School Site Traffic Observations

The week of October 10th 2005, MIC staff observed morning and afternoon traffic dynamics around Laura MacArthur Elementary School. Major issues noted by MIC staff included:

- **Crossing guards socializing and not crossing kids.** They need to stand at separate corners.
- **Need adult crossing guard supervision**

Crossing guards socializing and lacking adult supervision.

- **Poor traffic circulation around school.** Parents parking in teacher lot, crossing Central Avenue in traffic and in front of buses to get their kids, and then crossing back through traffic. No traffic calming measures on Central Avenue, no speed enforcement, no separation of school traffic, its all in one location: teachers, buses, parents and walkers.
- **Non-functional parent drop on 6th Street** which is not being used, street is too narrow and does not allow traffic, including buses, to pass.
- **Parents parking in back of school** along 56th Avenue West, including parking on the sidewalks.

Lincoln Park Elementary and Middle School

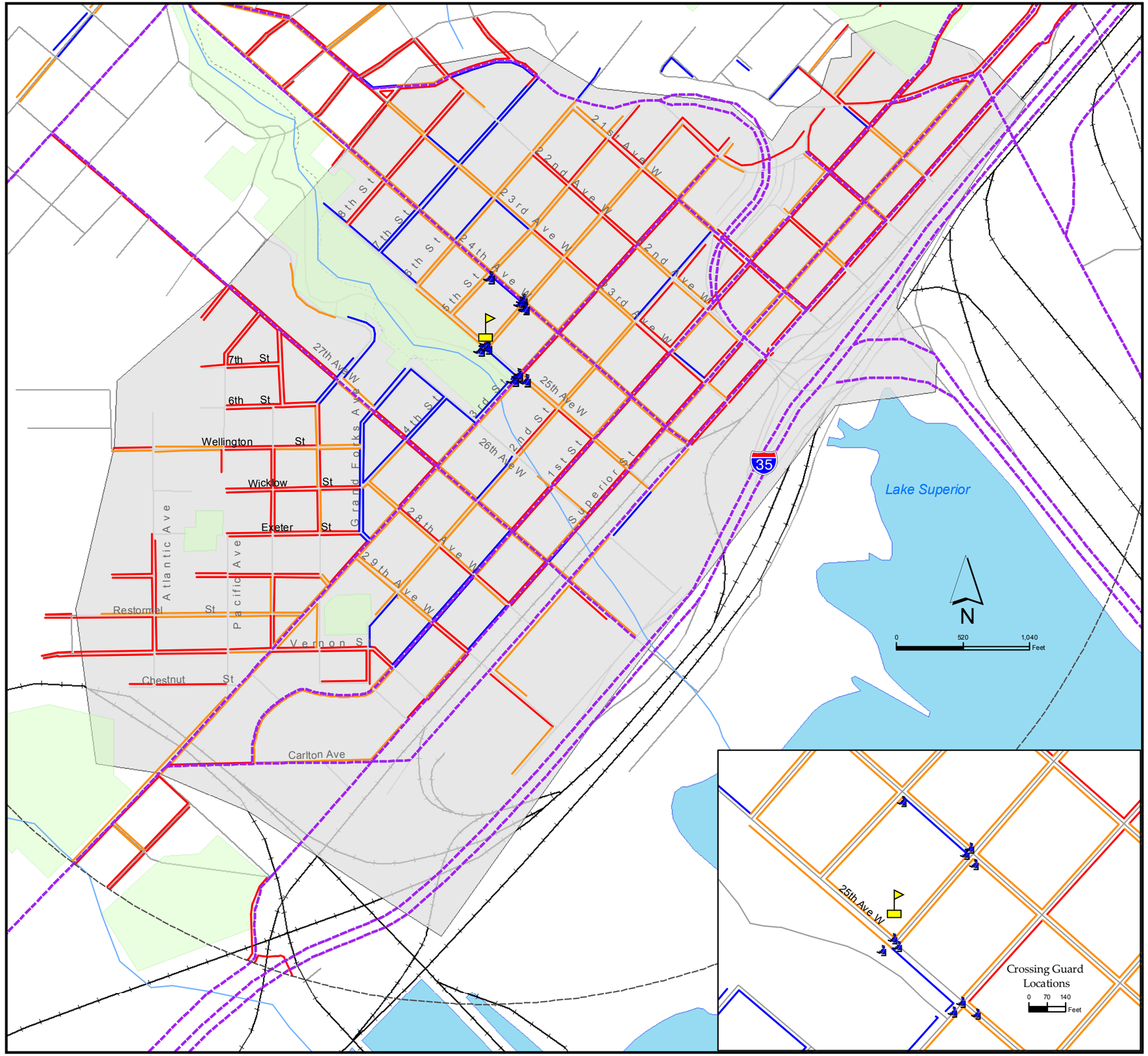
Survey Synopsis

There are 530 students at Lincoln Park School, 130 of whom are third through fifth graders and 300 of whom are sixth through eighth graders. Map 6 displays the location of Lincoln Park School. The walking boundary for third through sixth grade children living in the vicinity of school is a one-mile radius around school and the walking boundary for 7th and 8th graders is a two-mile radius around school. The percentage of third through eighth graders within the one-mile school district walking boundary is 67.86%, and 88.27% of third through fifth graders live within a two-mile radius of school. Lincoln Park School is bordered by several functionally classified roadways and is in a densely populated neighborhood. Lincoln Park is a neighborhood that is eligible to receive CDBG funding as it has census tracts/block groups with populations over 51% low to moderate income.

The intersection of 4th Street and 25th Avenue West

<u>Parent Response</u>

The parent survey return rate was 16% for Lincoln Park School for parents of 3rd through 8th graders. Parents said their child's transportation to school was: 25.4% by walking, 32.4% by carpooling, and 39.4% by bus. Parent surveys noted the dangerous school crossings of 24th Avenue West and 4th Street, 24th Avenue West and 5th Street, and 24th Avenue West and 3rd Street.



Lincoln Park

Enrollment Boundary and Functional Classification

Legend

- Lincoln Park Elementary

Crossing Guards

- Adult
- Student
- Enrollment Boundary
- Walking Boundary
- 1-Mile Radius
- Functionally Classified Road

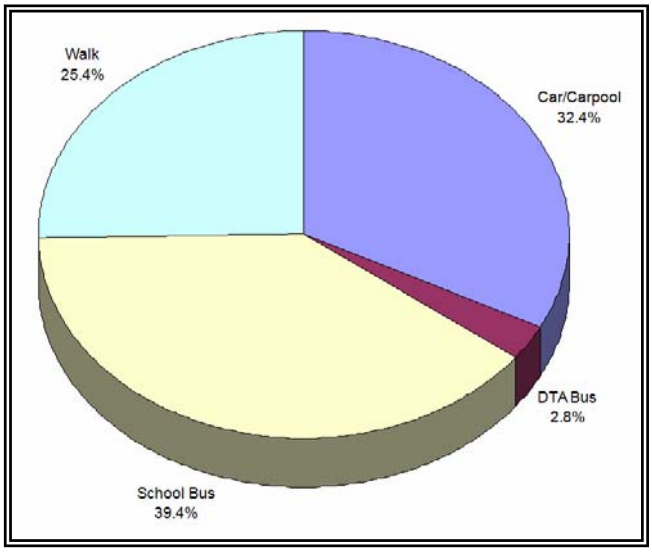
Sidewalk Condition

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Parks
- Streams
- Trails
- Rail Road Tracks

SRTS - Duluth
Map 6

Parent suggestions for improvement included creating a legal school zone with increased visibility and traffic calming measures, more stop signs, four-way stops, or signals, and adult crossing guards or supervisors.

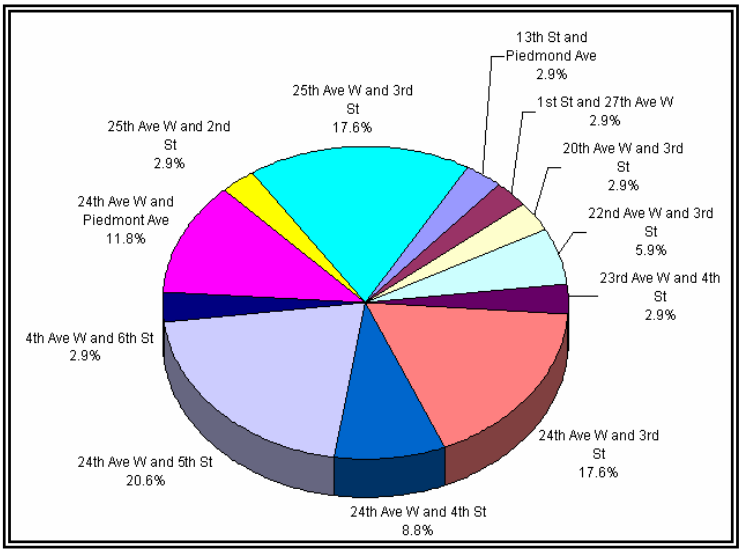
Parents answered that 46% of students use sidewalks in the winter and 44% of these respondents mentioned that sidewalks are not shoveled, are icy, and that kids are forced into the street. If a school coordinated walk to school program were established at Lincoln Park School 35% of parents would allow their children to participate with 32% answering that they would maybe allow their children to participate (if adult volunteers were checked for history of issues). Parent surveys indicated that 64% of parents would not allow their child to bike to school. A unique parent concern at Lincoln Park School was the presence of level 3 neighborhood registered sex offenders.



Lincoln Parent Response: How does your child get to school?

Student Response

The student survey return rate for Lincoln Park School was 61%. Students noted that the busiest intersections to cross were 24th Avenue West and 5th Street, 25th Avenue West and 3rd Street, 24th Avenue West and 3rd Street, 24th Avenue West and 4th Street, and 24th Avenue West and Piedmont Avenue. Suggested student improvements for safer access to school included an overwhelming response for more stop lights and stop signs, especially along 24th Avenue West, and additional crossing guards. Students mentioned that the best part of walking to



Student-identified unsafe intersections to cross

school is that it's fun exercise to wake up in the fresh air (52%) and they enjoy being alone (quiet) to observe nature (22%). Lincoln Park School does not have an organized PTA. Instead, they employ a full-time staff position of a "home and school liaison."

School Site Traffic Observations

The week of October 10th 2005, MIC staff observed morning and afternoon traffic dynamics around Lincoln Park. Major issues noted by MIC staff included:

- **DTA bus stop located on 25th Avenue West and 3rd Street on the lower west corner where there is no crossing guard.** Suggest that stop be moved to lower east side, that school crossing visibility be improved, and that all kids, including middle schoolers, cross 3rd Street with a crossing guard. Kids were observed departing DTA buses and running across 3rd Street without looking.

DTA bus crossing on 25th Avenue West and 3rd Street is located on a corner without a crossing guard and has poor visibility as a school crossing.

- **Parents in bus drop zone on 4th Street.**
- **Kids were observed biking, skateboarding, and rollerblading to school even though prohibited.**
- **Poor traffic circulation and total congestion observed at corner of 25th Avenue West and 4th Street**—teachers, parents, buses, and kids exiting to walk home all in same location. Lincoln Park School has no parking for parents or visitors and the school utilizes shared parking in lots across 24th Avenue West for teachers. Problems exacerbated by the fact that all street segments around school are posted "residential parking only" including the west side of 25th Avenue West which borders Lincoln Park.
- **Poor school crossing visibility on 24th Avenue West and heavy traffic**.
- **Inconsistent crossing guard attendance**, by far the lowest participation rate of any school, stigma in K-8 school that being a crossing guard is not "cool,"

an issue exacerbated by the fact that **middle schoolers (6th-8th) are not required to cross with crossing guards.**

- **No time separation between middle and elementary start times for the crossing guards to distinguish between elementary and middle school kids.** Often guards do not offer to cross kids and are therefore ineffective. In need of adult supervisor particularly along busiest street segments such as 24th Avenue West and 3rd Street.

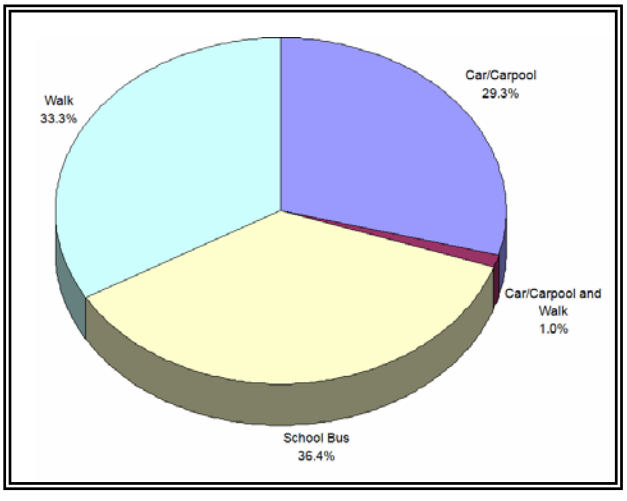
Congdon Park Elementary School

Survey Synopsis

There are over 500 students at Congdon, approximately 300 of which are third through fifth graders. Map 7 displays the location of Congdon Park School which is located at the intersection of Superior Street and Hawthorne in East Duluth. The walking boundary for third through fifth grade children living in the vicinity of school is a one-mile radius around school. The percentage of third through fifth graders within the one-mile school district walking boundary is 53.76%, looking farther out, 86.38% of third through fifth graders live within a two-mile radius of school.

The intersection of Hawthorne and East Superior Street.

A unique factor for Congdon Elementary School is it has two school staff positions that are adult crossing supervisors on the street at the busy intersection of Hawthorne and Superior, they are present 15 minutes before school and 15 minutes after school.



Congdon parent response: How does your child get to school?

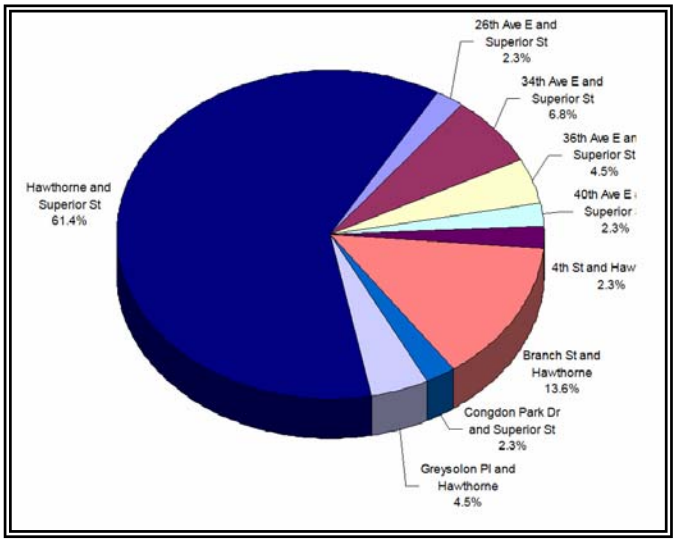
<u>Parent Response</u>

The parent survey return rate was 33% for Congdon Park Elementary for

parents of 3rd through 5th graders. Parents noted the dangerous school crossings of Hawthorne and Superior, Branch and Hawthorne, and 34th Avenue East and Superior Street. Parent suggestions for improvement included building sidewalks, creating a legal school zone with increased visibility and traffic calming measures, improving the parent drop area, and more stop signs, four-way stops, or signals. Parents answered that 50% of students use sidewalks in the winter and 38% of these respondents mentioned that sidewalks are not shoveled, are icy, and that kids are forced into the street. If a school coordinated walk to school program were established at Congdon 57% of parents would allow their children to participate with 16% answering that they would maybe allow their children to participate (if adult volunteers were checked for history of issues). Parent surveys indicated that 47% of parents would not allow their child to bike to school.

<u>Student Response</u>

The student survey return rate for Congdon was 90%. Students overwhelmingly (61%) noted that the busiest intersection to cross at Congdon is Hawthorne and Superior with Branch and Hawthorne at a distant second (4.5%). Suggested student improvements for safer access to school included building sidewalks, enforcement of snow removal and de-icing of sidewalks, and putting up more stop signs and signals. Students mentioned that the best part of walking to school is that it's fun exercise to wake up in the fresh air (44%) and being with friends (28%).

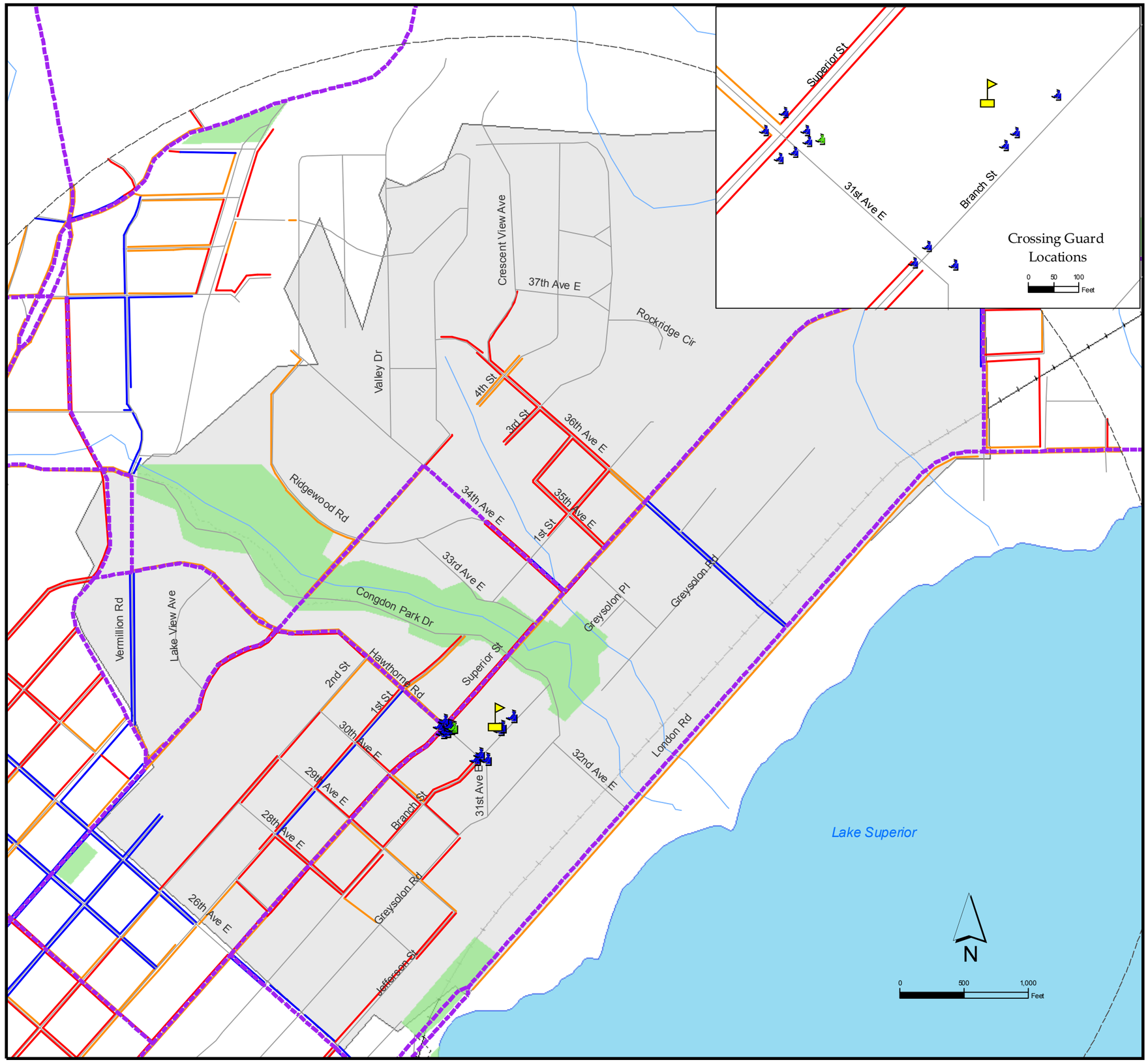


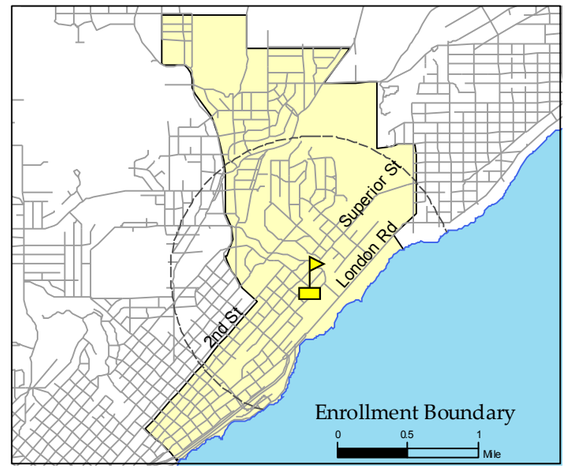
Student-identified unsafe intersections to cross

PTA Input

On January 10th, 2006, MIC staff presented the results of the student and parent surveys to the Congdon PTA. Some of the key input received included:

- **Lack of sidewalks** along 34th Avenue East between Superior and 4th Streets
- **Lack of sidewalk** around Congdon Park Elementary and in neighborhoods leading to school
- **Poor parent drop off area**





Congdon Park

Enrollment Boundary and Functional Classification

Legend

- Congdon Park Elementary

Crossing Guards

- Adult
- Student
- Walking Boundary
- 1-Mile Radius selection
- Functionally Classified Road

Sidewalk Condition

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Streams
- Parks
- Trails
- Rail Road Tracks

SRTS - Duluth
Map 7

School Site Traffic Observations

The week of October 10th 2005, MIC staff observed morning and afternoon traffic dynamics around Congdon Park Elementary. Major issues noted by MIC staff included:

- **The buses only zone is overloaded with parent vehicles** and buses have to vie for a spot. Parents are parking in bus zone and walking kids into school.
- **Non-functional and insufficient parent drop** that is not marketed to parents. Parent drop has inadequate vehicle storage along a narrow street and lacks sidewalks leading into school.
- **Sidewalk is lacking** on Hawthorne Street and Branch Street crossing into school.

The "buses only zone" full of parent vehicles on Superior Street in front of Congdon Park Elementary School.

- **Heavy morning traffic** headed downtown on functionally classified Superior Street in front of Congdon Park Elementary.
- **Poor lighting** around school.
- **Unique factor** of Congdon Park Elementary is that they have **a morning and afternoon adult supervisor** stationed at the school's busiest crossing on Superior and Hawthorne Streets.
- **Pedestrian bridge** on the west side of Congdon Park Elementary has one corner experiencing erosion over stream.
- Another unique factor about Congdon Park Elementary is that **crossing guards are stationed in the back parking lot of school to keep parents out**, allowing special needs buses and kids to exit school. This is not working too well, parents are arriving before kids come out to their stations and are inundating the back parking lot and along Greysolon Place in back of school. The back lot is small and could be reconfigured to allow more teacher parking which would free up some on street space for other functions. Congdon lacks a functional location place for parents to pick up kids.

Lester Park Elementary School

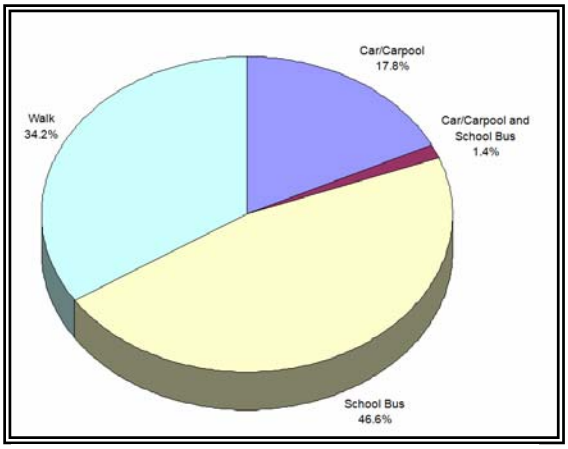
Survey Synopsis

There are approximately 350 students at Lester Park, 260 of which are third through fifth graders. Map 8 displays the location of the school located in the neighborhood of Lester Park and nearby Lakeside at the intersection of 54th Avenue East and Glenwood Street. The walking boundary for third through fifth grade children living in the vicinity of school is a one-mile radius around school. The percentage of third through fifth graders within the one-mile school district walking boundary is 65.48%, looking farther out, 92.46% of third through fifth graders live within a two-mile radius of school.

School crossing on 54th Avenue East and Glenwood in front of Lester Park Elementary

Parent Survey Results

The parent survey return rate was 28% for Lester Park Elementary for parents of 3rd through 5th graders. Parents noted the dangerous school crossings of 54th Avenue East and Glenwood (39%) and 54th Avenue East and Oneida (9%). Parent suggestions for improvement included building sidewalks, creating a legal school zone with increased visibility and traffic calming measures, improving the parent drop area, and more stop signs, four-way stops, or signals. Parents answered that 56% of students use sidewalks in the winter and 30% of these respondents mentioned that sidewalks are not shoveled, are icy, and that kids are forced into the street. If a school-coordinated walk to school program were established at Lester Park, 43% of parents would allow their children to participate with 21%

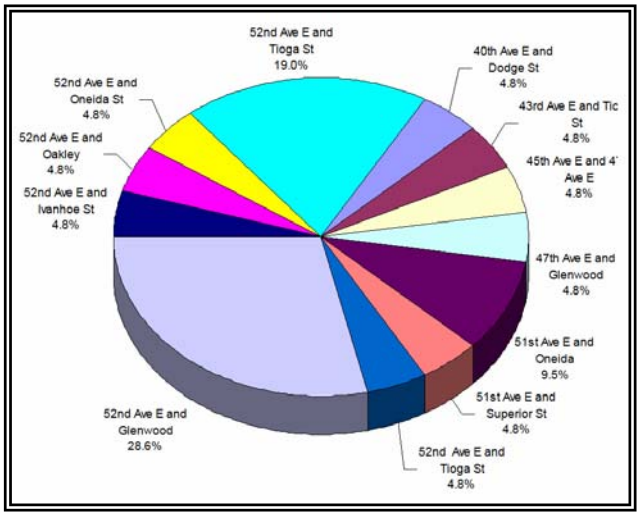


Lester parent response: How does your child get to school?

answering that they would maybe allow their children to participate (if adult volunteers were checked for history of issues). Parent surveys indicated that 48.5% of parents would allow their child to bike to school with 6% responding maybe. A unique factor for Lester Park is their large attendance boundary.

Student Survey Results

The student survey return rate for Lester Park was 90%. Students noted that the busiest intersections to cross were 52nd Avenue East and Glenwood and 52nd Avenue East and Tioga. Suggested student improvements for safer access to school included more signals and stop signs, enforcement of snow removal policy and de-icing of sidewalks, lower speeds limits and education for drivers to watch for kids, and adult crossing supervisors. Students mentioned that the best part of walking to school is that it's fun exercise to wake up in the fresh air (47%), being alone (quiet) to observe nature (21%), and being with friends (18%).



Student-identified unsafe intersections to cross

PTA Input

On February 13, 2006 MIC staff presented the results of the student and parent surveys to the Lester Park PTA. Some of the key input received included:

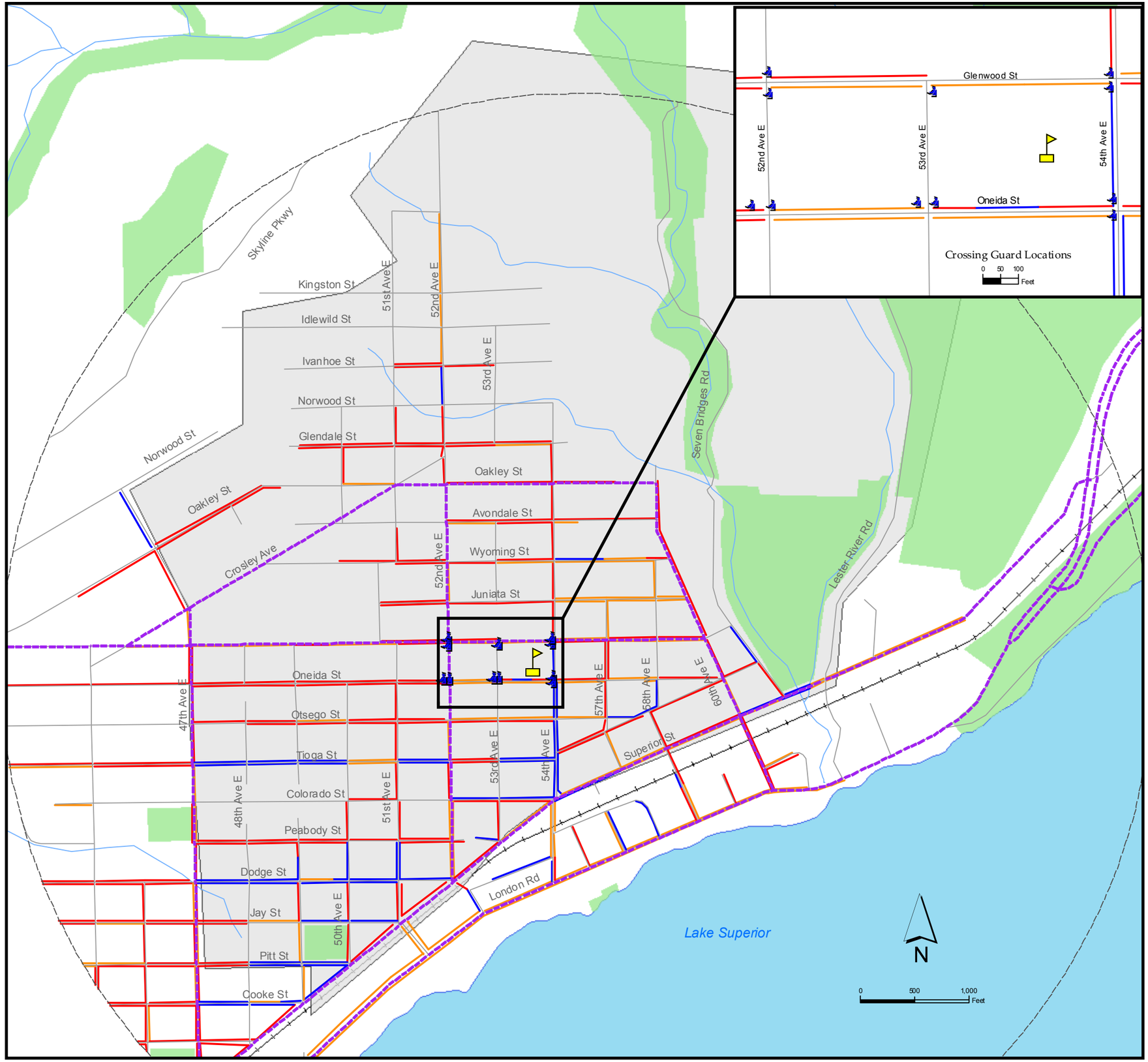
- **Lack of sidewalks** along the functionally classified 52nd Avenue East is unacceptable.
- **Lack of snow removal/snow removal ordinance** enforcement in Lester Park neighborhood; the school itself needs snow removal equipment
- **Parent volunteer day** to address poorly trimmed shrubbery along main routes to school etc.
- **Utilize thick fog-line striping** on streets around schools in an effort to slow traffic
- The Lester Park/Lakeside **neighborhood is poorly lit.**

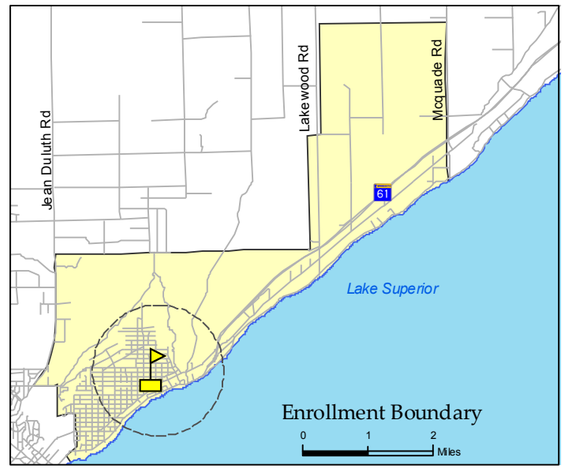
- **Poor parent drop off area on Oneida.**
- The bus **drop zone functions well** on 54th Avenue East.
- **Parents dropping off kids along Glenwood, doing u-turns mid-street,** and creating congestion in front of school. **Parents not using the Oneida parent drop,** pulling into teacher lot or along Glenwood.
- **Poor school crossing visibility on 54th Avenue East and Glenwood** in front of school.
- **Poor school crossing visibility** on 52nd Avenue East at Glenwood and Oneida.

School Site Traffic Observations

The week of October 10th 2005, MIC staff observed morning and afternoon traffic dynamics around Lester Park Elementary. Major issues noted by MIC staff included:

- **Lack of sidewalk** on functionally classified 52nd Avenue East.
- **Poor lighting around school**
- **Poor school zone visibility** along Glenwood and 54th Avenue East
- **Parent congestion in front of school** on Glenwood and in the teacher parking lot mixing with students walking to school and trying to access the front door (where parents are dropping kids off).
- **Underutilized/under marketed parent drop off area in back of school** on Oneida.
- **Poor snow removal around school** and throughout the Lester Park and Lakeside neighborhoods.





Lester Park
Enrollment Boundary and Functional Classification

Legend

- Lester Park Elementary

Crossing Guards

- Adult
- Student
- Enrollment Boundary
- Walking Boundary
- 1-Mile Radius
- Functionally Classified Road

Sidewalk Condition

- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Streams
- Parks
- Rail Road Tracks

SRTS - Duluth
Map 8

CHAPTER 4 / SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL AND SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Devising Safe Routes to School

As part of the October 2005 student surveying effort, those students who walk to school were asked to draw in their routes to school on maps attached to their surveys. From this information, MIC staff mapped these routes in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to gain a visual assessment of routes most heavily used to access local schools. The more heavily used routes began to overlap and became thicker displaying the primary routes used to access schools. MIC staff then obtained confidential address information to examine how student routes and residential densities relate to one another, ensuring that routes are serving populations or that population concentrations are not isolated by lack of sidewalks etc.

Police Department Input

Important feedback was also gained from working with the School Police Director from the Duluth Police Department. Student surveys were used as the basis for devising safe routes to school by identifying the most heavily used student routes. The Duluth Police Department, however, had opinions on where the safest routes to school are located and gave concrete advice on what safety issues to consider. Police staff felt that all student routes to school should be directed to:

- Crossing guards
- Traffic controls (traffic signals or stop signs)
- Sidewalks and Trails
- Main student routes and residential densities

Unsafe People

The issue of "unsafe people" was an issue noted by parents at Lincoln Park, a neighborhood that has level 3 sex offenders in the area. Once safe routes to school are established and perhaps signed, the Duluth Police Department and Duluth School District should work cooperatively to form a stronger relationship with the Minnesota Department of Corrections to steer children away from unsafe people and to notify schools and families as to where these people are living in their neighborhoods.

Community notification

Since 1991, all felony level sex offenders (level 3) in Minnesota have been required to register their home address with local law enforcement in accordance with Minnesota statute 243.166. Additionally, the Minnesota Legislature passed a Community Notification Act in 1996, charging local law enforcement with the responsibility of informing the public about sex offenders living in their community. The legislature found that, *"...if members of the public are provided adequate notice and information about a sex offender who has been or is about to be released from custody and who lives or will live in or near their neighborhood, the community can develop constructive plans to prepare themselves and their children for the offender's release."* Neither the registration nor the notification laws are retroactive, meaning any sex offender convicted before 1991 is not required to register their home address. Any sex offender released from prison before 1997 is not subject to community notification. To remain proactively informed about these unsafe people visit the Minnesota Department of Corrections to search by city and zip code at: http://www.doc.state.mn.us/level3/search.asp.

Devising School-Specific Safety Recommendations

The results from the student and parent surveys were used to highlight the greatest safety concerns for each school. In addition to the survey data, MIC staff spoke to each school's PTA to gain additional information on other concerns perhaps not voiced in the surveys. These data were presented to the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee and helped to focus the conversation on key safety issues and recommendations.

Traffic Separation

Before addressing the school safety improvements, a discussion on traffic separation must be had. The five study schools are all older, inner-city schools, all built before 1930, with the exception of Stowe Elementary, which was rebuilt in 1994. These schools were not built around the automobile, they were built as neighborhood schools serving students who primarily walked or biked to school. These schools now face the demands of students arriving by bus, an increasing population of parents who choose to drop their children at the front door, and a general increase in neighborhood traffic.

In preparation for the Superior SRTS Study, MIC staff had examined Wisconsin cities who were implementing Safe Routes to School improvements and routes to school. One city that stood out was Eau Claire, Wisconsin, who on their own, well

before SAFETEA-LU, had implemented Safe Routes to School funding and constructed school safety improvements (locally paid for) with strong parent, student, and administrative backing. One example was Putnam Heights Elementary School (Eau Claire, WI), which chose to separate on-site school traffic—particularly parents and buses. Putnam Heights and other Eau Claire schools no longer allow parents to drop off their children in the school parking lot where buses are present. Instead, Putnam Heights has created a short-term on-street parent drop-off zone in front of the school. This drop-off zone has been narrowed with traffic calming measures, mainly bulb-outs that only allow one vehicle to pass through the intersection at a time, and adult crossing guards have been added for safety and enforcement. Students are not allowed to cross the street mid-block in this drop-off zone, but are forced to walk back to the intersection bulb-out and to cross with the crossing guard. Traffic calming measures in the parent drop-off zone in front of school have allowed greater safety for students by controlling the traffic volume and speed.

Many of the Duluth school safety recommendations were devised in this same mindset, not to make it more convenient for parent drivers or bus riders, but to separate those drop off points, therefore easing the congestion for those who are walking to school and accessing school in the same congested areas.

Traffic Calming

As mentioned in Chapter 1, "traffic calming is the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users." Traffic calming has three key characteristics: (1) measures are self enforcing (unlike traffic controls which are regulatory), (2) measures rely on physics not human psychology to slow traffic (street elements such as trees, lighting, street-furniture, and streetscaping that complement traffic calming but do not directly slow drivers), and (3) measures modify driver routing options (do not change driver behaviors such as speed, just options). These three elements in combination affect traffic volume and speed, are self-enforcing, and are engineered.

Pre-engineering Assessment and Unique Safety Issues Discussion

Something unique to this study that MIC staff conducted was a preliminary safety recommendation assessment with Duluth City Engineering staff regarding what improvements are feasible under current standards. A list of allowable improvements was brainstormed between Duluth City Engineering and MIC staff

and used as a platform to begin the safety recommendations brainstorming session with the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee.

On April 26, 2006, a school safety issue meeting was held for Stowe and Lincoln Park schools. For Stowe Elementary School, the MnDOT District 1 Traffic Engineer reviewed allowable safety modifications for Trunk Highway(T.H.) 23 (Commonwealth Avenue) in conjunction with Duluth City Engineering Staff. MnDOT District 1 and City Engineering also discussed school warrant criteria (see Chapter 2) for a traffic signal along 24th Avenue West (a state aid route).

Steering Committee Meeting to Identify General and School Specific Safety Improvements

On Friday March 3, 2006, the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee met to formulate school safety and general policy recommendations for the study. The meeting lasted five hour allowing a timeframe for each school that invited PTA members and principals to attend their school-specific session and leave as necessary.

General Policy Recommendations

In the process of devising school-specific recommendations, several common themes and issues emerged that are not resolvable at the level of the individual schools. The following policy-level recommendations are directed primarily to the School District and the City of Duluth in the interest of improving safety and promoting walking and bicycling at all the study schools.

A. Update Duluth School District Bike Policy 5095

The original school district bike policy was devised on June 9, 1970 and was revised on June 20, 1995. It reads:

> *The principal of each school is given the authority and responsibility to regulate and control the use of automobiles and other vehicles of transportation by students going to and from school during the school day. Students shall not bring skis, wagons, skateboards, sleds, bicycles, motorcycles, snowmobiles, or scooters to the school building or grounds except by permission of the principal.*

It is the principal's decision to allowing biking to school at present. The principals are concerned about the age of kids and their ability to understand traffic laws. However, if safety improvement measures are implemented, elementary bicycling is

something to consider in the future. Education and infrastructure measures would need to be implemented, such as bike racks, which are presently not provided. Middle and High Schoolers are biking to school and this should be promoted. The Steering Committee, comprised of school principals as well, felt that biking to school should be a long term goal as education and safety measures need to be improved first. Measures suggested by the Police Department for allowing biking to school in the future include:

- Permission slips from parents
- Fire/Parks Department safety education clinics and bike check up clinics
- Bike racks will be needed in the future, especially if PTA's start promoting wellness and walking/biking to school. Bicycling will be a good alternative as busing eligibility changes by grade and is a good transportation alternative.

B. Provide Crossing Guard Training and Adult Supervision

Each school has a School Patrol Advisor. These are staff level personnel who hold another job within the school, which generally does not allow them the opportunity to get out and directly supervise the student crossing guards. The School Patrol Advisor position can be problematic as these staff persons can also be the discipline specialists who are busy with the kids they are working with. The duties of the School Patrol Advisor include scheduling the crossing guards and serving as the contact with the Police Department contact for student training.

Successes of Congdon Elementary School

Congdon Elementary School pulled together funding (supply budget) for two adult supervisors to assist the safety of student crossing guards at the busy intersection of Superior and Hawthorne. One supervisor goes out 15 minutes before school and the other stays 15 minutes after school. The key is that these are paid school staff, a key component to their dependability, since volunteers do not typically work. There is proof that the Congdon adult crossing guard supervision system works. Ordean Middle School, down the street on the corner of Superior Street and 40th Avenue East, also has an adult supervisor.

Need for School District and School Board Recognition

PTA's can not pay salaries for "Adult Crossing Guard Supervisors." The best alternative would be for the School District and School Board to recognize the importance of adult supervision at busy intersections and assist the schools with large numbers of walking students (the five examined in this study), and

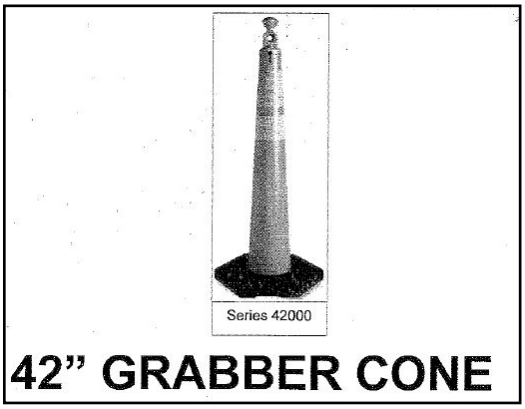
additional budget resources to assist with finding an adult staff person to assist with crossing safety and supervision.

C. Increase the Visibility of School Zones and Crossings

The Steering Committee recommended the use of polypreform or DuraTherm crosswalks, which are patterned inlaid thermoplastic crossings that last three times longer than normal thermoplastic and significantly longer than paint, which wears off of crosswalks. Polypreform crossings are ADA compliant and snowplow friendly as they have no seams. These are currently being used in Minneapolis.

Polypreform or DuraTherm crosswalk

Another measure selected by the Steering Committee to heighten school crossing visibility was to use midblock crossing signage to raise driver's awareness of students crossing. Currently crossing guards are using orange cones which are light to carry and easy to set out. The Committee reviewed three options of midblock signs: (1) heavy duty flexible sign systems ($500, 43 inches high, 32 lb base which can be screwed into the street), (2) portable sign systems and posts ($120, 48 inches high, 18 lb base, and 30x30 sign which can tip over in the wind), and grabber cones with reflective striping ($25, 42 inches high, 16 lb base). The committee selected the grabber cone option which is an upgrade from the current midblock crossing cones that are being used by guards. This option had the lightest base weight for a student to carry, and were reasonably priced.



Additionally, the heavy base and screwing a sign into the pavement was a concern for engineering with potential snowplow damage and lack of potential use during winter months, which sends a non-consistent message.

D. Promote Bike and Pedestrian Safety and Health Education in Schools

Duluth Parks and Recreations Department ended their bicycle education approximately three years ago when they formerly distributed helmets in schools. Additionally, the only pedestrian education that is performed at present is conducted by the Duluth Police Department for kindergarten and first graders focusing mainly on crossing the street, bus safety, and how to deal with strangers.

Duluth bicycle education should be expanded and should offer safety clinics that actually check the safety of the bicycle itself. Pedestrian education should be expanded beyond kindergarten and first grade.

Safety Education Gap

There is a distinct gap in bicycle and pedestrian education in Duluth, education that is currently being performed in Superior. Additionally, the availability of safety brochures offered by the Wisconsin and Minnesota State Departments of Transportation and Motor Vehicles Department are drastically different. WisDOT and the WI DMV had numerous bicycle, pedestrian, bus safety brochures and booklets for students, while MnDOT and MN DMV had only a statewide "Share the Road" brochure targeted primarily to adult audiences. To address this education gap for children, Minnesota schools and police departments should utilize national bicycle and pedestrian brochures that are available to be printed off on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's website http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

E. Implement School Coordinated Walking Groups

A "walking school bus" is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. These can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school, to as structured as a route with meeting points, a timetable and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers (http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/). A similar technique with bicycles is referred to as a "bike train."

Schools and PTAs should encourage parents and students to utilize and be part of walking school buses in their neighborhoods. Parents who are interested in volunteering should contact the administration of each school to be part of a walking school bus for their neighborhood.

F. Require New Residential Developments in the City to Include Sidewalks or Trails

New residential developments within the City of Duluth are not required to build sidewalks. Young families with children have purchased these new homes and experienced a lack of connectivity with the rest of the neighborhood, including schools. This generally leads to parents driving their children to school, as sidewalks do not exist, and they are too proximate to school to be eligible for busing. In some areas of the Twin Cities, when developers are not required to provide sidewalks, zoning codes require that developers provide trail connections.

Trail Connections to Schools

The Wisconsin cities of Superior and Janesville have a master trail system plan that includes trail connectivity to their schools. The City of Duluth should follow this lead in recognizing the importance of school connectivity to new developments with the provision of sidewalks and trails. This should be a key principle in the Duluth Comprehensive Plan and zoning codes should be revamped accordingly.

Special Issue Area: Grant School Crossing at 8th Avenue East and 9th Street

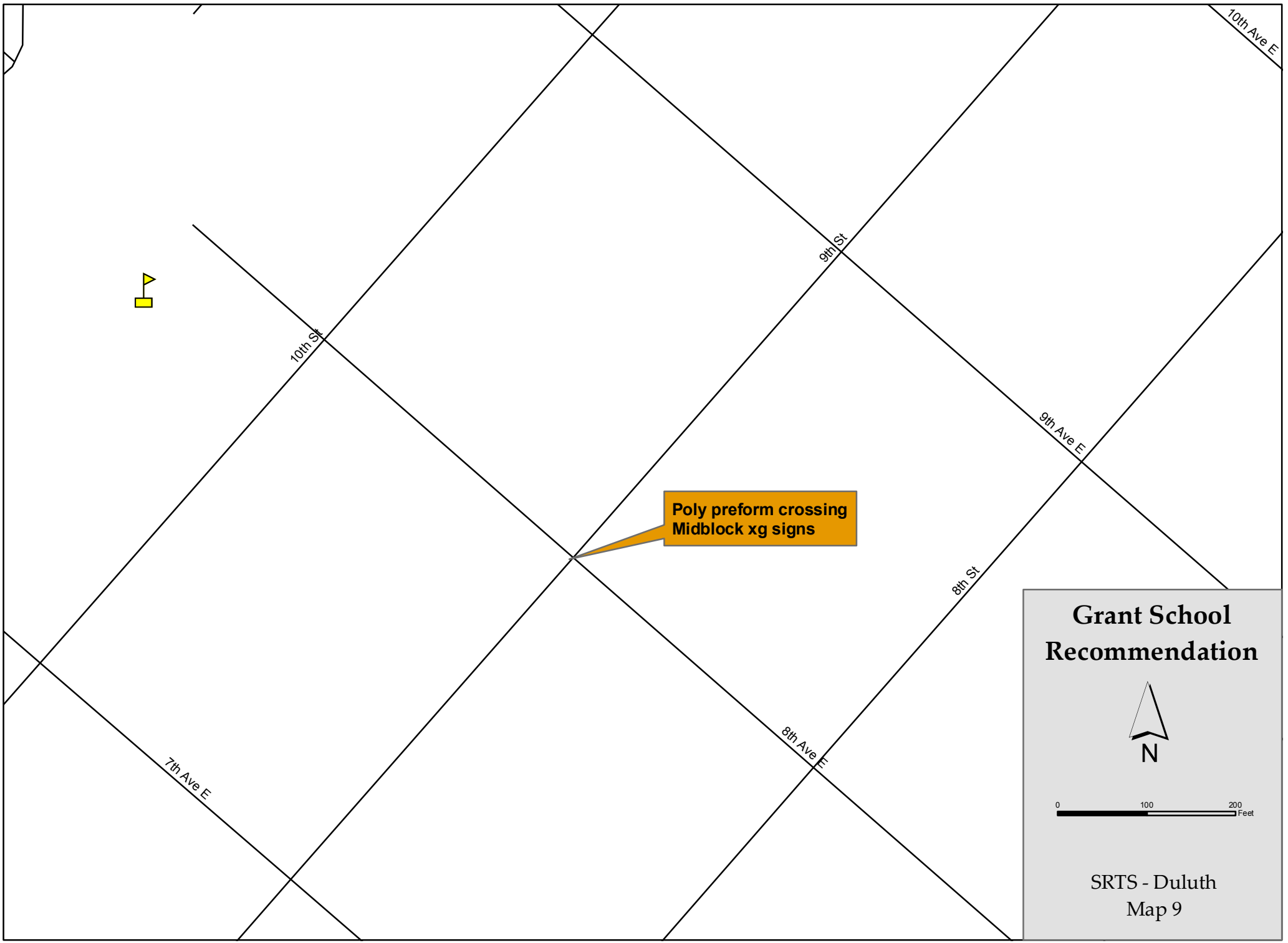
Grant School was originally discussed as a potential school for examination in this study. However, as a magnet school, meaning it draws its enrollment city-wide by program attraction as well as within its neighborhood, the vast majority of the student population is bused, and therefore not a good fit for this study.

The majority of students within the neighborhood below 9th Street attend Grant School, and even though busing is available, many choose to cross the busy street to access school more readily, since it is so close. The crossing of 8th Avenue East and 9th Street experiences heavy and steady traffic and has poor visibility, especially with afternoon sun glare. The crossing is located two blocks off of 6th Avenue East, a main artery of the city, and two blocks off of the four-way stop intersection at 10th Avenue East. Recognizing that students do utilize this crossing, safety improvements supported and to be included with this study include:

- **Create a poly pre-form crossing**
- **Purchase a mid-block street crossing sign**

Table 1: Grant Project Recommendations

Grant Magnet School: Special Issue Area (K-5 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
Poly Preform Crossing @ 8th Ave E & 9th St		1	$3,000/Each	$3,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones		1	$25/Each	$25
		Grant School	**Subtotal**	**$3,025**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$302**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$3,327**


10th Ave E
9th St
10th St
9th Ave E
Poly preform crossing
Midblock xg signs
8th St
8th Ave E
7th Ave E
Grant School
Recommendation
N
0
100
200
Feet
SRTS - Duluth
Map 9

School-Specific Safety Recommendations

In Chapter 3, parent, student and PTA safety concerns were summarized. The discussion format to devise school safety recommendations for each school with the Steering Committee was:

- Review Safe Routes to School devised by Duluth Police Department
- Note key student routes lacking sidewalks
- Note parent and student identified unsafe intersections and review city engineering concepts for improvement
- Discuss option of separating parent and bus drop-off locations and traffic
- Increase school zone visibility
- Sidewalk snow removal: schools, residents, enforcement

Stowe Elementary School Safe Routes & Recommendations

Map 10 displays the safe routes to school that were devised by the Duluth Police Department in conjunction with this study, and incorporates survey data about the routes most frequently used by Stowe students.

Unique Safety Issues

Intersection of Commonwealth and Fillmore in Gary-New Duluth for Stowe School

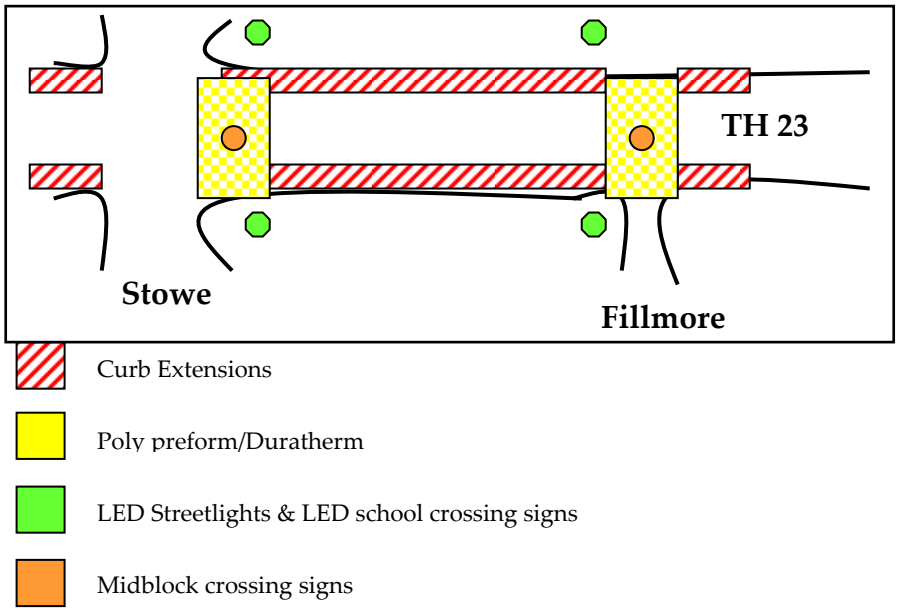
As noted at the beginning of this chapter, a safety meeting was held on April 26, 2006 to address the school crossings on T.H. 23 (Commonwealth) at Stowe and Fillmore Streets. Prior to this meeting on April 5th, MIC staff performed school crossing pedestrian counts during morning (7:30-8 am) and afternoon (2:50-3:20 pm), peak crossing times to gauge the usage of these school crossings. For pedestrian counts at the intersection of T.H. 23 and Stowe, a total of 18 pedestrians crossed in the morning and 24 in the afternoon. For the intersection of Fillmore and T.H. 23, there were no pedestrians who crossed in the morning and six pedestrians who crossed in the afternoon.

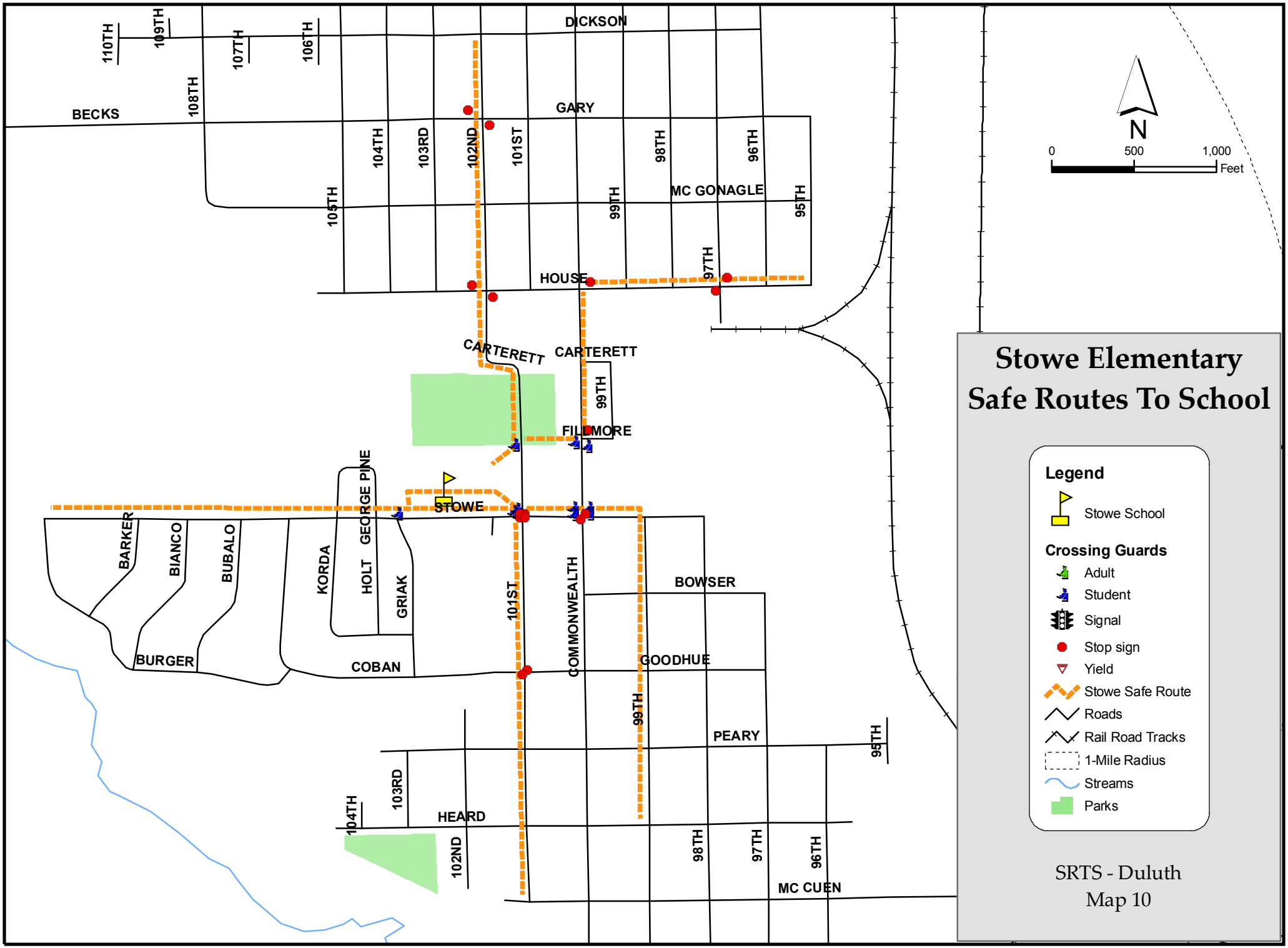
In March, the Duluth Safe Routes to School Steering Committee had recommended building a concrete median between Stowe and Fillmore Streets to provide pedestrian refuge in this six-lane configuration (4 driving lanes and 2 lanes of parking). MnDOT stated that a median was not acceptable due to plowing issues, and therefore proposed:

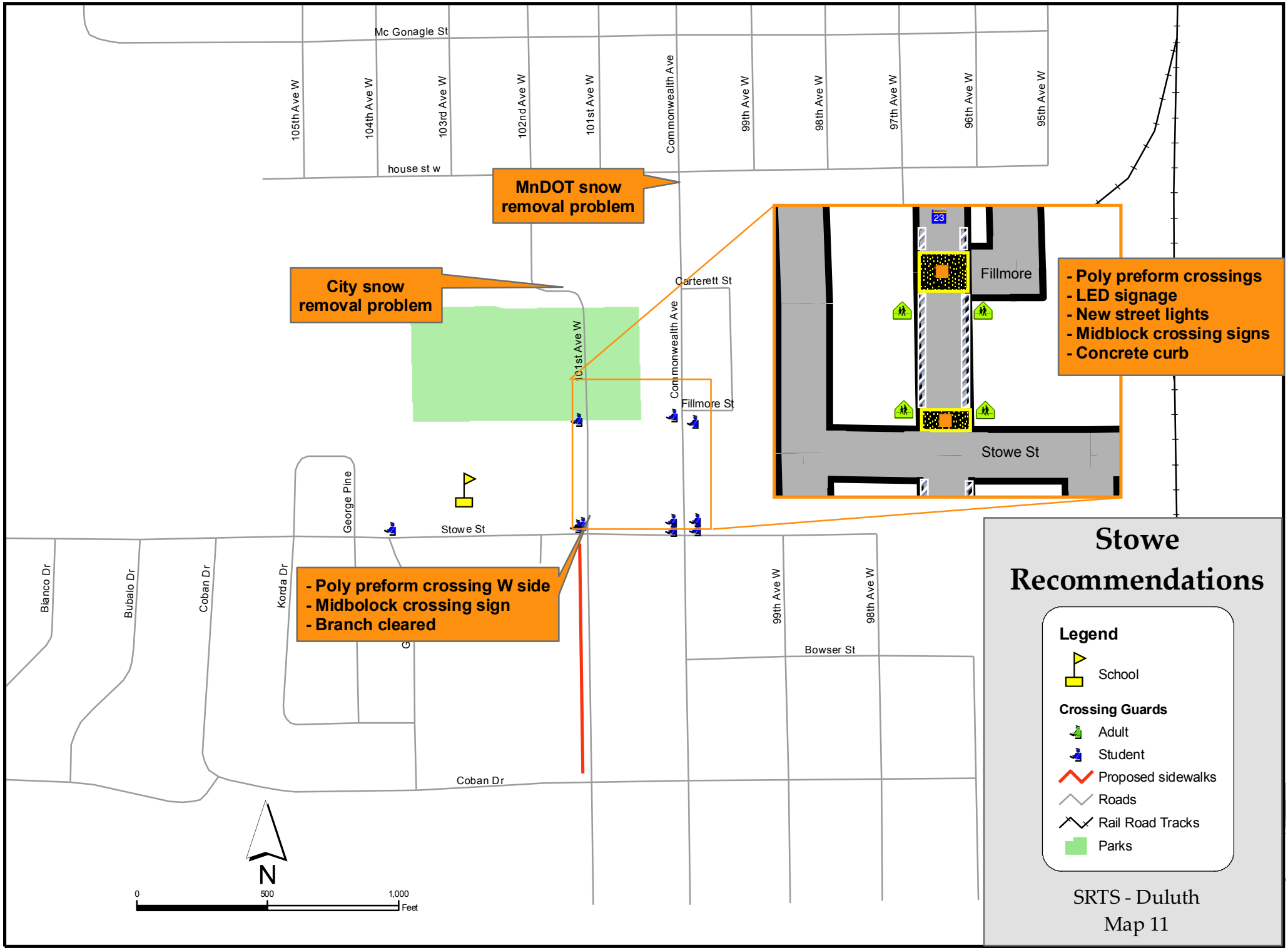
- Concrete curb extensions into both parking lanes (narrowing the road from a six lane to a four lane)
- Implementing poly pre-form/Duratherm crossings at Stowe and Fillmore
- New LED Streetlights which are a bright white light rather than the yellow haze of regular street lights
- Flashing LED school crossing signs mounted to the base of the street lights (there would be a signal box on the corner or within the school so that the flashing crossing lights would be timed or activated for the am and pm peak crossing timeframes and special school events).
- Midblock crossing signs for Stowe and Fillmore Streets.

The design was acceptable to all present, most importantly Stowe School and PTA staff. MnDOT does not have funds for the T.H. 23 improvements and assumes that a grant will be put forward for SRTS funds from the MnDOT Central Office. The MnDOT Safety Fund category was also mentioned as a potential source for T.H. 23. Later, snow removal along Commonwealth and "bumping" back snow was discussed, which would be a comment taken back to the MnDOT maintenance crews. MnDOT and the City would devise updated cost estimates.

MnDOT's Safety Recommendation to Stowe school crossings on TH 23




DICKSON
110TH
109TH
107TH
106TH
BECKS
108TH
GARY
104TH
103RD
102ND
101ST
98TH
96TH
105TH
MC GONAGLE
99TH
95TH
97TH
HOUSE
CARTERETT
CARTERETT
99TH
FILLMORE
GEORGE PINE
STOWE
BARKER
BIANCO
BUBALO
KORDA
HOLT
GRIAK
101ST
COMMONWEALTH
BOWSER
BURGER
COBAN
GOODHUE
99TH
PEARY
95TH
103RD
104TH
HEARD
102ND
98TH
97TH
96TH
MC CUEN
N
0
500
1,000
Feet
Stowe Elementary
Safe Routes To School
Legend
Stowe School
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Signal
Stop sign
Yield
Stowe Safe Route
Roads
Rail Road Tracks
1-Mile Radius
Streams
Parks
SRTS - Duluth
Map 10


Mc Gonagle St
105th Ave W
104th Ave W
103rd Ave W
102nd Ave W
101st Ave W
Commonwealth Ave
99th Ave W
98th Ave W
97th Ave W
96th Ave W
95th Ave W
house st w
MnDOT snow removal problem
City snow removal problem
Carterett St
Fillmore St
Stowe St
George Pine
Bianco Dr
Bubalo Dr
Coban Dr
Korda Dr
Bowser St
- Poly preform crossing W side
- Midbolock crossing sign
- Branch cleared
- Poly preform crossings
- LED signage
- New street lights
- Midblock crossing signs
- Concrete curb
Fillmore
23
Stowe Recommendations
Legend
School
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Proposed sidewalks
Roads
Rail Road Tracks
Parks
N
0
500
1,000
Feet
SRTS - Duluth
Map 11

Key Improvements

Shown below is a prioritized list of improvements suggested by the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee, Stowe Elementary School staff, and the Stowe PTA regarding key improvements that address parent and student safety concerns that were identified in transportation surveys from October 2005. Map 11 displays the recommendations geographically.

Table 2: Stowe Project Recommendations

Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary (K-5 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Curb extension into parking lanes from S. of Stowe to N. of Fillmore		1	$60,000/Each	$60,000
LED school crossing signs hardwired (Hwy 23 @ Stowe & Fillmore)		4	$1,600/Each	$6,400
Polypreform Crossings: Stowe, Fillmore, & 101st Ave W		3	$3,000/Each	$9,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (101st Ave W, Stowe, Fillmore)		3	$25/Each	$75
New street lights		4	system	$30,000
SIDEWALK:				
101st Ave W from Stowe to Goodhue (west side)		1050 L.F.	$30/per ft	$26,400
City snow removal problem along 102nd Ave W north of school				*City Engineering*
Commonwealth snow removal problem: MnDOT needs to bump back snow				*MnDOT*
	Stowe Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$131,800**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$13,180**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$144,980**

Laura MacArthur Elementary School Safe Routes & Recommendations

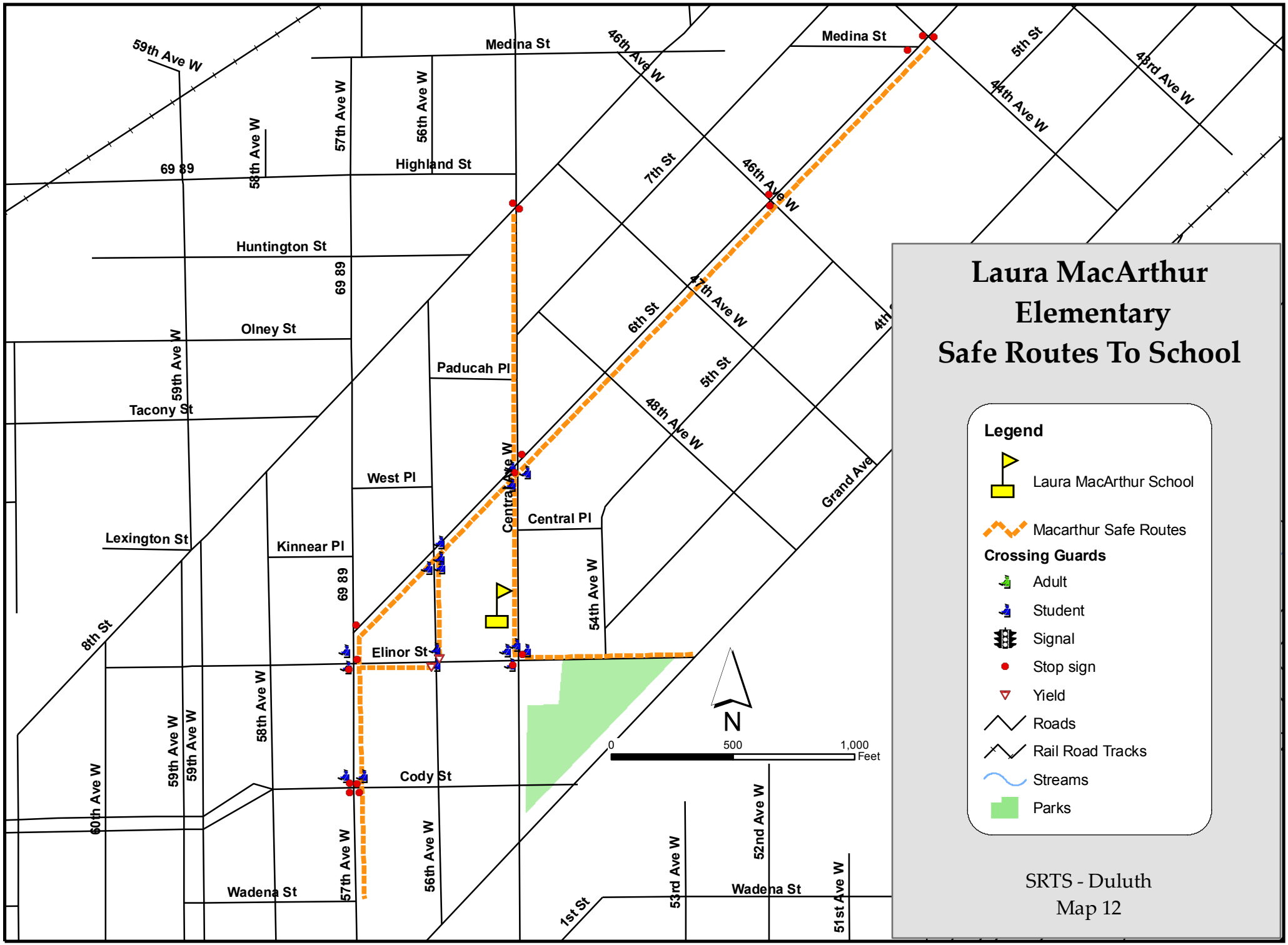
Map 12 displays the safe routes to school that were devised by the Duluth Police Department in conjunction with this study, and incorporates survey data about the routes most frequently used by MacArthur students.

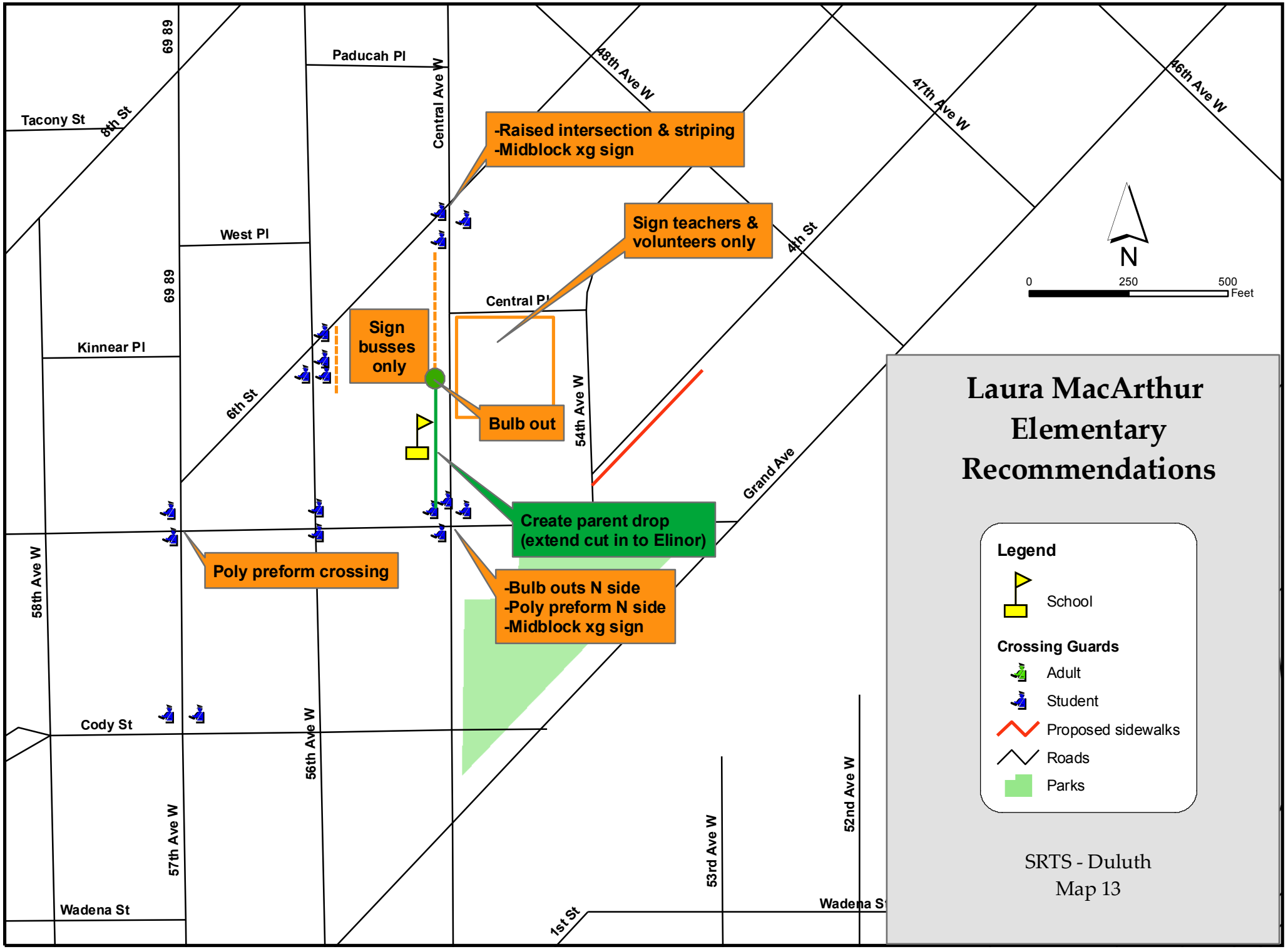
Key Improvements

Shown below is a prioritized list of improvements suggested by the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee, MacArthur Elementary School staff, and the MacArthur PTA regarding key improvements that address parent and student safety concerns that were identified in transportation surveys from October 2005. Map 13 displays the recommendations geographically.

Table 3: MacArthur Project Recommendations

Laura MacArthur Elementary (K-5 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Create Parent Zone: extend south from current termini on Central to Elinor			$34,000	$34,000
create bulbout at the front door of MacArthur separate buses (N) & parents (S)		1	$4,000/Each	$4,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
6th ST & Central: build a raised intersection (painted)		1	$60,000/Each	$60,000
Elinor & Central Ave: Bulbouts (north side)		2	$4,000/Each	$8,000
Polypreform Xgs (Elinor & Central; Elinor & 57th Ave W)		2	$3,000/Each	$6,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (6th @ Central & 56th Ave W; Cody @ 57th Ave W		7	$25/Each	$175
Elinor @ Central, 56th Ave W and 57th Ave W)				
SIDEWALK:				
4th St from 54th Ave W easterly	south side	500 L.F.	$30/per ft	$15,000
SIGNAGE:				
Sign N of frontdoor bulbout "Buses only," sign S of bulbout "Parent Drop"				*City Engineering*
Sign teacher lot as "Teacher & Volunteer Parking Only"				*Duluth School District*
Add "No Parking Here to Corner" sign on 46th at 6th St (sight visibility)				*City Engineering*
*Sign by back door on 56th Ave W as Buses only				*City Engineering*
	Laura MacArthur Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$127,175**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$12,717**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$139,892**


Laura MacArthur
Elementary
Safe Routes To School
Legend
Laura MacArthur School
Macarthur Safe Routes
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Signal
Stop sign
Yield
Roads
Rail Road Tracks
Streams
Parks
SRTS - Duluth
Map 12
N
0
500
1,000
Feet
Medina St
Highland St
Huntington St
Olney St
Tacony St
Paducah Pl
West Pl
Central Pl
Kinnear Pl
Lexington St
Elinor St
Cody St
Wadena St
8th St
1st St
59th Ave W
58th Ave W
57th Ave W
56th Ave W
54th Ave W
53rd Ave W
52nd Ave W
51st Ave W
46th Ave W
47th Ave W
48th Ave W
44th Ave W
43rd Ave W
7th St
6th St
5th St
Central Ave W
Grand Ave
69 89


Laura MacArthur Elementary Recommendations
-Raised intersection & striping
-Midblock xg sign
Sign teachers & volunteers only
Sign busses only
Bulb out
Create parent drop (extend cut in to Elinor)
Poly preform crossing
-Bulb outs N side
-Poly preform N side
-Midblock xg sign
Legend
School
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Proposed sidewalks
Roads
Parks
N
0
250
500
Feet
SRTS - Duluth
Map 13
Paducah Pl
Central Ave W
48th Ave W
47th Ave W
46th Ave W
Tacony St
8th St
West Pl
Central Pl
4th St
Kinnear Pl
6th St
54th Ave W
Grand Ave
58th Ave W
Cody St
56th Ave W
57th Ave W
53rd Ave W
52nd Ave W
Wadena St
1st St
69 89

Lincoln Park School Safe Routes & Recommendations

Map 14 displays the safe routes to school that were devised by the Duluth Police Department in conjunction with this study, and incorporates survey data about the routes most frequently used by Lincoln Park students.

Unique Safety Issues

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, a safety meeting was held on April 26, 2006 to address the school crossings on 24th Avenue West at 4th and 5th Streets. Prior to this meeting on April 20th, MIC staff performed school crossing pedestrian counts during morning (8-8:30am) and afternoon (3:10-3:35 pm), peak crossing times to gauge the usage of these school crossings.

Intersection of 24th Ave W and 4th Street near Lincoln Park School

For pedestrian counts at the intersection of 24th Avenue West and 4th Street, a total of 36 pedestrians crossed in the morning and 39 in the afternoon. For the intersection of 24th Avenue West and 5th Street, there were 37 pedestrians who crossed in the morning and 50 pedestrians who crossed in the afternoon. In total at these two intersections, 73 pedestrians crossed in the morning and 89 in the afternoon.

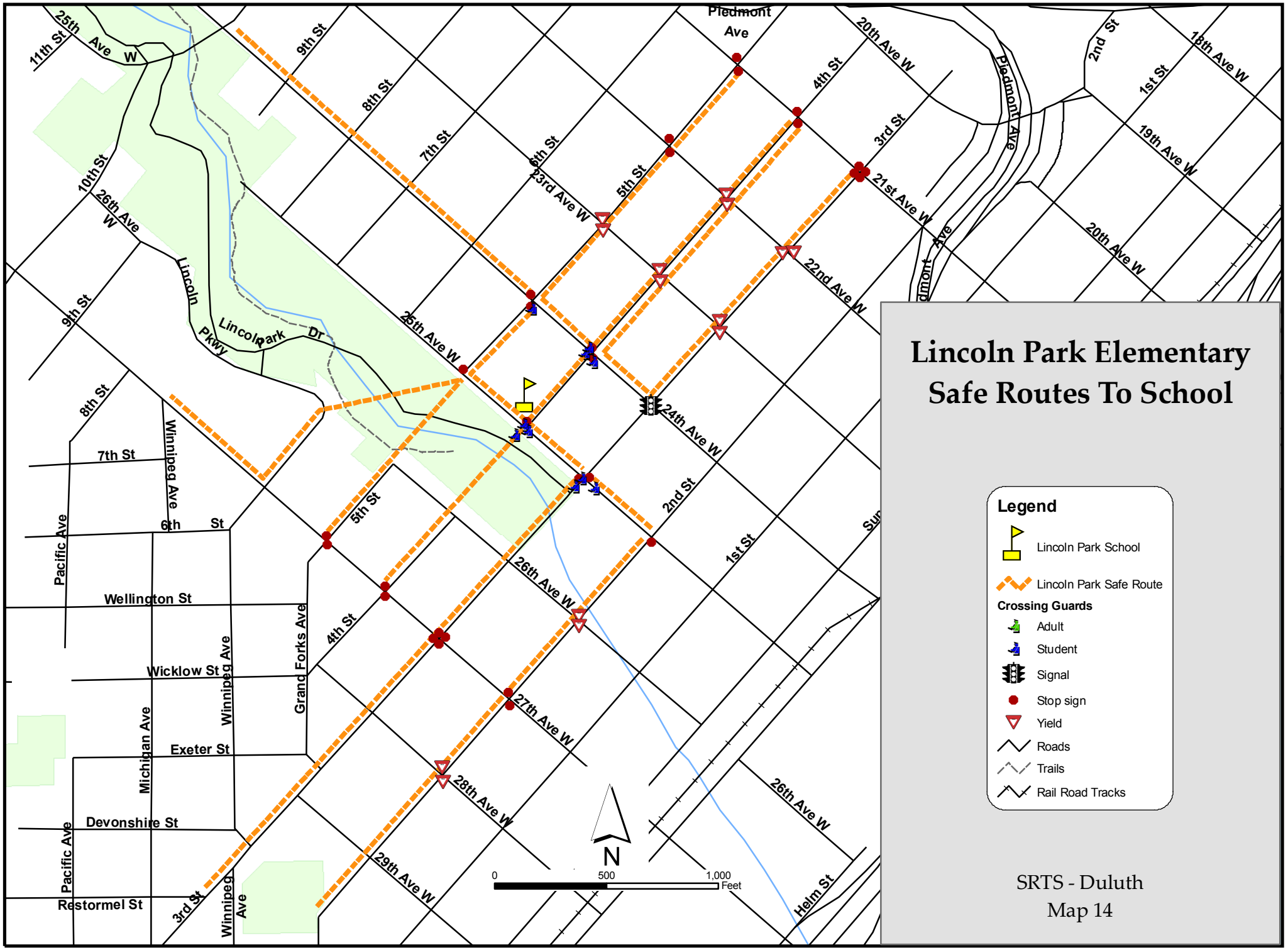
While performing pedestrian counts, MIC staff observed morning crossing guards at 24th Ave W and W 5th Street that were not present in the afternoon for students crossing at 5th Street. There were no crossing guards both in the morning or afternoon at the intersection of 24th Ave W and 4th Street, which Duluth Police says is unusual as 5th Street absence is more common. In the afternoon, kids were observed cutting in front of cars and were unsure of when to cross the street. MIC staff also observed a "close call" when a young boy came running around the corner and ran right across the street without even looking; a delivery truck coming down the hill slammed on its brakes and missed the young boy by about 10 feet. It is clear that 24th Avenue West needs additional safety measures, which include adult supervision to assist these crossing guards and crossing students.

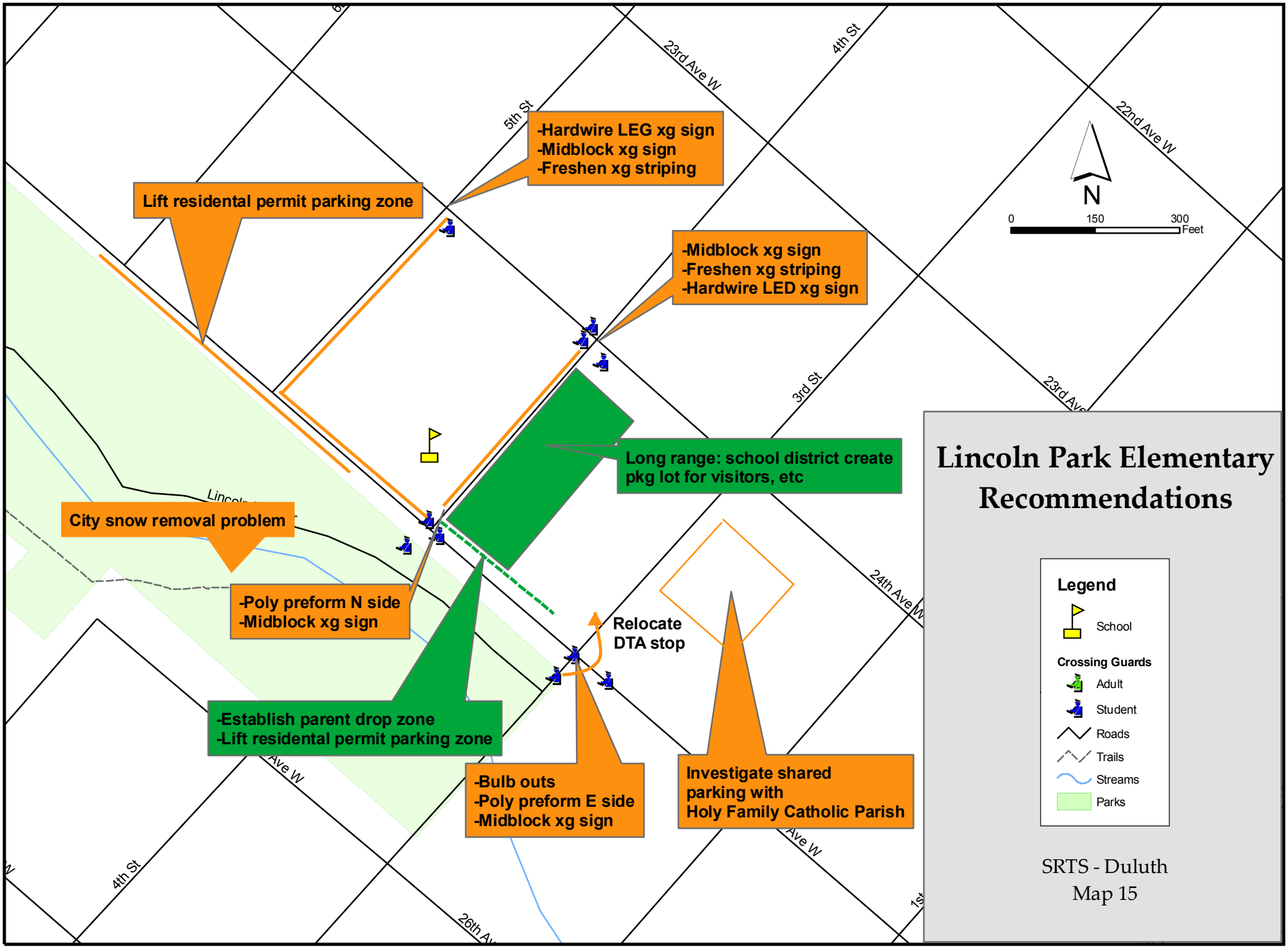
Chapter 2 reviewed the criteria for a "school crossing warrant for signal." This was the topic discussed on April 26th. It was discussed that these crossings are both dangerous and that during the Piedmont reconstruction in 2002-2003, there was a temporary signal installed at 5th Street and 24th Ave W. The school forced all kids to cross at that location while it was up. The school supports the installation of a signal at 5th and 24th Ave W as 4th Street is too close to the signal on 3rd Street and 24th Ave W. Lincoln Park School has a low number of crossing guard volunteers, primarily because the school is K-8 and middle schoolers are not required to cross with the 3rd – 5th grade crossing guards, leaving a stigma that it is not "cool" to be a crossing guard at this school.

Intersection of 24th Ave W and 5th Street near Lincoln Park School

Additionally, as mentioned in Chapter 3, Lincoln Park School is a neighborhood center that offers a variety of programs for area residents. Therefore, throughout the day, there is consistent pedestrian traffic across 24th Avenue West for programs such as Boys and Girls Club, Early Childhood Education, and Head Start. As previously mentioned, this school is located in one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city. Unique demographics include a large population of low income families and the presence of level 3 sex offenders. It is also the only study school that combines elementary and middle schoolers in the same building, a building that was constructed in 1889 when vehicles were not a factor of transportation.

MnDOT and the City of Duluth reviewed school pedestrian crossing warrants for signalization and suggested LED flashing crossing signs as a first step, as 24th Avenue West and 3rd Street are already signalized. MIC staff has suggested that city engineering conduct the traffic gap analysis to fully review the school warrant information and that Lincoln Park School staff continue to keep this issue on the forefront of the city's list of improvements that should target area safety funds.


Lincoln Park Elementary
Safe Routes To School
Legend
Lincoln Park School
Lincoln Park Safe Route
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Signal
Stop sign
Yield
Roads
Trails
Rail Road Tracks
SRTS - Duluth
Map 14
N
0
500
1,000
Feet
Piedmont Ave
20th Ave W
4th St
2nd St
1st St
18th Ave W
19th Ave W
3rd St
21st Ave W
22nd Ave W
20th Ave W
11th St
25th Ave W
9th St
8th St
7th St
6th St
5th St
23rd Ave W
10th St
26th Ave W
Lincoln Park Pkwy
Lincoln Park Dr
25th Ave W
24th Ave W
2nd St
1st St
26th Ave W
Pacific Ave
Winnipeg Ave
7th St
6th St
Wellington St
Wicklow St
Exeter St
Devonshire St
Restormel St
Michigan Ave
Grand Forks Ave
4th St
27th Ave W
28th Ave W
29th Ave W
3rd St
Helm St


-Hardwire LEG xg sign
-Midblock xg sign
-Freshen xg striping
Lift residental permit parking zone
-Midblock xg sign
-Freshen xg striping
-Hardwire LED xg sign
Long range: school district create pkg lot for visitors, etc
City snow removal problem
-Poly preform N side
-Midblock xg sign
Relocate DTA stop
-Establish parent drop zone
-Lift residental permit parking zone
-Bulb outs
-Poly preform E side
-Midblock xg sign
Investigate shared parking with Holy Family Catholic Parish
23rd Ave W
4th St
5th St
22nd Ave W
3rd St
24th Ave W
26th Ave
N
0
150
300
Feet
Lincoln Park Elementary Recommendations
Legend
School
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Roads
Trails
Streams
Parks
SRTS - Duluth
Map 15

Key Improvements

Shown below is a prioritized list of improvements suggested by the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee and Lincoln Park School staff regarding key improvements that address parent and student safety concerns that were identified in transportation surveys from October 2005. Map 15 displays the recommendations geographically.

Table 4: Lincoln Park Project Recommendations

Lincoln Park School (K-8 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
2 LED hardwired xg signs on 24th Ave W-5th ST downbound 4th ST upbound		2		$8,200
Poly Preform Crossings (25th Ave W @ 3rd and 4th Streets)		2	$3,000/Each	$6,000
Bulbouts @ 25th Ave W & 3rd St (eastside)		2	$4,000/Each	$8,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (25th Ave W @ 3rd & 4th ST; and		4	$25/Each	$100
24th Ave W @ 4th & 5th ST)				
EDUCATION:				
Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Education funding for urban/low income school with K-8 enrollment				$5,000
	Lincoln Park School		**Subtotal**	**$27,300**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$2,730**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$30,030**
Lincoln Park School (K-8) Continued: Policy Review and Other Improvements				
CITY TRANSIT SAFETY ISSUE:				
Ask DTA to change 25th Ave W bus stop from west corner to east corner (which has xg guards)				*DTA*
SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL IN CITY PARKS:				
City snow removal problem on staircases within Lincoln Park				*Public Works*
TRAFFIC SAFETY:				
Freshen Crosswalk Paint on 24th Ave W @ 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets				*City Engineering*
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Lack of Onstreet Parking: examine numerous residential parking only segments around school, what can be lifted?				
				City Engineering
Parent Parking: remove unnecessary residential parking only on the west side of 25th Ave W and sign "Parent Drop"				
on 25th Ave W between 4th & 3rd Streets				*City Engineering*
Back school lot (5th ST) needs more HC parking				*City Engineering*
Bus Parking Only: sign 4th ST between 24th and 25th Ave W (upper side) as buses only; sign east side of				
25th Ave W between 4th and 5th ST as buses only				*City Engineering*
Teacher/Staff Parking: no employee lot, using church lot on 5th & 24th Ave W, on Lincoln Park Drive,				
small back of school lot, one block of available on-street parking on 25th Ave W between 4th and 5th ST				
*Create a visitors/teachers lot on the lower side of 4th Street between 24th & 25th Ave W				
				Duluth School District
Shared Parking Opportunities: investigate opportunities with Holy Family Catholic on 3rd St & 24th Ave W				
				Duluth School District
Sign back teacher lot (5th ST) as "Teachers Only"				*Duluth School District*

Congdon Park Elementary School Safe Routes & Recommendations

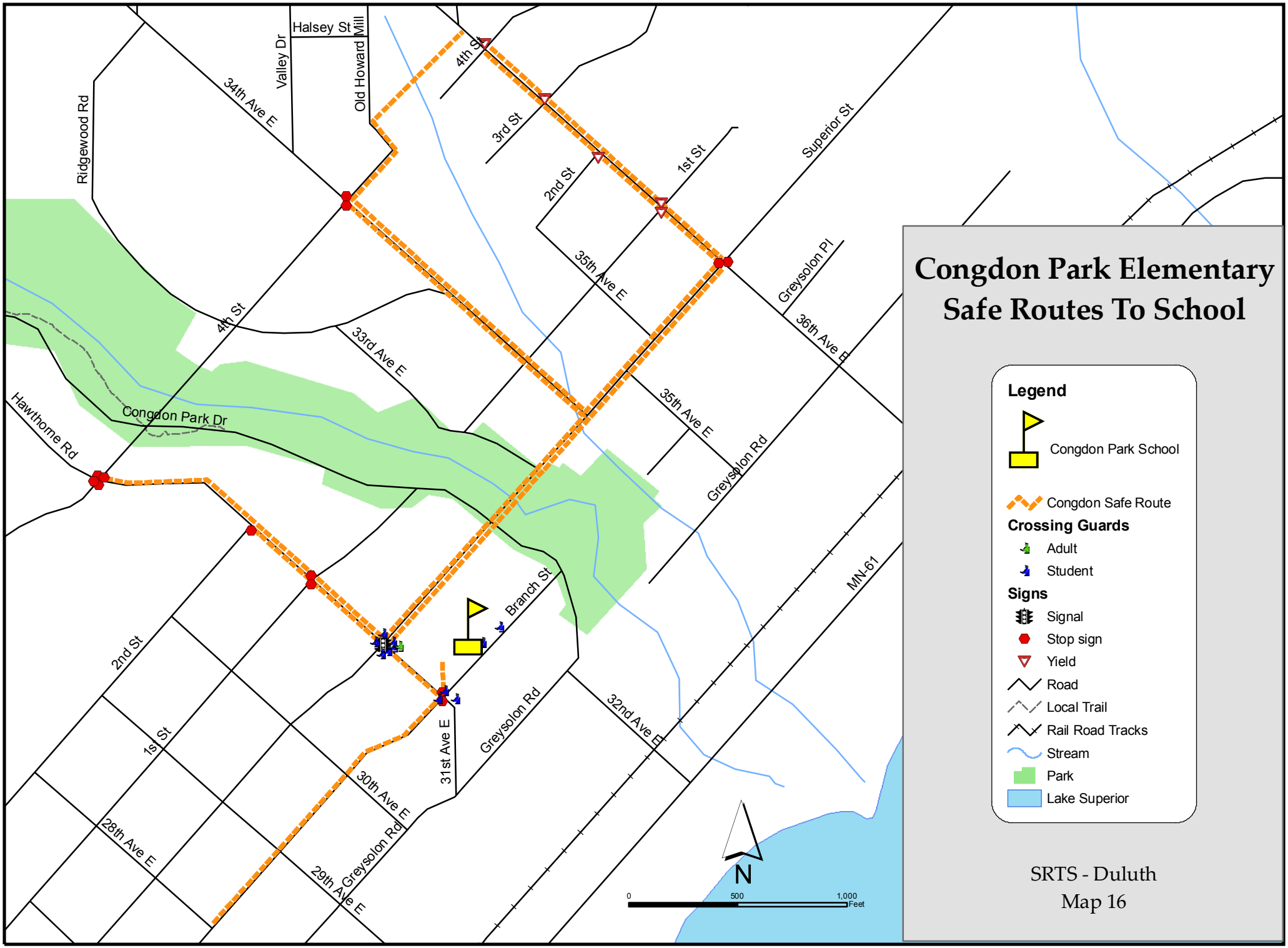
Map 16 displays the safe routes to school that were devised by the Duluth Police Department in conjunction with this study, and incorporates survey data about the routes most frequently used by Congdon students.

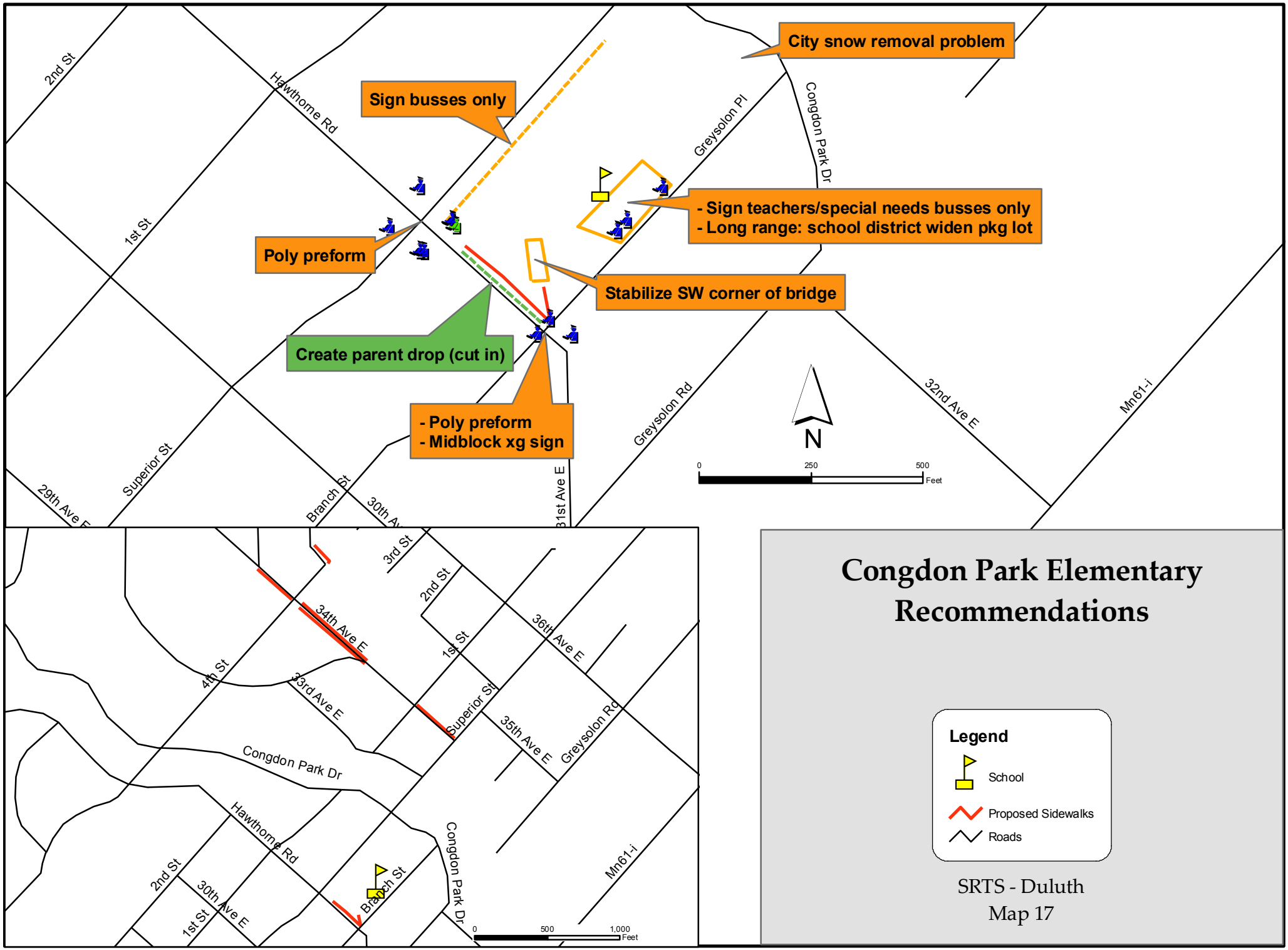
Key Improvements

Shown below is a prioritized list of improvements suggested by the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee, Congdon Elementary School staff, and the Congdon PTA regarding key improvements that address parent and student safety concerns that were identified in transportation surveys from October 2005. Map 17 displays the recommendations geographically.

Table 5: Congdon Park Project Recommendations

Congdon Park Elementary School (K-5 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Parent Cut In Drop Off along East side of Hawthorne				$52,000
Sign Superior Street (lower side) as buses only				*City Engineering*
PRIORITY SIDEWALK:				
34th Ave E-Superior St to 1st St	east side	325 L.F	$30/per ft	$9,750
34th Ave E - Ridgewood to 4th St	east side	760 L.F.	$30/per ft	$22,800
SIDEWALK:				
34th Ave E - Ridgewood to 4th St	west side	500 L.F	$30/per ft	$17,970
4th St & Old Howard Mill to bridge	lower side	150 L.F.	$30/per ft	$4,500
34th Ave E-4th St to Valley Drive	west side	400 L.F	$30/per ft	$12,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Preform Crossings: Superior and Hawthorne; Branch and Hawthorne		2	$3,000/Each	$6,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (Branch & Superior)		2	$25/Each	$50
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Sign back Teacher Lot as "Teachers & Special Needs Buses Only"				*Duluth School District*
Redesign teacher parking lot: increase size from 35 to 45 vehicles				*Duluth School District*
	Congdon Park Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$125,070**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$12,507**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$137,577**


Halsey St
Valley Dr
Old Howard Mill
4th St
34th Ave E
Ridgewood Rd
3rd St
2nd St
1st St
Superior St
35th Ave E
Greysolon Pl
36th Ave E
4th St
33rd Ave E
Hawthorne Rd
Congdon Park Dr
35th Ave E
Greysolon Rd
MN-61
Branch St
2nd St
1st St
31st Ave E
Greysolon Rd
32nd Ave E
30th Ave E
28th Ave E
29th Ave E
Greysolon Rd
N
0
500
1,000
Feet
Congdon Park Elementary
Safe Routes To School
Legend
Congdon Park School
Congdon Safe Route
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Signs
Signal
Stop sign
Yield
Road
Local Trail
Rail Road Tracks
Stream
Park
Lake Superior
SRTS - Duluth
Map 16



Congdon Park Elementary Recommendations

Legend

- School
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Roads

SRTS - Duluth
Map 17

Lester Park Elementary School Safe Routes & Recommendations

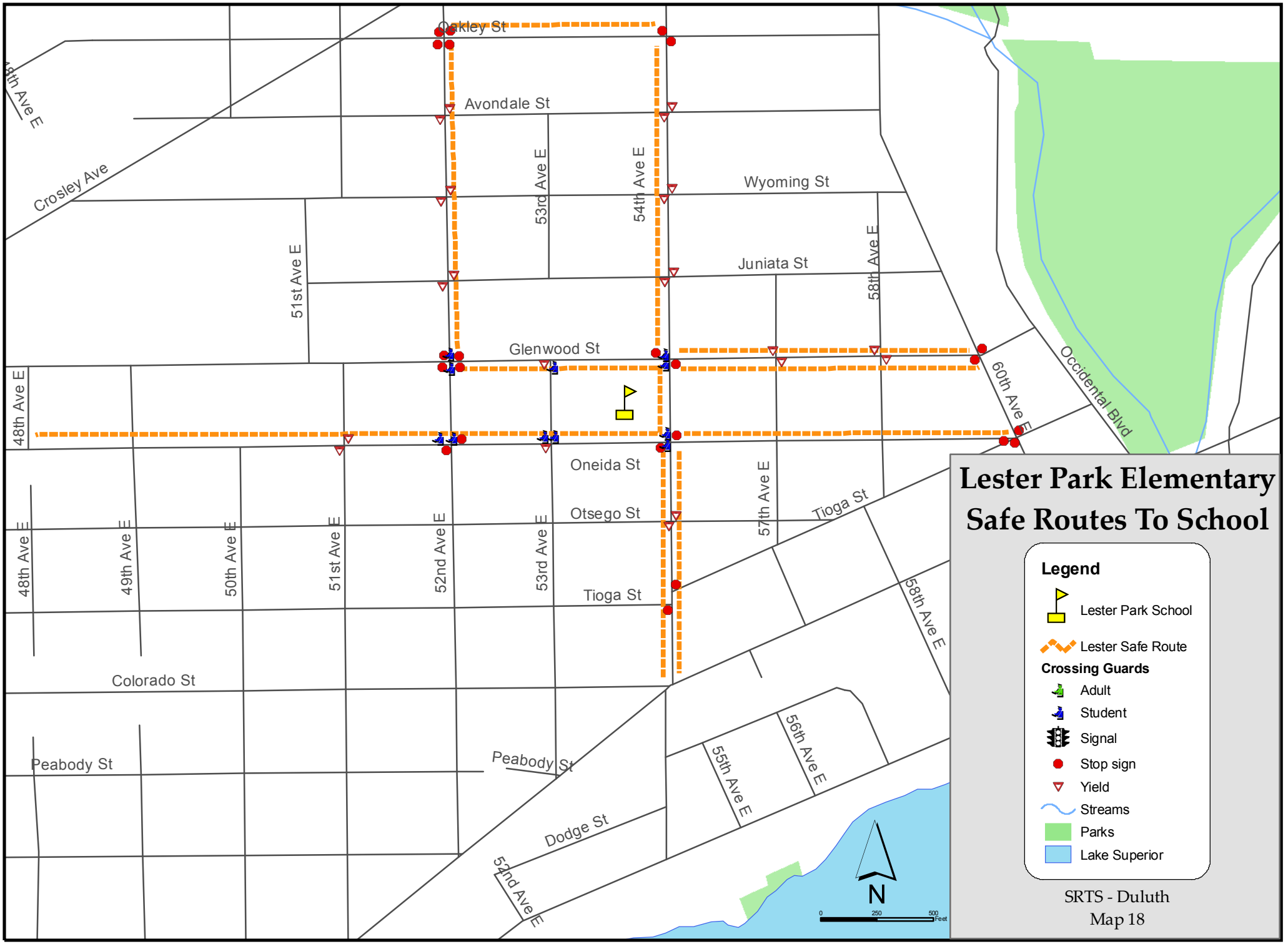
Map 18 displays the safe routes to school that were devised by the Duluth Police Department in conjunction with this study, and incorporates survey data about the routes most frequently used by Lester students.

Key Improvements

Below is a prioritized list of improvements suggested by the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee, Lester Elementary School staff, and the Lester PTA regarding key improvements that address parent and student safety concerns that were identified in transportation surveys from October 2005. Map 19 displays the recommendations geographically.

Table 6: Lester Park Project Recommendations

Lester Park Elementary School (2-5 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Preform Crossings: 54th Ave E @ Glenwood (west & south sides);		3	$3,000/Each	$9,000
54th Ave E @ Oneida (north or upper side)				
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Parent Cut in on north side of Oneida from 54th Ave E to midblock				$61,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (54th Ave E @ Glenwood and Oneida;		4	$25	$100
52nd Ave E @ Glenwood and Oneida)				
SIDEWALK:				
52nd Ave E - Colorado to Crosley (east side)		2000 LF	$30/per ft	$60,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Prefrom Crossings: 52nd Ave E @ Glenwood (east side)		1	$3,000/Each	$3,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Curb extensions/bulbouts-Glenwood at 54th Ave E west side		2	$4,000 each	$8,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Prefrom Crossings: 52nd Ave E & Oneida (north or upper side)		1	$3,000/Each	$3,000
SIGNAGE:				
Sign west side of 54th Ave E between Glenwood & Oneida "Buses Only"				*City Engineering*
Sign teacher lot as "Teachers & Volunteers Only"				*Duluth School District*
School zone signage between 52nd Ave E & 54th Ave E				*City Engineering*
School crossing advance 54th below Oneida St				*City Engineering*
CITY SNOW REMOVAL ENFORCEMENT AROUND SCHOOL				
Pressure city, policy to clear around schools				*Duluth School District*
NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS				*Duluth Physical Planning Dept*
Pressure city, sidewalks & trail connectivity to neighborhood & schools be considered in new developments				
	Lester Park Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$144,100**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$14,140**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$158,240**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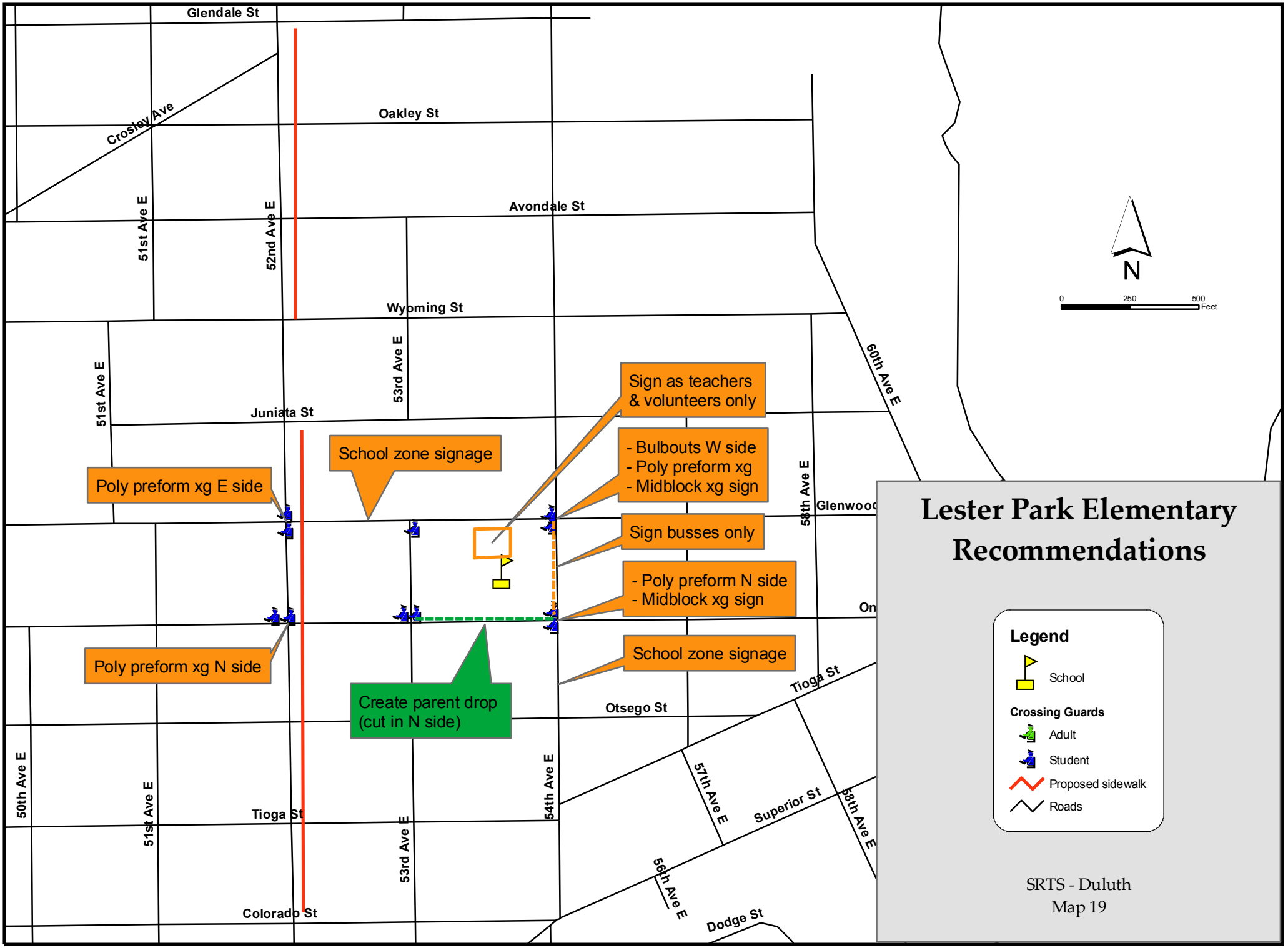
Avondale St
Wyoming St
Juniata St
Glenwood St
Oneida St
Otsego St
Tioga St
Colorado St
Peabody St
Dodge St
Crosley Ave
48th Ave E
49th Ave E
50th Ave E
51st Ave E
52nd Ave E
53rd Ave E
54th Ave E
55th Ave E
56th Ave E
57th Ave E
58th Ave E
60th Ave E
Occidental Blvd
Lester Park Elementary
Safe Routes To School
Legend
Lester Park School
Lester Safe Route
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Signal
Stop sign
Yield
Streams
Parks
Lake Superior
N
0
250
500
Feet
SRTS - Duluth
Map 18


Glendale St
Crosley Ave
Oakley St
Avondale St
51st Ave E
52nd Ave E
Wyoming St
53rd Ave E
60th Ave E
Juniata St
School zone signage
Poly preform xg E side
Sign as teachers & volunteers only
- Bulbouts W side
- Poly preform xg
- Midblock xg sign
Sign busses only
- Poly preform N side
- Midblock xg sign
School zone signage
Poly preform xg N side
Create parent drop (cut in N side)
58th Ave E
Glenwood
Tioga St
Otsego St
50th Ave E
54th Ave E
57th Ave E
Superior St
58th Ave E
56th Ave E
Dodge St
Colorado St
N
0
250
500
Feet
Lester Park Elementary Recommendations
Legend
School
Crossing Guards
Adult
Student
Proposed sidewalk
Roads
SRTS - Duluth
Map 19

Key Recommendations Summary – All SRTS Schools

Table 7: All Duluth SRTS Project Recommendations

Duluth Safe Routes to School Project: School Safety Recommendations				
Lester Park Elementary School (2-5 in Priority Order)		**AMOUNT**	**INDIVIDUAL**	**TOTAL**
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Preform Crossings: 54th Ave E @ Glenwood (west & south sides);		3	$3,000/Each	$9,000
54th Ave E @ Oneida (north or upper side)				
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Parent Cut in on north side of Oneida from 54th Ave E to midblock				$61,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (54th Ave E @ Glenwood and Oneida;		4	$25	$100
52nd Ave E @ Glenwood and Oneida)				
SIDEWALK:				
52nd Ave E - Colorado to Crosley (east side)		2000 LF	$30/per ft	$60,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Prefrom Crossings: 52nd Ave E @ Glenwood (east side)		1	$3,000/Each	$3,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Curb extensions/bulbouts-Glenwood at 54th Ave E west side		2	$4,000 each	$8,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Prefrom Crossings: 52nd Ave E & Oneida (north or upper side)		1	$3,000/Each	$3,000
SIGNAGE:				
Sign west side of 54th Ave E between Glenwood & Oneida "Buses Only"				*City Engineering*
Sign teacher lot as "Teachers & Volunteers Only"				*Duluth School District*
School zone signage between 52nd Ave E & 54th Ave E				*City Engineering*
School crossing advance 54th below Oneida St				*City Engineering*
CITY SNOW REMOVAL ENFORCEMENT AROUND SCHOOL				
Pressure city, policy to clear around schools				*Duluth School District*
NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS				*Duluth Physical Planning Dept*
Pressure city, sidewalks & trail connectivity to neighborhood & schools be considered in new developments				
	Lester Park Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$144,100**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$14,140**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$158,240**
Congdon Park Elementary School (K-5 in Priority Order)		**AMOUNT**	**INDIVIDUAL**	**TOTAL**
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Parent Cut In Drop Off along East side of Hawthorne				$52,000
Sign Superior Street (lower side) as buses only				*City Engineering*
PRIORITY SIDEWALK:				
34th Ave E-Superior St to 1st St	east side	325 L.F	$30/per ft	$9,750
34th Ave E - Ridgewood to 4th St	east side	760 L.F.	$30/per ft	$22,800
SIDEWALK:				
34th Ave E - Ridgewood to 4th St	west side	500 L.F	$30/per ft	$17,970
4th St & Old Howard Mill to bridge	lower side	150 L.F.	$30/per ft	$4,500
34th Ave E-4th St to Valley Drive	west side	400 L.F	$30/per ft	$12,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Poly Preform Crossings: Superior and Hawthorne; Branch and Hawthorne		2	$3,000/Each	$6,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (Branch & Superior)		2	$25/Each	$50
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Sign back Teacher Lot as "Teachers & Special Needs Buses Only"				*Duluth School District*
Redesign teacher parking lot: increase size from 35 to 45 vehicles				*Duluth School District*
	Congdon Park Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$125,070**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$12,507**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$137,577**

Lincoln Park School (K-8 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
2 LED hardwired xg signs on 24th Ave W-5th ST downbound 4th ST upbound		2		$8,200
Poly Preform Crossings (25th Ave W @ 3rd and 4th Streets)		2	$3,000/Each	$6,000
Bulbouts @ 25th Ave W & 3rd St (eastside)		2	$4,000/Each	$8,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (25th Ave W @ 3rd & 4th ST; and		4	$25/Each	$100
24th Ave W @ 4th & 5th ST)				
EDUCATION:				
Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Education funding for urban/low income school with K-8 enrollment				$5,000
	Lincoln Park School		**Subtotal**	**$27,300**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$2,730**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$30,030**
Lincoln Park School (K-8) Continued: Policy Review and Other Improvements				
CITY TRANSIT SAFETY ISSUE:				
Ask DTA to change 25th Ave W bus stop from west corner to east corner (which has xg guards)				*DTA*
SIDEWALK SNOW REMOVAL IN CITY PARKS:				
City snow removal problem on staircases within Lincoln Park				*Public Works*
TRAFFIC SAFETY:				
Freshen Crosswalk Paint on 24th Ave W @ 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets				*City Engineering*
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Lack of Onstreet Parking: examine numerous residential parking only segments around school, what can be lifted?				
				City Engineering
Parent Parking: remove unnecessary residential parking only on the west side of 25th Ave W and sign "Parent Drop"				
on 25th Ave W between 4th & 3rd Streets				*City Engineering*
Back school lot (5th ST) needs more HC parking				*City Engineering*
Bus Parking Only: sign 4th ST between 24th and 25th Ave W (upper side) as buses only; sign east side of				
25th Ave W between 4th and 5th ST as buses only				*City Engineering*
Teacher/Staff Parking: no employee lot, using church lot on 5th & 24th Ave W, on Lincoln Park Drive,				
small back of school lot, one block of available on-street parking on 25th Ave W between 4th and 5th ST				
*Create a visitors/teachers lot on the lower side of 4th Street between 24th & 25th Ave W				
				Duluth School District
Shared Parking Opportunities: investigate opportunities with Holy Family Catholic on 3rd St & 24th Ave W				
				Duluth School District
Sign back teacher lot (5th ST) as "Teachers Only"				*Duluth School District*
Laura MacArthur Elementary (K-5 in Priority Order)		**AMOUNT**	**INDIVIDUAL**	**TOTAL**
TRAFFIC SEPARATION:				
Create Parent Zone: extend south from current termini on Central to Elinor			$34,000	$34,000
create bulbout at the front door of MacArthur separate buses (N) & parents (S)		1	$4,000/Each	$4,000
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
6th ST & Central: build a raised intersection (painted)		1	$60,000/Each	$60,000
Elinor & Central Ave: Bulbouts (north side)		2	$4,000/Each	$8,000
Polypreform Xgs (Elinor & Central; Elinor & 57th Ave W)		2	$3,000/Each	$6,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (6th @ Central & 56th Ave W; Cody @ 57th Ave W		7	$25/Each	$175
Elinor @ Central, 56th Ave W and 57th Ave W)				
SIDEWALK:				
4th St from 54th Ave W easterly	south side	500 L.F.	$30/per ft	$15,000
SIGNAGE:				
Sign N of frontdoor bulbout "Buses only," sign S of bulbout "Parent Drop"				*City Engineering*
Sign teacher lot as "Teacher & Volunteer Parking Only"				*Duluth School District*
Add "No Parking Here to Corner" sign on 46th at 6th St (sight visibility)				*City Engineering*
*Sign by back door on 56th Ave W as Buses only				*City Engineering*
	Laura MacArthur Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$127,175**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$12,717**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$139,892**

Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary (K-5 in Priority Order)		AMOUNT	INDIVIDUAL	TOTAL
TRAFFIC CALMING:				
Curb extension into parking lanes from S. of Stowe to N. of Fillmore		1	$60,000/Each	$60,000
LED school crossing signs hardwired (Hwy 23 @ Stowe & Fillmore)		4	$1,600/Each	$6,400
Polypreform Crossings: Stowe, Fillmore, & 101st Ave W		3	$3,000/Each	$9,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones (101st Ave W, Stowe, Fillmore)		3	$25/Each	$75
New street lights		4	system	$30,000
SIDEWALK:				
101st Ave W from Stowe to Goodhue (west side)		1050 L.F.	$30/per ft	$26,400
City snow removal problem along 102nd Ave W north of school				*City Engineering*
Commonwealth snow removal problem: MnDOT needs to bump back snow				*MnDOT*
	Stowe Elementary		**Subtotal**	**$131,800**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$13,180**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$144,980**
Grant Magnet School: Special Issue Area (K-5 in Priority Order)		**AMOUNT**	**INDIVIDUAL**	**TOTAL**
Poly Preform Crossing @ 8th Ave E & 9th St		1	$3,000/Each	$3,000
Mid-Street Grabber Cones		1	$25/Each	$25
	Grant School		**Subtotal**	**$3,025**
	Preliminary Engineering 10%		**Subtotal**	**$302**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$3,327**
			PROJECT TOTAL	**$614,046**

CHAPTER 5 / POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Federal Transportation Funding for Safe Routes to School

In August 2005, the federal transportation bill, Safe Accountable Flexible Equitable Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users, or "SAFETEA-LU," included $612 million in federal-aid highway funds to State Departments of Transportation over the course of the bill FY 2005-2009 for SRTS projects. These funds are available for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects, and to administer SRTS programs that benefit elementary and middle school children in grades K-8. Funding will be distributed to states based on student enrollment, with no state receiving less than $1 million per year. Each state is also required to have a Safe Routes to School Coordinator as a statewide point of contact. The three purposes of the federal SRTS Program are:

1. Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
2. Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
3. Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

The Five E's of SRTS

The five key "E's" to SRTS projects include:

1. **Engineering** – Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways.
2. **Education** – Teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.
3. **Enforcement** – Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings , and proper walking and bicycling

behaviors), and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.

4. **Encouragement** – Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.
5. **Evaluation** – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the intervention(s).

Eligible Activities

Projects and activities in each category should directly support increased safety and convenience for elementary and middle school children in grades K-8 to bicycle and/or walk to school. Projects may indirectly benefit high school age youth or the general public; however, these constituencies cannot be the sole or primary beneficiaries. Infrastructure projects constructed with these funds must be accessible to persons with disabilities, per the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).

Infrastructure Related Projects

SAFETEA-LU specifies that eligible infrastructure-related projects include the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects *that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school,* including:

Sidewalk improvements: new sidewalks, sidewalk widening, sidewalk gap closures, sidewalk repairs, curbs, gutters, and curb ramps.

Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements: roundabouts, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crossings, raised intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, full- or half-street closures, automated speed enforcement, and variable speed limits.

Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements: crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, traffic control devices (including new or upgraded traffic signals, pavement markings, traffic stripes, in-roadway crossing lights, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, and pedestrian activated signal upgrades), and sight distance improvements.

On-street bicycle facilities: new or upgraded bicycle lanes, widened outside lanes or roadway shoulders, geometric improvements, turning lanes, channelization and roadway realignment, traffic signs, and pavement markings.

Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities: exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways that are separated from a roadway.

Secure bicycle parking facilities: bicycle parking racks, bicycle lockers, designated areas with safety lighting, and covered bicycle shelters.

Traffic diversion improvements: separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities, and traffic diversion away from school zones or designated routes to a school.

Non-Infrastructure Related Activities

SAFETEA-LU specifies that eligible non-infrastructure activities *will encourage walking and bicycling to school*, including:

Public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders,

Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools; and

Student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment, and funding for training, volunteers, and managers of safe routes to school programs.

Ineligible Uses of SRTS Funding

Projects that do not specifically serve the stated purposes of the SRTS Program, or cover reoccurring costs (such as crossing guard salaries, which can be used for crossing guard training) except as specifically provided in the legislation. The use of funds for projects that reorganize pick-up and drop-off, primarily for the convenience of drivers, rather than to improve child safety and/or walking and bicycling access, is not permitted, nor should program funds be spent on education programs that are primarily focused on bus safety. Improvements to bus stops are not eligible for this funding.

State of Minnesota (MnDOT) Distribution of Federal SRTS Funds

As stated in Chapter 1, Minnesota's funding level for Safe Routes to School will be $8 million during the life of SAFETEA-LU (2009). The funds can be used for infrastructure improvements, education, and enforcement to improve the safety of bicycling and walking to and from school. The funding split is 70% for infrastructure, 10% for education and enforcement, and 20% that may be used in either category.

Minnesota Safe Routes to School Funding	
2005	$830,400
2006	$1,211,509.20
2007	$1,644,551.10
2008	$2,035,255.30
2009	$2,545,531.55
TOTAL	**$8,267,247**

Eligibility

Projects from both public and non-profit entities are eligible for funding. The MN SRTS program will not be part of the ATP allocation process; it will be a centralized program. A statewide grant-making approach will be used to identify and fund projects. A MnDOT application process should be in place by Spring 2006 and Kristie Billiar will be the state coordinator (651/296-5269 or 6Hkristie.billiar@dot.state.mn.us).

Intent to Apply for Federal Safe Routes to School Funds

Once this plan is formally approved by the Duluth Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Steering Committee, the MIC Policy Board, and is presented to the Duluth School Board, it is the intent of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) staff to assist the Duluth Public Schools in completing a state application for federal SRTS funds. The City of Duluth will be the project sponsor on behalf of the Duluth School District. The eligibility for agencies and groups is listed above. The project sponsor will receive the federal funding, design the projects, and will be responsible for meeting engineering design standards and project memorandum milestones.

Regardless, if this project is funded, it will require diligent coordination on the part of the Duluth Public School's Transportation Director and Administration, City of Duluth Engineering Staff, and MIC Staff for planning guidance. If partial funding is received for this project, the Duluth SRTS Steering Committee should reconvene to

ensure that top safety improvements for each school are addressed based on the available funding allocated to the project.

Other Funding Resources

Blue Cross Blue Shields of Minnesota (BCBS) "Prevention MN"

A substantial portion of Minnesota's tobacco settlement will be used to support active living improvements for healthy lifestyles across the state. Programs can support infrastructure improvements as well as social support programs. These funds should be actively monitored as certain grant cycles will be a good fit to fully fund recommendations included in this plan. As more of these tobacco settlement funds become available for groups beyond the target adult populations, schools should apply for funding to promote activities such as walking groups within schools. To monitor available activity promotion grant cycles, visit: http://www.preventionminnesota.com/.

Transportation Enhancement Funds and Safety Funds

Transportation Enhancement Activities offer communities the opportunity to expand transportation choices. Eligible activities include safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic routes, beautification, and other investments increase opportunities for recreation, accessibility, and safety for everyone beyond traditional highway programs. There are twelve key eligible activities for these funds:

- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety and educational
- Acquisition of scenic or historic easements
- Scenic or historic highway programs including tourist and welcome centers
- Landscaping and scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities
- Conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails
- Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Environmental mitigation of runoff pollution and provision of wildlife connectivity
- Establishment of transportation museums

Federal Safety Funds

Originally enacted in 1966, the Highway Safety Act required agencies to establish uniform standards for State highway safety programs to assist States and local communities in implementing their highway safety programs. Highway Safety Funds are used to support State and community programs to reduce deaths and injuries on the highways. Pedestrian Safety has been identified as a National Priority Area and is therefore eligible for Section 402 funds. These 402 funds can be used for a variety of safety initiatives including conducting data analyses, developing safety education programs, and conducting community-wide pedestrian safety campaigns. Since the 402 Program is jointly administered by NHTSA and FHWA, Highway Safety Funds can also be used for some limited safety-related engineering projects.

CHAPTER 6 / WALK TO SCHOOL CAMPAIGN

A Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program has two distinct pieces, (1) the study or assessment that identifies safety issues and routes to school and (2) a school campaign that promotes walking and biking to school using the safest routes. Finding the correct community partners and resources is critical to the success of a SRTS campaign.

Timing is a key consideration for a successful SRTS campaign as well. Based on experiences learned in the Superior Safe Routes to School Project in 2004, MIC staff found it difficult to fully assist in lifting a Safe Routes to School walking campaign that coincided with International Walk to School Day (first week of October) so shortly after the school year began. Therefore, for the Duluth Safe Routes to School Project, MIC staff decided to launch a spring Walk to School Week to kick off the walking and bicycling season in this northern climate. This was a successful way to end the planning process in a hands-on campaign effort. The energy of steering committee members led the campaign, which included principals, PTA members, the police department and county health officials.

Steering Committee / Community Partners

A diverse group of community partners led this study on the Steering Committee. Committee membership represented the School Principals, PTA Members, School Board Representatives, School District Transportation and Finance Staff, City Councilors, City Planning, City Engineering, Duluth Police Department, St. Louis County Public Health, and a local Bicycle Advocate. A total of six meetings were held, which does not include presentations to the School Board and each school's PTA.

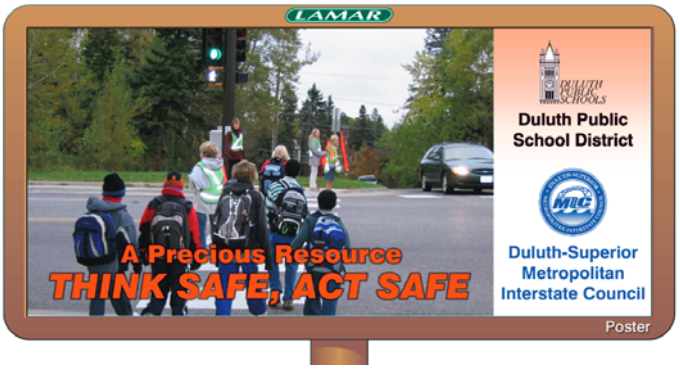
Walk to School Week (May 15-19, 2006)

Students from Lester Park, Congdon, Lincoln Park, Laura MacArthur, and Stowe Elementary Schools were encouraged to participate in Walk to School Week from May 15-19, 2006. Students in grades 3-8 were encouraged to walk to school and plotter-sized routes maps were hung by each school's office. School newsletters featured Walk to School Week, pedestrian and bicycle safety education articles, and a health article written by St. Louis County Public Health. The Duluth Police Department increased speed enforcement in school zones during this week. Each school's teachers in 3rd-8th grade classrooms were asked to highlight pedestrian and bicycle education to the

greatest extent possible during this week and encouraged students to walk to school. Additionally, Walk to School Week was featured on Public Access Cable Television. Some schools, such a Lincoln Park School, hired a person to conduct bicycle safety education for students. Stowe and Lincoln Park Schools organized walking school buses. The May 20th weekend *Duluth Budgeteer* newspaper featured the organized walking school bus of students from Stowe Elementary School.

Community Outreach

Throughout this study, the MIC worked cooperatively with the Duluth School District, and in particular, the School District Transportation Director. The Duluth School District and the MIC co-sponsored a THINK SAFE, ACT SAFE billboard campaign that was posted from May 9th – June 9th. The intent of the billboards was to highlight the importance of school zone safety to community drivers. MIC staff and the Duluth School District partnered to develop and strategize a press release on Walk to School Week.



Education

MnDOT did not have the pedestrian or bicycle education brochure resources that WisDOT had when conducting the Superior Safe Routes to School Project. Therefore, MIC staff accessed the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website and utilized national education brochures and handouts. In April, the Steering Committee selected classroom educational brochures for use during Walk to School Week, and these brochures were also enclosed in schools May newsletters.

APPENDIX

October School Newsletter Article
Parents we need your input!
Our School is Participating in the Duluth Safe Routes to School Study

Over the course of the 2005-2006 school year, Congdon, Lester Park, Lincoln Park, MacArthur, and Stowe schools will be involved in the Duluth Safe Routes to School Study. These schools were identified by the school district based on the large number of students within the schools' walking boundaries.

What is Safe Routes to School or "SRTS?" SRTS is a national effort focused on identifying primary routes and barriers that children encounter in accessing local schools. Outcomes from being involved in Safe Routes to School studies commonly include pedestrian and bicycle improvements, traffic safety and health promotion education for students, outreach to raise public awareness in school zones, and walking/biking to school campaigns. Parents and students will be surveyed the week of October 10th in an effort to identify safety issues around your school. Parent surveys will be sent home with students and student surveys will be administered in class to 3rd – 8th graders. **We'd really appreciate your participation and support in this effort by completing and returning the surveys by Friday October 14th.**

Duluth Public Schools are partnering with the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), the federal transportation planning agency for the Twin Ports area, to conduct this study. MIC completed the *Safe Routes to School in Superior Plan* in January 2005. As a result, funds to implement the Superior plan recommendations were supported by Congressmen Obey and Oberstar and included in the Federal Transportation Bill "SAFETEA-LU" which was passed in August. The City of Superior and Superior School District are currently selecting improvements from the plan and will spend $600,000 ($480,000 federal) to make routes to school safer, more pedestrian friendly, and more bikable. To view the *Safe Routes to School in Superior Plan* online, visit www.ardc.org/mic.

Congressman Oberstar is one of the nation's leaders who promoted the inclusion of new Safe Routes funding in SAFETEA-LU. SRTS initiatives now have federal funds available, to the tune of $612 million nationally over the next four years, to implement toward making routes to school, safer, more walkable, and more bikable. Communities that stay ahead of the curve, such as Duluth and Superior, will undoubtedly be worthy candidates for these funds!

Safe Routes to School Can Lead to Healthier Children

By Rep. James L. Oberstar
September 21, 2005

America's children are developing a sedentary lifestyle at an early age. They are watching TV more and playing outdoors less than children of a generation ago. The Centers for Disease Control reports that nearly one American child in four is overweight.

The Safe Routes to School program can help change this. It promotes walking or biking to school to provide our children with fresh air and exercise by providing them with a safe environment in which to travel. It also helps reduce fuel consumption and air pollution. This program has the potential to improve the living habits of an entire generation of schoolchildren.

In 2000, I brought together the federal Departments of Transportation, Education, and Health and Human Services and bicycling advocates to explore this new role for the bicycle in American society. I was inspired to do this by the successful three-year Sustainable Transportation experiment in the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, where 30 percent of all trips are made by bicycle.

This past summer, Congress passed and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), a landmark surface transportation funding bill. This legislation provides $612 million over six years for a national Safe Routes to School program to encourage children to bicycle and walk to school.

This program makes funding available to states and communities for activities associated with a local Safe Routes to School program. The funds may be used to make improvements to streets and sidewalks to help students to walk and bike to school safely. These could include installation or upgrading of sidewalks and bicycle paths, efforts to help calm traffic and reduce speed, pedestrian and bike crossing projects, and traffic diversion programs in the vicinity of schools.

With the cooperation of federal, state, municipal, and local school officials, as well as parents and dedicated volunteers, we can help establish Safe Routes to Schools programs throughout this country, and help our children live healthier lives.

Example of Each School's Survey Cover Letter

Rockridge Elementary
4849 Ivanhoe Street
Duluth, MN 55804
(218) 525-0821
Fax (218) 525-0826

Lester Park Elementary
315 North 54th Ave E
Duluth, MN 55804
(218) 525-0804
Fax (218) 525-0826

Memo

To: Parents of Lester Park 3rd, 4th, and 5th Graders

From: Tom Threinen, Principal

Date: October 10, 2005

RE: **Duluth Safe Routes to School Project: Parent Survey due Oct. 14th**

Lester Park Elementary School will be involved in the Duluth Safe Routes to School Study during the 2005-2006 school year. Our school was selected for inclusion in this study based on the large number of students within the school's walking boundary.

Safe Routes to School is a national effort focused on identifying primary routes and barriers that children encounter in accessing local schools. Outcomes from being involved in Safe Routes to School studies commonly include pedestrian and bicycle improvements, traffic safety and health promotion education for students, outreach to raise public awareness in school zones, and walking/biking to school campaigns.

Parents, in an effort to identify safety issues around our school, please complete this survey for the child who brought it home to you and return it by the end of the week (Friday October 14th) or you can fold, tape, and mail directly.

Survey data will be compiled by the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC) at ARDC, and results will be used to devise safety recommendations and apply for national and state funding sources available for these types of improvements.

We'd really appreciate your participation and support in this effort. Thank you so much for your time.

"Guiding students along the path to tomorrow."

Parent Survey: Duluth Safe Routes to School Study
Parents, please answer this transportation survey for the child who brought it home to you. We need your input, please help us!

1. **How does your child *usually* travel to school? (Circle one)**

   BIKE CAR/CARPOOL DTA BUS SCHOOL BUS WALK

   SKATEBOARD/ROLLERBLADE
   OTHER/COMMENTS:_____

2. **If you drive your child to school, why do you make this choice? (Circle up to three)**

BUSY STREETS	CONVENIENCE	LACK OF SIDEWALKS
NO BUS SERVICE	SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	LENGTH OF SCHOOL BUS RIDE
POOR LIGHTING	STRANGERS	TOO FAR TO WALK
SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULE		OTHER:_____

3. **What physical improvements need to be made to unsafe areas around or on the way to school ?** (i.e., intersections, streets, sidewalks, drop-off zones at school, trails, parking lots etc.)

   Intersection:_____and_____
   What could be done to improve this?_____

   Intersection:_____and_____
   What could be done to improve this?_____

   Other locations:_____
   What could be done to improve this?_____

4. **If the above improvements were implemented, would you allow your child to walk or bike to school? (Circle)**

   YES NO MAYBE COMMENTS**:**_____

5. **Does your child use sidewalks to get to school in the winter? (Circle)**

   YES NO
   Are they usually shoveled? YES NO
   COMMENTS**:**_____

6. **Currently bike facilities, such as bike racks, are not provided at Duluth Schools. If bike racks were provided, would you allow your child to bike to school? (Circle)**

   YES NO MAYBE
   COMMENTS**:**_____

7. **Would you allow your child to walk to school if there was a school coordinated walking program led by parent volunteers to walk with students? (Circle)**

   a) YES NO MAYBE

b) COMMENTS:_____

8. **If there is a Spring 2006 Walk to School campaign, would you be interested in being involved? (Circle)**

   a) YES NO MAYBE

   b) Your Contact Info:_____

Please have your child return this survey to his or her teacher by Friday Oct 14th or fold & tape this form & affix a stamp with the address clearly shown. Thank you for your input!

Return Address: 37 cents

_____
_____
_____

Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council
221 West First Street
Duluth, MN 55802

Responses to Parent Surveys

How does your child usually travel to school?	**Congdon**	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Car/Carpool	29.3%	17.6%	32.9%	41.3%	36.5%
Car/Carpool and Walk	1.0%				
Car/Carpool and School Bus		1.4%		2.7%	
DTA Bus			2.9%		
School Bus	36.4%	47.3%	38.6%	32.0%	36.5%
Walk	33.3%	33.8%	25.7%	24.0%	27.0%

If you drive your child to school, why do you make this choice? Answers less than 1% not included	**Congdon**	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Behavior on School Bus		1.01%			
Busy Streets	6.02%	6.06%	13.08%	7.27%	10.81%
Convenience	9.77%	8.08%	7.48%	7.27%	9.91%
Family logistics	1.50%		<1%	2.73%	
Lack of Sidewalks	6.77%	4.04%	<1%	1.82%	3.60%
Length of School Bus Ride	<1%	2.02%	1.87%	<1%	<1%
N/A	27.07%	41.41%	33.64%	26.36%	32.43%
No Bus Service	12.78%	6.06%	8.41%	12.73%	7.21%
Not our local school	4.51%	1.01%	1.87%	2.73%	<1%
On my way to work	<1%	1.01%	<1%	2.73%	
Other: weather related		1.01%			
Poor Lighting	<1%	2.02%	<1%	<1%	3.60%
Poor weather	7.52%	8.08%	5.61%	3.64%	5.41%
School Activities	3.76%	2.02%	4.67%	3.64%	2.70%
School Bus Schedule	3.01%	3.03%	<1%	2.73%	1.80%
Strangers	3.01%	5.05%	12.15%	13.64%	11.71%
Too Far to Walk	9.77%	8.08%	6.54%	10.91%	5.41%

What physical improvements need to be made to unsafe areas around or on the way to school?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
Adult Guards/Supervisors		7.4%	14.3%	2.5%	9.1%
Build sidewalk	18.0%	14.8%	4.8%	2.5%	
City enforcement of brush trimming		3.7%			
Extend busing			4.8%		4.5%
Inattentive drivers				2.5%	
Increased police enforcement	6.0%	3.7%	4.8%	7.5%	
Legal school zone visibility & traffic calming	26.0%	18.5%	23.8%	30.0%	18.2%
Modify bus pickup/drop-off locations		3.7%		2.5%	
Need bus shelter				2.5%	
Need crossing guard & improve training	6.0%	7.4%	9.5%	12.5%	9.1%
Need stop sign, 4-way, or light w/walk signal	22.0%	14.8%	28.6%	20.0%	27.3%
Parents should not leave cars	2.0%				
Poor parent drop off area	16.0%	11.1%		7.5%	4.5%
Poorly maintained				2.5%	4.5%
Reduce crossing locations					4.5%
sex offenders in area			4.8%		
Sight visibility problem	2.0%	11.1%	4.8%		
Snow removal problem	2.0%	3.7%		5.0%	18.2%
Turning arrows for cars				2.5%	

Top Intersections:

Congdon	
Hawthorne and Superior St	20.0%
Branch St and Hawthorne	8.6%
Lester Park	
54th Ave E and Glenwood	27.3%
54th Ave E and Superior St	6.1%
54th Ave E and Oneida St	6.1%
Lincoln Park	
24th Ave W and 4th St	30.8%
24th Ave W and 3rd St	7.7%
24th Ave W and 5th St	7.7%

MacArthur	
6th St and Central Ave	15.0%
8th St and Central Ave	10.0%
Central Ave and Elinor St	10.0%
Central Ave and Grand Ave	10.0%
57th Ave W and Elinor St	7.5%
Stowe	
Commonwealth and Stowe St	40.7%
Commonwealth and Fillmore St	18.5%

If the above improvements were implemented would you allow your child to walk or bike to school?
(Comments less than 10% not included)

Congdon

Yes 39.4%, Comments:	
Implement school area safety improvements	76.9%
No 45.5%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	80.0%
Maybe 15.2%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	20.0%
Yes, if walk/bike with friend	20.0%
Modify school bus pick-up/drop-off locations	20.0%
Implement school area safety improvements	20.0%
High school drivers inattentive	20.0%

Lester Park

Yes 35.3%, Comments:	
Implement school area safety improvements	33.3%
Already walks	33.3%
Too young to walk/bike	16.7%
Traffic calming	16.7%
No 35.3%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	60.0%
Too young to walk/bike	20.0%
Drive by choice (feel its safer)	10.0%
Too much traffic	10.0%
Maybe 5.9%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	100.0%

Lincoln Park

Yes 15.8%, Comments:	
Sex offenders in area	33.3%
Live close to school, pleased with guards	33.3%
Implement school area safety improvements	33.3%
No 68.4%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	100.0%
Maybe 15.8%, Comments:	
Implement school area safety improvements	66.7%
Too young to walk/bike	33.3%

MacArthur

Yes 28.6%, Comments:	
Implement school area safety improvements	50.0%
Create bike lane	25.0%
Too far to walk/bike	25.0%
No 42.9%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	50.0%
School Activities	16.7%
Too much traffic	16.7%
Too young to walk/bike	16.7%
Maybe 42.9%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	25.0%
Weather dependent	25.0%
Too young to walk/bike	25.0%
Traffic calming	25.0%

Stowe

Yes 53.3%, Comments:	
Implement school area safety improvements	37.5%
Already walks	25.0%
Hope district allows biking	12.5%
Mandatory to walk in group	12.5%
Prefer they walk/bike for exercise	12.5%
No 40.0%, Comments:	
Too far to walk/bike	66.7%
Drive by choice (feel its safer)	16.7%
Too much traffic	16.7%
Maybe 6.7%, Comments:	
Too young to walk/bike	100.0%

Does your child use sidewalks to get to school in the winter? Comments less than 10% not included

Congdon

Yes 58.3%, Comments:	
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	47.6%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	38.1%
No 27.8%, Comments:	
Lack of sidewalks	70.0%
Bus stops & Street corners not shoveled	10.0%
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	10.0%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	10.0%
No Answer 13.9%, Comments:	
Lack of sidewalks	40.0%
Ride bus	20.0%
Hollywood sidewalks need to be plowed	20.0%
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	20.0%

Lester Park

Yes 85.2%, Comments:	
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	43.5%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	30.4%
No 11.1%, Comments:	
Bus stops & Street corners not shoveled	33.3%
Lack sidewalk at bus stop	33.3%
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	33.3%
No Answer 3.7%, Comments:	
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	100.0%

Lincoln Park

Yes 84.2%, Comments:	
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	50.0%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	43.8%
No 15.8%, Comments:	
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	66.7%
Drive in winter	33.3%

MacArthur

Yes 61.1%, Comments:	
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	36.4%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	36.4%
No 27.8%, Comments:	
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	60.0%
Drive	20.0%
Drive in winter	20.0%
No Answer 11.1%, Comments:	
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	50.0%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	50.0%

Stowe

Yes 76.5%, Comments:	
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	69.2%
Shoveled sidewalks w/exception some homes	15.4%
No 23.5%, Comments:	
Lack of sidewalks	50.0%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy, walk in street	25.0%
Hollywood sidewalks need to be plowed	25.0%

Currently bike facilities, such as bike racks, are not provided at Duluth Schools. If bike racks were provided, would you allow your child to bike to school? Comments less than 10% not included

Congdon

Yes 29.7%, Comments	
Only school area safety improvements done	27.3%
Biking asset for Middle/High Schoolers	18.2%
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	18.2%
No 45.9%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	35.3%
Too hilly to walk/bike	29.4%
Too much traffic	23.5%
Maybe 24.3%, Comments	
Too hilly to walk/bike	33.3%
Only school area safety improvements done	22.2%
Too far to walk/bike	11.1%
Sidewalks not shoveled and icy	11.1%
Biking asset for Middle/High Schoolers	11.1%
Build sidewalk & buffer elementary walk/H.S. drive	11.1%

Lester Park

Yes 25%, Comments	
Biking asset for Middle/High Schoolers	33.3%
if mandatory bike helmets & safety class	33.3%
Too young to walk/bike	33.3%
No 66.7%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	75.0%
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	12.5%
Too much traffic	12.5%
Maybe 8.3%, Comments	
Too young to walk/bike	100.0%

Lincoln Park

Yes 6.3%, Comments	
Prefer they walk/bike for exercise	100.0%
No 81.3%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	38.5%
Too much traffic	15.4%
Too young to walk/bike	15.4%
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	15.4%
Maybe 12.5%, Comments	
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	50.0%
Weather dependent	50.0%

MacArthur

Yes 13.3%, Comments	
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	50.0%
if mandatory bike helmets & safety class	50.0%
No 66.7%, Comments	
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	30.0%
Too far to walk/bike	30.0%
Too young to walk/bike	20.0%
Too hilly to walk/bike	10.0%
High school drivers inattentive	10.0%
Maybe 20%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	66.7%
Weather dependent	33.3%

Stowe

Yes 31.6%, Comments	
Anti-theft measures necessary (racks critical)	33.3%
Prefer they walk/bike for exercise	33.3%
Only school area safety improvements done	16.7%
Weather dependent	16.7%
No 57.9%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	54.5%
Too much traffic	18.2%
Maybe 10.5%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	50.0%
Build sidewalk & buffer elementary walk/H.S. drive	50.0%

Would you allow your child to walk to school if there was a school coordinated walking program led by parent volunteers to walk with students? Comments less than 10% not included

Congdon

Yes 43.5%, Comments	
Already walk alone/friends/parents	60.0%
Great idea	10.0%
Implement school area safety improvements	10.0%
Prefer they walk/bike for exercise	10.0%
Too far to walk/bike	10.0%
No 43.5%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	100.0%
Maybe 13%, Comments	
Must walk in group	33.3%
Too far to walk/bike	33.3%
Weather dependent	33.3%

Lester Park

Yes 31.6%, Comments	
Adult supervision helps	50.0%
Great idea	33.3%
Already walk alone/friends/parents	16.7%
No 63.2%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	83.3%
Maybe 5.3%, Comments	
Too young to walk/bike	100.0%

Lincoln Park

Yes 36.8%, Comments	
Great idea	28.6%
If parents checked & program well coordinated	28.6%
Too far to walk/bike	28.6%
Sex offenders in area	14.3%
No 42.1%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	87.5%
Weather dependent	12.5%
Maybe 21.1%, Comments	
If child is interested	25.0%
If parents checked & program well coordinated	25.0%
Too far to walk/bike	25.0%
Extend busing	25.0%

MacArthur

Yes 55%, Comments	
Great idea	36.4%
Already walk alone/friends/parents	18.2%
Prefer they walk/bike for exercise	18.2%
Too far to walk/bike	18.2%
No 40%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	75.0%
Too young to walk/bike	12.5%
Already walk alone/friends/parents	12.5%
Maybe 5%, Comments	
Adult supervision helps	100.0%

Stowe

Yes 42.9%, Comments	
Great idea	33.3%
Must walk in group	22.2%
Too far to walk/bike	22.2%
Already walk alone/friends/parents	11.1%
If parents checked & program well coordinated	11.1%
No 47.6%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	90.0%
Too much traffic	10.0%
Maybe 9.5%, Comments	
Too far to walk/bike	50.0%
Already walk alone/friends/parents	50.0%

If there is a spring 2006 Walk to School Campaign, would you be interested in being involved?					
	Congdon	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Yes	21.3%	18.5%	16.1%	15.3%	16.7%
No	50.6%	58.5%	50.0%	40.3%	51.5%
Maybe	28.1%	23.1%	33.9%	44.4%	31.8%

Duluth Safe Routes to School Study: Student Survey, How do I get to school?

Students, as part of the Duluth Safe Routes to School Study, we'd like to hear about how you get to school so that we can help make your route to school as safe as possible.

1. **How do you *usually* get to school? (Circle one)**
   BIKE CAR/CARPOOL DTA BUS SCHOOL BUS

   SKATEBOARD/ROLLERBLADE WALK OTHER/COMMENTS:_____

IF YOU USUALLY WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL, THEN:

2. **Please draw your route to school on the back of this sheet (SEE MAP ON BACK)**

3. **How many blocks do you travel? (Circle one)**

   BLOCKS: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 +

4. **Who do you *usually* travel to school with? (Circle one)**
   ALONE FRIEND PARENT SIBLING / RELATIVE

5. **Where do you walk or bike to school? (Circle all that apply)**
   SIDEWALKS TRAILS STREETS

6. **Do you use sidewalks to get to school or to catch the bus in the winter? (Circle)**
   a) YES NO

   b) Are they usually shoveled? YES NO

   c) COMMENTS:_____

7. **Do you have to cross a busy street or unsafe area to get to school? (Circle / Fill in)**
   a) YES NO

   b) Busy Intersection:_____and_____

   c) Unsafe area:_____

   d) Is there a crossing guard there? YES NO

   e) Is there a signal there? YES NO

   f) Is there a stop sign there? YES NO

   g) What could be done to improve this busy intersection or unsafe area?_____

8. **Have you ever been in danger walking or biking to school? (Circle / Fill in)**
   a) YES NO

   b) COMMENTS:_____

   What could be done to help you get to school more safely?

   a) COMMENTS:_____

9. **What do you like best about walking or biking to school?**_____

Responses to Student Surveys

How do you usually get to school? Answers less than 1% not included					
	Congdon	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
School Bus	38.9%	51.1%	29.3%	37.8%	40.8%
Car/Carpool	28.1%	17.0%	16.7%	29.6%	26.1%
Walk	26.7%	28.9%	33.5%	26.5%	28.7%
School Bus and Car/Carpool	2.6%	<1%	3.0%	1.0%	1.3%
Car/Carpool and Walk	1.9%	2.1%	6.5%	2.0%	1.3%
Walk and School Bus	1.1%			1.0%	
Walk and Skateboard/Rollerblade		<1%	1.1%	1.0%	0.6%
DTA Bus	<1%		2.3%		1.3%
Skateboard/Rollerblade			3.4%		
Bike			<1%	1.0%	

If you walk/bike, how many blocks do you travel?					
	Congdon	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
<1		1.3%			
1	75.7%	69.8%	58.6%	76.5%	71.8%
2 to 5	14.6%	21.7%	23.2%	17.3%	21.2%
6 to 10	9.7%	7.2%	18.3%	6.1%	5.8%
>10					1.3%

If you walk/bike, who do you usually travel to school with? Answers less than 5% not included					
	Congdon	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Friend	28.8%	32.4%	17.4%	31.3%	40.8%
Alone	20.0%	29.7%	37.2%	37.5%	28.6%
Parent	16.3%	5.4%	<5%	6.3%	6.1%
Sibling/Relative	15.0%	21.6%	29.8%	18.8%	20.4%
Friend and Sibling/Relative	10.0%	6.8%	<5%		<5%

Where do you walk or bike to school?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
Sidewalks	55.7%	84.0%	64.3%	100.0%	65.3%
Sidewalks and Streets	22.8%	13.3%	12.7%		16.3%
Sidewalks and Trails	6.3%		1.6%		6.1%
Sidewalks, trails, and streets	6.3%	1.3%	4.0%		
Streets	6.3%	1.3%	11.9%		6.1%
Trails and Streets	1.3%		1.6%		
Grass	1.3%				
Trails			4.0%		6.1%

Do you use sidewalks to get to school or to catch the bus in the winter?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	64.8%	53.6%	31.9%	51.0%	30.6%
Yes	30.7%	39.1%	46.4%	38.8%	49.0%
No	4.4%	7.2%	21.7%	10.2%	20.4%

Are sidewalks usually shoveled in winter?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	69.6%	57.0%	37.6%	57.1%	43.9%
Yes	21.1%	27.2%	31.6%	27.6%	35.7%
No	9.3%	15.7%	30.8%	15.3%	20.4%

Comments on winter sidewalks?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
Some are shoveled, some are not	82.8%	51.9%	47.2%	88.9%	50.0%
Forced in snowbank/St, icy, bus stops not shoveled	10.3%	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	25.0%
Lack sidewalks	3.4%	11.1%	11.1%		25.0%
It's cold!			2.8%		
Snowboard to school in winter			2.8%		
Good snow removal	3.4%	3.7%	2.8%		

Do you have to cross a busy street or unsafe area to get to school?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	70.7%	68.1%	54.0%	70.4%	69.4%
Yes	17.4%	20.9%	24.7%	15.3%	17.2%
No	11.9%	11.1%	21.3%	14.3%	13.4%

Busy Intersections (greater than 10%):			
Congdon		**MacArthur**	
Hawthorne and Superior St	61.4%	46th Ave W and 6th St	23.1%
Branch St and Hawthorne	18.2%	**Stowe**	
Lester Park		Commonwealth and Stowe St	44.4%
54th Ave E and Glenwood	28.6%	101st Ave W and Stowe St	16.7%
52nd Ave E and Glenwood	12.2%	102nd Ave W and Stowe St	11.1%
Lincoln Park			
24th Ave W and 5th St	12.3%		
25th Ave W and 3rd St	10.5%		
24th Ave W and 3rd St	10.5%		

Unsafe Areas:			
Congdon		**Lincoln Park**	
Superior St	25.0%	23rd & 3rd; 34th & 4th	25.0%
Superior St and 36th Ave E	25.0%	27th Ave W	25.0%
36th Ave E	12.5%	Crossing guards don't do anything, need better crossing guards	25.0%
Crossing Congdon Park	12.5%	Piedmont Ave	25.0%
I walk to crossing guards	12.5%		
26th Ave E & 4th St	12.5%	**MacArthur**	
		Cody St	100.0%
Lester Park			
Trail very slippery in winter	10.0%	**Stowe**	
40th Ave E & Dodge short cut to Ordean	10.0%	Crossing House St	25.0%
43rd Ave E lots of traffic, mostly exceeding speed limit	10.0%	Bus Stop (Stowe)	25.0%
53 Ave Colorado to Oneida--no sidewalk	10.0%	Busy Street	25.0%
54th Ave E & Glenwood	10.0%	Commonwealth	25.0%
Busy	10.0%		
Lester Park parking lot	10.0%		
Where we line up to wait for the bus	10.0%		
Woods and traffic	10.0%		
Down 52nd, no sidewalks 50%	10.0%		

Is there a crossing guard there?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	73.7%	78.7%	72.2%	80.6%	79.6%
Yes	20.4%	12.8%	16.0%	10.2%	13.4%
No	5.9%	8.5%	11.8%	9.2%	7.0%

Is there a signal there?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	76.7%	79.6%	72.6%	80.6%	79.6%
Yes	14.4%	18.7%	20.5%	18.4%	19.1%
No	8.9%	1.7%	6.8%	1.0%	1.3%

Is there a stop sign there?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	77.0%	79.1%	73.8%	80.6%	79.5%
Yes	12.6%	13.6%	13.3%	14.3%	12.8%
No	10.4%	7.2%	12.9%	5.1%	7.7%

What could be done to improve this busy intersection or unsafe area?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
Build sidewalk	33.3%	13.0%	2.3%		
Flashing caution sign, crosswalk, walk signals)	22.2%	4.3%	6.8%	10.0%	18.2%
More stop lights and stop signs	22.2%	60.9%	54.5%	80.0%	36.4%
Additional crossing guards	22.2%	4.3%	20.5%	10.0%	18.2%
Slower speed limit & traffic calming		13.0%	9.1%		9.1%
Adult supervision		4.3%	2.3%		
Poorly trained crossing guards			4.5%		
Sight visibility problem (parked cars)					18.2%

Have you ever been in danger walking or biking to school?	Congdon	Lester Park	Lincoln Park	MacArthur	Stowe
No Answer	71.5%	68.8%	57.8%	69.4%	71.3%
No	24.8%	23.9%	33.8%	30.6%	21.7%
Yes	3.7%	7.3%	8.4%		7.0%

Comments for Yes answer:	**Congdon**	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Had a close call	71.4%	26.7%	46.7%		50.0%
People concerns	28.6%	26.7%	13.3%		33.3%
Better snow removal		20.0%	6.7%		16.7%
Was hit by a car		6.7%	13.3%		
Crossing guards not present		6.7%			
Stop arm violators		6.7%			
Very busy traffic		6.7%	6.7%		
Loose dogs			6.7%		
Streets lack sidewalks			6.7%		

What could be done to help you get to school more safely? Answers less than 5% not included	**Congdon**	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Put up stop signs and stop lights w/walk signals	25.0%	20.8%	14.6%	20.0%	
Extend busing		8.3%	14.6%		18.2%
Slower speeds, educate drivers to watch for kids		12.5%	9.8%	20.0%	
More crossing guards (& out earlier & stay later)	8.3%	8.3%	9.8%	40.0%	
Walk in groups		<5%	9.8%		18.2%
Enforce snow removal & de-icing of sidewalks	25.0%	16.7%	7.3%		27.3%
Have parents drive		<5%	7.3%	10.0%	
Build sidewalks	25.0%	<5%	<5%		18.2%
More street lights	8.3%		2.4%		
Adult supervisors		12.5%	<5%		18.2%
Allow biking to school			<5%	10.0%	
Put cameras on buses	8.3%				

What do you like best about walking or biking to school? Answers less than 5% not included	**Congdon**	**Lester Park**	**Lincoln Park**	**MacArthur**	**Stowe**
Fun exercise and wake up (fresh air)	43.8%	46.8%	51.7%	48.0%	43.3%
Being with friends	28.1%	17.7%	10.1%	20.0%	43.3%
Being alone (quiet) & observe nature	10.9%	21.0%	22.5%	8.0%	6.7%
Independence	3.1%	12.9%	11.2%	20.0%	3.3%

PTA Input

Stowe PTA Input: February 7, 2006 Meeting (6:30pm)

- Students not allowed into school until 7:50am, many parents need to be at work by 8am and have no choice other than to leave them outside at 7:30am in the cold.
- Gary Street is dangerous to cross, the entire length of the street into the business district from 105th into Commonwealth. There is a blind hill and cars average 45mph, many kids cross Gary Street to access school.
- Students walking in T.H. 23, Commonwealth Avenue, as snow piles cover sidewalks which are not cleared by businesses or residents. MnDOT bumps back plowed snow along T.H. 23 t/o West Duluth, Norton Park etc., so but stops are cleared. MnDOT does not continue west to Gary-New Duluth. Parents believe MnDOT should assist bumping back plowed sidewalk snow t/o Gary-New Duluth.
- Poor lighting in the neighborhood, very dark for kids walking to and from school.
- Lots of unleashed dogs because several Gary-New Duluth residents feel that they live in the country.
- Several wide open areas with blowing wind. Crossing guards have no shelter and stand in the freezing cold.
- The majority of discussion focused on the fact that there are different walking boundaries for different grades. Parents are infuriated by this because younger siblings have to board the bus w/o their older siblings and parents feel that their children should stick together. Therefore PTA members all choose to drive their kids to school. The biggest point of contention was that the buses have to go by these houses anyway and continue back to school half full while the older students are forced to walk to school behind the bus in the cold, and again the buses are half full. Parents feel that is doesn't cost the school district anymore money because they have to drive those routes anyway and pick up kids. Parents would like to see <u>one</u> uniform walking boundary for Stowe that is reasonable.
- One parent "clocked" the distance from school to her house and said it was over a mile but somehow the school district says she is within the mile walking radius and therefore not eligible for busing. She is wondering if the school district considers streets and sidewalks or simply runs a one mile radius around the school regardless of streets and sidewalks? Parents at the meeting said it is an inconvenience to have to worry about the transportation of multiple children and the rules being different, it is more cumbersome for them to deal with.

- Parents and members of the meeting stated that they've traveled around the country and other cities and states have well marked school zones with flashing lights & heavy police enforcement. They said looking down Commonwealth there is POOR school zone/school crossing visibility and cars zip by students as they return to the curb with their crossing flags. Parents present felt that no child should be forced to cross the Hwy (T.H. 23/Commonwealth).
- Parents mentioned that Stowe students also cross at non-school crossings farther up Commonwealth in the business district area. One parent said that just this morning two kids ran across the Hwy in front of her at the Milk House. Commonwealth is a 4-lane Hwy with two parking lanes.

MacArthur PTA Input: January 10, 2006 Meeting (6pm)

- Congestion in front of school on Central Avenue with buses, cars, students all in same location—one PTA parent said it's a zoo, separate parents and cars
- School zone enforcement of speed
- Add stop signs on Central Avenue to slow cars
- Have student crossing guards at MacArthur stand on separate corners to cross kids instead of congregating on the same corner chatting and not crossing kids
- No posted school speed zone or flashing lights on Central, flashing lights are critical in gaining drivers attention
- Most parents park in the teacher lot on the east side of Central Avenue and walk their kids into school otherwise they'd have to cross themselves. Therefore students and parents are dodging traffic, buses and other parents who are in a hurry to get to work
- Median down central with traffic calming at 6th & Elinor to calm the one block segment, with increased enforcement
- Long standing neighborhood of West Duluth so numerous sidewalks, but they are not shoveled in the winter
- Long term many parents would love to see biking to school available
- Very poorly trained crossing guards with zero adult supervision to aid them, this week saw several kindergarteners just waiting to be crossed and the guards did not help, guards also going in early coming out late
- Crossing Guards and their age: a few years ago the elementary schools changed and 6th graders were taken out of the elementary schools and added to the middle schools. Prior, 4th, 5th and 6th graders were crossing

guards, now Duluth Police have to dip into 3rd grade to find enough guards

- Sidewalks missing on 4th Street off of Elinor on the west side of Central so even though kids close to school---no sidewalks
- Students also using the alleyway off of the teachers parking lot, crossing the lot and walking to school, speeding parents down the alleyway
- What parents want is a **separate** parent drop off area that is away from the buses, even if it was off of Elinor street and a loop was created with sidewalk into the playground what parents want is to drop their kids on the sidewalk at school where they don't have to cross any streets
- Parents are parking on sidewalks behind school on 56th Ave W, parents walking their kids in when parking on Central, would be good if Central was a drop only loading zone flashing during morning drop & afternoon pick up times with parents not allowed to leave their cars & adult enforcement from school staff to keep it moving
- Pete noted that Chester Park used to share an adult guard with Woodland Middle as there was an adult guard on Woodland
- Parent suggestion: have proximate high schoolers volunteer to be morning crossing guards and middle schoolers volunteer to be the afternoon crossing guards
- Morning buses arrive inconsistently allowing parents to utilize bus drop zone
- Need a painted crosswalk with traffic calming & an adult guard on Central between the teacher lot and school---a centralized crossing location instead of the current chaos
- Traffic calming one block section between 6th & Elinor—6th is perfect for a round about and would FORCE traffic and engineering the road so that traffic could not speed through a school zone
- Getting flashing lights in front of MacArthur during school hours or am/pm peak is critical to grab the attention of the driving public, similar to a construction zone
- Central like a freeway, no stop signs
- Kids are short and lack visibility

Congdon PTA Input: January 10, 2006 Meeting (Noon)

- Tischers Creek Trail between Congdon & 4th Street—enforcement issue run ins with high schoolers and elementary students
- 34th Ave E between 4th Street and Superior Street (Exclamation point priority): (A) no sidewalks therefore Hidden Valley students trapped no

way to walk to school and therefore are driven; (B) no stopped leg on 34th Ave E, there is a stop sign on 4th Street at 34th Ave E, also mentioned intersection narrows at 4th and site visibility have to pull forward (C) busy with high school drivers accessing East High School and adult drivers, education for high school drivers to be attentive for elementary students given their proximity, later morning start for East has not helped too much because students still go into school early for other activities. 34th Ave E & 4th Street needs flashing lights, possibly 34th Ave E & Superior too but 4th Street critical

- Lack of sidewalks around Congdon School: Branch, Greysolon, Avenues, Hawthorne, Congdon Park Drive/32nd Ave E, Greysolon Place etc. too inconsistent to promote effective/safe walking
- Poor parent drop off area, Hawthorne too narrow: Create a drop off loop on the east (hockey rink), west (open yard on hill near stream), or revamp back lot area to a loop. If a loop is created ensure no parents get out and walk their kids to the door backing up traffic—ensure site visibility is good with adequate sidewalks so that students don't have to cross anything and there are no transportation conflicts—a straight shot to school.
- No sidewalks on 32nd Ave E/Congdon Park Drive between Superior Street and Greysolon Place: Build sidewalk between hockey rinks into Congdon playground & into school; snow piled along Congdon Park Drive
- Create new teacher parking lot and modify the back lot as a parent drop loop
- PTA suggestion coming from a Twin Cities suburban school: older elementary students volunteer to walk students down to the doorway from sidewalk
- Parents parking on both sides of Greysolon Place in back of school: too narrow to pass, no visibility
- Overall poor lighting: on the way to and around school for kids walking to school (that on top of snow removal concerns)
- Poor transportation information for parents: to understand where they are supposed to drop off: map on school website & in newsletter
- Ped activated crossings, flashing lights during peak walk to and walk from school times
- Congdon ped bridge: address erosion
- If a traffic signal were put at 26th Ave E & Superior: potential for cut thru traffic on Branch Street

Lester Park PTA Input: February 13, 2006 Meeting (6:30pm)

- 52 Ave E has no sidewalks, fast speeds, MANY stop arm violations
- LED lighted sign on 24th Ave W is highly effective and we'd like one by Lester Park
- Students living along 52nd Ave E should not have to cross the street, they are supposed to stay on the east side of the street only. One parent mentioned that his daughter has to cross 52nd Ave E, Tom Threinen mentioned they would talk after the meeting and rectify that.
- Lester Park & Rockridge are partner schools, kids going to Rockridge have to cross a busy Crosley Street, sidewalks are not cleared and they walk in snow banks.
- New long stop arms on buses that cross an entire other lane so that stop arm violations can not occur
- School district needs snow removal equipment
- Kids that are bussed can't even get to the bus stop at the corner as sidewalks are not cleared
- Idea to take a school volunteer day (parents) and trim brush along main routes to school, around school, paint curbs etc.
- Must slow traffic on 52nd Ave E, 60th Ave E, Glenwood and 54th Ave E
- Lester Park/Lakeside neighborhood lacks street lighting, very dark
- Utilize thick lane striping to slow traffic
- (Kim Wickman, parent) [A] With this application could we purchase the tall street signs for school zone visibility like Ashland, WI? Yes.
- (Kim Wickman, parent) [B] Oneida Street between 54th Ave E & 53rd Ave E: After school pickup by the playground--this is actually the #1 spot that parents pick up, not on Glenwood. During winter there are way more parents/cars there, probably at least 20 cars. The kids come out of the building at different times, so parents are pulling out of their spots at different times. Kids are always jaywalking up and down the block, and 2 of the buses turn onto Oneida and pass through there too. Anyhow it is mass chaos to say the least. There have been several times I have had to stop suddenly because a kid cut in front of me to get to where their parent was parked. I personally always park on the school side, even if it is a block away, just so my kid doesn't have to cross. I heard a study that children don't thoroughly look for cars until they are 10-12 yrs old.

School Newsletter Article (January 2006)

The goal of the Duluth Safe Routes to School project is to "provide safe and adequate routes leading to schools so that more students are able to walk or bike to school." The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is a national program that was spearheaded by our Congressional Representative James Oberstar (D-MN) and was signed into law as part of the federal transportation bill in August 2005. A major research element of these projects is to identify primary routes that children are using to access local schools and obstacles that they encounter. Outcomes from being involved in Safe Routes to School studies commonly include pedestrian and bicycle improvements, traffic safety and health promotion education for students, outreach to raise public awareness in school zones, and walking/biking to school campaigns.

The intersection of Stowe Street & Commonwealth Avenue (T.H. 23)

The Duluth Safe Routes to School project will analyze the adequacy and safety of walking routes leading to Lester Park, Congdon, Lincoln Park, Laura MacArthur, and Stowe schools. These five schools were selected by the Duluth School District for this study based on the large number of students contained within their school district designated walking boundaries.

The Duluth Safe Routes to School study is being conducted by the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council and led by a diverse Steering Committee with representatives from: Duluth City Engineering and Planning; Duluth City Council, Duluth Public Schools, Duluth School Board, Duluth Police Department, St. Louis County Public Health, Duluth-Superior Biking, and the school PTAs.

As you may recall, transportation surveys were distributed to 3rd through 5th graders and their parents back in October 2005. Student surveys had a 73% response rate while volunteer parent surveys had a 28% response rate. Key survey results for Stowe Elementary are as follows:

Student Transportation Survey Results

The top student-identified unsafe locations included:

1) Commonwealth & Stowe
2) 101st Avenue West & Stowe

Student suggestions to improve the above unsafe areas included:

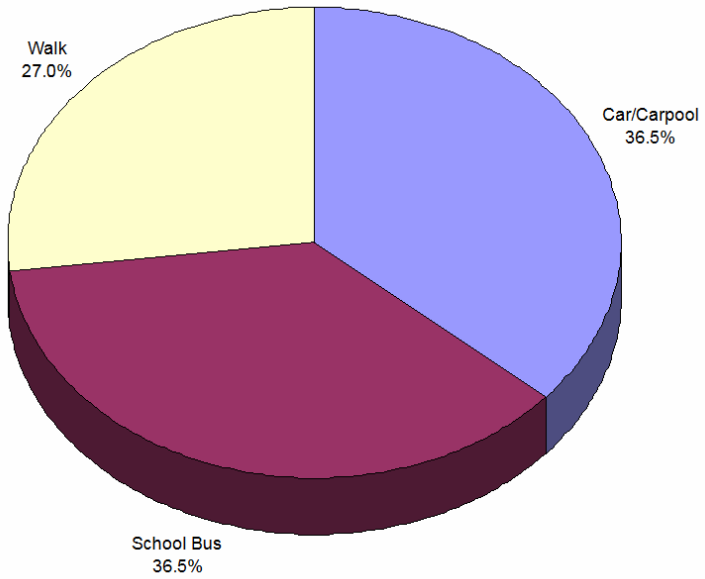
a) More stop lights & stop signs
b) Site visibility issues with parked cars
c) Flashing caution sign, cross walk, and walk signals
d) Additional crossing guards
e) Slower speed limit & traffic calming measures

Student suggestions to improve the overall safety of walking to school:

1) Enforce snow removal & de-icing of sidewalks in the winter
2) Walk in groups
3) Extend busing
4) Build sidewalks
5) Adult supervisors

Parent Transportation Survey Results

How does your child get to school:



The top parent-identified unsafe locations included:

1) Commonwealth & Stowe
2) Commonwealth & Fillmore

Parent suggestions to improve the above unsafe areas included:

a) Legal school zone visibility & traffic calming measures
b) Need stop sign, 4-way stop, or stop light with walk signal
c) Enforcement of snow removal
d) Poor parent drop off area
e) Need more crossing guards & improve training
f) Adult guards/supervisors

The Duluth Safe Routes to School Steering Committee will begin analyzing heavily used student routes to school and will formulate safety recommendations. This spring, Stowe Elementary staff will consider coordinating a group walking campaign and will outreach for parent volunteers. For questions or comments please contact Principal Terry Cottingham at: 626-4500 or Terry.Cottingham@duluth.k12.mn.us.

Stowe
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Educational Excellence With An Environmental Emphasis

March 20, 2006

Mr. Rob Ege, District Traffic Engineer
1123 Mesabi Avenue
Duluth, Minnesota 55811

Dear Mr. Ege:

Please accept this letter in support of approving the safety and well being of Stowe Elementary School students.

Stowe is one of five Duluth Public School sites being studied this year within the Duluth Safe Routes To School project. Improving the safety and accessibility of routes Stowe students use to and from school has been a realistic concern of Stowe parents and community members for years. We are extremely grateful for the opportunity to finally plan for and make improvements in safety for our kids through the 'SR2S' project.

The Stowe School campus, reconstructed in 1994, has been an active community facility since 1914. Historically, there have been a few student fatalities of students crossing Trunk Highway 23. I receive literally dozens of phone calls each year from parents and community members who are concerned about the safety of our students. I believe that whatever 'state aid standards' or variances are required,it is necessary to modify these crossings to make them safer for all community members. Some parents refuse to allow their children to walk to school and provide them with rides each and every day. It appears that more and more parents that are able to transport their children, are doing so. However, not all Stowe families have this option; nor should they have to exercise it.

Within the survey component of the 'SR2S' project, Stowe parents and students have identified two intersections on Commonwealth Avenue/Trunk Highway 23 where school crossing guards are posted as 58% of greatest need for improvement.

At our March 3, 2006 'SR2S' Steering Committee meeting Paul Scanlan presented the site review conducted in late February by yourself and him. Stowe's PTA President Kim LeDoux, also present at this meeting, and I felt MnDOT District 1's proposal did not sufficiently address the safety of the Trunk Highway 23 crossings at Fillmore Street and also at Stowe Street. These crossings have four travel lanes and two full parking lanes making a six land roadway segment for children to cross to access school during morning and afternoon peak travel.

715 101st Avenue West • Duluth, MN 55808 • (218) 626-4500 • Fax (218) 626-4507 • Terry Cottingham, Principal

Through multiple 'SR2S' Steering Committee meetings, members are recommending calming traffic at these intersections with the following five additions:

- The installation of a traffic median with flashing LED school crossing signs. Our proposed Highway 23 median would be situated on the south half of the block between Carterette and Fillmore Streets, the full block between Fillmore and Stowe Streets, and the north half of the block between Stowe and Bowser Streets. This median is recommended in leau of bulbouts.
- Adding four LED School Crossing signs
- Purchase two mid-block crossing signs for Fillmore and Stowe on T.H.23
- Place poly perform or Duratherm crossings across T.H. 23 at Fillmore and Stowe
- Add four new street lights

The Stowe PTA endorses these five recommendations as well.

Our committee understands MnDOT's mission to manage traffic movement and flow at an efficient pace. We believe that opposed to a semaphore signal, medians would be a reasonable compromise between traffic flow and child safety. This proposed recommendation is also endorsed by the Stowe PTA members in providing pedestrian refuge and safety for both of these heavily used crossings.

We ask you to please support our recommendation as we move forward in finalizing our request for funding the 'SR2S' project's improvements in safety for our children. We would like to invite a few of the key players together to convene a meeting in the near future, to reach a consensus on a proposed recommendation for Stowe School. Members to be invited would include you, Paul Scanlan, Ron Chicka, Holly Butcher, Kim LeDoux, and myself. If you agree to meet with this group, I request that you contact Holly Butcher, our Steering Committee Chair, to arrange a time and date to put our heads together.

From all of us at Stowe, and the members of the Stowe community, we thank you for your time and consideration is making our community a safer and happier place to live.

Sincerely,

Terry Cottingham
Principal

cc: Paul Scanlon, Holly Butcher, Ron Chicka, Ken Willms, Sharon Montgomery

LINCOLN PARK K-8 SCHOOL

A Community Dedicated to Learning!

2424 West Fifth Street • Duluth, MN 55806
Phone: (218) 733-2046 Fax: (218) 733-2056
Eric.Kaiser@duluth.k12.mn.us

Eric Kaiser, Principal

June 20, 2006

Dear MnDOT,

I am writing to encourage the Minnesota Department of Transportation to install traffic lights at 24th avenue west and 5th street in Duluth. This intersection borders Lincoln Park School and the Lincoln Park Boys' and Girls' Club.

Students, parents, and staff cross this area twice daily. The traffic lights would provide for pedestrian safety as well as a calming point for traffic flowing down the hill to the intersection at 24th avenue west and third street.

Lincoln Park is a K-8 school with an enrollment of 530 students. We also serve 64 Head Start students as well as 139 children and 112 parents in ECFE classes. The school employs 115 adults whose designated parking lot is located on the upper east corner of 24th avenue west and 5th street.

On April 20, 2006 personnel from the *Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council* did a pedestrian count at north 24th avenue west and 5th street. A total of 37 pedestrians crossed in the morning and 50 pedestrians crossed in the afternoon. These totals did not take into account the number of children leaving the Boys' and Girls' Club at 8:00 p.m.

Please consider installing lights at 24th avenue west and 5th street for the safety of our community. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Eric Kaiser, Principal

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