

Safe Routes to School: What You Should Know



What is Safe Routes to School?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plans and policies aim to educate the public, make changes to the built environment, and encourage the community to change how they get to and from school or work. Such a focus on bicycle and pedestrian transportation has only increased in recent years. Perceived decreased safety, due to increasing numbers of children getting to school by car, has caused yet more parents and children to use cars – thus perpetuating the downward trend in active transportation.



Kids playing in a New Ulm park, circa 1960

Did you know?

Nationwide, the number of children walking or biking to school has dropped from 50% in 1969 to under 10% at most schools today. In New Ulm, 36% of the students live within a mile of their school which equates to a 20-minute walk. New Ulm students don't even have to walk to their school. They can walk to the school closest to their home and ride a shuttle bus to their school.

and Healthy Streets (CASHS), the Heart of New Ulm (HONU) leadership team and public schools. After the New Ulm High School opened in its new location, the SRTS plan was updated in 2018 to include it in the plan.

SRTS and New Ulm

In June of 2015, a SRTS team was formed and began implementing the strategies contained in the 2015 Safe Routes to School plan. The plan was informed by parent surveys, student tallies, the Coalition for Active, Safe

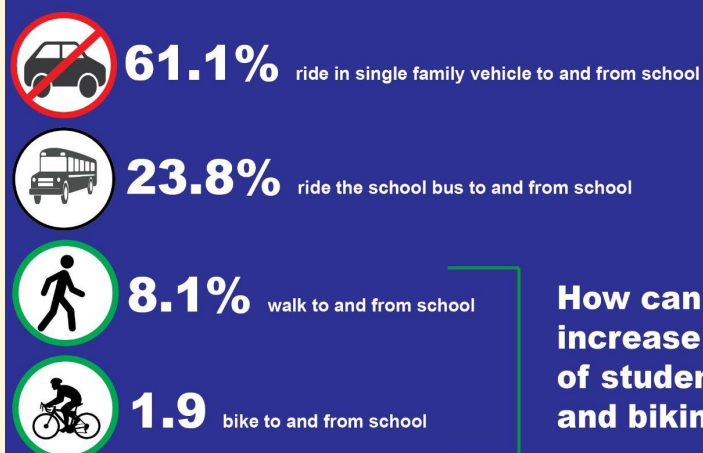
Vision

The Safe Routes to School Program for the community of New Ulm will be a dynamic long-term strategy that will address the growing trends of childhood obesity and inactivity by making walking and bicycling to and from school a safe, healthy, viable and appealing option for children and their parents.

Parent Survey Findings

- Parent surveys mentioned the following concerns:
 - 43% of parents indicated traffic speed
 - 49% of parents indicated the amount of traffic
 - 47% of parents indicated safety of crossings and intersections
- In all cases, the majority of parents indicated they would allow their children to walk to school if their concerns were addressed.

According to May 2021 student tallies:



How can you help increase the number of students walking and biking to school?

See the New Ulm SRTS Goals and Objectives on the following pages

Safe Routes to School Goals and Objectives

New Ulm Bike Safe Routes to School Goals and Objectives (updated 7/21)					
Strategy	Category	Strategy Lead	Partners	Action Steps	Progress
Goal 1: Promote walking and biking to and from school with students, parents and the community					
Implementing the SRTS plan and continuing to monitor progress	Evaluation	CASHS	Schools	1.1) Appoint a SRTS coordinator and continue safe routes to school meetings during implementation	SRTS coordinator hired 3/21- supervisor is middle school asst. principle
			Schools and SHIP	1.2) Continue to monitor success of program through parent surveys and student travel tallies yearly	On going - training video created on how to fill out the student travel tallie sheets for the teachers
Celebrate International walk and bike to school day and increase activity to monthly and	Encouragement	SRTS/ CASHS	HONU Leadership Team/ MLC	1.3) Set up walking school bus program for National observation days	Has been occurring. Participation has dropped off - need to develop some programming to help improve participation
Create a routine walking school bus for each school	Encouragement	SRTS	Schools	1.4) Create a walking school bus program to provide adult supervision for children walking to school	To discuss a pilot program at St. Paul's using Turner Hall parking lot as staging site
Distribute walking and biking to school information at the beginning of the school year.	Education	SRTS/CASHS	Schools	1.5) Create walking and biking information to be distributed periodically throughout each school year.	Informational flyers created or updated each year with important messaging

Goal 2: Improve the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure around schools and in the surrounding neighborhoods					
Infrastructure improvements throughout the community to support safe walking and bicycling environments for children, parents and community members	Engineering	SRTS/ CASHS	City	2.1) Identify areas of improvement for crossing Broadway Street, Center Street, 5th North Street, North Highland Ave.	N. Highland at Oak roundabout; curb extensions added at 5th North St. & Washington Streets; Center Street new light has an LPI; Enhanced crosswalk at 4th South and Broadway being installed (still need a HAWK system at this location)
	Engineering	SRTS/ CASHS	City	2.2) Continue expanding sidewalks and trails as new	On going
	Engineering	School and City	CASHS and Schools	2.3) Continue collaboration between schools and city staff	On going
	Engineering	SRTS/ CASHS	City	2.4) Implement slower speed	Looking into lowering speed limits in

Goal 3: Create safe and adequate routes to and from school					
Safe routes for students walking and biking	Education	SRTS/ CASHS	Schools/ City	3.1) Create and distribute safe routes to school maps for each school	On going
	Engagement/ Encouragement	SRTS	Schools	3.2) Create an adult crossing guard program at identified locations at hazardous crossings away from the school campus	Will revisit after some of the traffic calming measures have been adopted.
	Engagement/ Encouragement	STRS	Schools	3.3) Create and expand school patrol for crossings adjacent to the school sites in New Ulm	On going

Goal 4: Encourage and educate proper habits, behaviors, and roadway skills for all users

Skill building and education	Education	SRTS	SHIP/ Schools	4.1) Implement Walk! Bike! Fun! SRTS curriculum through physical education classes	On-going
	Education	SRTS	SHIP/ Schools	4.2) Create message campaign to promote and educate all users of proper behaviors while driving, walking and biking	Will conduct a social media campaign in 2021-2022
	Education	SRTS	Schools/ HONU/ NUMC	4.3) Offer educational opportunities outside of school hours such as bicycle rodeos, teen biking classes, or family walking and biking events.	An after school bike club is being developed for all schools through community education

Goal 5: Decrease traffic amount and speeds around the schools

Create arrival and dismissal procedures for each school	Engineering	City	Schools and CASHS	5.1) Identify areas for traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds	On going
	Enforcement	Schools	SRTS	5.2) Create a voluntary carpooling program to help connect parents who are interested and able to participate	Needs work

Goal 6: Reduce conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and motorists

Conflict Reduction	Engagement/ Engineering	Schools/ SRTS	Busing Company/ New Ulm Police Dept.	6.1) Create arrival and dismissal procedures for each school	Continue to monitor and make adjustments
	Engagement	Schools	SRTS	6.2) Create a student valet program to assist in improving drop off and pick up	Needs work
	Engagement	SRTS	HONU	6.3) Work with Towards Zero Death program to discourage distracted driving	Needs work