



SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOLS PROJECT INFORMATION

Active Living Committee Members who helped with this project: Shawn Roberts, Stan Thurlow, Evie Fox, Steve Nepl, Corinna Erickson, Julie Ernst, Reed Johnson, Ann Trebesch, Patrick Hollister (PartnerSHIP4Health), Angie Hoffman, Deb Jacobs, Joel Hoistad, Neil Crocker, Kris Karlgaard, Lori Gefre, and Renae Smith.

Project timeline 2016 – current:

- 2015 – Applied for Safe Routes to School Planning Assistance Grant through MnDOT
- April 2016 – Awarded this grant in which planning assistance would be provided by West Central Initiative
- July 2016 - Active Living Committee formed a SRTS Team and worked with West Central Initiative over the next several months to create a SRTS plan
 - Created mission, vision, goals
 - Defined strengths, barriers and opportunities
 - Conducted student travel tallies
 - Surveyed parents
 - Held public informational meeting
 - Completed the 238-page SRTS Plan in May 2017. Significant findings include the following:
 - 63% to 76% of students live within city limits
 - Drop-off loop at Breck Elementary School area of concern
 - EMS & HS students walk back & forth between schools daily & take most direct route (Hall Ave) which has no sidewalks
 - Railroad crossing forms barrier for students living on south side of tracks and crossing at 8th St. has no sidewalks
 - High traffic volumes & speeds on 11th St. noted as concern
- January 2018 – applied for Transportation Alternatives grant to implement SRTS plan;
- January 2018 – Shawn and Renae presented SRTS plan to MnDOT and West Central Initiative in Fergus Falls
- April 2018 – Received letter that our project was selected for funding of up to \$225,000
- December 2018 – Applied for a second Transportation Alternatives grant to help offset local share of costs associated with project
- March 2019 – Received letter that our project was selected for additional funding of up to \$56,250
- October 2019 – Project kick-off meeting held between city staff, Wilkin County, and MnDOT State Aid Engineer
- October 2019 - Proposals requested for engineering services



- December 2019 – Ulteig Engineers hired to perform engineering services for design and bidding phases of project

Next Steps – rough timeline:

- Engineer and Active Living Committee will work together to solicit public input on proposed project
- Engineer will create and submit project memorandum with environment assessment to MnDOT by December 1, 2021
- Engineer to create plans & specs to be approved by City Council and submitted to State (try to submit by February 1, 2022)
- Advertise for construction bids upon MnDOT's approval of plans and specs - early 2022
- Construction to be completed by fall 2022

Proposed Project

The original extent of the project was determined this winter to be more expensive than the allocated funding. The project was then scaled back to its current format and this revision was approved by MnDOT to proceed as the City's SRTS project. The project consists of:

- installing new sidewalk on the south side of Hall Avenue from the Elementary-Middle School (EMS) to the High School (HS)
- Installing new sidewalks on the east and west sides of the Family Aquatic Center Park from Beede Avenue to Hall Avenue
- Installing flashing pedestrian crossing signs on 11th Street for the Hall Avenue intersection
- Installing flashing pedestrian crossing signs on Beede Avenue near the east parking area entrance
- Installing a new crossing gate at the east entrance of the south parking area at the EMS.
- Installing additional sidewalk at the northwest side of the EMS for improved bus loading and unloading

On Hall Avenue, between 11th Street and 14th Street, the existing curb and gutter on the south side of the road will be removed and new curb installed 3 to 6 feet north. The road width in this area will then be consistent. The driving area should be about the same as what is available now. A new 6-foot wide sidewalk will be installed behind the new curb with ADA compliant ramps at each intersection.

Project Financing

As stated in the Project Timeline, the City will receive MnDOT grant funds up to \$281,250 for the project. The current total project cost is estimated to be \$397,000. This leaves a City cost share of \$115,750. Firmer project costs will be known once the project is bid in Spring 2022.