

## Safe Routes to Schools

Southeast Elementary School Walkway  
Community Information Meeting  
March 25, 2014

## About Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)

### ■ Transportation Challenges

- Decline in walking and biking leads to both traffic congestion and air pollution issues

### ■ Health Challenges

- Children are engaging in less physical activity, resulting in greater incidence of childhood obesity

- In 1969, 48% of children 5-14 walked or biked to school, as compared to 13% in 2009\*
- In 1969, 41% of children in grades K-8 lived within 1 mile of school, and 89% of those children walked or biked to school. In 2009, 31% of children lived within that radius, however, only 38% of those children walked or biked to school on a regular basis\*

\*[http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/the\\_decline\\_of\\_walking\\_and\\_bicycling.cfm](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/the_decline_of_walking_and_bicycling.cfm)

## + About Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)

- Community Based
- Uses comprehensive approach to improve outcomes
  - Engineering/Infrastructure
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Enforcement
  - Evaluation
- National Safe Routes to School Program was created by Congress in 2005
- Provides federal funding for SRTS activities through the federal-aid transportation program

## + Safe Routes to School

### The Five "E's"

- Engineering – Identifying operational and physical improvements to infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds, conflicts with motor vehicles and establish safer, fully accessible walkways, crosswalks, trails and bikeways
- Education – Teaching children about the variety of transportation choices, instructing them on bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver education campaigns
- Encouragement – Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling
- Enforcement – Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of the school and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs
- Evaluation – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data

## Southeast Elementary Safe Routes

May 2011 Parent Survey (Mansfield Advocates for Children)

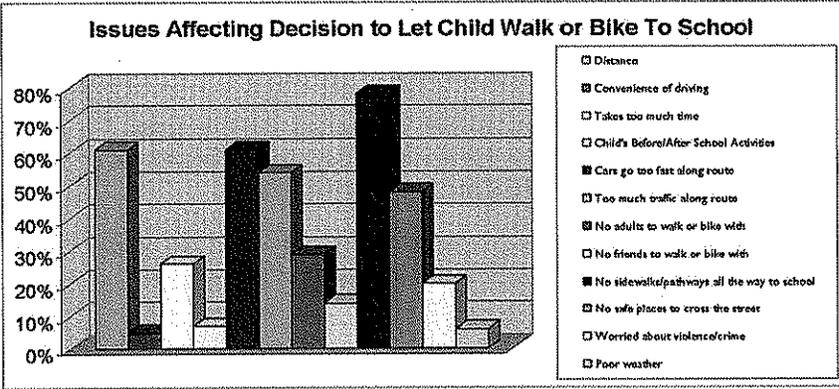
- 15.5% indicated that their child had asked to for permission to walk or bike to school
- 94.2% acknowledged walking to school as a healthy or very healthy activity
- 9.8% lived within 1/2 mile of the school; 18.2% within 1 mile
- 78.9% believed that walking or biking to school under current conditions is either unsafe or very unsafe



## Southeast Elementary Safe Routes

May 2011 Parent Survey

### Issues Affecting Decision to Let Child Walk or Bike To School



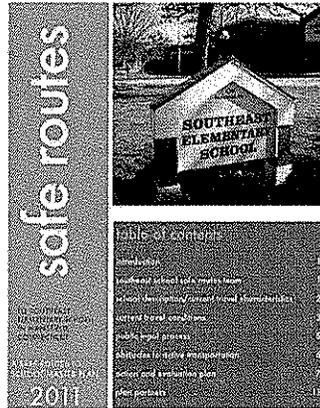
Issue	Percentage
Distance	~65%
Convenience of driving	~65%
Takes too much time	~30%
Child's Before/After School Activities	~10%
Cars go too fast along route	~65%
Too much traffic along route	~55%
No adults to walk or bike with	~30%
No friends to walk or bike with	~15%
No sidewalks/pathways all the way to school	~80%
No safe places to cross the street	~25%
Worried about violence/crime	~10%
Poor weather	~10%



## Southeast Elementary SRTS Project

2011 Safe Routes to School Application

- Based on survey results, Town decided to pursue participation in the Safe Routes to School program in 2011
- As a first step, the Safe Routes to School Team developed a SRTS Master Plan
- Grant funding was then requested for the major engineering strategy identified in the Master Plan



## Southeast Safe Routes to School

Master Plan Vision

- Encourage the pursuit of healthy activities such as walking and biking at an early age to improve the chances that such activities will be a life-long lifestyle choice
- Provide students with the option of walking and biking to school, something that is currently discouraged due to lack of safe off-road facilities leading to the school
- Reduce speeding and other reckless driving activities near the school by increasing driver awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists

## Southeast Education Strategies

- ☒ Promote pedestrian awareness and safety
  - ☒ Develop promotional campaign to raise driver awareness of pedestrian and bicycle safety throughout the town.
  - ☒ Example of Possible School Sponsored Event: Poster Contest
- ☒ Teach Benefits of Walking and Biking
  - ☒ Teach health, environmental and transportation benefits
- ☒ Teach Safety Skills
  - ☒ Teach pedestrian, bicycle and personal safety skills to students and parents through distribution of educational materials and workshops
  - ☒ Example of Town Sponsored Event: Bicycle Rodeo at 2013 John E. Jackman Tour de Mansfield

## Southeast Encouragement Strategies

- ☒ International Walk to School Day
  - ☒ Host annual International Walk to School Day events to celebrate and promote benefits of walking to school
- ☒ Develop walking rewards program
  - ☒ Incentivize walking to school through a reward/recognition program based on number of times students walk to school
- ☒ Develop park and walk program
  - ☒ Park and walk programs provide convenient locations (such as the library) for parents to drop off kids for a supervised walk to school along a safe route instead of driving them all the way to school.
  - ☒ Could be regular event in good weather, for example, "Walking Wednesdays"

## + Enforcement Strategies

- Use Speed Trailer to focus driver attention
- Increase enforcement of speed limits and crosswalks
- Implement 'Pace-Car' Program
  - Grass-roots approach to speed enforcement
  - Pledge to drive the speed limit



## + Southeast Engineering Strategies

- Improve On-site Pedestrian Connections
  - Dedicated pedestrian path along south side of southernmost driveway connecting to new Route 89 walkway
  - Striping and signage in northern parking lot to connect to adjacent ballfields



## ✦ Southeast Engineering Strategies

- **New Off-Road Walkway** to connect the existing walkway on Route 195 with Southeast School
- **Two alternative routes** being considered
- **Estimated Construction Cost** (per 2011 grant application): \$495,100



## ✦ Southeast Safe Routes to School

### Next Steps

- **Town Council approval** of a resolution supporting the project
- **Submission of Community Information Meeting Summary and Town Council Resolution** to Connecticut Department of Transportation(CTDOT)
- **If approved, Town Engineering staff** would work with CTDOT to identify preferred route and begin design

**Safe Routes to School Grant – Southeast School Walkway**

Move, effective May 27, 2014, to adopt the following resolution in support of the Southeast School Walkway Safe Routes to School Project:

*WHEREAS, the Town of Mansfield broadly publicized a public informational meeting for the proposed Safe Routes to School Southeast Elementary School Walkway project on Route 89 through direct mail to property owners in the project vicinity, PTO notification of Southeast parents, flyers at the public library, Town Manager reports and website postings; and*

*WHEREAS, a public informational meeting was held on March 25, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Southeast Elementary School gymnasium, 134 Warrenville Road, at which meeting residents had an opportunity to voice their concerns; and*

*WHEREAS, the Town Council has received additional community feedback since the April 15, 2014 meeting expressing support for the walkway project and grant; and*

*WHEREAS, the Town of Mansfield has considered the concerns of residents from the public informational meeting and finds that the proposed project is in the best interest of the Town of Mansfield, and will promote public health, safety and general welfare of its residence and provide convenience and safety for the travelling public.*

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Town of Mansfield hereby fully supports the proposed Southeast School Walkway project based upon the above information.*

Hi Linda – As per our conversation today, I would to confirm that my office needs a resolution of support by this Friday, May 30, 2014, if the Town of Mansfield is going to accept the SRTS infrastructure grant.

The reason is that the original shortlist notification emailed by the Department on January 14, 2014, gave a 3-month deadline for receipt of public informational report and resolution of support from the Town to secure the funding. The deadline was officially April 14, 2014. An extension was granted on 3/26/14 due to the fact that the Town Council meeting wasn't scheduled until April 14, 2014, and ultimately denied the acceptance of the grant.

It is understood that due to strong public support, the Town is interested in pursuing the Safe Routes to School project; therefore, would like to approach the Town Council again today to get seek approval. Due to the lapsed time, if my office does not get a resolution of support by May 30, 2014, we will have to withdraw the grant offer.

Any questions let me know.

Sharon P. Okoye

Safe Routes to School Coordinator

CT Department of Transportation

Strategic Planning and Projects

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## sidewalk to Southeast School

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From: **Gary Bent** (gdbent@earthlink.net)  
Sent: Sat 5/24/14 2:06 PM  
To: TownCouncil@mansfieldct.org

I was disappointed at the Council's decision not to build the sidewalk from Rte. 195 to Southeast School. I expected the Republican naysayers not to vote for any improvements, but I expected better from the Democratic members. It appears the Council never researched the possible uses of the sidewalk. I read one comment that the sidewalk would not be safe for people. Does anyone think walking in the road is safer? The Mansfield Tomorrow process deemed walkability and better public transportation a priority. What is that process for if the council ignores it?

Sincerely,

Gary Bent

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## Re: Sidewalk grant

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From: **Gloria Bent** (gsbent@earthlink.net)  
Sent: Fri 5/23/14 9:03 AM  
To: Betsy Paterson (betsy\_paterson@hotmail.com)

Please let me know if it is coming up again. I would be willing to touch base with folks I know who are probably as unhappy with the vote as I am.

Gloria

On May 22, 2014, at 9:02 AM, Betsy Paterson <[betsy\\_paterson@hotmail.com](mailto:betsy_paterson@hotmail.com)> wrote:

Gloria,

Thank you for your response on this issue. I completely agree with you. I could not have stated it better. Know that we are looking into whether or not the grant has been reallocated, and if not we will seek to bring it up again.

Betsy

> From: [gsbent@earthlink.net](mailto:gsbent@earthlink.net)  
> Subject: Re: Sidewalk grant  
> Date: Wed, 21 May 2014 22:06:17 -0400  
> To: [TownCouncil@mansfieldct.org](mailto:TownCouncil@mansfieldct.org)  
>  
> Dear Members of the Town Council,  
>  
> "Disappointed, upset, angered, exasperated —" these descriptors can't begin to convey my feelings about Council's rejection of the "Safe Routes to School Grant."  
> I served five years on Mansfield Advocates for Children - advocating for a sidewalk from the intersection of routes 89 and 195 was one of our priorities in working toward our results statement "All Mansfield children, ages birth through eight, are healthy, successful learners, and their families are connected to the community." The sidewalk from 195 to Southeast school is about health, literacy and school readiness. It would have allowed young families with limited access to automobiles to take the WRTD bus to the bus stop at that intersection and then walk safely with small children in strollers to the library, where they could interact with other parents and take advantage of the wonderful programs our library offers. It would have allowed students at Southeast School to participate in a "walking school bus"; schools that are able to engage in this practice report that students arrive at school ready to focus and academic performance improves.  
>

> A few years ago Eastern Highlands Health District brought Mark Fenton, an advocate for improving community well-being through walking, to Mansfield to consult on the best ways to improve walkability here. Walkability makes for a healthy community across the life span and is an environmentally friendly practice. (If memory serves me correctly you republicans touted your credentials as environmentalists in the last election.)

>

> A long hoped for project was within our grasp. But five of you chose to dismiss a goal articulated in "Mansfield Tomorrow", a project supported by the Board of Education and Planning and Zoning Commission, and a project important enough to many members of this community that, having been turned down once by the state, they went through the application process again. Why do you even bother funding a process like Mansfield Tomorrow and asking for citizen input only to ignore it?

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> Gloria Bent

> [gsbent@earthlink.net](mailto:gsbent@earthlink.net)

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> 97 Mansfield Hollow Road

> Mansfield Center, CT 06250

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Gloria Bent  
[gsbent@earthlink.net](mailto:gsbent@earthlink.net)

Town of Mansfield  
Ten Year CIP - Conceptual Outlay

Description	Amount
<b>POTENTIAL FUTURE INITIATIVES (not included above)</b>	
<b>Public Safety</b>	
Replacement (\$4,500,000) or Renovation (\$3,000,000) of Fire Station 107 <i>215 + 32</i>	4,000,000
Renovation of Fire Station 207 - <i>if Edmonds</i>	1,500,000
Renovation of Fire Station 307 - <i>Sprague Hill</i>	2,000,000
Addition of a new Fire Station (support the southern end of town)	4,000,000
Aerial Apparatus	1,000,000
<i>SCHOOL</i>	
<b>Community Services</b>	
Splashpad/Sprayground (CC Site)	150,000
Rainwater Harvesting System (CC Site)	200,000
Restroom Bldg Improvements (BCP)	200,000
Mass Sanctuary Dam Repair	200,000
Southeast Park Irrigation System	100,000
River Park Restroom/Concession/Storage Building	140,000
Open Space Acquisition	500,000
<b>Facilities Maintenance (potentially fund above)</b>	
New Heating System -Town Hall	100,000
Asbestos Abatement under Town Hall	250,000
Potential for solar panels on Town buildings	
<b>Public Works</b>	
South Eagleville Walkway (still need bond authorization)	
Road Resurfacing - need approximately \$500,000/annually	

4-10-2012