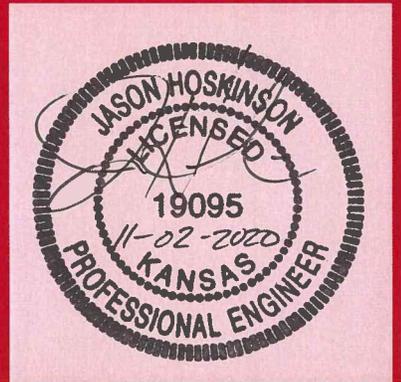


SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

PHASE 1 MASTER PLAN (November 2, 2020)

City of Columbus, Kansas & Columbus USD #493



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Master Plan was generated as a result of multiple agencies efforts. A few of the key partners acknowledged for their efforts in helping create this Plan are as follows:

- Kansas Department of Transportation
- City of Columbus, Kansas
- Columbus Schools USD #493
- BG Consultants, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Introduction.....	1
Key Stakeholders & Public Input.....	1
Purpose.....	2
Background.....	2
Implementation.....	2
Education.....	3
Encouragement.....	4
Engineering.....	5
Enforcement.....	9
Evaluation.....	10

Appendix A

- Figure 1 – City and Key USD Facilities Maps*
- Figure 2 – Safe Routes to School Corridor Map*
- Figure 3 – Existing Sidewalk Condition Map*
- Figure 4 – Safe Routes to School Improvements Priority Map*
- Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Costs – SRTS Priority #1 Project*

Appendix B

- Photo Log of Infrastructure Concerns and Issues*

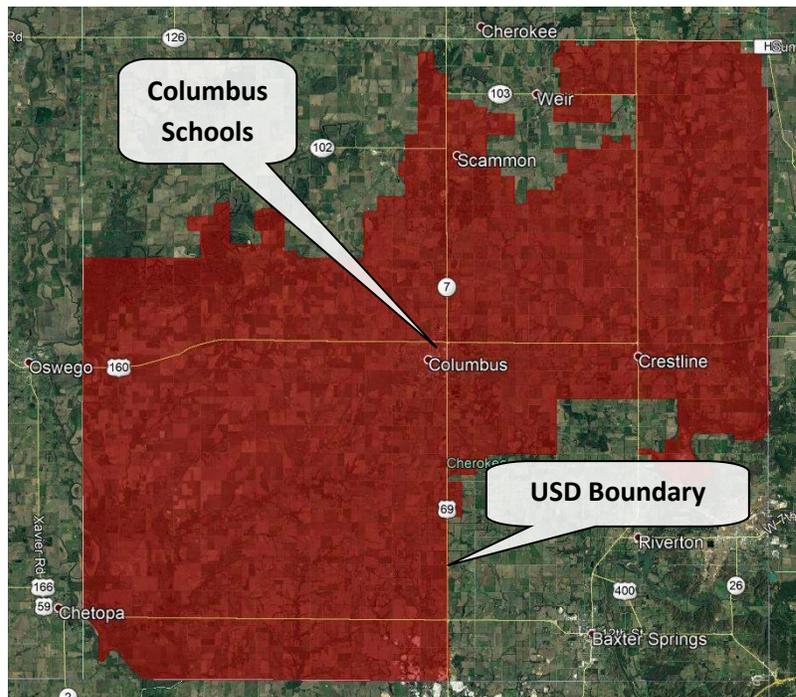
Appendix C

- Letters of Support*

INTRODUCTION

Located in central Cherokee County in the very southeastern corner of Kansas, Columbus is a community of approximately 3,100 people. The city is home to a wide range of business, industry, residential neighborhoods, and governmental agencies. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau estimates 1,656 housing units within the City Limits and nearly 26% of the community's population is comprised of children under the age of 18.

Serving these children and the area surrounding Columbus is the Columbus USD 493 school district. The USD boundary covers a large



portion of Cherokee County, extending from the west county line eastward to the Kansas/Missouri state line and extending from the Kansas/Oklahoma state line on the south, northward to the north county line. Grades K-8 are split between 3 campus locations in Columbus, all within about ¼ to ½ mile from the centrally located Columbus High School.

The City of Columbus has the desire to implement initiatives that will better accommodate students' needs, particularly relating to safety measures and walkability to/from the USD facilities. The City has implemented several capital infrastructure projects in recent years and is now envisioning broader planning and improvement of the community's transportation system, particularly pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and safety of students in the school zones.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS & PUBLIC INPUT

Multiple groups and agencies have collaborated over the past several years and again during the development of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan. Some of the stakeholders include:

- City of Columbus, KS
- Columbus Schools Staff
- USD #493 Administration
- BG Consultants, Inc.

Public input opportunities have been provided at multiple phases in the development of Columbus's Safe Routes to School project.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan is to identify the obstacles that discourage or prohibit students from walking or biking to school. Understanding these obstacles then enables a comprehensive approach to be established and implemented to remove them. Obstacles come in many shapes and form. Some are physical infrastructure issues. Others are non-physical such as perceptions and inefficient communication. This Master Plan utilizes the five nationally accepted SRTS principles of Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation to create a better environment for students to walk and bike to and from school. These principles are known as the “5 E’s”.

BACKGROUND

The City of Columbus was awarded Safe Routes to School Phase 1 funds in 2020 to develop this Master Plan around the Columbus USD Schools catering to grades K thru 8. Agreements were put in place in late-2020 allowing the City to select a consulting firm and begin the infrastructure evaluation and identification of ways to deliver some of the initiatives of this Master Plan into the community.

However, the City’s effort to implement Safe Routes to School initiatives pre-dates this Master Plan. Columbus has been a proactively planning for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for years now by budgeting financial resources, planning for surface improvements, and proactively reaching out to the community to encourage and educate citizens of the Safe Routes to School initiative.



The current condition of sidewalks and school zone traffic control is deteriorated at best which translates to increased maintenance efforts that are straining the City’s budget and ability to fund transportation needs. This Master Plan provides a proactive and planned approach to properly implement infrastructure improvements, along with non-infrastructure guidance initiatives, to establish a Safe Routes to School program.

IMPLEMENTATION

City Staff and USD Staff have put significant effort into educating and encouraging citizens about Safe Routes to School for the past several years. Encouragement and educational activities were implemented in past years, but the recent impacts of COVID-19 have hindered the ability to organize groups. The community has adapted to the current environment and continue with outreach efforts to implement this plan’s initiatives.

Although COVID-19 restrictions are creating current short-term issues with busing of students, the USD #493 is experiencing a long-term challenge of finding bus drivers to fill the part time position. As busing students becomes a dwindling option within city limits, it is ever more important to take the necessary initiatives now to create a more recreation centered, walkable and bikeable community to enable students to safely use alternative modes of transportation to/from school.

EDUCATION

The goal of the “Education” initiative of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan is to teach children and parents about the broad range of transportation choices available in Columbus, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the community. Led by the Stakeholders, several target groups of citizens will be engaged for various educational opportunities. They include students, parents, and neighborhood residents and drivers.

Students: Students are engaged primarily to teach children important lifelong skills that can lead to healthier lifestyles. Content includes efforts to educate students about:

- The benefits of physical activity.
- The proper way to walk and bike safely within the community.
- How pedestrians and bicyclists should interact with automobiles.

Parents of Students: Parents play a critical role in determining their children’s lifestyle choices. Parents often determine whether their child will walk or bike to and from school, or if their child will be transported via automobile. Content includes efforts to educate parents about:

- The importance of school zone safety.
- The designated safe routes to school.
- The encouragement initiatives set forth in this Master Plan.
- The proper procedures for pick-up and drop-off.

Neighborhood Residents and Drivers: The prior two groups of citizens will interact daily with other members of the community which have not been targeted as students or parents of students. Content includes efforts to educate neighborhood residents and drivers about:

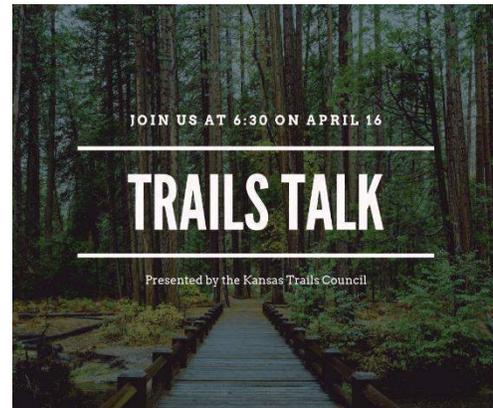
- The importance of safe driving around schools.
- The importance of keeping the designated safe routes to school clear of hazards, obstacles, snow, and vegetation.

Education Action

There are two key goals of the SRTS educational efforts. The first goal is to reach out to parents, students, and citizens in the community which have not been informed of the SRTS initiatives. The second goal is to reinforce the importance of safety, particularly around schools and the designated safe routes to school, with groups which have been previously targeted with educational efforts. These folks are more likely to remember and practice the goals of this SRTS Master Plan when they continue to hear this critical message. Efforts for the Education initiative of this SRTS Master Plan are as follows.

- **Sheriff’s Department Resource Officers** – Along with enforcement tasks, the local resource officers’ duties include educating the community on topics which include stranger danger, internet safety, drug use, vehicle safety, dating violence, and proper walking/biking on streets.
- **Virtual Social Media Campaign on the History of the Bicycle** – The community’s SRTS committee has adapted many educational and encouragement efforts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One recent educational effort was a virtual campaign to educate the community on the history of the bicycle which was used as a platform to introduce an upcoming ride-share program and to encourage cycling for transportation.

- **Student-targeted Education** – The dedication of the All Wheels Bike Park Feature at Reeve’s Park featured demonstrations by professional bicyclists educating citizens how to properly and safely bike as a mode of transportation at the park and around the town.
- **Trail Building Community Meetings** – The Trail Building Committee has been meeting for several years and have hosted speakers from the Kansas Trails Council and the Thrive Allen County trails group to speak at meetings and educating local ped/bike activists on how to successfully build trails and connect community assets for improved usage.
- **Parent Surveys** – Parent surveys, although also identified as an evaluation tool, can be useful in informing parents of students about the community’s efforts to enhance walking/biking to school and safety associated with it. A copy of the City’s Safe Routes to School map can be included with surveys as a leave behind.
- **Community Meetings** – Outreach meetings should be held, as/when feasible due to COVID-19 restrictions, to better educate the community of the SRTS initiatives and how they can help the City achieve the targeted goals of this plan. City Council updates have been provided in the past and future meetings should periodically provide updates on SRTS Master Plan infrastructure recommendations and implementation progress.



ENCOURAGEMENT

The goal of the “Encouragement” initiative of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan is to use a variety of events, activities, and social media outlets to promote safe walking and bicycling. Some easily implemented encouragement efforts the City of Columbus has implemented are described below. Some of these activities are stand along events which could be held at regular intervals while others are routine annual/semiannual events to encourage walking/biking as a mode of transportation.

- **Walking School Bus** – As Columbus constructs the infrastructure improvements for safe routes to school, the community should consider implementing a walking school bus program. Walking school busses can easily be organized, enhance student safety, and alleviate the stress and concern some parents experience by allowing their child to walk/bike between school and home.
- **Bike Share Program** – A creative student in the USD 493 developed the concept of a Bike Share Program to encourage biking as a mode of transportation to/from school and around the community. The program is in its infancy and the City is working on plans to roll out the program community wide in the near future.



- **“Walk to School Day”, “Bike to School Day”, and “National Trails Day” Events** – The community and the USD 493 has, and should continue, to take advantage of these nation-wide events to further expand the encouragement of walking/biking to school as an alternate mode of transportation.
- **Citywide Art and Essay Contest** – The City of Columbus engaged the community, and particular students, with an art and essay contest focused on biking and being outdoors. With over 100 entries, a total of 20 new bikes and 18 skateboards were given out, all with new helmets.
- **Pedal to the Park** – This event was recently held at one of the community parks and successfully encouraged families to walk or bike together. The sheriff’s department was present and handed out new helmets and performed bike safety checks.
- **Additional Resources:** <http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/encouragement/index.cfm>



ENGINEERING

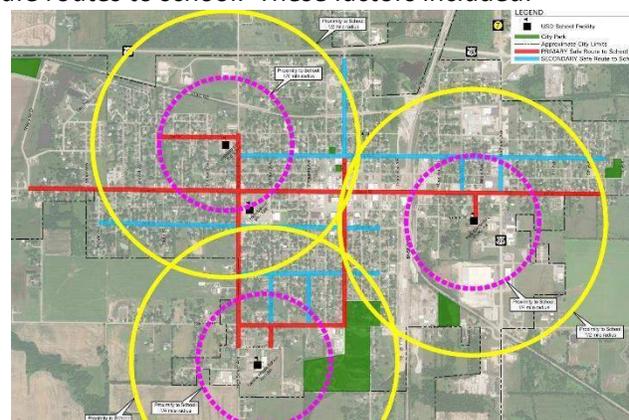
The general goal of the “Engineering” initiative of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan is to identify physical barriers for pedestrians and bicyclists and to recommend infrastructure improvements leading to and surrounding schools. The improvements will eliminate congestion potential, improve, or eliminate conflict points between motorists and pedestrians/bicyclists, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails, and bikeways connecting residential neighborhoods with the school facilities. The following major areas of concern were reviewed.

- A walkability and accessibility assessment of existing infrastructure.
- Sidewalk inventory to capture existing known infrastructure conditions for use in the Plan.
- Basic gravity model evaluation for traffic flow between residential areas and the schools.
- Student drop-off and pick-up procedures and associated traffic patterns.
- School zone signing and pavement marking.

Identification of Safe Routes to School: Several key walkable/bikeable factors were considered when identifying key routes to focus for identification of safe routes to school. These factors included:

- USD facility location with respect to residential neighborhoods.
- Basic gravity model considerations.
- Sidewalk conditions throughout the town.

Based on this evaluation along with community input, several primary safe routes to school were identified along with a number of secondary routes. These findings are summarized in Figures 2 and 3 included in this Master Plan.



Infrastructure Assessment: As with many communities in this region, physical barriers to walking/biking are present. These barriers include sidewalks in poor condition or simply a lack of sidewalks, a lack of curb ramps and/or ADA compliant ramps, inconspicuous or poorly positioned crosswalks, and a lack of overall continuity in the pedestrian infrastructure. In some instances, pedestrians and bicyclists are required to travel in the street during peak hours, including many of the areas near the Central Middle School.

Many of the residential neighborhood in the more central part of Columbus have existing sidewalks, the conditions of which vary from recently reconstructed all the way to poor condition. Newer residential areas to the western side of the city limits do not have sidewalks but are also located farther from the USD facilities and therefore may be slightly lower on the priority list as infrastructure improvements near the schools will have a larger initial benefit for the investment. School zone signing is reasonably sufficient but some signs are outdated, improperly mounted, or lack retroreflectivity.

Priority #1 Safe Routes to School Sidewalks:

- **Country Road Sidewalk Improvements.**

Country Road serves as a key east-west route conveying student traffic from numerous residential neighborhood areas to/from the Central Middle School at the south City Limits. The street lacks sidewalk infrastructure and the crossings at the Country Rd/High School Ave and the Country Rd/Vermont St intersections need to be improved for



enhanced safety, pedestrian conspicuity, shortened crosswalks, and separated vehicle conflicts.

Recommendation: Construct a sidewalk along the North side of Country Road from High School Ave to Kansas Ave.

- **Central Street Intersection Improvements.** The Central St/High School Ave currently lacks continuous sidewalks and crosswalks between pedestrian facilities and the Central Middle School campus. Parking lot improvements on the northeast corner of the intersection further detract from pedestrian safety and delineated walking paths. Furthermore, the Central St/Vermont St intersection becomes a congestion point during drop-off/pick-up times due to the on-street parking area, lack of geometric definition, and the wide crosswalk students must traverse.

Recommendation 1: Work with the adjacent property owner to realign the parking and better delineate a one way in/out of the parking lot so as to reduce pedestrian conflicts and enable the extension of a separate sidewalk facility in City right-of-way.



Central St Looking East at Vermont Ave Crosswalk

Recommendation 2: Reconfigure the curb lines of the Central St/Vermont St intersection to better delineate traffic patterns, delineate the on-street parking along the south side of Central Street, and enhance pedestrian conspicuity at the crosswalk. Also, consider extending a sidewalk north from Central St to Country Rd along the East side of Vermont Ave.

- Maple Street Improvements.** Sidewalks along the south side of Maple Street near the Park Elementary School are in poor condition and/or non-existent east of Tennessee Avenue. The mid-block crossing with a flashing beacon near Illinois Street is also located very close to the signalized crossing at US-69 & Maple St. **Recommendation:** Construct a sidewalk along the south side of Maple Street (Tennessee Ave to US-69), remove the flashing beacon and crosswalk at Illinois Ave and utilize the existing traffic signal at US-69 & Maple Street for a safe route to school for students east of US-69. Also, improve a crosswalk at Maple St/Ohio Ave with a flashing beacon warning sign assembly which will provide a second crossing of Maple Street slightly farther away from the traffic congestion between Illinois Ave and US-69.



School Zone Traffic Control:

- School zone signing exists around most of the USD facilities and is generally in fair condition. A few of the signs are improperly mounted or aging and in need of replacement. Additional signage may also be needed with sidewalk infrastructure and crosswalks. **Recommendation:** Any aging signage that does not meet current MUTCD requirements should be replaced to comply with current standards. Signing plans should be engineered as part of the Priority 1 improvements to establish appropriately marked school zones around the USD facilities.
- Pavement markings at some key crosswalks are white painted longitudinal lines delineating the edges of the crosswalk. **Recommendation:** As a part of the Priority 1 improvements, the City should consider implementing a high visibility crosswalk (KDOT Type 2 Crosswalk) marking scheme where major streets cross safe routes to school paths and at mid-block crossings.

 - Central Street/High School Avenue (East leg)
 - Central Street/Vermont Avenue (West leg)
 - Country Road/High School Avenue (East leg)
 - Country Road/Vermont Avenue (West leg)
 - Country Road/Kansas Avenue (North leg)



Example Signage (Central Middle School)

- Elm Street/Vermont Avenue (West leg)
- High School Avenue/Elm Street (East leg)
- High School Avenue/Maple Street (North and East legs)
- Maple Street/Ohio Avenue (East leg)

Summary of Engineering Initiative Recommendations (Priority #1)

Recommended infrastructure improvements follow with the Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Costs and a Map describing the conceptual infrastructure needs is included in Appendix A. The opinion of total project cost for the recommended Priority #1 improvements is \$646,450.

- Designate safe routes to school and implement infrastructure improvements to provide safer and better-connected pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Sidewalk and ADA compliant accessible curb ramp improvements will be necessary along the following locations:
 - **North side of Country Road (High School Ave to Kansas Ave):** 5’ sidewalk.
 - **South side of Maple Street (Tennessee Ave to US-69):** 5’ sidewalk.
 - **Maple Street Crosswalks:** Install accessible ped. signal system at US-69, Remove beacon and crosswalk at Illinois Ave, Install crosswalk at Maple St/Ohio Ave.
 - **High School Ave/Country Rd Intersection:** Crosswalk accessibility and conspicuity improvements to decrease pedestrian exposure length.
 - **Country Rd/Vermont Ave:** crosswalk improvements with accessibility improvements and removal of driveway-pedestrian conflict.
 - **High School Ave/Central St:** sidewalk extension and parking lot modifications for pedestrian accessibility and safety improvements.
 - **Central St/Vermont Ave:** crosswalk improvements and curb re-alignment to delineate the driving lanes, reduce crosswalk length, and provide safer pedestrian crossing.
 - **Signing and Markings:** Perform a school zone signing plan to replace non-compliant signs and add/improve signs at all school zones. Install high-visibility (KDOT Type 2) crosswalks at the Priority #1 locations indicated in this Master Plan.

Priority #2 Safe Routes to School Sidewalks:

Community-side Sidewalk Improvements.

Priority #2 sidewalks are extensions off the Priority #1 “backbone” of the safe routes to school system. These sidewalks should be constructed as funding enables. Funding programs could include future phases of the Safe Routes to School funding, or CDBG funding program administered by the Department of Commerce. Many locations do not have sidewalks or have sidewalks in poor condition that are not fully connected within the City’s transportation system.



Example poor sidewalk condition, non-accessible

ENFORCEMENT

The goal of the “Enforcement” initiative of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan is to develop a partnership between the local law enforcement, members of the community, and key stakeholders to improve compliance with traffic laws in the vicinity of the Columbus Schools and along the designated routes of pedestrian/bicycle travel to school. An increased law enforcement presence can result in better enforcement of vehicular speeds, cars yielding to pedestrians, proper walking and bicycling behaviors, and all-around better compliance with transportation safety compliance.

Columbus schools currently work cooperatively with the local Sheriff’s Department to have a school presence with two resource officers. The deputies assigned to the USD adjust their work schedules to be present on the campuses with primary responsibilities to include ensuring the students, staff and visitors are safe, provide educational programs on topics which include stranger danger, internet safety, drug use, vehicle safety, and dating violence.

Enforcement Action

The following items provide enforcement action “tools” to consider implementing in Columbus for improved Safe Routes to School success.

- Continue a cooperative effort with the Cherokee County Sheriff’s Department for the two school resource officers in the Columbus schools. The effectiveness of the officers’ presence should be periodically evaluated and resources/needs adjusted where necessary to best accommodate safety needs.
- Consider implementing a Crossing Guard training program for qualified volunteers interested in participating. 2005 State of Kansas Legislation has stipulated that school crossing guards should be trained thoroughly, as their role is very important to the health and safety of school aged children. As such, the Kansas Department of Transportation produced guidance for implementing/training crossing guards which can be found at this webpage:

https://www.ksdot.org/burTrafficEng/sztoolbox/School_Crossing_Guard_Info.asp

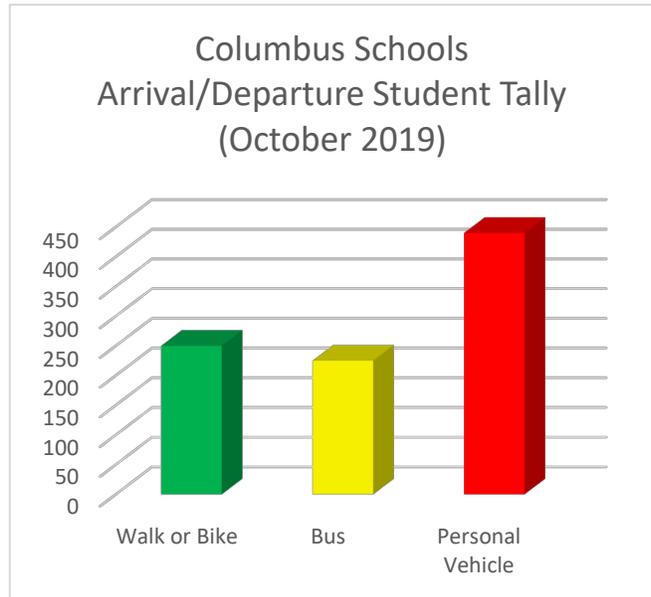
KANSAS GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS



EVALUATION

The goal of the “Evaluation” initiative is to monitor and document needs, perceptions, and success of this Safe Routes to School Master Plan. This effort will identify trends of pedestrian and bicycle facility users by collecting before and after data. The results will help the key stakeholders understand which initiatives are working, which initiatives could be modified or improved, and which initiatives are not producing the desired outcomes.

The Columbus School staff performed an initial arrival/departure tally for district students in October of 2019. A graphic of the tally of a total of 945 students is shown to the right on this page. At the time of preparing this Master Plan, USD Staff are in the process of collecting updated student arrival/departure tallies to continue the community’s baseline establishment and monitoring of transportation needs. The new data is anticipated to show a substantial decrease in busing due to recent rider limitations and subsequent shift in demand from busing to walk/bike/personal transport.

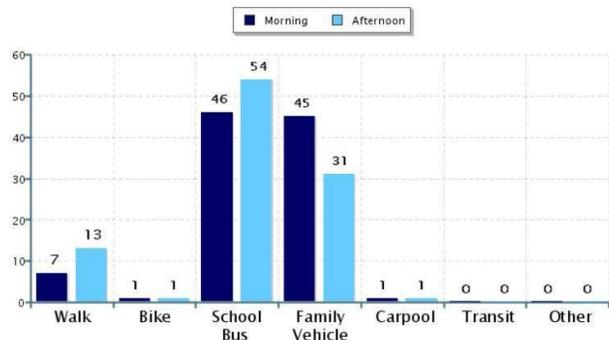


Evaluation Action

Parent surveys and student arrival/departure tallies should be periodically collected and the information submitted to the National Center for Safe Routes to School at the following website: <http://saferoutesdata.org/>.

- Parent Surveys (by USD).
- Student Arrival/Departure Tally (by USD).

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison



Example saferoutesdata.org comparison chart

Appendix A

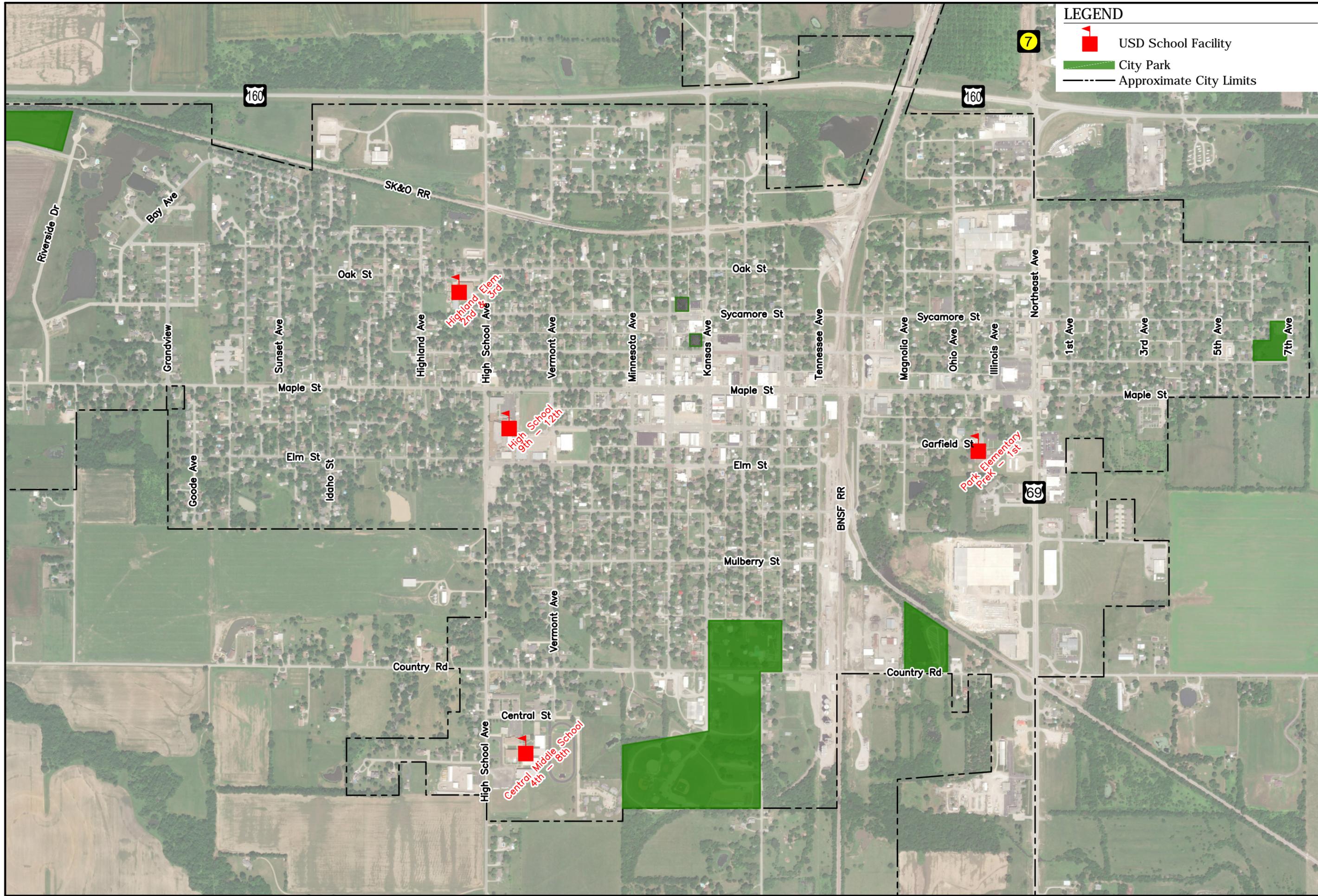
Figure 1 – City and Key USD Facilities Map

Figure 2 – Safe Routes to School Corridor Map

Figure 3 – Existing Sidewalk Condition Map

Figure 4 – Safe Routes to School Improvements Priority Map

Engineer’s Opinion of Probable Costs



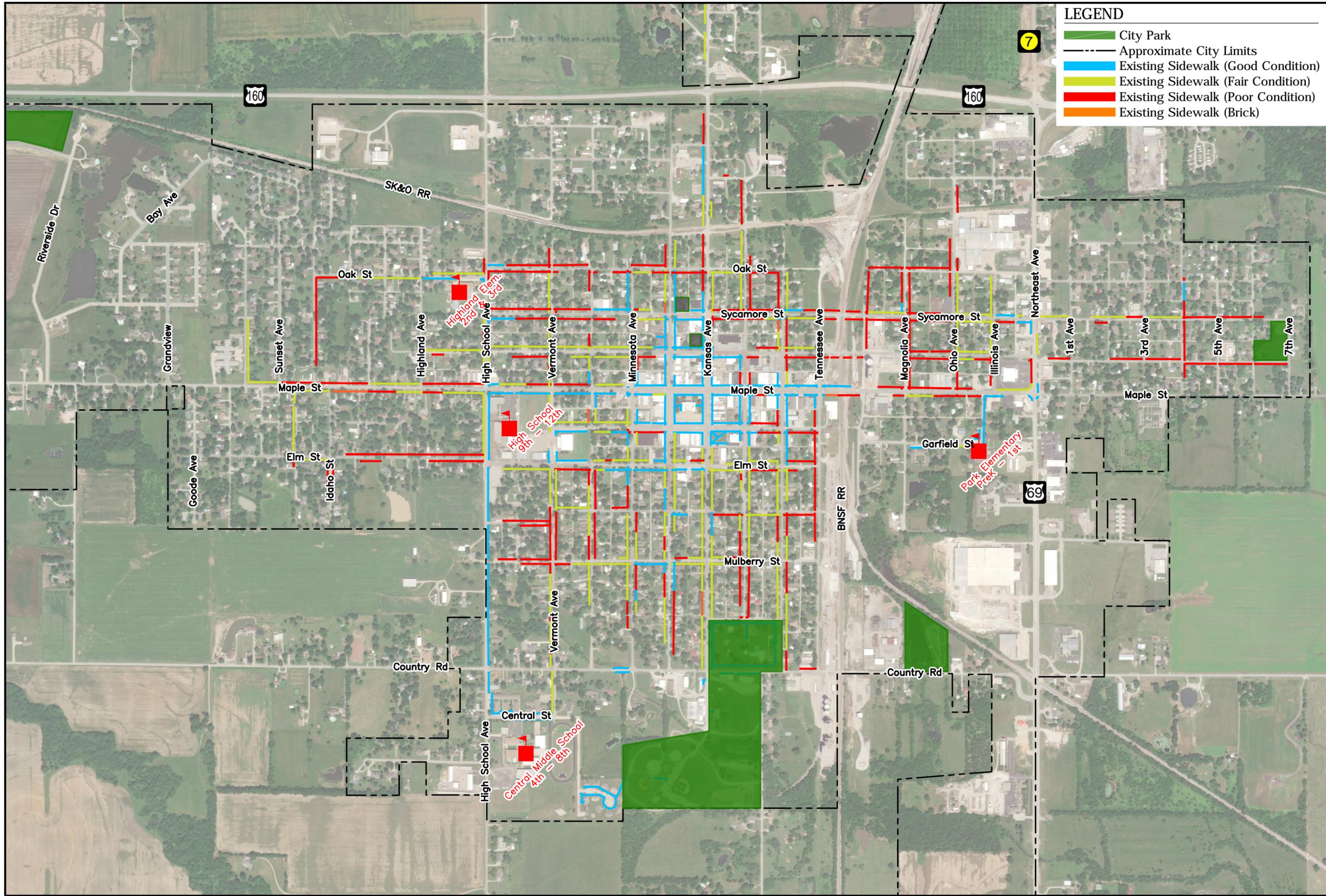
LEGEND

- USD School Facility
- City Park
- - - - - Approximate City Limits



Figure 1 - City and Key USD Facilities Map
Columbus, Kansas





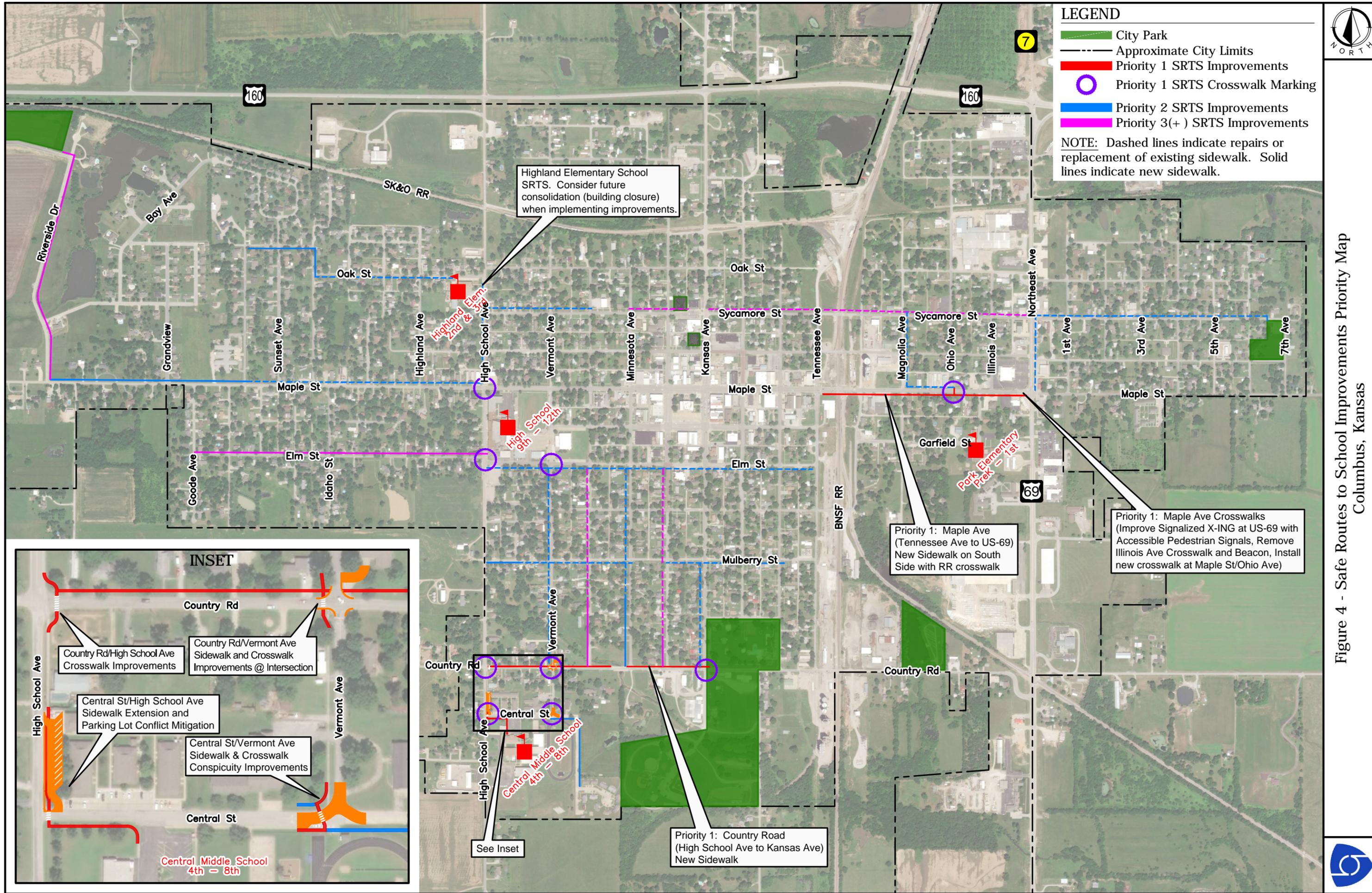
LEGEND

- █ City Park
- Approximate City Limits
- █ Existing Sidewalk (Good Condition)
- █ Existing Sidewalk (Fair Condition)
- █ Existing Sidewalk (Poor Condition)
- █ Existing Sidewalk (Brick)



Figure 3 - Sidewalk Condition Map
Columbus, Kansas





LEGEND

- █ City Park
- Approximate City Limits
- █ Priority 1 SRTS Improvements
- Priority 1 SRTS Crosswalk Marking
- █ Priority 2 SRTS Improvements
- █ Priority 3(+) SRTS Improvements

NOTE: Dashed lines indicate repairs or replacement of existing sidewalk. Solid lines indicate new sidewalk.



Highland Elementary School SRTS. Consider future consolidation (building closure) when implementing improvements.

Priority 1: Maple Ave (Tennessee Ave to US-69) New Sidewalk on South Side with RR crosswalk

Priority 1: Maple Ave Crosswalks (Improve Signalized X-ING at US-69 with Accessible Pedestrian Signals, Remove Illinois Ave Crosswalk and Beacon, Install new crosswalk at Maple St/Ohio Ave)

Priority 1: Country Road (High School Ave to Kansas Ave) New Sidewalk

See Inset

INSET

- Country Rd/High School Ave Crosswalk Improvements
- Country Rd/Vermont Ave Sidewalk and Crosswalk Improvements @ Intersection
- Central St/High School Ave Sidewalk Extension and Parking Lot Conflict Mitigation
- Central St/Vermont Ave Sidewalk & Crosswalk Conspicuity Improvements

Central Middle School 4th - 8th

Figure 4 - Safe Routes to School Improvements Priority Map
Columbus, Kansas



Safe Routes to School Priority #1 Project

City of Columbus, Kansas

Engineer's Opinion of Probable Project Costs

October 26, 2020

<u>No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Unit Price</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
<u>Common Items of Work</u>					
1.	Contractor Construction Staking	1	Lump Sum	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
2.	Mobilization	1	Lump Sum	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
3.	Removal of Existing Structures	1	Lump Sum	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
4.	Temporary Erosion Control	1	Lump Sum	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
5.	Seeding	1	Lump Sum	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
6.	Permanent Signing (School Zone Signing)	1	Lump Sum	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
7.	Permanent X-WALK Striping	1	Lump Sum	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
8.	Traffic Control	1	Lump Sum	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00
Subtotal A =					\$ 120,000.00
<u>Country Rd Sidewalk (High School Ave to Kansas Ave)</u>					
	Grading and Earthwork	1	Lump Sum	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
	5' Wide Concrete Sidewalk (4")(AE)	1,800	Lin. Ft.	\$ 28.00	\$ 50,400.00
	Sidewalk Curb Ramp	12	Each	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 15,000.00
	6" Concrete Pavement (AE)(Driveways)	250	Sq. Yds.	\$ 75.00	\$ 18,750.00
	Ditch Cleaning and Drainage Pipes	1	Lump Sum	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Subtotal B =					\$ 109,150.00
<u>Central St/High School Ave</u>					
	Grading and Earthwork	1	Lump Sum	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
	5' Wide Concrete Sidewalk (4")(AE)	450	Lin. Ft.	\$ 28.00	\$ 12,600.00
	Sidewalk Curb Ramp	4	Each	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 5,000.00
	Concrete Curb and Gutter	450	Lin. Ft.	\$ 40.00	\$ 18,000.00
	6" Concrete Pvm't. (AE)(Driveways/Parking)	200	Sq. Yds.	\$ 75.00	\$ 15,000.00
Subtotal C =					\$ 70,600.00
<u>Central St/Vermont Ave</u>					
	Grading and Earthwork	1	Lump Sum	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
	5' Wide Concrete Sidewalk (4")(AE)	100	Lin. Ft.	\$ 28.00	\$ 2,800.00
	Sidewalk Curb Ramp	2	Each	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 2,500.00
	Concrete Curb and Gutter	300	Lin. Ft.	\$ 30.00	\$ 9,000.00
	Intersection Pavement (7" Concrete)(AE)	575	Sq. Yds.	\$ 80.00	\$ 46,000.00
	Strom Structures/Pipes	1	Lump Sum	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Subtotal D =					\$ 90,300.00
<u>Maple Street Sidewalk Improvements</u>					
	Grading and Earthwork	1	Lump Sum	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
	5' Wide Concrete Sidewalk (4")(AE)	1,200	Lin. Ft.	\$ 28.00	\$ 33,600.00
	RR Crossing	1	Lump Sum	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
	Sidewalk Curb Ramp	16	Each	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 20,000.00
	Concrete Curb and Gutter	350	Lin. Ft.	\$ 40.00	\$ 14,000.00
	6" Concrete Pavement (AE)(Driveways)	200	Sq. Yds.	\$ 75.00	\$ 15,000.00
	Maple St/US-69 APS System	1	Lump Sum	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00
Subtotal E =					\$ 135,100.00
Construction Total (Subtotals A thru E) =					\$ 525,150.00
+ 25% Soft Costs (Design and Construction Engineering) =					\$ 131,300.00
PROJECT TOTAL =					\$ 656,450.00

Appendix B

Photo Log of Infrastructure Concerns and Issues



Photo 1: Example non-ADA accessible features on pedestrian routes



Photo 2: Maple Street (south side) crossing RR leading to Park Elementary



Photo 3: Maple St/Illinois Ave crosswalk, low use and inconspicuous → Remove



Photo 4: Country Road looking West toward Central Middle School. Sidewalks on one drainage structure, but no other ped/bike features along SRTS primary route.



Photo 5: Example students walking in Country Road street pavement (no sidewalk).



Photo 6: High School Ave Crosswalk @ Country Rd (SRTS primary route).



Photo 7: Sidewalk ends on High School Ave just prior to Central Middle School.



Photo 8: Central St/Vermont Ave: Pedestrian-Vehicle assignment conflicts.

Appendix C

Letters of Support



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tel: 620.429.1414
cell: 620.674.1459

Aimee Saporito, Chairperson
Clint Ellis
Lindsay Grundy
Karrah Smith
Dan Walters
Lori Combs - Treasurer

November 3, 2020

Ms. Jenny Kramer
KS Department of Transportation
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison St, 2nd Floor
Topeka, KS 66603

Jenny Kramer,

The Columbus Recreation Commission endorses the continued efforts of the Columbus Safe Routes to School committee and community leaders in submitting the city's application for the next phase in the SRTS grant process. We applaud the decision to request construction funding at this point.

COVID-19 has affected our community in many ways, including USD493 having to curtail bus service to students living within city limits in order to facilitate distancing among riders. This has led to a significant increase in children walking and biking to school. Our failing infrastructure system has been highlighted by congestion at poorly marked crosswalks (and some that are missing altogether), children having to walk in the street where sidewalks don't exist, and cyclists riding down the middle of narrow and unmarked streets.

It is our hope that the increases we've seen in pedestrian and bicycle traffic will continue after the virus is brought under control as that will contribute to a healthier community. However, in order to encourage and facilitate this, our community needs to step up efforts to improve sidewalks, roadways, and crosswalks. The Rec Commission believes funding from the SRTS grant program will help make this possible. We pledge our support throughout the process.

Sincerely,

Clint Ellis

November 1, 2020

Ms. Jenny Kramer
KS Department of Transportation
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison St, 2nd Floor
Topeka, KS 66603

Ms. Kramer:

The Columbus Trails Organization gives its full support to the city of Columbus on its application for the Safe Routes to Schools grant.

The Columbus Trails Organization was formed by citizens who would like to see more opportunity for walking and biking around the city. The group recognizes the lack of safe routes throughout town and the deteriorating infrastructure of our sidewalk system to be a major deterrent for pedestrian traffic.

In our community, the schools act as the center of activity in many cases. We believe adding safer routes to these hubs can improve the overall health and well-being of our community. Increased walking and biking for our citizens will lead to increased physical activity, improved mood, increased connection with neighbors, and pride in our hometown.

The Columbus Trails Organization is working on trails initiatives around town to bring off street walking, hiking, and biking to our citizens. We believe the most important of these initiatives is our Safe Routes to School plan. Our team of volunteers is ready to help in any way that we can.

The master plan developed in SRTS phase 1 highlights the routes that can have the greatest impact for our children's safety. The adoption of this master plan to improve pedestrian safety and promote physical activity is vital for our city's future. In addition, our organization is using this plan to develop trail systems that will give pedestrians access to parks and trails throughout our city. We are very excited for the opportunities to come!

Sincerely,

Dan Walters
Chairperson Columbus Trails Organization
Vice-Chairperson Columbus SRTS committee

October 30, 2020

Re: KDOT Safe Routes to School Grant: Phase II

To whom it may concern,

I wish to communicate my full support for the City of Columbus' application for the second phase of the Kansas Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School grant opportunity. Among the most important aspects of community development is ensuring that street and sidewalk infrastructure adequately serves our needs. Our city would benefit tremendously from continued grant support to ensure that our children can safely walk and bike to and from school. We have a dedicated group of leaders, comprised of city and school district officials, business partners, and engaged citizens that will work together to ensure that our plans holistically serve our city's needs.

As you will see in our application package, the current state of some of our sidewalk infrastructure around our school buildings is poor. Required repairs and enhancements are capital-intensive and strain the budgets of cities our size. We firmly believe that grant support from this program will help us overcome this obstacle and make meaningful improvements that enhance safety for our children.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the transportation patterns for many USD 493 students. Many children that rode buses before are now walking to and from school to promote social distancing. It is likely that a significant portion of these children will continue to walk and bike to school even when pandemic subsides. Our city's primary transportation goal is to ensure the safety of the children that walk and bike to school. This grant opportunity would greatly assist our city's efforts toward this end.

Respectfully,



Jake Letner

Community Development Coordinator – City of Columbus, KS

City Hall 300 E. Maple PO BOX 308 Columbus KS 66725



PO Box 45 • S. East Ave

Columbus, KS 66725

tel 620.429.1414

fax 620.429.1412

November 2, 2020

Ms. Jenny Kramer
KS Department of Transportation
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison St, 2nd Floor
Topeka, KS 66603

Ms. Kramer:

Crossland Construction Company enthusiastically endorses efforts of Columbus community leaders to continue the Safe Routes to School process with submission of the master plan and application for construction dollars in the next phase of the procedure. We commit our support throughout the process and will work with area partners to ensure success because we believe development efforts leading to safer trafficways, cycling and walking paths, and sidewalks will benefit the entire community.

Our company is one of the primary employers in Columbus and Cherokee County and we recognize that having quality infrastructure systems is a benefit when recruiting new employees to our company, and to the home office in Columbus. Families with children especially value safe ways for students to bike and walk. Currently, the lack of safe biking routes, inadequate or dangerous crosswalks, and missing or deteriorating sidewalks create major health and safety concerns, especially for students navigating these areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this effort; we look forward to continued progress and pledge our complete support along the way.

Sincerely,

Liz Simpson
Community Development Associate
SRTS Committee Member

DAVID M. GROVES
SHERIFF

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

TERRY CLUGSTON
UNDERSHERIFF



CHEROKEE COUNTY
PHONE 620-429-3992
FAX 620-429-1454

915 E. COUNTRY RD.
COLUMBUS, KANSAS 66725

November 2, 2020

To whom it may concern:

It's an honor to submit this letter supporting the City of Columbus' Safe Routes to School grant application.

With seemingly more and more children biking or walking to and from school, it's perhaps now more important than ever to renew focus on providing adequate and safe routes for them to do so.

The award of this grant will dramatically improve the safety of our young students while also enhancing the overall health of our community, which is why I enthusiastically support efforts to bring this vision to reality.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David M. Groves".

David M. Groves
Sheriff, Cherokee County



Unified School District 493
Board of Education Office

October 16, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the City of Columbus's Safe Routes to School Grant. The safety of our students is always a priority. Currently, we have several streets in our community that students use to walk to school that do not have sidewalks. In some places, the sidewalks are not adequate where they do exist. I believe this grant will give our community the opportunity to improve the routes to school to ensure our student's safety.

Two of the most inadequate areas in our community are near our elementary schools. Once the students leave school grounds, they do not have safe routes to walk home. Both of these schools are located near busy streets. Because most of our most vulnerable populations lack transportation, some of our parents will walk to the school to pick up their children. In many cases, they must push a stroller in the street with younger children who are not of school age. This creates a dangerous situation for all involved.

Again, I strongly support the City of Columbus's grant application. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Smith
Superintendent

Phone 620-429-3661

802 S High School Ave
Columbus, KS 66725

Fax 620-429-2673

November 1, 2020

Ms. Jenny Kramer
KS Department of Transportation
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison St, 2nd Floor
Topeka, KS 66603

Ms. Kramer:

It is an honor to write this letter in support of the Safe Routes to School program for my hometown of Columbus, Kansas. I moved to this small town during my kindergarten year in 1991. Once upon a time, I remember students walking or riding their bikes to school, but as sidewalk and road conditions have declined, so has the ability to travel safely to school without parent or bus transportation. As a mother of two and teacher of many fifth graders, this project is vital to our town.

Columbus is a small community that has shrunk in the past years due to some large factories closing in the area. As those businesses closed, some families had to relocate, and others had to find work outside of town. Over the past decade, our quaint town has deteriorated a bit and the ability to travel along sidewalks and roadways has become unsafe, especially for young students. As I graduated from high school, it felt like our town wasn't being maintained as it should. Many buildings in town were left empty and I wondered if Columbus would withstand a drop in the economy plus job displacement?

Finally, over the past 4-5 years, our small community has started to come together in hopes to revitalize and renovate our charming little piece of southeast Kansas. Crossland Construction has put so much time and effort into helping Columbus become what it once was. It is exciting to watch other community members, including myself, come together and help rebuild and freshen up the home that we've chosen to start our families. I want my two young children to have beautiful sidewalks, parks, and trails to ride their bikes and walk to different places in town. I want my children and my students to have what I had as a child and better. This dream will not be possible without the Safe Routes to School program, it is absolutely necessary, therefore I am 100 percent behind this project and support each step. I ask that you help by doing the same.

Thank you for your consideration,
Hillary Smith, M.S., Edu.
Columbus Resident and 5th Grade Teacher

City of Columbus

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

300 EAST MAPLE • COLUMBUS, KANSAS 66725-1894 • PHONE (620) 429 - 1332 • FAX (620) 429 - 1334

October 16, 2019

Re: Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

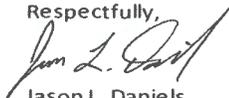
As the Chief of Police of Columbus, Kansas, I fully support the Safe Routes to School Grant Program. In any community, the greatest investments that can be made are those that directly impact the safety and well-being of our youth. These children will be the future generations that lead our communities and re-invest in their hometowns. The thought of loss or injury to just one of those children due to inadequate sidewalk access while attempting to make it to school is gut wrenching.

We currently have four schools in our City. The sidewalk access is limited to these schools. Children must cross at intersections multiple times or walk on the edge of the road, since the sidewalks are not on every block, depending where they live. Each time they must do this it places them at further risk of being harmed.

In the morning right before school and the afternoon once school is let out, the streets are congested and busy. A child walking on the edge of the street could easily be struck due to the increasing size of vehicles, or due to the inexperience of a driver of any vehicle. Additionally, if sidewalks are installed children will have a definite path to stay on, helping eliminate the necessity for them to come up with a route of their own.

Thank you for the development of this program and taking our community into consideration.

Respectfully,



Jason L. Daniels
Chief of Police

October 25, 2019



Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension
Cherokee County
124 W. Country Road
P.O. Box 148
Columbus, KS 66725-0148
620-429-3849
Fax: 620-429-2720

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Cherokee County K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, I strongly support the partnership initiatives between the City of Columbus, the Columbus Recreation Commission, USD 493, and local community members in striving to improve the walkability and safety of local youth and residents of Columbus, Kansas.

Cherokee County K-State Research and Extension has been collaborating with the City of Columbus, the Columbus Recreation Commission, and USD 493 to increase the health of local residents through farmers markets, community gardens, and direct education for local residents. The missing piece that is hindering the health outcomes of local citizens is the lack of safe sidewalks to promote physical activity and walkability for local residents. The lack of sidewalks impacts the access ability to participate in physical activity, impairs social connections, and exacerbates the feelings of isolation of senior citizens. Cherokee County K-State Research and Extension strongly supports the work by these local partners in pursuing an opportunity to improve the current and future health of local residents.

Our office supports the opportunity for a community study to evaluate and plan walkways for Columbus, Kansas. We are thankful the work of our local community members and pursuing this initiative and hopeful that your committee will select Columbus, Kansas as a Phase 1 recipient of this grant initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Christina Holmes'.

Christina Holmes, RD, LD
Cherokee County K-State Research and Extension
Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Cherokee County
Kansas State
University Agricultural
Experiment Station and
Cooperative Extension
Service

K-State, County Extension
Councils, Extension
Districts, and U.S.
Department of Agriculture
Cooperating

All educational programs
and materials available
without discrimination on
the basis of race, color,
religion, national origin,
sex, age, or disability.

*"Knowledge
for Life"*



Cherokee County, Kansas
Economic Development
"the corner of opportunity"

October 21, 2019

Ms. Jenny Kramer
Kansas Department of Transportation
Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison St, 2nd Floor
Topeka, KS 66603

Ms. Kramer:

I am writing to express the Cherokee County Economic Development Corporation's support for the City of Columbus' application for funding a Safe Routes to School project through the Transportation Alternatives Program. The proposed project will fund the creation of a Safe Routes to Schools Master Plan which is an important first step in making walking and bicycling to school safer and more accessible for children in the community.

While making the trip to and from school safer for local students is reason enough for us to support the City's grant application, as an economic development organization we are also keenly aware of the importance of perceived quality of life as a driver of local economic prosperity. And, we know that walkability has been linked to a higher perceived quality of life. We are also certain that improved sidewalks will boost the health of both local children and adults – something else we would love to see.

Thus, we fully support the City's efforts in attaining funding to develop a Safe Routes to School Master Plan, and we look forward to the safer, healthier and more prosperous community that will ultimately result. Please contact me at 620-762-0717 if I may be of additional assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janet Miller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet Miller
Director

October 28, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the Safe Routes to School program for Columbus, KS. It is evident there is a need in this community for the improvements this grant will provide.

Columbus is a rural community with many low-income families. These families and town businesses are not able to withstand the costs to make large, much needed improvements. However, Columbus residents do have a spirit of pride and have been working diligently over the past few years to lead productive change.

As a community member, educator, and parent of three small, school-age children, I see how the Safe Routes to School program would positively impact residents, students, and parents. Of course, safety is the number one priority for our kids. Access to better crosswalks, sidewalks, and drop off areas at our schools would ease the minds of educators and parents alike. Our students also do a significant amount of walking to parks, other schools, and businesses for a variety of health and community functions including the Homecoming Parade, Halloween Walk, Accelerated Reader parties, class demonstrations, etc... All citizens and businesses would also benefit from improved infrastructure, but the developments would help especially during Columbus Days, the Christmas Parade, harvest times, and a wide variety of other community events.

I am proud to live in Columbus, and I am confident the needs of Columbus address the mission and purpose of the Safe Routes to School program. The possibilities are exciting and motivating. I look forward to the opportunity to work with community and school leaders to enrich the lives of our Columbus citizens through this program.

Respectfully,

Aaron Rider, Columbus Citizen and Educator

Columbus Teachers Association

810 S. Highschool St.
Columbus, Ks 66725

October 23, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the sidewalk project for the Columbus, Kansas community. As a teacher and parent, safe paths to school and around our community is extremely important. Not only would it benefit our students, but it would also benefit other citizens with another safe means of transportation. I believe that it is the responsibility of our community to keep our students and citizens safe with a sidewalk that can get them to and from important places in town.

The streets around the schools are usually very busy doing drop off and pick up times. The streets are unsafe for students to walk or ride their bikes on, but at the moment we do not have enough safe sidewalks for students to utilize. With this grant, our community will be able to provide our kids and citizens a safe way to actively get to school, other businesses, or important places throughout Columbus.

Thank you for your consideration,



Kelly Walters
Columbus Teachers Association President
kwalters@usd493.com

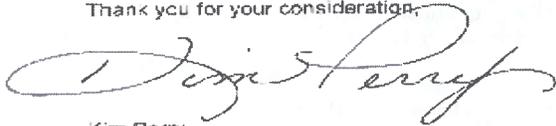
October 28, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

As the Parent Teacher Organization, our utmost priority is the safety of the students in USD 493 Columbus Unified School District, therefore we are writing in support of the safe routes to school for the community of Columbus, Ks.

We believe that this project will greatly benefit our students as well as the adults in our community. The children in our town will be able to safely walk, ride bikes, skateboard, or scooters to school, friends' houses, and parks. This will give everyone a safe place to get to important landmarks and businesses throughout Columbus. While the children of USD 493 are our first concern, new sidewalks would also benefit those wanting to live an active lifestyle. With the new sidewalks all members of our community young and old will be safe as we commute throughout our town.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Perry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "P".

Kim Perry
Titan PTO President
Columbus, Kansas

October 28, 2019

Kansas Department of Transportation
Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program

Re: Columbus Safe Routes to School Phase 1 Project

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am very pleased to offer my full support moving forward with this project. The City of Columbus along with the Columbus Recreation Commission, USD 493 and support of the community is a collaboration long overdue.

This program will provide a much-needed improvement in the surface infrastructure of our community, it will advance access to schools, residents, and commercial business districts, and clearly provide a much safer transportation experience for student walkers, bike riders and residents with disabilities. Use of the pathway will promote physical activity which will in turn lead to better health and well-being. Studies show this can have a significant impact on obesity rates, diabetes, heart disease and other related health concerns.

Our community has many citizens that do not have access to motorized transport and rely solely on walking, bicycling or battery powered assist chairs as a means conveyance. This program would readily support their means of access to the community and lessen their dependence on others. Pedestrian sidewalks have been a part of the 10-year planning discussions over the recent years and will provide important beneficial improvements to an aging part of our City access.

Respectfully,

Sammye Opela
Councilwoman, Ward 4, Columbus

October 28, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my privilege and pleasure to submit this letter in support of the grant application being submitted by the city of Columbus through the Safe Routes to School program. As a parent and grandparent, nothing is of higher concern than the safety of our children. Every effort must be made to ensure they are safe and secure. As a retired teacher, I know that was a goal we made for every classroom and district building.

In conjunction with this, we have the highest concern for the safety of our students as they make their way to and from school each day. I am a member of a safety coalition team organized by our county sheriff, Sheriff David Groves. In our meetings we have discussed this topic and the concerns we have regarding these matters. I therefore offer my full support for the grant being sought.

Sincerely,

Neal Anderson

Cherokee County Commissioner, District Two



300 E Maple St - PO Box 308 - Columbus, Kansas 66725-1894

October 22, 2019

Kansas Department of Transportation
Bureau of Traffic Engineering
Dwight D Eisenhower State Office Building
700 SW Harrison Street
Topeka, KS 66603-3754

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Columbus Kansas to express support for the Safe Routes to School grant for the City of Columbus.

Updates to sidewalks in Columbus are important and are needed improvements. Many students from the elementary level to the high school level walk to and from school every day. Students and residents are compelled to walk on our streets as many of our sidewalks have become deteriorated through the years.

The City of Columbus is engaging with a consultant to develop a master plan for walkability. Our goal is to increase the safety for our students that are walking to and from school and to improve the quality of life for all our citizens through affordable healthy activities such as walking.

Your help in improving our sidewalks in Columbus would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant Spieth", is written over a light blue background.

Grant Spieth
Mayor
City of Columbus

mayor@columbusks.gov

<http://www.columbusks.gov>

Phone 620-429-2159



Fax 620-429-1159