Safe Routes to School

A plan to make walking and biking to school a safe, fun activity.

MAY 18, 2022

SAINT JOSEPH, MINNESOTA

Kennedy Community School

MINNESOTA SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The Vision

Walking, biking, and rolling to school is safe, comfortable, and fun for all students at Kennedy Community School.

THE 6 E'S

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs rely on six core strategies, called the "Six Es", to work towards their vision.

EQUITY – THE OVERARCHING E

Prioritizing positive outcomes for students from lower-income households; Black, Indigenous, and other students of color; students with disabilities; and other students who face disproportionate barriers to walking, biking, and rolling to school.

ENGAGEMENT

Working with students, families, school staff, and community members and organizations, especially those from priority Equity groups, to create and implement Safe Routes to School initiatives.

ENGINEERING

Developing Equity-focused changes to the built environment, designed and prioritized through community Engagement.

EDUCATION

Providing students and other community members, especially those from priority Equity groups, with skills and knowledge about walking, biking, and rolling.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Normalizing a culture of walking, biking, and rolling through incentive programs, events, and activities that center priority Equity groups.

EVALUATION

Measuring how Safe Routes to School initiatives are implemented (process evaluation) and what their impacts are (outcome evaluation), especially how initiatives Engage with and support priority Equity groups.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the participation of the following individuals and organizations in the development of this Safe Routes to School Plan.

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ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

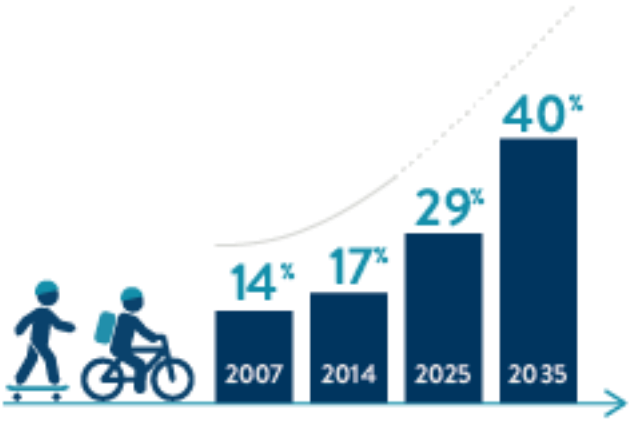
This report is designed to support and be accessible to multiple groups of people involved with Safe Routes to School in Saint Joseph, including students, caregivers, teachers, school administrators, public works staff, elected officials, and county and state employees. To help make the body of this report relevant to all readers—while also documenting all of the participation, analysis, and deliberation that went into development of the plan—some content has been moved to the Appendices.

Why Safe Routes to School?

Figure 1. Crossing guard helping children across the street.

Why Safe Routes to School?

Today, less than 20% of K-8 students walk or bike to school, but as recently as 1970, nearly 50% of students walked or biked to school. Where schools and housing are located, how roads are designed, and how automobiles are regulated have all contributed to this decline. Through policy changes, infrastructure improvements, and programs, Safe Routes to School helps create physical and social environments that empower students, their families, and their communities to walk and bike more often. Communities that participate in Safe Routes to School also benefit from less air, noise, and water pollution; lower road maintenance costs; and more pleasant streetscapes for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike.



SRTS initiatives are contributing to more students and families walking and biking to school.

Most kids are not getting enough physical activity.

Roads near schools are congested, decreasing safety and air quality for children.

KIDS WHO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL:

- Arrive alert and able to focus on school
- Feel better about their physical health
- Are more likely to have good mental health
- Get most of their recommended daily physical activity just from traveling to and from school
- Have better school performance and test scores

A REINFORCING CYCLE OF WALKING AND BIKING TO SCHOOL

- More students walking and biking to school
- Greater focus on policies, infrastructure, and programs to support walking and biking
- Safer and easier routes to and from school
- Better air quality and more pleasant bike and pedestrian environments

*More information, including primary sources, can be found at http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org.

Figure 2. Stakeholder's workshop.

Equity in SRTS

Particular groups and communities in the U.S. have disproportionate access to resources such as high-quality jobs, schools, parks, healthcare, food, and bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Meanwhile, other groups of people have limited access to these resources, negatively impacting their health and wellbeing. These differences are not random—they are the results of government policy in the past and present, which has worked to the benefit of some and to the disadvantage of others, often along race, income, and gender lines. These group-based differences are forms of inequity.

Equity in Safe Routes to School is impacted by transportation system inequities—such as limited access to high-quality walking and biking infrastructure or the presence of highways in lower-income and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) neighborhoods—as well as inequities in related systems. For example, racial wealth inequities and racial discrimination in housing mean that BIPOC students may live further away from schools than their white peers from higher-income families.

Safe Routes to School works to address these inequities by prioritizing programs, infrastructure, and policy improvements that help individuals and groups with less access to resources, in particular those who don't have safe, convenient, and fun routes to school. By looking at demographic data, examining existing transportation services and policies, and speaking with members of the community, the Saint Joseph Safe Routes to School team worked to develop recommendations that support equity in walking and biking to school.

SCHOOL CONTEXT:

Kennedy Community School

PRINCIPAL:

Anna Willhite

ENROLLMENT:

688

GRADES SERVED:

PK-8

SOCI-ECONOMIC:

42.6% of students eligible for free or reduced lunch

DEMOGRAPHICS*

American Indian/Alaska Native, 0.2%

Asian, 0.7%

Black/African American, 26.7%

Hispanic or Latino, 6.3%

Multiracial, 3.9%

White, non-Hispanic, 62.2%

TOP 5 LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY STUDENTS IN DISTRICT*

English	5,891
Somali	2,651
Spanish	364
Vietnamese	78
Anuak	64

Total Languages Spoken: 52

Percent English Learners: 28.2%

*Source: Minnesota Department of Education

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Kennedy Community School's enrolled population of 688 students is spread across Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grades. Figure 3 shows that the school attendance boundary covers most of the City of Saint Joseph and portions of the townships of Avon, Collegeville, Saint Joseph, and Saint Wendel.
- As shown in Figure 4, populations identified as BIPOC around the school range from 13.4% to 50.7%, according to the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census. The school's half-mile buffer is contained in one block group with a BIPOC population of 13.4%. The block group south of I-94 has a lower BIPOC population at 2%, while the block group southeast of the school south of the Sauk River has a BIPOC population of 50.7%.
- Approximately 9.4% of households immediately surrounding Kennedy Community School are considered low-income according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015-2019 ACS Five Year Estimates, as shown in Figure 5. West of I-94 has a low-income household poverty rate of 1.7%, and south of the Sauk River sits at about 5%. Almost half of the student population (42.6%) was eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

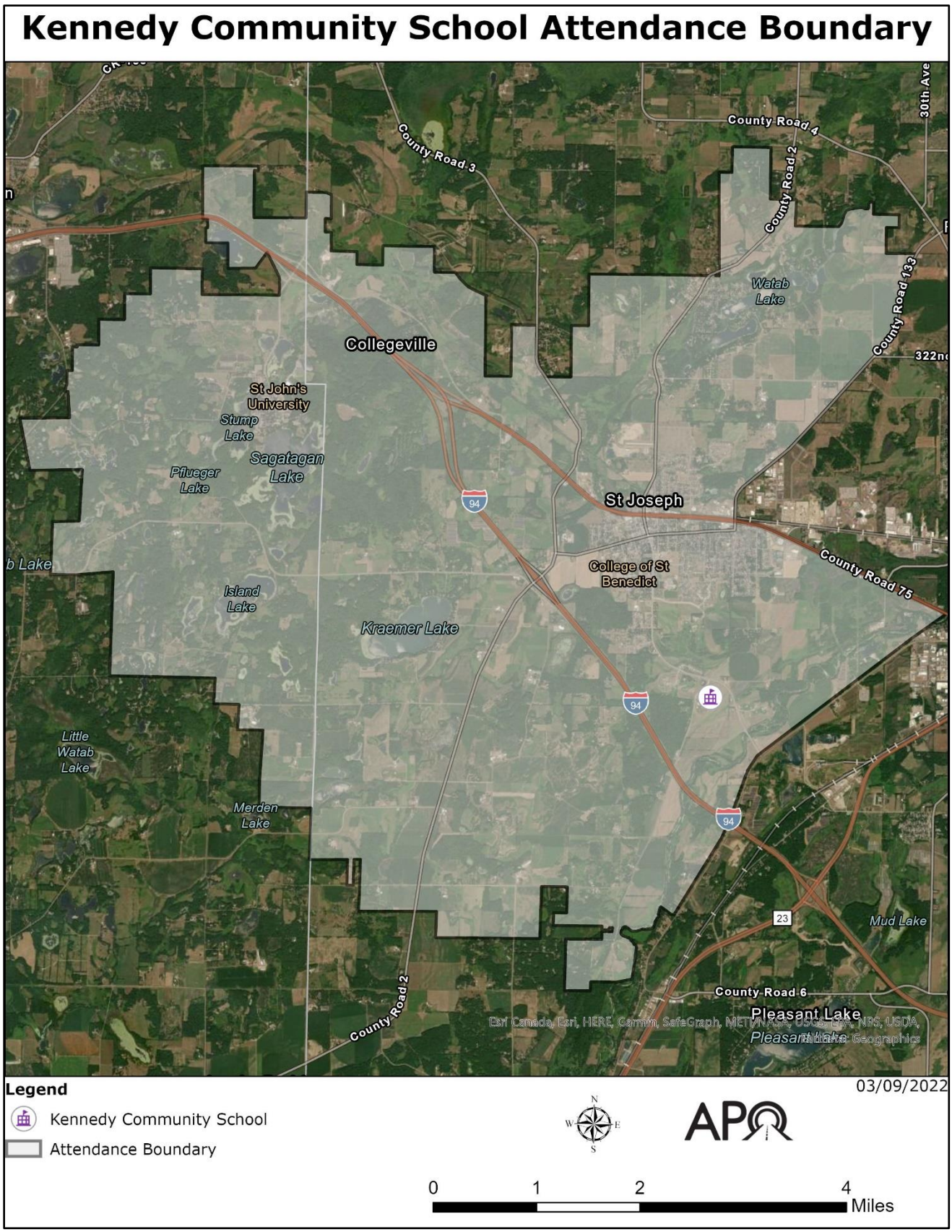


Figure 3. Kennedy Community School Attendance Boundary.

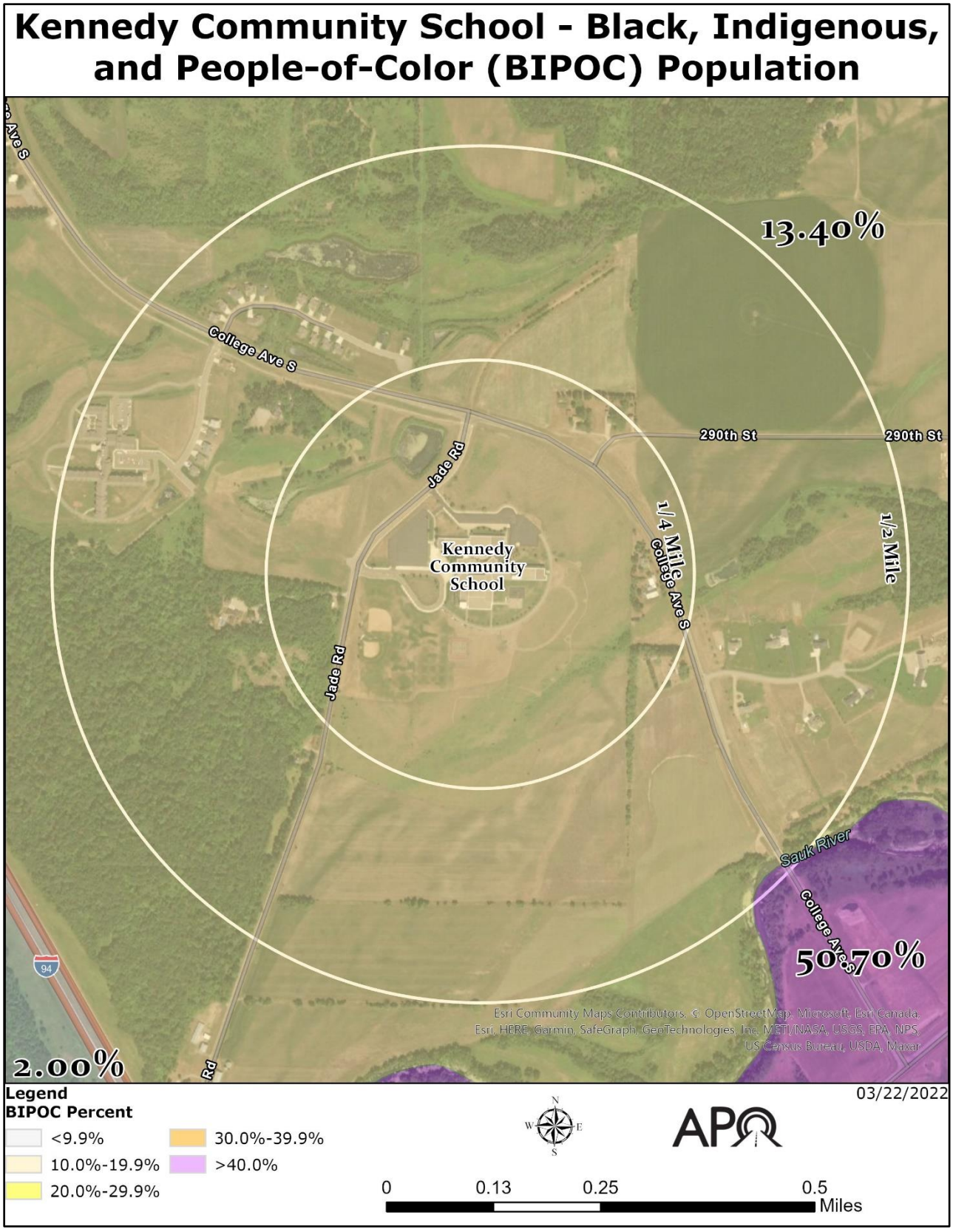


Figure 4. Kennedy Community School - Black, Indigenous, and People-of-Color Populations.

*Data Source: 2020 U.S. Decennial Census.

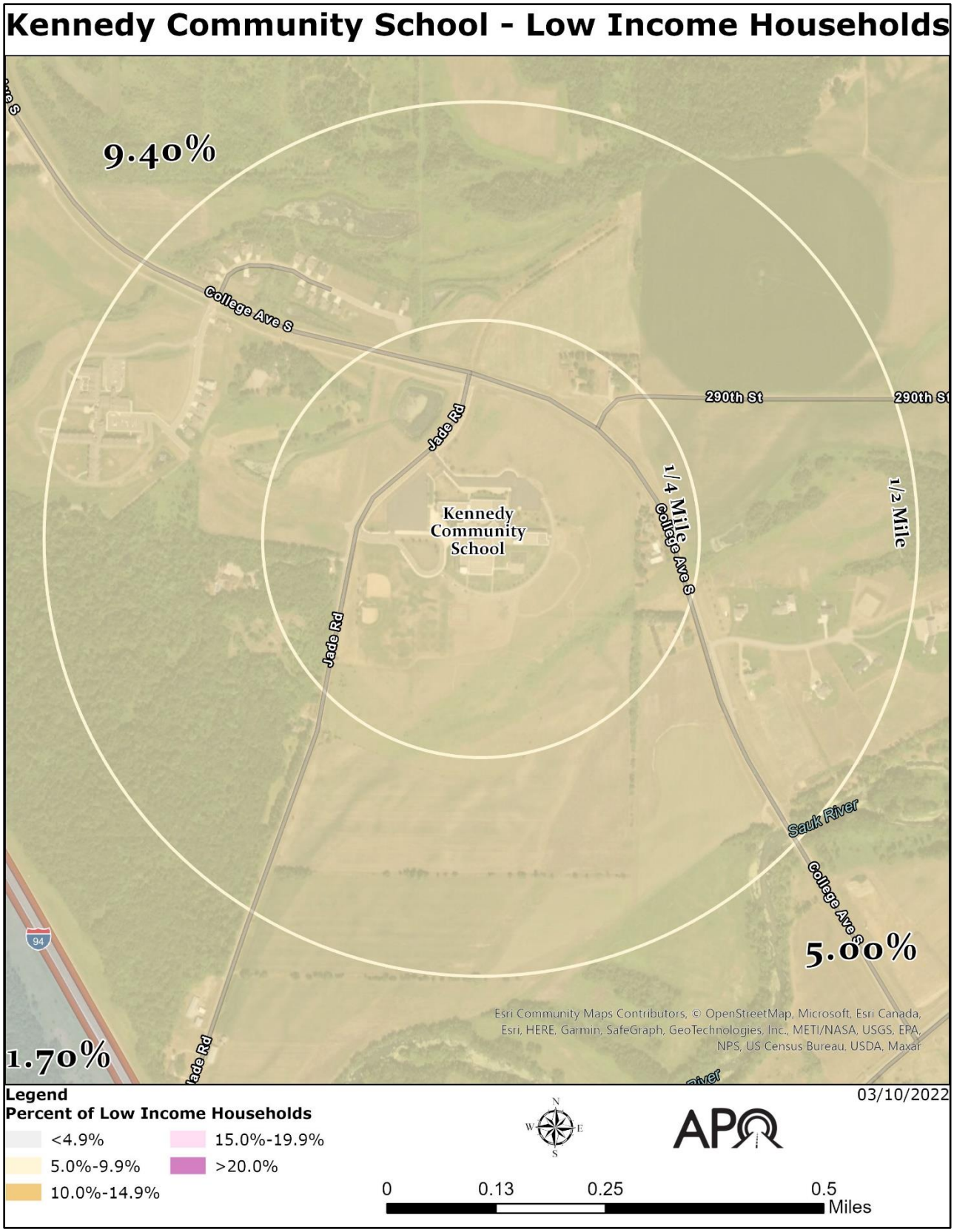


Figure 5. Kennedy Community School - Low-Income Households.

**Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau's 2015-2019 American Community Survey Five Year Estimates.*

Kennedy Hill Community School Community in Context

Figure 6. Kennedy Community School bus entrance.

SITE CIRCULATION

Land Use: Low-density single-family homes are the predominant land use within a half-mile buffer zone around the Kennedy Community School. Existing single-family residential areas exist north and east of the school. However, a good section of land, as shown in Figure 7, is currently undeveloped. The homes located east of College Avenue S and south of 290th Street are within Saint Joseph Township boundaries. West of the school is the Woodcrest of Country Manor assisted living facility and the Woodcrest patio homes, a 55+ senior community. Along the Sauk River, a planned park known as East Park is to the south. The park could potentially contain 95 acres and offer a variety of amenities.

Active Transportation Users: Sidewalk within the school campus boundaries connects to an adjacent facility along Jade Road. From there, the sidewalk connects to a shared use path along College Avenue S (Stearns County Road 121) where it continues north and eventually turns into a sidewalk once the facility enters Saint Joseph's downtown area, as shown in Figure 8.

School Buses: The bus loading zone is located on the north side of the school for arrival and dismissal, as shown in Figure 9. Parents pick up and drop off students in two lanes on the west side of the school.

Vehicles: Major vehicular corridors around the school include Jade Road immediately in front of the school and College Avenue S to the north. While in close proximity to the southern section of the school campus, I-94 does not have a direct access to the school.

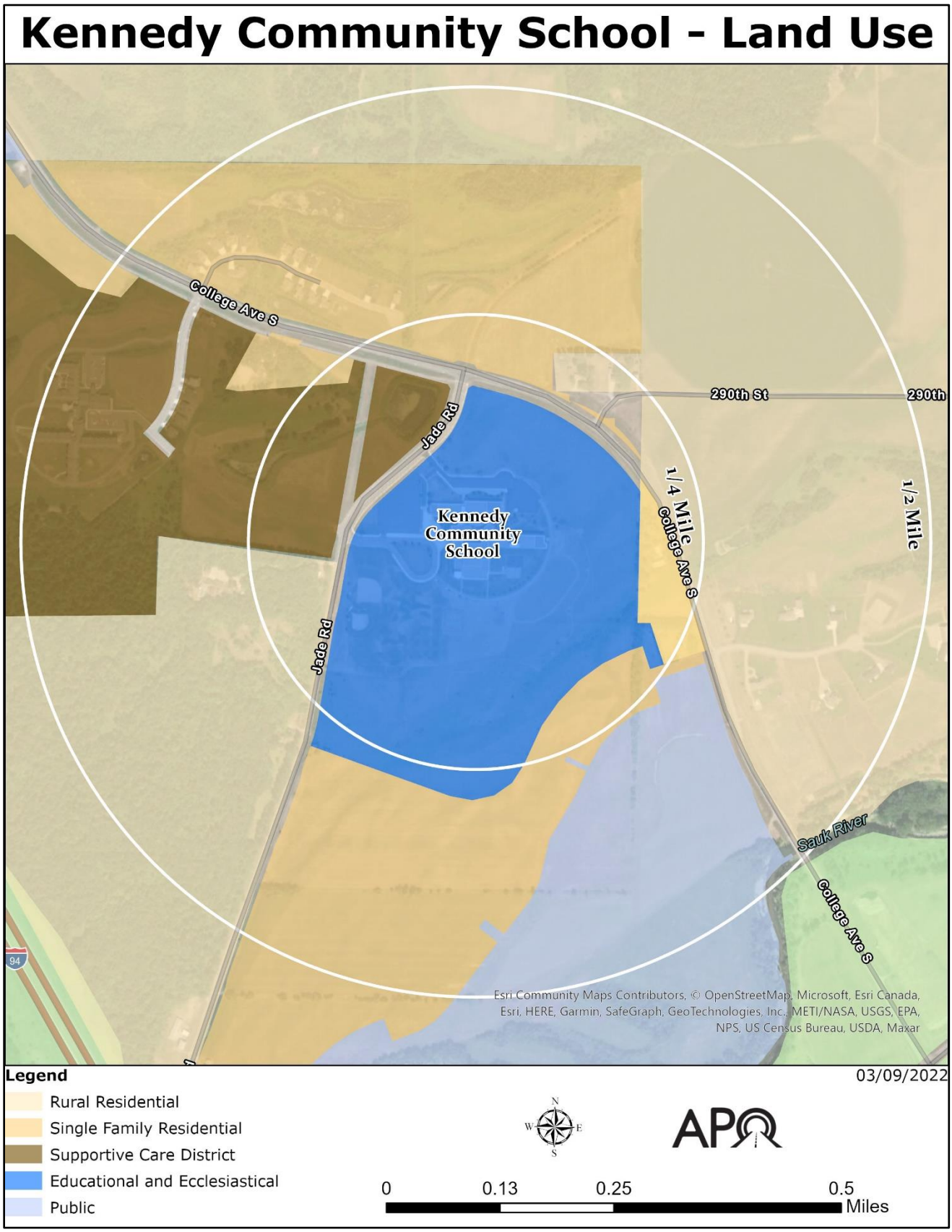


Figure 7. Kennedy Community School Surrounding Land Use.

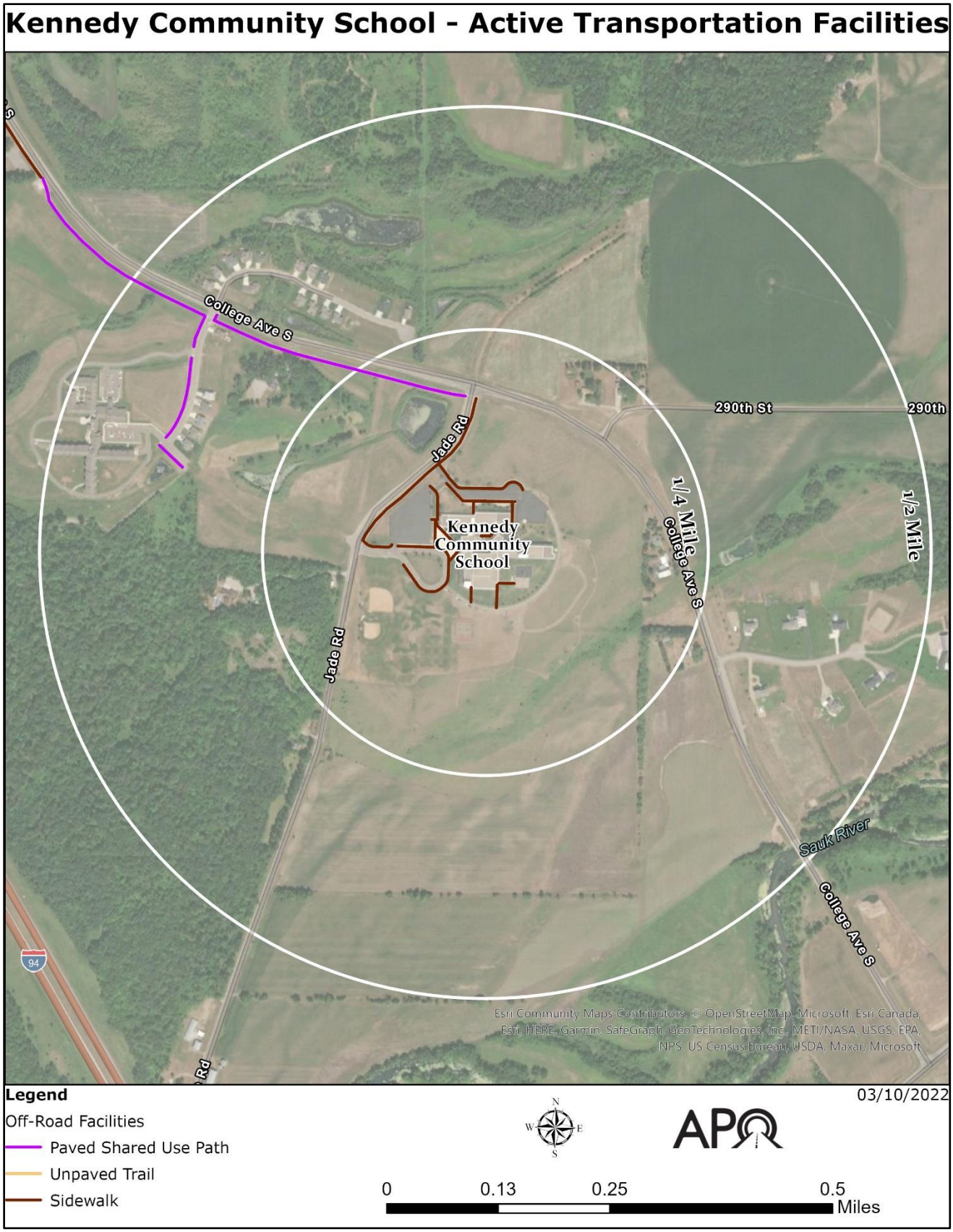


Figure 8. Kennedy Community School - Active Transportation Facilities.

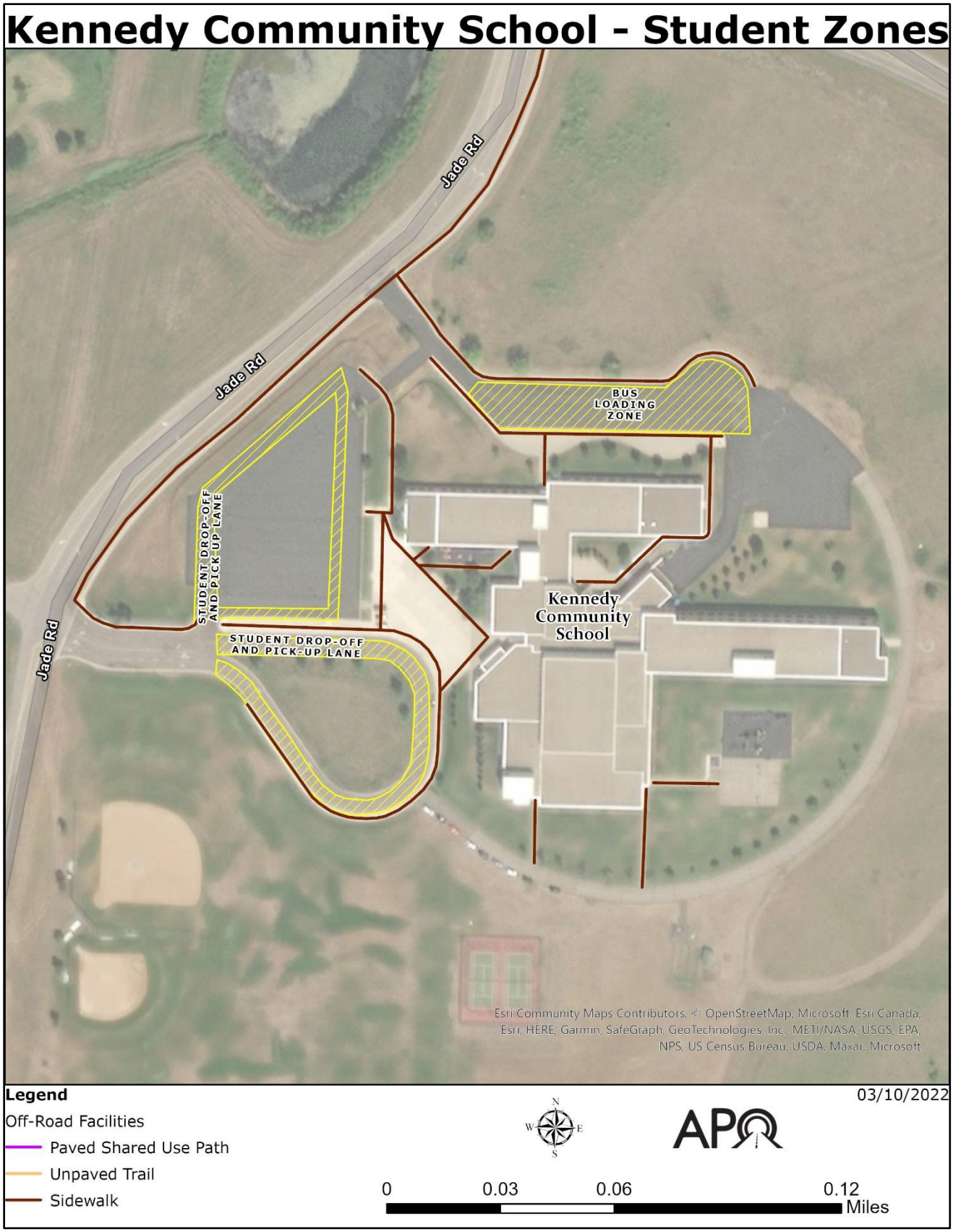


Figure 9. Kennedy Community School - Student Zones.

Infrastructure

Figure 10. Shared use path along College Avenue S.

Figure 11. Students using a crosswalk.

Introduction to Infrastructure

Physical changes to the streetscape are essential to making walking, biking, and rolling to school safer and more comfortable

An in-person walking and biking audit helped to inform specific recommendations to address the key identified barriers to walking and bicycling in Saint Joseph. Discussion with the Safe Routes to School Team and conversations with school and district staff, caregivers, students, community members, and city and county staff led to additional recommendations. Recommendations were prioritized based on community and stakeholder input, traffic and roadway conditions, proximity to schools, and proximity to and use by equity priority populations.

This plan does not represent a comprehensive list of every project that could improve conditions for walking and bicycling in the neighborhood. Instead, it calls attention to key conflict points and potential improvements. Recommendations range from simple striping changes and signing to more significant changes to the streets, intersections, and school infrastructure.

Engineering recommendations are described on the following pages. Recommendations are planning-level concepts and will require additional study to confirm feasibility and to finalize project prioritization.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Surrounding Kennedy Community School is a variety of active transportation facilities. A shared use path is parallel to College Avenue S from just south of Iverson Street W to Jade Road. There is also a shared use path from Woodcrest of Country Manor assisted living facility to College Avenue S. A sidewalk is located along Jade Road from College Avenue S to the southern school entrance. There are various sidewalks leading to different entrances around the school. The recent developments to the north and east of the school do not have any active transportation facilities present.

Figure 12. Example of shared use path along College Avenue S.

Pavement Condition

Shared use paths and sidewalks require regularly scheduled maintenance to remain usable. Potential maintenance includes, but is not limited to, repainting, seal coating, crack sealing, resurfacing, reconstruction, and vegetation removal. The Saint Cloud Area Planning Organization hired The Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota to measure pavement condition shared use paths in 2020.

Figure 15 shows that most of the shared use paths in this area are in smooth to very smooth condition, with sections of College Avenue Sin fair condition. There is no data for sidewalk conditions at this time.

Figure 13. Example of sidewalk along Jade Road.

Roadway Design

Active transportation facilities should be designed with functional classification, average annual daily traffic (AADT), speed limits, number of lanes, and land use context in mind. These characteristics help determine which active transportation facilities are warranted and how they should be designed.

The functional classification system of roadways is the process of grouping streets into classes based on their characteristics and how they intend to function. For example, College Avenue S is a collector route linking to arterials such as Stearns County Road 75 and I-94 and also joins local roadways such as Jade Road.

Figure 14. Example of shared use path along Lanigan Way.

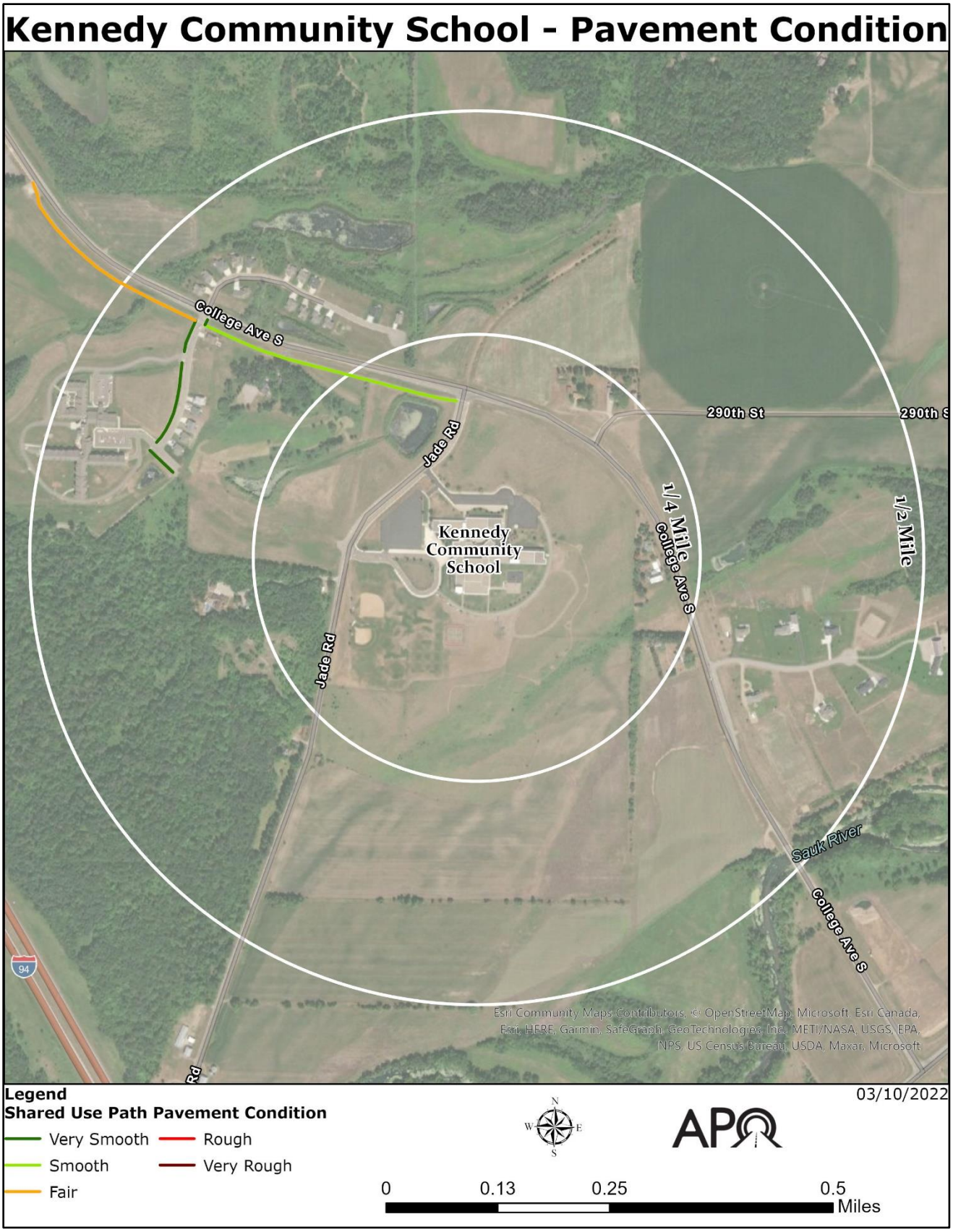


Figure 15. Kennedy Community School – Pavement Condition

Figure 16. Example of school zone speed limit along Jade Road.

AADT measures the total number of vehicles using a roadway daily and can indicate a need for active transportation facilities along roads. High AADTs can create barriers for students crossing busy streets or create unsafe on-road bicycling conditions. Based on MnDOT's most recent count data from 2017, Figure 19 reveals that College Avenue S has an AADT range from 2,100 south of Jade Road and 2,300 north of Jade Road. Local roads such as Jade Road do not have available count data.

College Avenue S has a posted speed limit of 40 mph in the half of mile buffer. Jade Road in the school zone has a posted speed limit of 25 mph when children are present. Other local roadways have speed limits of 30 mph.

Figure 17. Example of crosswalk at College Avenue S and Jade Road.

A marked crosswalk can benefit pedestrians by directing them to cross at locations where appropriate traffic control exists, including traffic signals or stop signs. Crosswalks do not slow traffic or reduce pedestrian crashes, but they can alter drivers' behaviors. There are four locations where crosswalks exist within the half mile buffer around Kennedy Community School, as shown in Figure 20.

The first crosswalk location is crossing Jade Road parallel to College Avenue S and is a zebra crosswalk design. There is a stop sign controlling access onto College Avenue S and an advanced stop bar accompanied by a pedestrian crossing sign. At the intersection of College Avenue S and Lanigan Way SE/SW, there are two standard crosswalks; each are parallel lines. The traffic on College Avenue S is unsignalized, while traffic onto College Avenue S has stop signs to the north and south. The last crosswalk, at the entrance to Woodcrest of Country Manor, is a standard crosswalk.

Figure 18. Example of crosswalk at College Avenue S and Lanigan Way SW.

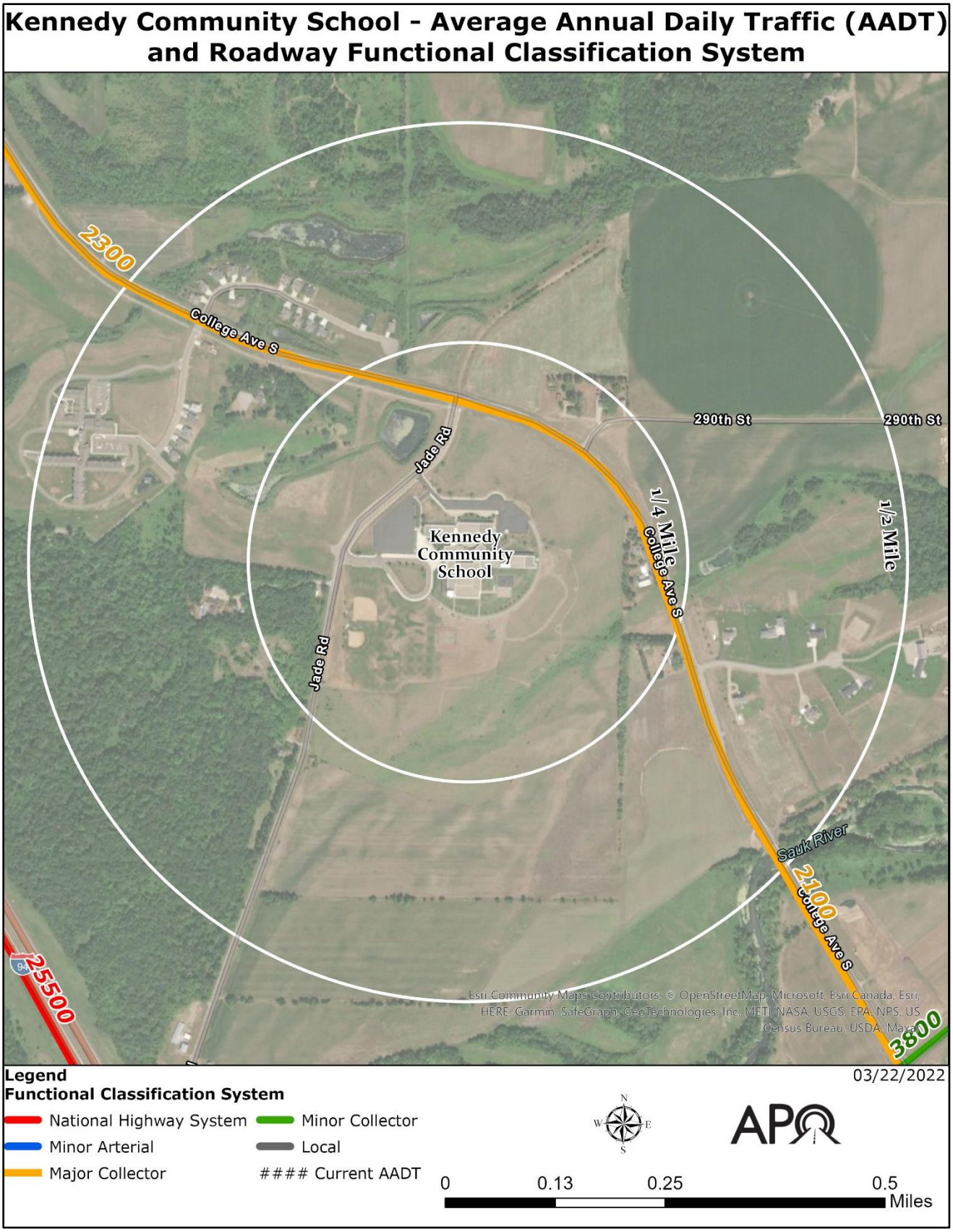


Figure 19. Kennedy Community School – AADT and Roadway Functional Classification System.

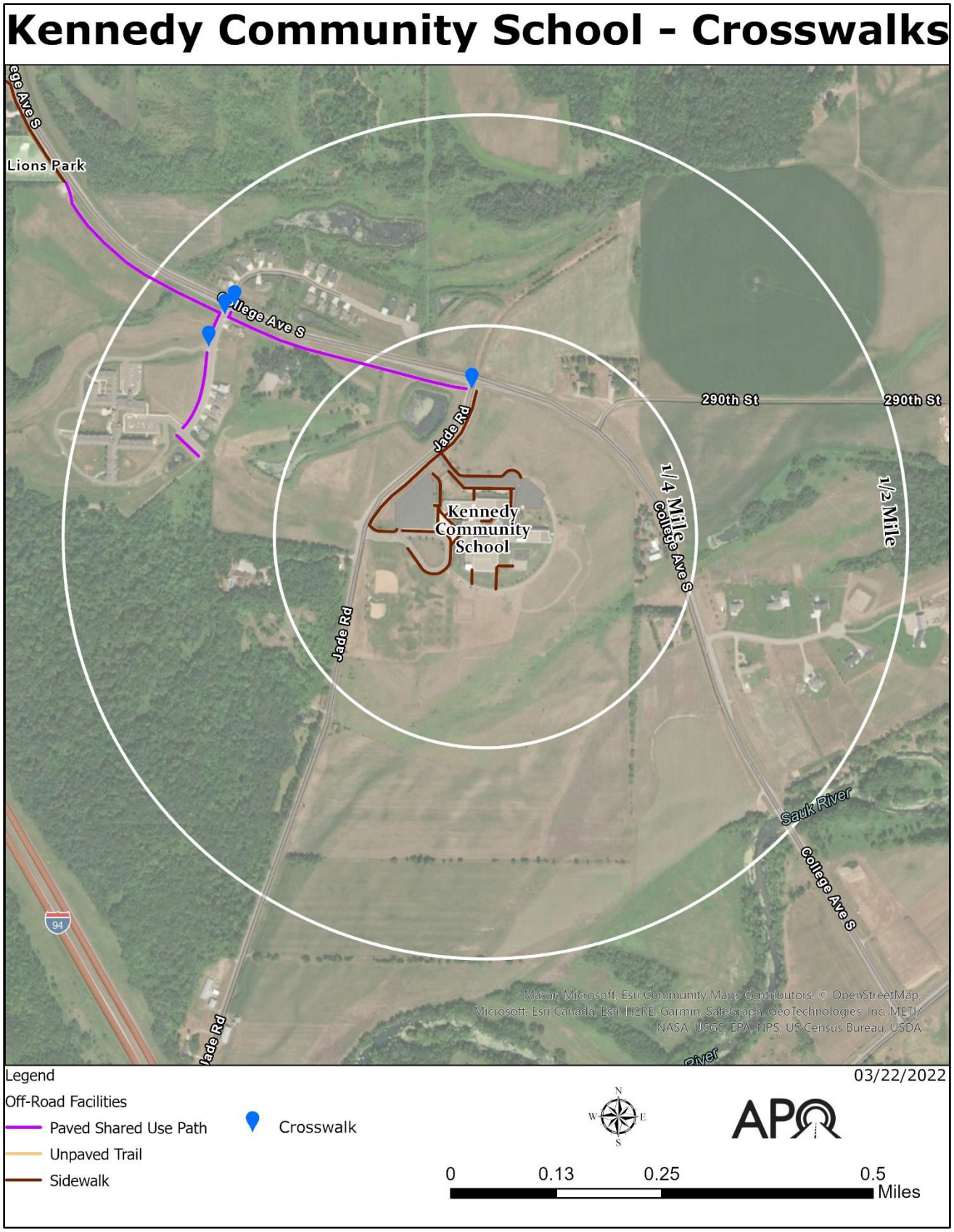


Figure 20. Kennedy Community School – Crosswalks

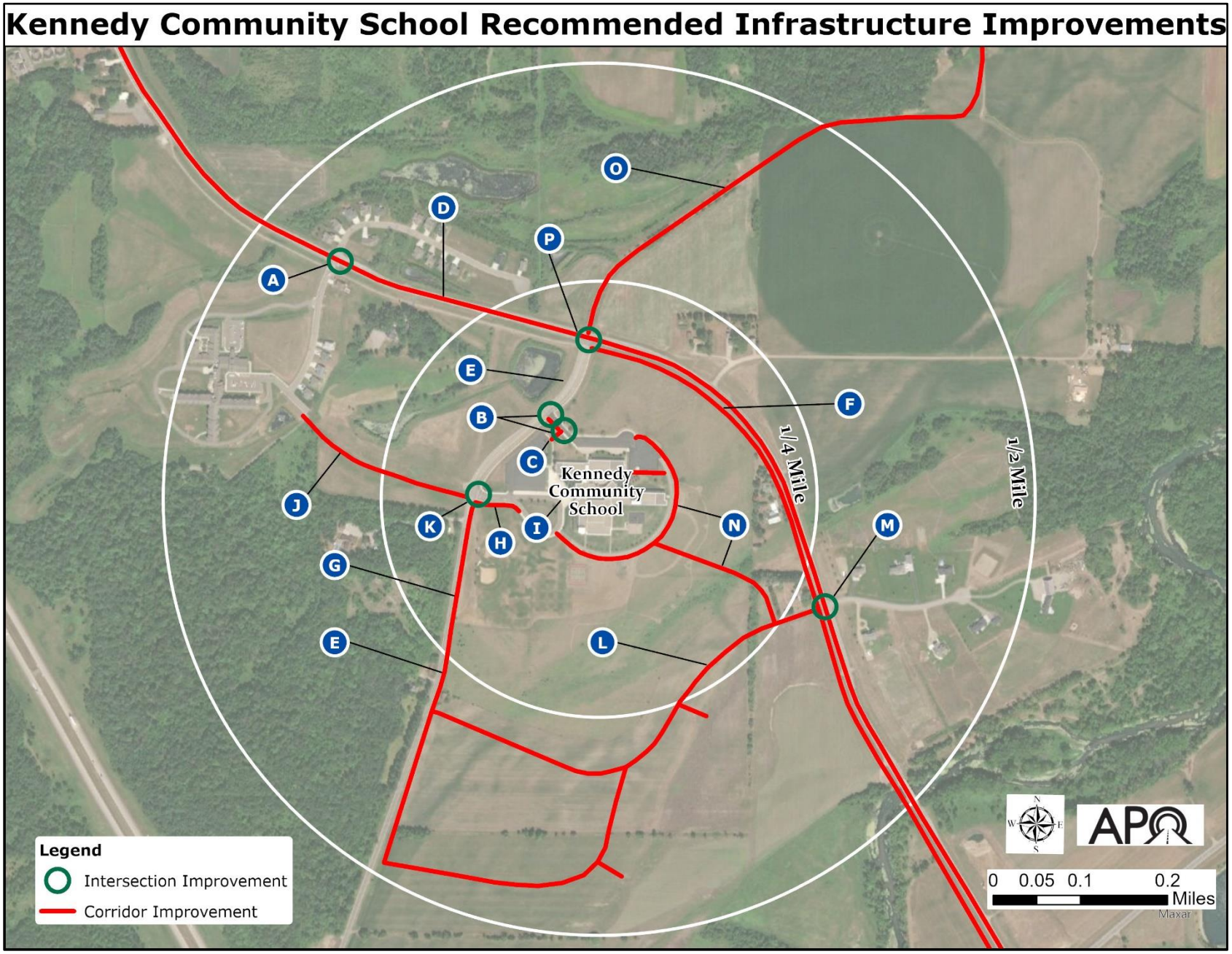


Figure 21. Recommended Infrastructure Improvements.

A: College Avenue S intersection with Lanigan Way SE/SW.

PRIORITY: **High**

RECOMMENDATION

Install a high visibility crosswalk with Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) on College Avenue S at the Lanigan Way SE/SW intersection. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

A high visibility marked crosswalk improves the visibility of the crosswalk compared to the standard parallel lines. RRFBs alert drivers of students needing to cross the roadway.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph and Stearns County.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to cross the roadway safely.

Figure 22. Example crosswalk at College Avenue S and Lanigan Way SE/SW intersection.

B: Install crosswalks on the school campus.

PRIORITY: **High**

RECOMMENDATION

Install crosswalks at the school bus and service vehicle driveway to project C. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

A marked crosswalk can benefit pedestrians by directing them to cross at an appropriate location and alert drivers of possible student crossings.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School and the City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 23. Example of school bus and service vehicle driveway.

C: Construct a sidewalk to connect the north and west entrance sidewalks.

PRIORITY: **High**

RECOMMENDATION

Construct a sidewalk to connect the north and west entrance sidewalks. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

Create better connectivity of school campus sidewalks.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve connectivity and safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 24. Example of existing sidewalk.

D: Conduct a speed study along College Avenue S.

PRIORITY: **High**

RECOMMENDATION

Conducted a speed study along College Avenue S to determine if lowering the speed limit is warranted. Explore the possibility of establishing a school zone along the corridor if feasible.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

The speed limit at the intersection of Jade Road is 55 mph and decreases to 40 mph west of Jade Road and east of Lanigan Way.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Stearns County.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

Lower speed limits and establishing a school zone could increase safety along this corridor.

Figure 25. Example of school speed zone sign on Jade Road.

E: Install flashing school zone signs along Jade Road.

PRIORITY: **High**

RECOMMENDATION

Install flashing school zone signs along Jade Road that flash during school approval and dismal times. School speed zone signs should read "when flashing." It could include a radar speed sign for drivers traveling north on Jade Road as they approach the school speed zone.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

Flashing school zone signs can help condition motorists to change their behavior when the devices are activated.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School and the City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to cross the roadway safely.

Figure 26. Example of flashing school zone sign.

F: Construct a shared use path along College Avenue S.

PRIORITY: **Medium**

RECOMMENDATION

Construct the shared use path along College Avenue S from Jade Road to Stearns County Road 138. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

There are no active transportation facilities from Jade Road to the south. The area south of the school is zoned for future residential and a city park along the Sauk River.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph and Stearns County.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve connectivity and safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

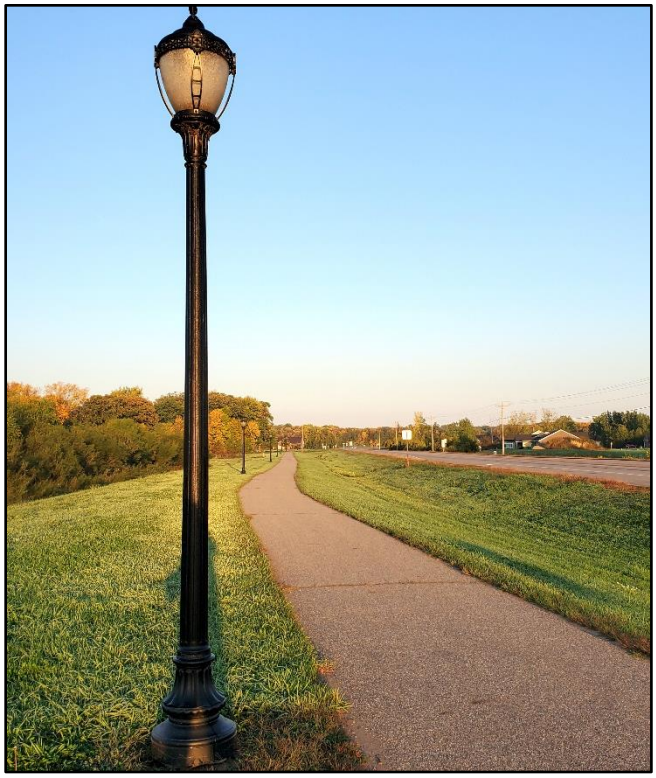


Figure 27. Example of shared use path along College Avenue S.

G: Construct a shared use path along Jade Road.

PRIORITY: Medium

RECOMMENDATION

Construct a shared use path along Jade Road from the end of the current sidewalk south towards the future development.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

There are no active transportation facilities from the end of the sidewalk on Jade Road to the south. The area south of the school is zoned for residential and a future park along the Sauk River.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve connectivity and safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 28. Example of current sidewalk along Jade Road.

H: Construct a sidewalk from Jade Road to the campus sidewalk.

PRIORITY: **Medium**

RECOMMENDATION

Construct a sidewalk from Jade Road to the existing campus sidewalk.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

Create better connectivity of school campus sidewalks.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve connectivity and safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 29. Area where future Jade Road shared use path and school sidewalk will connect.

I: Evaluate the number of bike racks on school property.

PRIORITY: Medium

RECOMMENDATION

Evaluate the usage of bike racks on the school property. Determine if additional racks are needed based on typically available space.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

There is one bike rack located at the school.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

Bike racks will provide a safe place to store bikes at school without being stolen.

Figure 30. Example of a bike rack.

J: Construct a shared use path along Lanigan Way SW.

PRIORITY: **Medium**

RECOMMENDATION

When Lanigan Way SW is extended to Jade Road, continue the shared use path east.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

The extended shared use path will provide connectivity for students between residential areas and the school.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve connectivity and safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 31. Area where Lanigan Way SW will be extended and connect to Jade Road.

K: Intersection of Jade Road and future Lanigan Way SW.

PRIORITY: Medium

RECOMMENDATION

Add crosswalks, signage, and RRFBs to connect projects H and J across Jade Road. Also, add a crosswalk to the school entrance to connect project G and the existing sidewalk along Jade Road. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

The addition of active transportation facilities will create a need for students to cross Jade Road safely and the school driveway.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School and City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 32. Example southern school driveway entrance.

L: Future southern development.

PRIORITY: Low

RECOMMENDATION

Add shared use paths in future developments to the south and connect to the future park along the Sauk River.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

As this area develops, adding facilities to the future roadways will increase connectivity for students.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

These projects will improve connectivity and safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school and recreational facilities through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 33. Future Park concept along Sauk River from Saint Joseph's 2008 Master Park Plan.

M: Intersection of Cayley Court and future southern development roadway.

PRIORITY: Low

RECOMMENDATION

Install a high visibility crosswalk, signage, and RRFBs on College Avenue S at the intersection with Cayley Court. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

A high visibility marked crosswalk improves the visibility of students needing to cross College Avenue S once southern development occurs. RRFBs alert drivers of students needing to cross the roadway.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph and Steans County.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 34. Location of proposed high visibility crosswalk.

N: East of School campus.

PRIORITY: **Low**

RECOMMENDATION

Construct a shared use path on the east side of the school campus and connect to future southern development.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

The area south of the school is zoned for future residential with a plan for a city park along the Sauk River. When this area develops, connectivity from the southern development to the school's entrances should be as direct as possible.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

Kennedy Community School.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

These projects will improve safety and connectivity for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 35. Example of lack of facilities on the east side of the school property.

O: Future Jade Road extension to 16th Avenue SE.

PRIORITY: Low

RECOMMENDATION

When Jade Road is extended and connected with 16th Avenue SE, include a shared use path along the corridor.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

The area north of the school is zoned for future residential. As the area develops, connectivity between new developments and the school will be necessary.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety and connectivity for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 36. Jade Road extension as proposed in Saint Joseph's 2012 Transportation Plan.

P: Future intersection of College Avenue S and Jade Road.

PRIORITY: **Low**

RECOMMENDATION

Evaluate intersection design on College Avenue S at the intersection with the future Jade Road extension based on future projected traffic volume. Install a high visibility crosswalk, signage, and RRFBs based on potential intersection design. Must include ADA-compliant curb ramps.

WHY IS THIS RELEVANT?

Improved intersection design will enhance the safety of students needing to cross this intersection.

WHO WILL MAKE THIS HAPPEN?

The City of Saint Joseph and Stearns County.

HOW WILL THIS ADDRESS EQUITY?

This project will improve safety for students with disabilities and other students needing to access the school through walking, biking, and rolling.

Figure 37. Example of College Avenue S and Jade Road intersection.

Programs

Figure 38. Students during an activity.

Figure 39. Students riding their bikes.

Introduction to Programs

Programs are opportunities to increase awareness, understanding, and excitement around walking, biking, and rolling to school.

Programs are focused on educating students, families, and the broader community about walking and biking, as well as on building a culture that supports and normalizes walking and biking to school and other destinations. Because programs are low-cost and can often be implemented quickly by an individual school or the school district, they represent an important Safe Routes to School strategy that complements longer-term strategies, including infrastructure improvements and policy changes.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Kennedy Community School and Saint Cloud School District 742 have been actively working towards providing safe and inviting spaces around school campuses for students. This foundation of encouraging student travel safety provides a valuable baseline for expanding programs to encourage more students to walk and bike.

PROGRAMS ALREADY ACTIVE AT KENNEDY COMMUNITY SCHOOL:

- District 742 Safe Routes to School Strategic Action Plan.
- Collaboration with local law enforcement.
- District bike fleet rotation.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Conversations with school and district staff, caregivers, students, community members, and city and county staff led to the following program recommendations. Programs were tailored to meet the needs, capacities, and interests of the community and were prioritized based on existing programs, input from local stakeholders, the extent to which the program would serve priority equity populations, and the readiness of the school to launch the program.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Parent Workshop
- Walk! Bike! Fun!
- Community Encouragement
- Bike Mechanic Training
- Walk and Bike to School Days

Figure 40. Example of a parent workshop.

PARENT WORKSHOP

Since parents are usually the ones deciding whether their children walk or bike to school, a workshop designed for them can provide the tools, resources, and support needed to begin walking or biking for transportation. Topics could include starting a walking school bus, carpool matching, launching a safety campaign, community discussions on how to be responsible drivers or organizing an event, such as Walk and Bike to School Day.

When, where, and how will this be implemented?
Ongoing Discussion.

Why is this relevant and recommended?
Helping parents feel comfortable allowing their children to walk or bike to school without an adult.

How will this address transportation inequities?
This informational workshop would answer questions, address concerns, and provide information and resources to parents to help them decide whether to permit their children to transport themselves to school or not.

How will this be evaluated?
A parent survey and, feedback from school leaders.

Who needs to be involved to make this happen?
School and district staff, PTSA/parents, local government and law enforcement, Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, advocates/volunteers, League Cycling Instructors (League of American Bicyclists).

What is the timeline for implementation?
Short term (1-2 years).

Figure 41. Students participating in a curriculum.

WALK! BIKE! FUN!

Pedestrian and Bike Safety Curriculum is a two-part curriculum designed specifically for Minnesota's schools. It is structured to meet Minnesota education standards and is an important part of the Safe Routes to School Program in Minnesota. Walk! Bike! Fun! helps students ages 5 to 13 learn traffic rules and regulations, the potential hazards to traveling, and handling skills needed to bike and walk effectively, appropriately, and safely through their community.

When, where, and how will this be implemented?
Ongoing Discussion.

Why is this relevant and recommended?
Encouraging students to become excited about walking and biking to school.

How will this address transportation inequities?
Safety curriculums can promote excitement for active transportation by providing the skills and confidence to travel independently. Students can not be expected to transport themselves to school if they are not taught how to do so safely.

How will this be evaluated?
A parent and student survey as well as feedback from school leaders.

Who needs to be involved to make this happen?
School and district staff, PTSA/parents, local government, Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, advocates/volunteers.

What is the timeline for implementation?
Short term (1-2 years).

Figure 42. Community engagement liaison.

COMMUNITY ENCOURAGEMENT

Community encouragement is aimed at ensuring compliance with traffic and parking laws in school zones. Encouragement activities help reduce common poor driving behavior, such as speeding, failing to yield to pedestrians, turning illegally, parking illegally, and other violations. Encouragement actions include School Zone Speeding Administration and Crosswalk Stings. Other implementation actions can be led by the school administration, such as parking lot –'citations

When, where, and how will this be implemented?
Ongoing Discussion.

Why is this relevant and recommended?
Parents should feel safe allowing their children to walk or bike to school by ensuring compliance and encouraging the safety of intersections and crossings and the speed of traffic along the route. Driver behavior was also mentioned in the survey's comment section multiple times.

How will this address transportation inequities?
Law enforcement patrolling nearby roadways might facilitate awareness of irresponsible driver behavior in the community.

How will this be evaluated?
A parent survey and feedback from PTSA leaders.

Who needs to be involved to make this happen?
School and district staff, local government and law enforcement, PTSA/parents, advocates/volunteers.

What is the timeline for implementation?
Medium-term (2-4 years).

Figure 43. Example of a gears.

BIKE MECHANIC TRAINING

Learning bike repair skills encourages students and families to bicycle to school and empowers students to take charge of their own transportation. Bicycle mechanic training can be made available to students as a one-time 'basics' lesson or as a multi-session course. This training can be offered after school or on weekends for interested students, and can be combined with an earn-a-bike program, bike rodeo, or bicycle safety/skills trainings.

When, where, and how will this be implemented?
Ongoing Discussion.

Why is this relevant and recommended?
This program is aimed at middle school-aged students to encourage hands-on training.

How will this address transportation inequities?
Understanding basic bicycle maintenance and repair is a lifelong skill that gives students the knowledge, confidence, and independence to venture further.

How will this be evaluated?
The number of attendees.

Who needs to be involved to make this happen?
School and district staff, parents, Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, advocates/volunteers, League Cycling Instructors (League of American Bicyclists), local bike shop/business.

What is the timeline for implementation?
Medium-term (2-4 years).

Figure 44. Example of a walk/bike to school day.

WALK/BIKE TO SCHOOL DAYS

National Walk to School Day and Bike to School Day attract millions of students and families to try walking, biking, and rolling to school every October and May. In addition, Minnesota celebrates Winter Walk to School Day in February. Additional education, encouragement, and enforcement programming can be used to promote the event, increase awareness, and expand participation. Walk/bike to school days can also take place more frequently if there's interest and capacity.

When, where, and how will this be implemented?
Ongoing Discussion.

Why is this relevant and recommended?
Walking or biking to school is healthy for students.

How will this address transportation inequities?
For parents to allow their children to transport themselves to and from school, education and engagement programs must first be in place. The school can provide encouragement programs such as Walk and Bike to School Days to increase walking and biking while empowering the youth.

How will this be evaluated?
A parent and student survey, feedback from PTSA leaders, and tallies of participating students.

Who needs to be involved to make this happen? School and district staff, local government and law enforcement, PTSA/parents, advocates/volunteers.

What is the timeline for implementation?
Long term (4+ years).

Working for Change

Figure 45. Students participating in an activity.

Figure 46. Example of a walking audit.

Action Steps

This plan and planning process provide two critical ingredients for creating a more equitable transportation system in Saint Joseph: a prioritized set of infrastructure and program recommendations, and a network of caregivers, school staff, local government employees, and community members committed to improving walking and biking.

Figure 47. Stakeholders engaged in an activity.

FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

A more equitable transportation system that prioritizes safe, comfortable, and fun opportunities to walk, bike, and roll benefits everyone. While this plan is focused on addressing connections to schools, many improvements will benefit people with no relationship to the schools because we all share the same streets, sidewalks, and trails. Likewise, many needed changes, such as reducing speed limits and normalizing walking and biking, extend far beyond the school system.

Your number one role as a community member is to advocate for changes that make walking, biking, and rolling safer, more comfortable, and more fun. Speak to elected officials, show up to community meetings, talk about walking and biking at school events and with school administrators, and organize and vote for candidates who support walking, biking, and public transit.

I AM A STUDENT OR CAREGIVER

Students and their families can have incredible influence when advocating for change in their school and broader community. For example, students and caregivers can support and lead SRTS initiatives including:

- Advocating for policy change and funding at City Hall.
- Developing campaigns to generate enthusiasm and improve social conditions for SRTS.
- Volunteering time to lead a Walking School Bus or organize a bike drive.
- Fundraising for SRTS programs and small infrastructure projects.

I AM A SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE

School district staff bring an important perspective and voice to advocating for a more equitable transportation system. By describing challenges and opportunities they see confronting their students and petitioning local elected officials for improvements, school district employees can support policy and infrastructure improvements that benefit their students and the broader community. Staff are also ideally positioned to implement the recommendations in this plan, whether it be a classroom-level curriculum or school district-wide policy around walking and biking.

I WORK FOR THE CITY OR COUNTY

As members of the governments that own, regulate, and maintain the roads, city and county staff can be instrumental in re-orienting transportation policies and infrastructure around walking and biking to schools and other destinations. City and county staff can leverage their expertise to identify, advocate for, and implement changes that contribute toward a more equitable transportation system. Key policies that staff can support include:

- Reducing lane widths and vehicular speed limits.
- Eliminating minimum parking requirements.
- Revising land use regulations to promote denser and more integrated land uses that promote walkable and bikeable trips.
- Prioritizing municipal maintenance and snow clearing of all pedestrian and bike facilities.
- Requiring complete streets infrastructure as part of all road resurfacing and reconstruction projects.

City staff can also use this report to support Safe Routes to School funding applications to programs such as MnDOT SRTS grants, Federal SRTS grants, and the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP).

MINNESOTA

SAFE ROUTES
TO SCHOOL

Appendices

Figure 48. Students walking on a sidewalk.

DATA GATHERING TOOL

Multiple tools were administered while gathering the Kennedy Community School Safe Routes to School Plan data. Each instrument focused on collecting data for the six E's (evaluation, education, encouragement, equity, engagement, and engineering). This process used quantitative and qualitative data to formulate informed program and infrastructure recommendations.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY ASSESSMENT

Kennedy Community School administration completed the School Environment and Policy Assessment in 2021. The assessment asked various questions such as; current policies and practices around walking and biking to school, arrival and dismissal procedures, and the school zone. The results can be found in Appendix A.

STUDENT TRAVEL TALLY

Teachers in the classroom conduct the student travel tally on 2-3 consecutive school days during a specified week. Teachers record the number of students arriving/leaving school that day using each type of travel mode. A total of 10 classrooms were recorded, with 236 students participating. The results can be found in Appendix B.

WALKING AND BIKING AUDIT

A walking and bicycling audit were conducted around Kennedy Community School in fall 2021. This process involved gathering data about environmental conditions (social, built, and natural) that affect walking and bicycling. One objective of the audit is to document factors that help or hinder safe walking and bicycling. These factors include but are not limited to street lighting, sidewalk width, condition, traffic volume, bike lanes, topography, and presence of dogs, trash, and debris.

SCHOOL ZONE HAZARD OBSERVATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The School Zone Hazard Observational Assessment was conducted by in-person observation by multiple community volunteers at AM arrival and PM dismissal in fall 2021. This is a way to track hazards that decrease safety around schools. The tool separately tracks different travel modes and corresponding behaviors (i.e. distractions, illegal parking/pick up, unsafe crossing, or helmet usage).

Minnesota Safe Routes to School — School Environment and Policy Assessment

School Name: Kennedy Community School
Address: 300 Jady Rd St. Joseph, MN 56374
Name: Michael Smith
Date Completed (MM/DD/YY): 05/25/21
MDE ID #:
Phone: 320-370-7430

Question				
This first set of questions asks about your school's policies and practices around walking and biking.				
1. How does your school or district **wellness** policy address walking and biking?	☐ Prohibits walking and biking	☐ Walking and biking are not addressed	☑ Promotes walking and biking	☐ Not applicable
2. How does your school or district **transportation** policy address walking and biking?	☐ Prohibits walking and biking	☐ Walking and biking are not addressed	☑ Promotes walking and biking	☐ Not applicable
3. Does your school or district collaborate with local law enforcement on enforcing speed limits or other traffic laws in the school zone?	☐ No		☑ Yes	☐ Not applicable
4. Does your school or district have a plan for evaluating Safe Routes to School efforts?	☑ No		☐ Yes	☐ Not applicable
5. Does your school have or participate in walking and biking events or programs such as Walk to School Day or Walking School Buses?	☐ No		☑ Yes	☐ Not applicable
6. Does your school have or participate in walking and biking skills and safety training or curriculum?	☐ No	☐ Staff trained, but curriculum not yet implemented	☑ Yes, staff trained and curriculum being implemented Dist. bike rodeo	☐ Not applicable
The next set of questions asks about your school property and arrival/dismissal procedures.				
7. How many designated and separated points of entry (e.g., sidewalk, trail, or intersection connection) onto the school property are accessible to walkers or bikers?	☐ 0	☑ 1-2	☐ 3 or more	☐ Not applicable
8. Is the bus loading/unloading area separated from parent pick-up and drop-off?	☐ No		☑ Yes	☐ Not applicable
9. Does your school have a written arrival and dismissal policy that addresses the needs and safety of students walking and biking, such as providing staggered dismissal times or separated physical arrival/dismissal spaces for students walking and biking?	☑ No policy or limited policy that acknowledges students walking and biking but does not address their unique needs and safety	☐ Yes, policy addresses needs and safety of students walking and biking, but it is not communicated to parents	☐ Yes, policy addresses needs and safety of students walking and biking, and it is communicated to parents via school's communications channels (e.g., school website, email, flyers, etc.)	☐ Not applicable

DRAFT 4/25/2018

The next set of questions asks about your school zone. The school zone includes school property and the area surrounding the school property to a distance of 300 feet or one city block, whichever distance is greater.				
10. What speed limits are posted within your school zone? Do not include signs that lower speed limits only when students are present.	☐ Any speed limits 40 mph or more	☑ Combination of 30 mph and 35 mph 35	☐ All speed limits 30 mph or less	☐ Not applicable
11. Are there signs in your school zone that lower the speed limit to ≤30 mph **when students are present**?	☐ No		☑ Yes 25	☐ Not applicable
12. Do the streets in your school zone have sidewalks, paths, and/or protected walkways?	☐ No	☑ Yes, but gaps are present	☐ Yes, present throughout with no gaps	☐ Not applicable
13. Are sidewalks and trails in your school zone maintained in safe condition in winter (e.g., cleared of snow and ice to allow students walking and biking to safely navigate them)?	☐ No	☑ Yes , in some areas	☐ Yes, all trails and sidewalks	☐ Not applicable
14. What is the condition of the sidewalks in your school zone? (Best guesses are okay).	☐ Poor (mostly (>50%) cracked, buckled, or missing sections)	☐ Acceptable (some (25-50%) cracked, buckled or missing sections)	☑ Good (few (<25%) cracked, buckled, or missing sections)	☐ Not applicable
15. How clear of obstacles (garbage bins, signs, utility poles, overgrown plants, trees, etc.) are the sidewalks in your school zone?	☐ Frequent obstacles interrupting sidewalk travel	☐ Some obstacles, but enough room for two people walking side-by-side	☑ Few or no obstacles	☐ Not applicable
16. Do the streets in your school zone have dedicated bicycle lanes, trails, and/or off street paths?	☐ No	☑ Yes, but gaps are present	☐ Yes, present throughout with no gaps	☐ Not applicable
17. Does your school have a designated walking route in the school zone? **If yes, consider that route while answering questions 18-21.*	☐ No	☑ Yes, but it is not promoted	☐ Yes, and school promotes awareness of route to students and parents (such as via signage or the school website)	☐ Not applicable
18. Are marked crosswalks present in your school zone?	☒ No	☐ Yes, at some crossings (or within designated route)	☐ Yes, at all crossings	☐ Not applicable
19. Are pedestrian crossing signals or "countdown" pedestrian crossing signals present at traffic signals in your school zone?	☒ No	☐ Yes, at some crossings (or within designated route)	☐ Yes, at all crossings	☐ Not applicable
20. Are **adult** crossing guards with safety vests and STOP paddles or flags present within the school zone?	☒ No	☐ Yes, at some crossings (or within designated route)	☐ Yes, at all crossings	☐ Not applicable
21. Is **student** school patrol present within the school zone?	☒ No	☐ Yes, at some crossings (or within designated route)	☐ Yes, at all crossings	☐ Not applicable

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Appendix B

Grade	Number of Students Enrolled in Class	Tuesday AM (Weather)	Tuesday AM (Student Tally)	Tuesday AM (Walk)	Tuesday AM (Bike)	Tuesday AM (School Bus)	Tuesday AM (Family Vehicle)	Tuesday AM (Carpool)	Tuesday AM (Transit)	Tuesday AM (Other)
K	18	Overcast	17	0	0	6	11	0	0	0
K	17	Overcast	15	0	0	12	3	0	0	0
K	17	NA	17	0	0	11	6	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	23	0	0	16	7	0	0	0
1	26	Overcast	20	0	0	11	9	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	22	0	0	15	7	0	0	0
2	24	Overcast	20	0	0	13	6	0	0	0
2	23	Overcast	21	0	0	11	10	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	20	0	0	13	7	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	19	0	0	15	4	0	0	0
3	21	Overcast	21	0	0	15	6	0	0	0
4	24	Overcast	20	0	0	10	10	0	0	0
4	25	Overcast	25	0	0	16	9	0	0	0
5	26	Sunny	26	0	0	12	14	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	22	0	0	11	11	0	0	0
5	26	Sunny	26	0	0	17	9	0	0	0
6	NA	NA	19	0	0	10	9	0	0	0
6	24	Overcast	20	0	0	9	11	0	0	0
7	21	Overcast	20	0	0	10	10	0	0	0
8	21	Overcast	15	0	0	8	6	0	0	0
8	19	Overcast	17	0	0	7	10	0	0	0

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Grade	Number of Students Enrolled in Class	Tuesday PM (Weather)	Tuesday PM (Student Tally)	Tuesday PM (Walk)	Tuesday PM (Bike)	Tuesday PM (School Bus)	Tuesday PM (Family Vehicle)	Tuesday PM (Carpool)	Tuesday PM (Transit)	Tuesday PM (Other)
K	18	Rainy	17	0	0	6	8	0	0	3
K	17	Overcast	15	0	0	10	5	0	0	0
K	17	NA	17	0	0	11	6	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	19	0	0	15	4	0	0	0
1	25	Sunny	22	0	0	15	7	0	0	0
1	26	Overcast	21	0	0	12	4	1	0	4
2	23	Overcast	21	0	0	12	9	0	0	0
2	24	Overcast	20	0	0	10	10	0	0	0
3	20	Sunny	19	0	0	13	3	0	0	3
3	20	Overcast	20	0	0	12	8	0	0	0
3	21	Sunny	21	0	0	12	5	0	0	4
4	24	Overcast	20	0	0	10	10	0	0	0
4	25	Overcast	25	0	0	14	7	4	0	0
5	26	Sunny	26	0	0	21	5	0	0	0
5	26	Sunny	26	0	0	12	14	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	22	0	0	12	9	1	0	0
6	22	Overcast	15	0	0	9	6	0	0	0
6	24	Overcast	20	0	0	8	11	1	0	0
6	NA	NA	17	0	0	9	8	0	0	0
7	21	NA	20	0	0	7	11	2	0	0
8	21	Overcast	15	0	0	8	5	1	0	0
8	19	Overcast	17	0	0	7	10	0	0	0

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K	18	Rainy	16	0	0	5	11	0	0	0
K	17	Rainy	15	0	0	10	5	0	0	0
K	17	NA	17	0	0	11	6	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	21	0	0	14	7	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	24	0	0	16	7	0	0	0
1	26	Overcast	21	0	0	11	10	0	0	0
2	24	Overcast	22	0	0	12	10	0	0	0
2	23	Overcast	19	0	0	10	9	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	18	0	0	13	5	0	0	0
3	20	Rainy	17	0	0	12	5	0	0	0
3	21	Overcast	20	0	0	14	6	0	0	0
4	24	Overcast	24	0	0	13	11	0	0	0
4	25	Rainy	25	0	0	17	8	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	17	9	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	12	14	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	25	0	0	12	13	0	0	0
6	NA	NA	18	0	0	10	8	0	0	0
6	24	Rainy	22	0	0	14	8	0	0	0
7	21	Overcast	19	0	0	10	9	0	0	0
8	21	Overcast	15	0	0	8	7	0	0	0
8	19	Overcast	17	0	0	7	10	0	0	0

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K	18	Rainy	16	0	0	6	7	0	0	3
K	17	Overcast	15	0	0	10	5	0	0	0
K	17	NA	17	0	0	11	6	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	20	0	0	14	6	0	0	0
1	26	Rainy	23	0	0	14	4	0	0	5
1	25	Overcast	19	0	0	16	3	0	0	0
2	23	Rainy	19	0	0	11	7	1	0	0
2	24	Rainy	22	0	0	10	12	0	0	0
3	20	Rainy	18	0	0	10	8	0	0	0
3	20	Rainy	16	0	0	10	3	0	0	3
3	21	Rainy	21	0	0	15	6	0	0	2
4	24	Overcast	24	0	0	13	11	0	0	0
4	25	Rainy	24	0	0	15	6	3	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	12	14	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	21	5	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	25	0	0	13	11	1	0	0
6	NA	NA	19	0	0	11	8	0	0	0
6	24	Rainy	22	0	0	14	8	0	0	0
6	22	Rainy	15	0	0	8	7	0	0	0
7	21	Rainy	19	0	0	9	10	0	0	0
8	21	Rainy	15	0	0	10	4	1	0	0
8	19	Rainy	17	0	0	7	10	0	0	0

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K	17	NA	17	0	0	11	6	0	0	0
K	17	Overcast	15	0	0	10	5	0	0	0
1	25	Sunny	23	0	0	17	6	0	0	0
1	26	Overcast	21	0	0	13	8	0	0	0
1	25	Overcast	23	0	0	15	8	0	0	0
2	23	Overcast	17	0	0	10	7	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	18	0	0	10	8	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	19	0	0	14	5	0	0	0
3	21	Overcast	21	0	0	15	6	0	0	0
4	24	Overcast	22	0	0	11	11	0	0	0
4	25	Overcast	23	0	0	16	7	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	17	9	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	14	12	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	22	0	0	12	11	0	0	0
6	24	Overcast	23	0	0	13	10	0	0	0
6	NA	NA	16	0	0	10	6	0	0	0
7	21	Overcast	18	0	0	10	8	0	0	0
8	19	Overcast	17	0	0	7	10	0	0	0
8	21	Overcast	13	0	0	8	5	0	0	0

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Grade	Number of Students Enrolled in Class	Thursday PM (Weather)	Thursday PM (Student Tally)	Thursday PM (Walk)	Thursday PM (Bike)	Thursday PM (School Bus)	Thursday PM (Family Vehicle)	Thursday PM (Carpool)	Thursday PM (Transit)	Thursday PM (Other)
K	18	Overcast	17	0	0	7	7	0	0	3
K	17	Overcast	15	0	0	10	5	0	0	0
K	17	NA	17	0	0	11	6	0	0	0
1	25	Sunny	22	0	0	14	8	0	0	0
1	26	Overcast	22	0	0	15	4	0	0	3
1	25	Overcast	17	0	0	15	2	0	0	0
2	23	Overcast	17	0	0	10	7	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	19	0	0	10	9	0	0	0
3	20	Overcast	19	0	0	13	3	0	0	3
3	21	Sunny	20	0	0	11	4	0	0	5
4	25	Overcast	23	0	0	14	7	2	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	14	12	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	23	0	0	12	11	0	0	0
5	26	Overcast	26	0	0	21	5	0	0	0
6	NA	NA	17	0	0	12	5	0	0	0
6	24	Overcast	18	0	0	10	8	0	0	0
7	21	Overcast	18	0	0	8	9	1	0	0
8	19	Overcast	17	0	0	7	10	0	0	0
8	21	Overcast	13	0	0	8	4	1	0	0

MINNESOTA
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