

## MISSISSIPPI HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY

# SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

### Executive Summary



## The Vision

*A plan to make walking, biking, and rolling to school a safe, accessible, and fun aspect of physical and emotional health, for students and all members of the growing Sauk Rapids community.*

In June 2024, Mississippi Heights Elementary completed a year-long planning process alongside two other Sauk Rapids-Rice Schools that culminated in a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan. The SRTS plan identifies policy changes, infrastructure improvements, and program strategies to create a safe, comfortable, and fun active transportation system and culture of walking and biking to school, with a focus on addressing equity in transportation and meeting the needs of underresourced groups.

This executive summary highlights near-term, high-priority recommendations from the SRTS Plan.

## Infrastructure

*Engineering projects that improve streets and routes*



- A** Explore the possibility of establishing a shared-use path connection between the elementary and middle school. Collaborate with property owners to assess the feasibility of adding a path through their property, utilizing city or school easements where possible.
- B** Extend the sidewalk along Fourth Avenue S from Third Avenue S to Mississippi Heights Elementary School. Prioritize identifying strategic and safe locations for crosswalks and implementing active transportation safety features, particularly at the peanut roundabout at Summit Avenue S during the sidewalk construction process.
- C** Install a sidewalk to establish a pedestrian connection between Fifth Street S/10th Street NE and Fourth Street S. Work with property owners to determine the viability of incorporating a pathway through their property, leveraging city or MnDOT easements where available.

### GET INVOLVED

Want to help make it safer, easier, and more comfortable to walk and bike to school in Sauk Rapids? Contact your Sauk Rapids SRTS Lead to learn how to get involved.

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Learn more about SRTS in Minnesota at [www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes)

## Programs

*Education, encouragement, engagement*



### Walking School Bus and Bike Train

**How will this be implemented?**

A Walking School Bus or Bike Train is a group of children walking or bicycling to school with one or more adults. With infrastructure updates and parent support, these groups can be implemented to improve walking and biking to school.

**Why is this relevant and recommended?**

These events build enthusiasm for walking and biking, and help parents and caregivers feel more confident in their student's safety getting to school.

**How will this address transportation inequities?**

These groups could be organized with under-resourced communities in mind. Sharing the time/responsibility of getting students to school can improve access. These groups also help parents or caregivers who have inflexible work schedules, such as shift work, feel confident that their student can get to school safely.

**Who needs to be involved to make this happen?**

School staff, students, parents.

**What is the timeline for implementation?**

Short term (1 year).



### Bike Rodeo

**How will this be implemented?**

The City and school could partner on an annual bike rodeo event held at the school.

**Why is this relevant and recommended?**

Bike rodeos are a skill-building event, providing students and families an opportunity to learn if they are not confident on a bicycle.

**How will this address transportation inequities?**

If paired with a bike donation event or by using an existing bike fleet available through CentraCare, this event will support all students' knowledge of and comfort with biking.

**Who needs to be involved to make this happen?**

City and school staff.

**What is the timeline for implementation?**

Short term (1 year).

