

Comprehensive Travel Plan for Disnard Elementary School

FINAL REPORT
August 2012

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Regional Planning Commission

and

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report addresses the Disnard Elementary School Travel Plan for the City of Claremont Comprehensive Safe Routes To School (SRTS) Travel Plan. This Travel Plan is one of three completed for the three Claremont elementary schools. Each individual Travel Plan responds to the unique conditions of the study school while addressing city-wide opportunities to increase student participation in active transportation, or walking and biking to and from school.



Organized walking school bus events are gaining popularity as a seasonal event and a weekly exercise among students.

The Claremont SRTS Task Force, the principal group sponsoring the Comprehensive Travel Plan initiative, wishes to enhance and encourage student and community health and welfare by promoting walking and biking to and from school. The Task Force membership demonstrates a strong, collaborative relationship between the City of Claremont and the Claremont School District and includes interested community members. It is important that the Task Force continues to make the SRTS program a community-based initiative.

This Report reviews the identified barriers to, and opportunities for promoting, walking and biking to

Disnard Elementary School, or Disnard School. This report summarizes the extensive survey information collected as part of the Plan's evaluation phase, details existing efforts in educating students and encouraging student participation local enforcement practices to help maintain a safe environment for active transportation, and provides recommended practices and possible engineering/infrastructure projects to improve the physical environment in support of Claremont's SRTS initiative.

It will be important for the Claremont SRTS Task Force to use the three elementary school Travel Plans to develop an Action Plan for a comprehensive SRTS initiative. Steps in developing the Action Plan are detailed in this study and will serve as a principal resource for implementing recommendations in the three Travel Plans.

II. COMMUNITY INFORMATION

SRTS Task Force Membership and Community Partnerships

The SRTS Task Force has been fortunate to have strong support from the City and the School District. The Task Force membership includes many individuals who have personal or professional interest in implementing a successful SRTS program. The Task Force also has support from many other community organizations interested in promoting walking and biking activities.

Table 2-1: Lebanon Safe Routes to School Task Force

NAME	AFFILIATION
Linda Brenneman	Principal, Bluff Elementary School
Joanne Petelle	Principal, Disnard Elementary School
Daniel Cherry	Principal, Maple Avenue Elementary School
Bruce Temple	Director, Claremont Department of Public Works Member of Claremont Traffic Safety Committee
Richard A. Bergeron	Chief, Claremont Fire Department Member of Claremont Traffic Safety Committee
Alexander Scott	Chief, Claremont Police Department Member of Claremont Traffic Safety Committee
Scott Hausler	Director, Claremont Parks & Recreation
Nancy Merrill	Director, Claremont Planning & Development Department
John Lambert	Owner, Claremont Cycle Depot

The following individuals and organizations participated in the development of the Comprehensive Travel Plan initiative and deserve the gratitude of the Task Force for their valuable contributions. Without their help, these Travel Plans would not have been possible. Continued community involvement will ensure success for the Claremont SRTS program.

Table 2-2: Present and Past Travel Plan Participants and Champions

NAME	AFFILIATION
Disnard School PTA	Disnard School Parents and Teachers
Bluff School PTO	Bluff School Parents and Teachers
Catherine Davignon	Principal (Retired), Maple Avenue Elementary School
Peter Chase	Chief (Retired), Claremont Fire Department

Claremont School District

According to the NH Department of Education the Claremont School District had a total student enrollment of 1,923 students for the 2011-2012 school year. The current SRTS travel planning effort focuses on the three elementary schools in Claremont (Kindergarten through Grade 5) with a total enrollment of 833 students (2011-2012 enrollment excluding Pre-Kindergarten

students). Table 2-3 summarizes the Claremont schools and student composition and Map 2-1 (Page 4) illustrates the student attendance zones for the three elementary schools.

The Claremont School District is dedicated to the health and welfare of its students and supports the principles and goals of this Comprehensive Travel Plan. The School District should pursue and support partnerships with the City, community members, and organizations to achieve the goals of this Travel Plan.

Table 2-3: Claremont Schools and Student Composition (2010-2011 School Year)

SCHOOL	GRADES	ENROLLMENT
Bluff Elementary School	K to 5	223
Disnard Elementary School	Pre-K to 5	280
Maple Avenue Elementary School	Pre-K to 5	367
Claremont Middle School	6 to 8	421
Stevens High School	9 to 12	632

Source: NH Department of Education (<http://my.doe.nh.gov/profiles/>)

City of Claremont

Claremont is the largest community in Sullivan County with a 2010 population of 13,355 and serves as an economic and retail center for surrounding communities. The City is currently working to improve upon its existing assets and infrastructure to maintain a high quality of life for its residents. The City’s Master Plan provides comprehensive overview of the high value placed on supporting and improving upon opportunities for physical activity and reinforcing pedestrian activity city-wide. The City has an extensive transportation network with an historic, pedestrian-scale city center. A map of the road network is illustrated in Map 2-2 (Page 5).

Claremont Master Plan

The Master Plan (revised June 2011), the central land use planning document for the City, presents a consistent and strong message of support for healthy activity and non-motorized modes of transportation as important assets to community quality of life. The following bullets provide an overview of specific goals and recommendations included in the Master Plan:

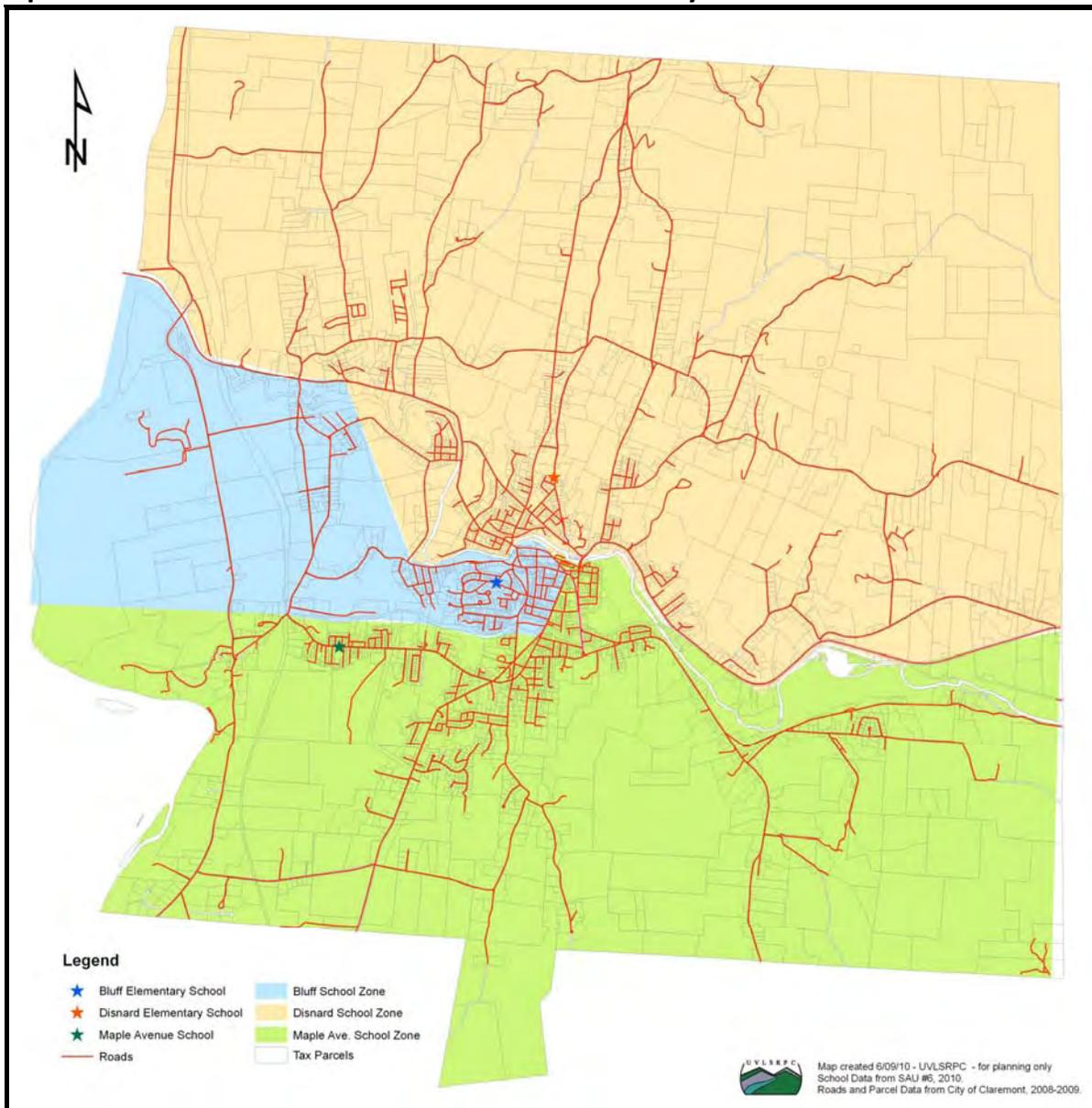
- The Vision Statement for the Master Plan states, “Claremont should be a livable community and regional center that... provides a multiple modal transportation system that connects the City’s neighborhoods. Claremont should strive to be a healthy community by supporting cultural and recreational opportunities through the support of facilities, programs, and events as well as to encourage an interconnection of trails, bikeways, sidewalks, and river walks connecting all parts of the City.”
- Maintain and promote pedestrian linkages in existing and new residential neighborhoods including promoting active transportation to and from schools by students.
- Provide choices and safety in transportation to create a livable and walkable community that will increase accessibility for people of all ages, whether on foot, bicycle, or in motor vehicles. Support multi-modal transportation choices as the City grows.
- Support ongoing sidewalk repair, rebuild roads to provide for pedestrian and bicycle facilities including new sidewalks where feasible and not currently available.

- Improve traffic flow and safety in the central business district including improvements to pedestrian crossings and implementing traffic calming techniques.
- One of the principal goals for the Master Plan is to establish, “corridor management techniques to allow for compatible pedestrian and vehicular activity.”

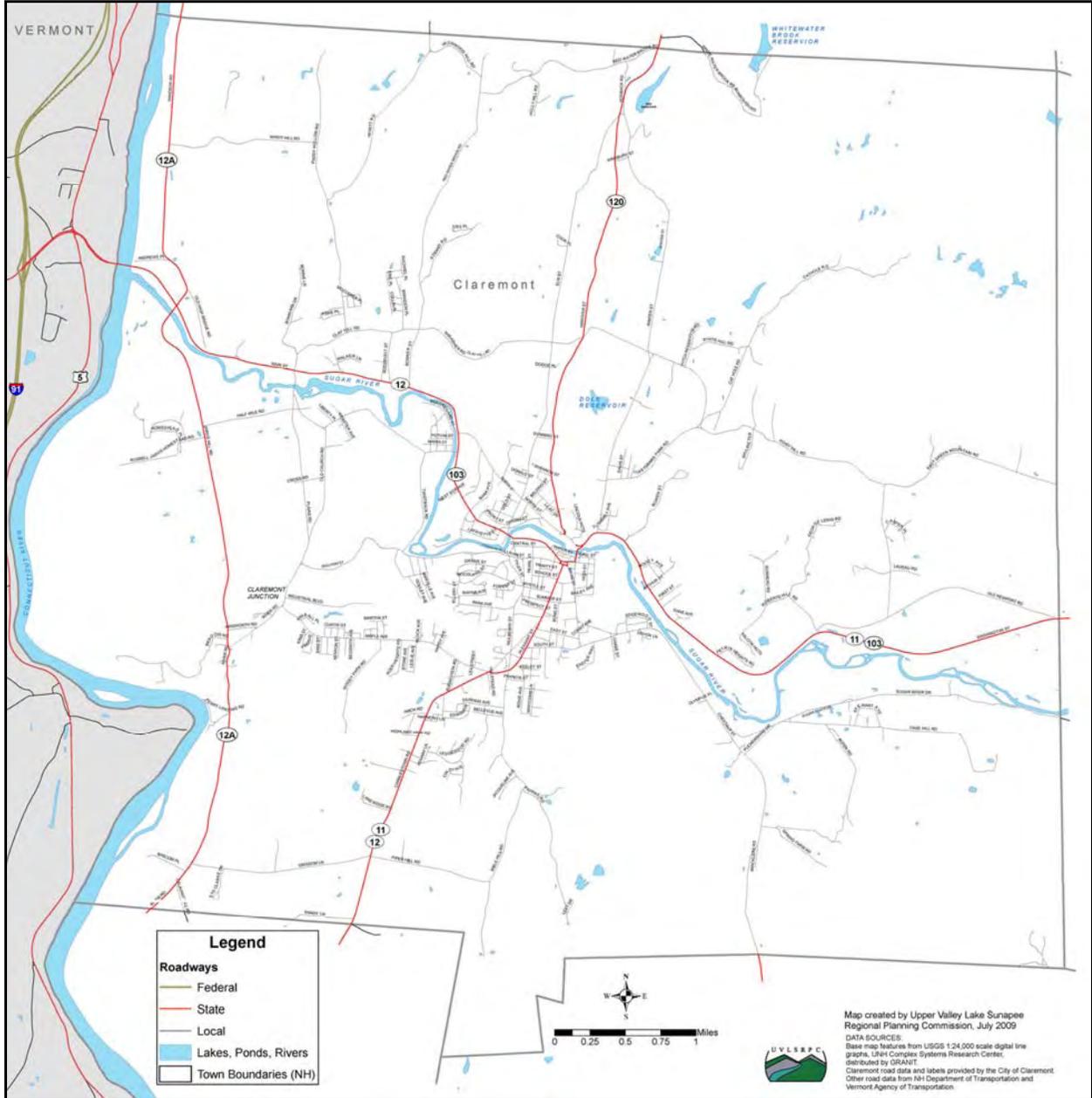
Capital Improvement Program

The City updates its Capital Improvement Program, effectively based on the Master Plan’s goals and recommendations, establishes a five-year plan for substantial City expenditures that may range from equipment and facility improvements to infrastructure projects. Later sections of this report address pedestrian and roadway improvement projects included in the Capital Improvement Program or in the planning stages in the City.

Map 2-1: Attendance Zones for Claremont Elementary Schools



Map 2-2: Overall Transportation Map



III. DISNARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

The Disnard School had a 280-student enrollment in Pre-School through Grade 5 in the 2011-2012 school year (259 students in Kindergarten through Grade 5). The school is located along Hanover Street at the northern extent of downtown Claremont. The school's designated attendance zone, or the area of the City from which it draws students, includes a number of residential neighborhoods north of the Sugar River in the downtown and extends to include the northern half of the City. Map 3-1 (Page 6) illustrates the attendance zone for the 2011-2012 school year.

The following sections address the “5 Es” of the Comprehensive Travel Plan:

- **Evaluation:** Review of the Parent and Classroom Surveys, as well as summaries of interviews with City and School representatives and comments from the Community Forum. Additional information in this portion of the Travel Plan will include mapping of the road and pedestrian network around Disnard School.
- **Education and Encouragement:** This section reviews two of the “5 Es” in one section because of their closely related and complimentary functions in Claremont’s present SRTS program.
- **Enforcement:** This topic covers practices by the School District and the Claremont Police Department to help maintain a safe environment for school children during morning arrival and afternoon departure.
- **Engineering:** Overview of City-wide infrastructure projects that may benefit Disnard School students.

Evaluation

The evaluation phase of work included collecting and compiling surveys, interviewing City and School representatives, conducting field assessments, compiling available data on the existing infrastructure, and mapping the study areas.

Travel Plan Surveys

Classroom Tally

The Disnard School teachers participated in a classroom survey of students in the fall of 2010. The purpose was to obtain information regarding how students travelled to and from school for three consecutive days in the week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). A summary of the Classroom Survey is included in Appendix A.

Figure 3-1 (Page 8) and the following bullets provide a summary of the Classroom Tally results:

- A greater percentage of students ride the bus and engage in active transportation methods in the afternoon trip home than in the morning trip to school
- On sunny days students are more likely to walk to school by approximately 10% over rainy or overcast days.
- Family vehicles, rather than school busses, are used on rainy or overcast days to compensate for those who do not walk to school

Map 3-1: Study Area Map

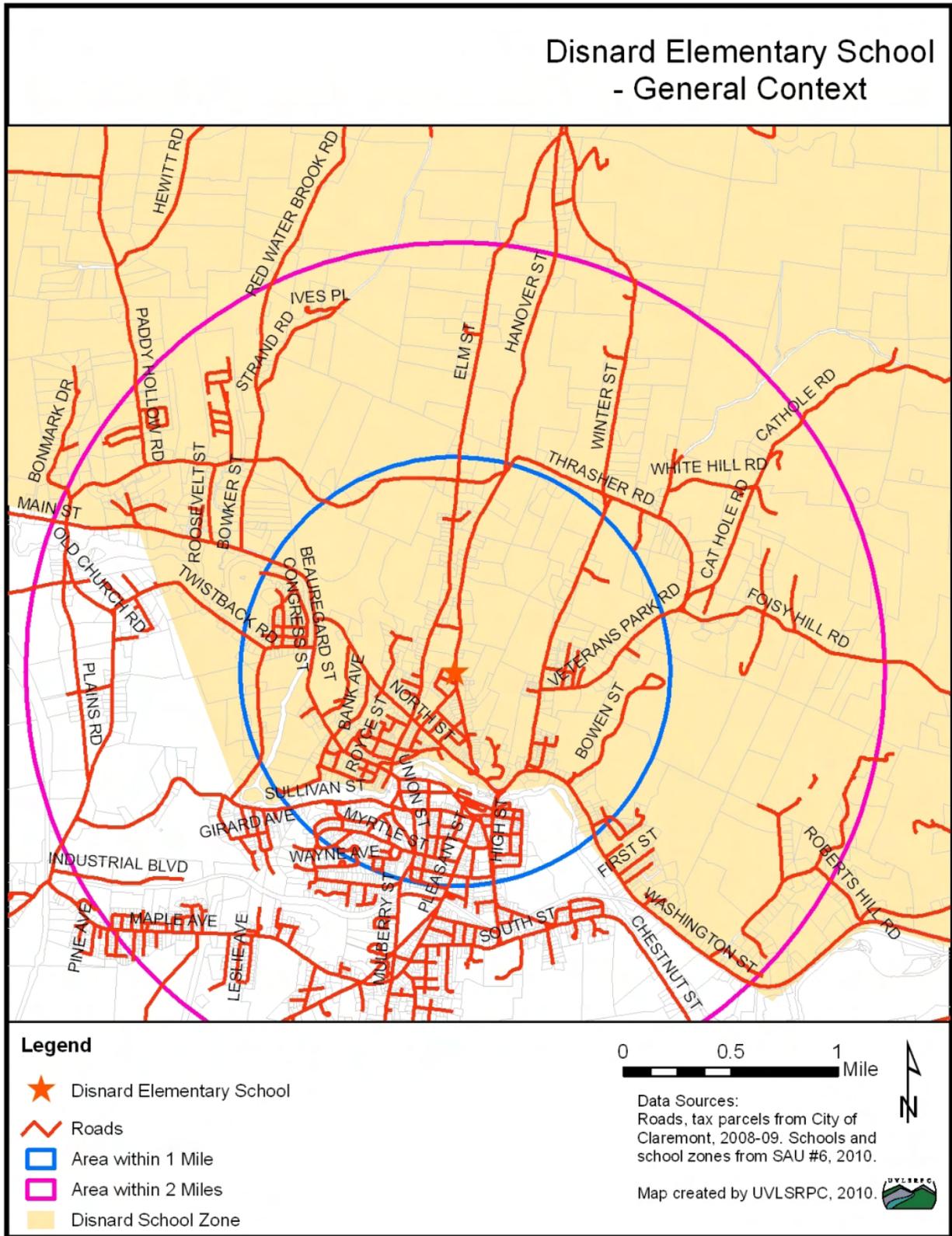
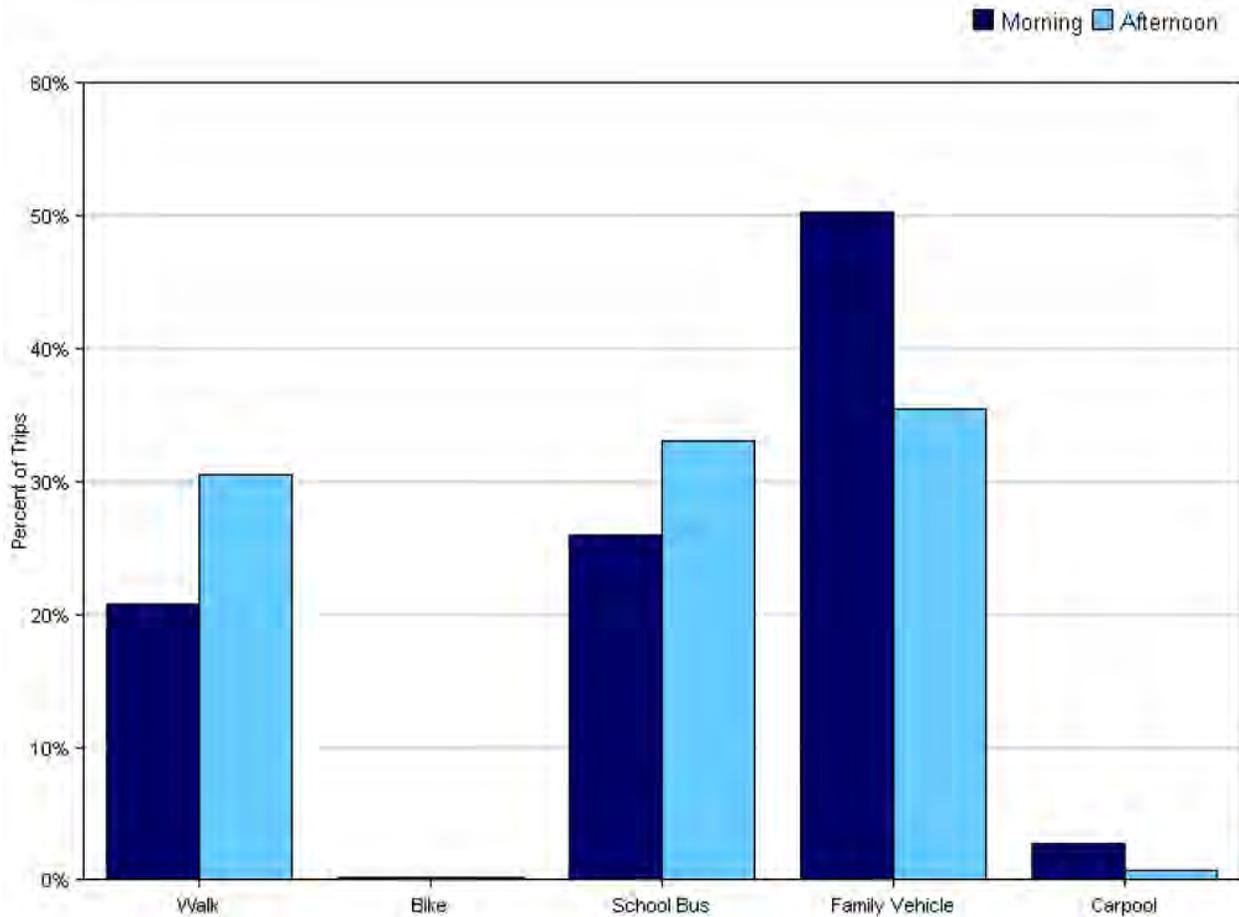


Figure 3-1: Classroom Tally Summary Chart



Parent Survey

The School District distributed paper copies of a Parent Survey for students to take home during fall 2010. This survey was developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS), which is a standard survey endorsed by the NH Department of Transportation. The response rate for this survey was 30%. A detailed summary of the Parent Survey results is included in Appendix A.

The following bullets and Figure 3-2 (Page 10) summarize the survey responses:

- Approximately 58% of parents estimate that school is more than 1 mi from home while 10% of families live within ¼ mi of school.
- 50% of parents and students report that morning trips to school are made by family vehicle
- The percentage of students riding the bus and engaging in active transportation after school is slightly higher than the morning percentage.
- Distance from home to school affects the types of transportation elected by families:
 - School busses are most utilized by students living more than ½ mi away from school however it is the most prominent means of transportation only for those living between ½ and 1 mile from school

- Nearly 40% of students who live within ¼ mi of school walk to school and more than 60% walk from school. Drops to less than 10% and 30%, respectively for students living ¼ to ½ mile away and very few living greater distances from school.
- Carpools contribute to transportation to school and only have a significant share of transportation mode for students living up to 1 mile away.
- Students who live near school are more likely to ask permission to walk or bike to school than those who live further away.
- Over 80% of students living between ¼ and ½ mi from school have asked to walk or bike to or from school while only approximately 20% actually engage in active transportation.
- The most prominent concerns among parents who do not permit their children to walk or bike to/from school include:
 - Traffic dangers
 - Other physical dangers (violence, crime)
 - Weather
 - Distance
- Among parents who do allow their children to walk or bike to and from school similar concerns persist, but with greater emphasis on violence and traffic and less on than the presence sidewalks/pathways and time.

Parent Attitudes toward Active Transportation:

- 49% of parents believe active transportation can be fun or very fun for their child while only 4% believe it is a negative experience
- 85% of parents believe walking and biking to/from school is healthy or very healthy for their children while the other 15% remain neutral
- 38% of parents believe the school encourages or strongly encourages active transportation to/from school

In addition, parents were given the opportunity to provide written comments about the topics addressed in the survey. The full responses are included in Appendix A and the following bullets summarize recurring topics:

- Concern for child safety, especially of the child is traveling alone. This includes:
 - Bullies,
 - Sex offenders and strangers,
 - Traffic safety and busy roads.
- Some parents have children with special needs and cannot let them walk or bike to school.
- Some parents do not believe their children are old enough or mature enough to responsibly walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-2: Importance of Issues Affecting Decision to Allow a Child to Walk to School

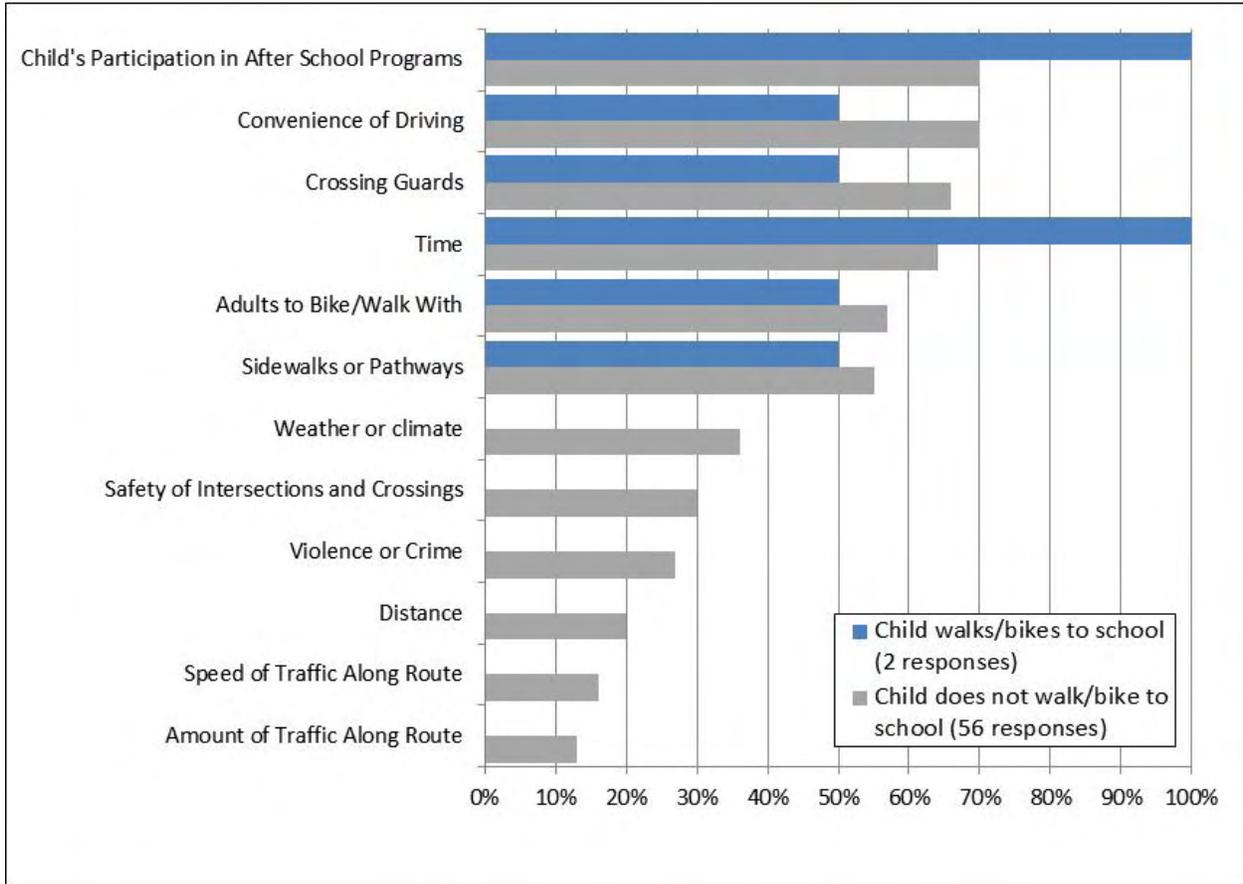
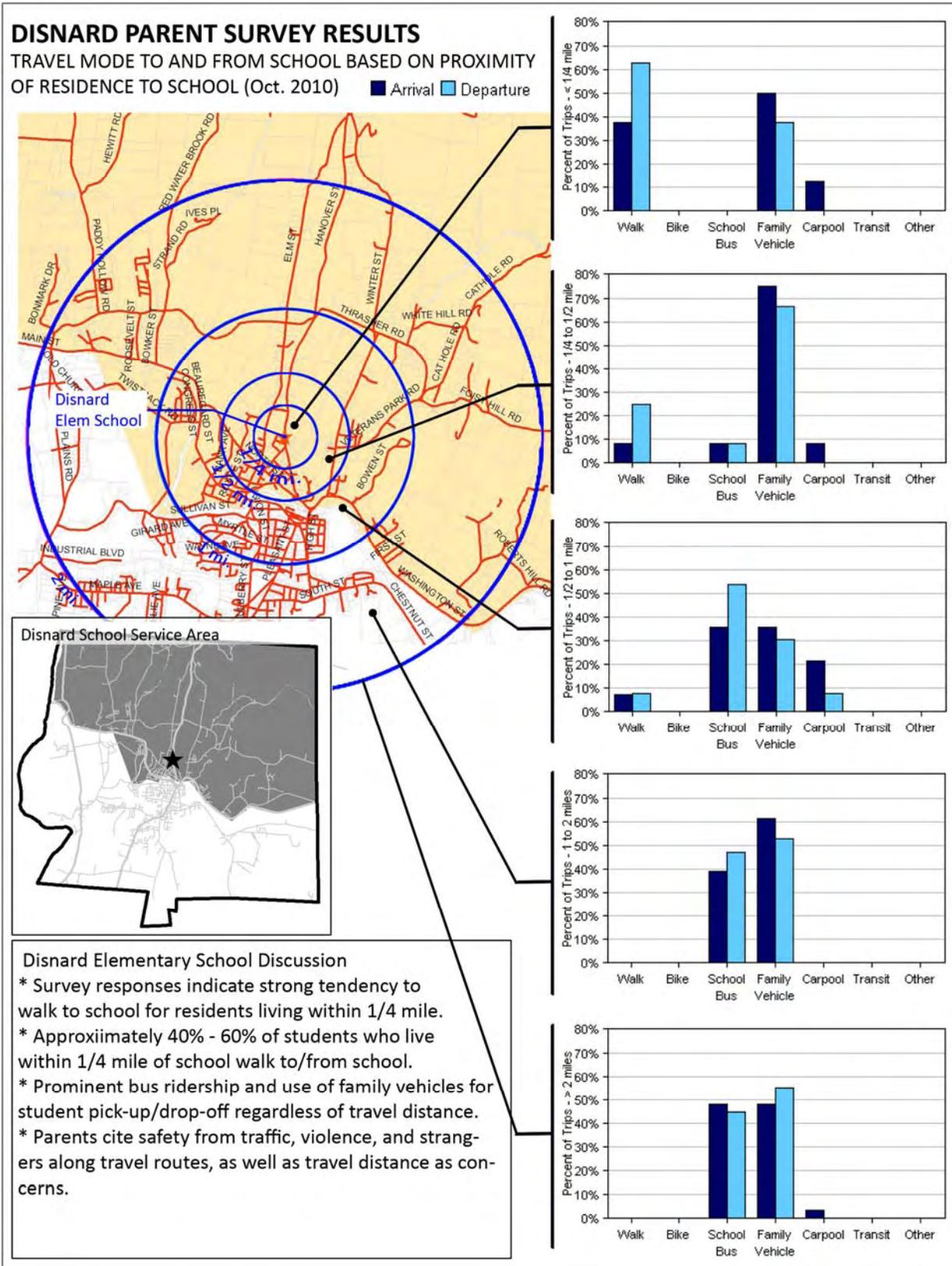


Figure 3-3: Parent Survey Responses – Travel Distance and Means of Travel to School



School and City Representative Interviews

Interviews with representatives from the Disnard School, Claremont Police Department and Claremont Department of Public Works provide valuable insights into the existing efforts in support of a Save Routes to School Program, assets of the school, as well as barriers and methods how the School District and City work together to address them. The following bullets provide a brief summary of these interviews. This information is repeated in later sections in this report:

- The City Department of Public works tries to clear all sidewalks within 24 hours, but this task is difficult for some neighborhoods because of the narrow sidewalks and obstructions (e.g. utility poles).
- There is a limited annual budget for City maintenance and construction of sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle projects. Typically, crosswalk striping is repainted annually and sidewalk maintenance is integrated into the annual roadway paving and maintenance projects.
- The Police Department places a high priority on patrolling the schools during arrival and departure times to monitor safety and congestion. The Police Department is responsible for designating a school resource officer and employing crossing guards. The City budget is sometimes limited and managing these resources with other law enforcement responsibilities is challenging.
- The City Police Department shares a speed trailer, which has a sign indicating the street speed limit and the motorist's speed, with other communities in Sullivan county. This speed trailer is a useful tool to help slow-down traffic speeds near schools during the morning arrival and afternoon departure times.
- Narrow city streets and sidewalks require careful planning to incorporate or improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The City makes such improvements where there are opportunities to do so.
- Observed issues with winter road and sidewalk maintenance make safe walking to/from school difficult. Also, more driver pick-ups and drop-offs in the winter.
- Children walk along Hanover Street – high pedestrian numbers. Concern about maintaining the sidewalk during the winter. If the sidewalks are not passable, the children are forced to walk in the Hanover Street travel way.
- Vehicles parking along Hanover Street during arrival and departure times is a concern. There is no crossing guard to ensure children can safely cross to cars parked across the street (northbound traffic) even though school administration discourages such activity.
- Narrow roads and streets are a concern for bicycle safety.
- Concerns about children walking to/from school include bullying and sex offenders. School staff address these issues through a school program to prevent bullying.
- Sidewalks from Winter Street are in good condition, but the high traffic speeds and volumes along Washington Street and North Street are a concern.

Community Forum

UVLSRPC Staff presented a draft of this report to the Disnard School Principal, Claremont School District Superintendent and the City of Claremont Staff and held a publicly noticed

meetings to review and discuss the draft Travel Plan. The Bluff School PTO hosted one of the public meetings.

The following bullets summarize comments and responses from the community:

- Hanover, Belding, and Elm Streets are the principal travel routes to Disnard School.
- The existing walk to school events have been popular with students. In practice, due to logistics, these events cannot occur more often than once a month.
- Creating a new travel route from the Barnes Park parking area at North Street along Belding and Hanover Streets to the school is a high priority.
- Completing a loop of sidewalks along Elm, Dunning, Hanover, and Belding Streets would be beneficial to providing safe walking routes for students.
- Flashing beacon lights were installed spring 2012 along Hanover Street, which are active during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods at the school. This will help inform motorists of the need to observe the school zone travel speed during those periods in the day
- Travel from Winter Street along Washington Street to Hanover Street is not a safe route for students and should not be encouraged as a regular walking route. The volume and speed of vehicle traffic, along with the lack of buffers between sidewalks and the traffic are the primary issues. There is no crosswalk for students walking from Armory Square apartment complex to get to existing sidewalks.
- The school and Disnard School PTA should identify staff and volunteers willing to assist with SRTS advocacy, activities and coordination efforts.
- Ongoing safety education programs are important for the long-term safety of students.
- An active feedback sign for vehicle speed in the school zone would be a useful tool to slow traffic along Hanover Street. Police enforcement of the speed limits would also help a lot.
- The DPW Staff understand that current City operations prioritize road clearing over sidewalk clearing after a winter storm. Given the limited resources and staffing available at the time of this study, the DPW does not have the capacity to dedicate any staff to sidewalk clearing without limiting its ability to clear roads or conduct other priority winter time activities.
- There are significant liability issues that prevent the City from organizing or allowing a volunteer program to clear sidewalks or road crossings during the winter.
- Promoting chaperones for walking and/or biking groups would help overcome issues of student safety. One opportunity is to use trained high school students as walking group chaperones.

Mapping

The following maps provide an overview of the geographic context for Disnard School, as well as provide information on the overall student densities in the school's attendance zone, pedestrian infrastructure, existing traffic volumes, and adjacent land uses.

This map combines the Disnard School Attendance Zone and the areas within 1-mile and 2-mile radii from the Disnard School.

Map 3-1: Disnard School Study Area (Page 6)

This planning-level mapping provides an overview of the Attendance Zone, 1-mile and 2-mile radii from Disnard School. It is important to note that the school district provided a map depicting the locations of students' residences (not included in this report). This mapping exercise indicated a high density of students live within the 1-mile radius of Disnard School.

Map 3-2: Adjacent Land Uses (Page 15)

This map provides an overview of the principal Zoning Districts surrounding the Disnard School. The school is on the northern edge of the City Center and is surrounded principally by residential areas with the Valley Regional Hospital abutting the school property to the north.

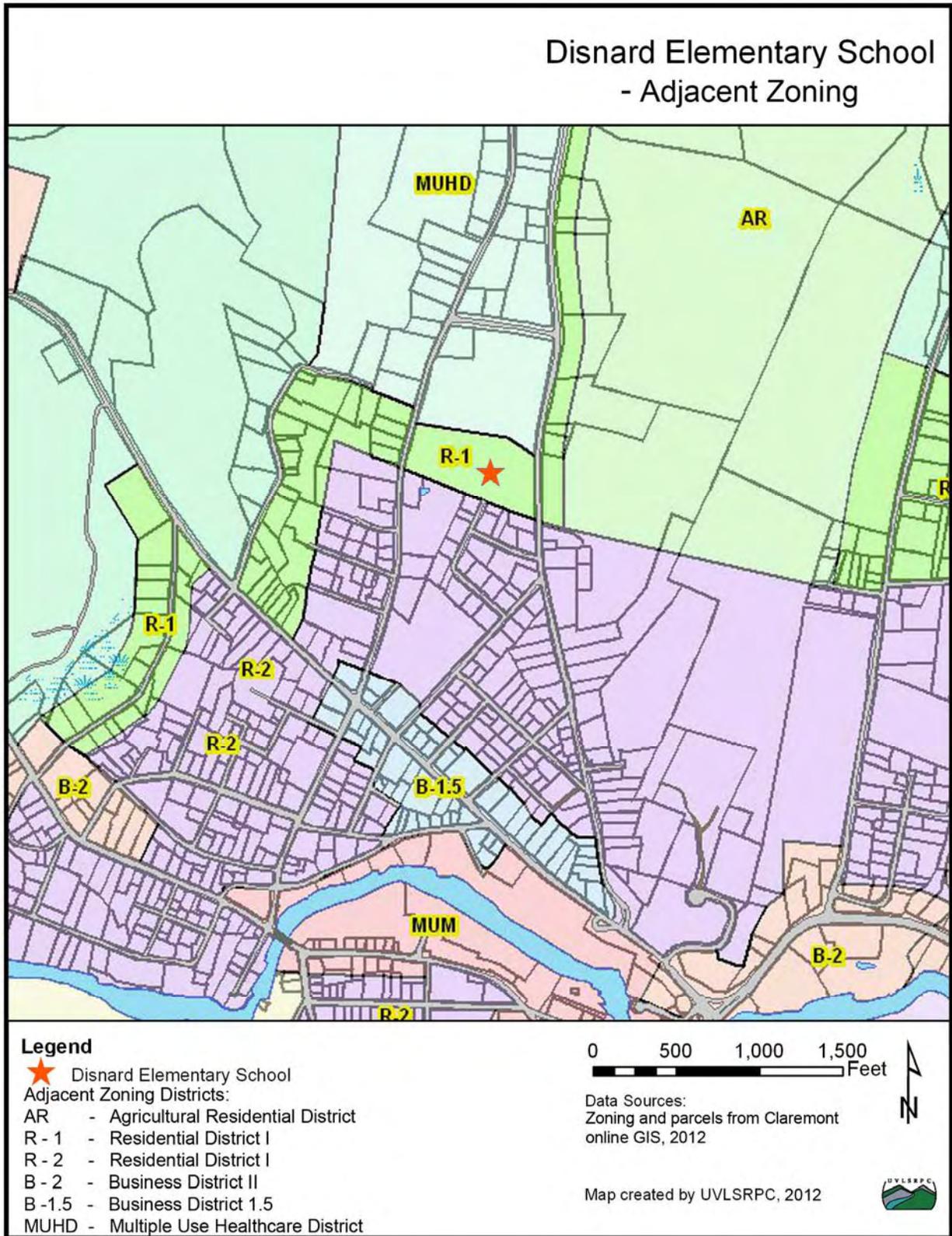
Map 3-3: Sidewalk Inventory and Qualitative Assessment (Page 16)

This map is the combination of information for this study and from a concurrent planning study under way: The Claremont City Center Project. This map provides an inventory of sidewalks within one mile of each of the three elementary schools. Claremont City Center Project volunteers conducted qualitative assessments of existing sidewalks and that information was added to the sidewalk inventory. This map, for the first time, provides an inventory of most of the sidewalks in the City and documents their general condition. This map can be the basis of future assessments.

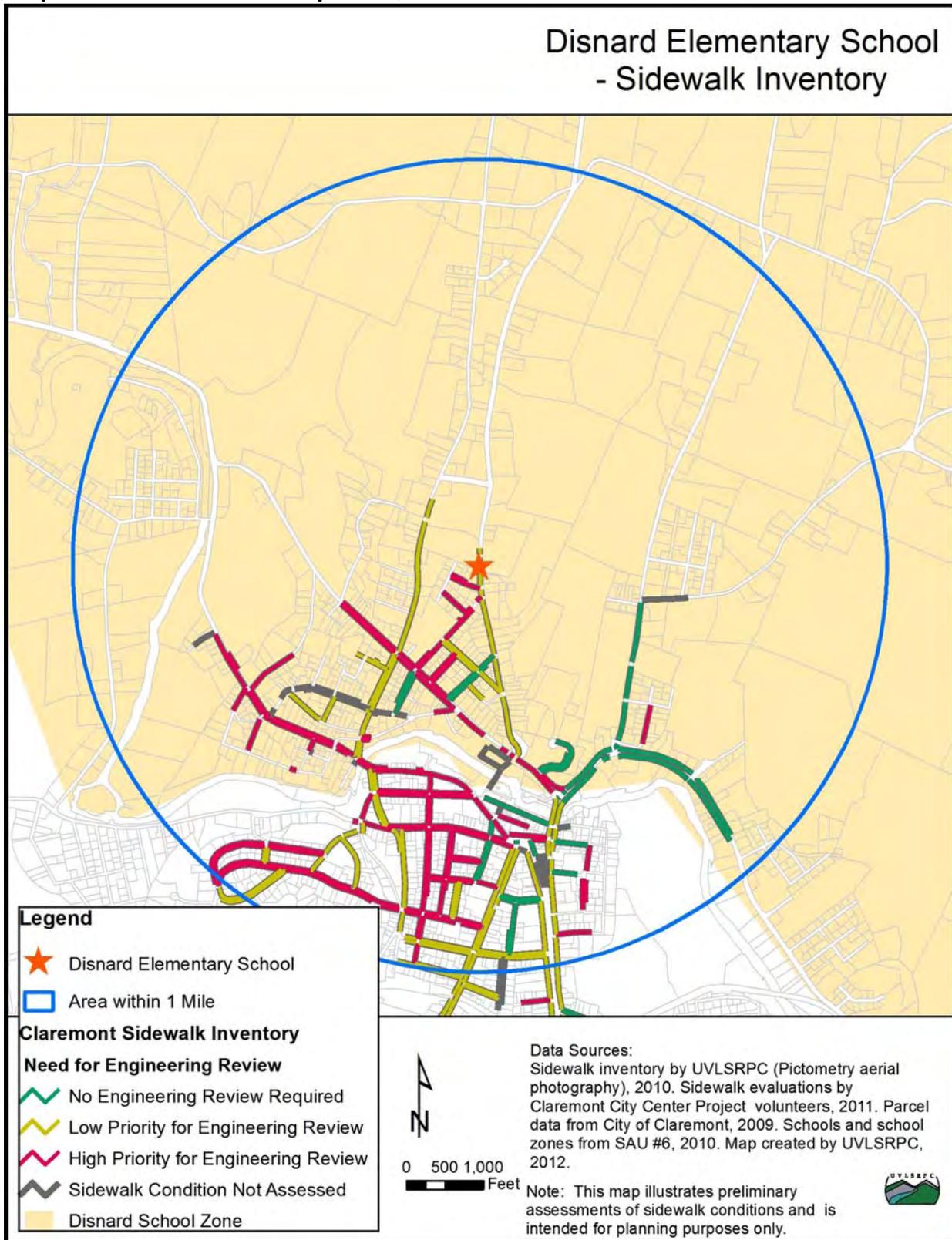
Map 3-4: Adjacent Street Traffic Volumes (Page 17)

The vehicle traffic information illustrated in this map is based on current available data published by the NH Department of Transportation. The volume numbers are adjusted average annual daily traffic volumes at the survey locations.

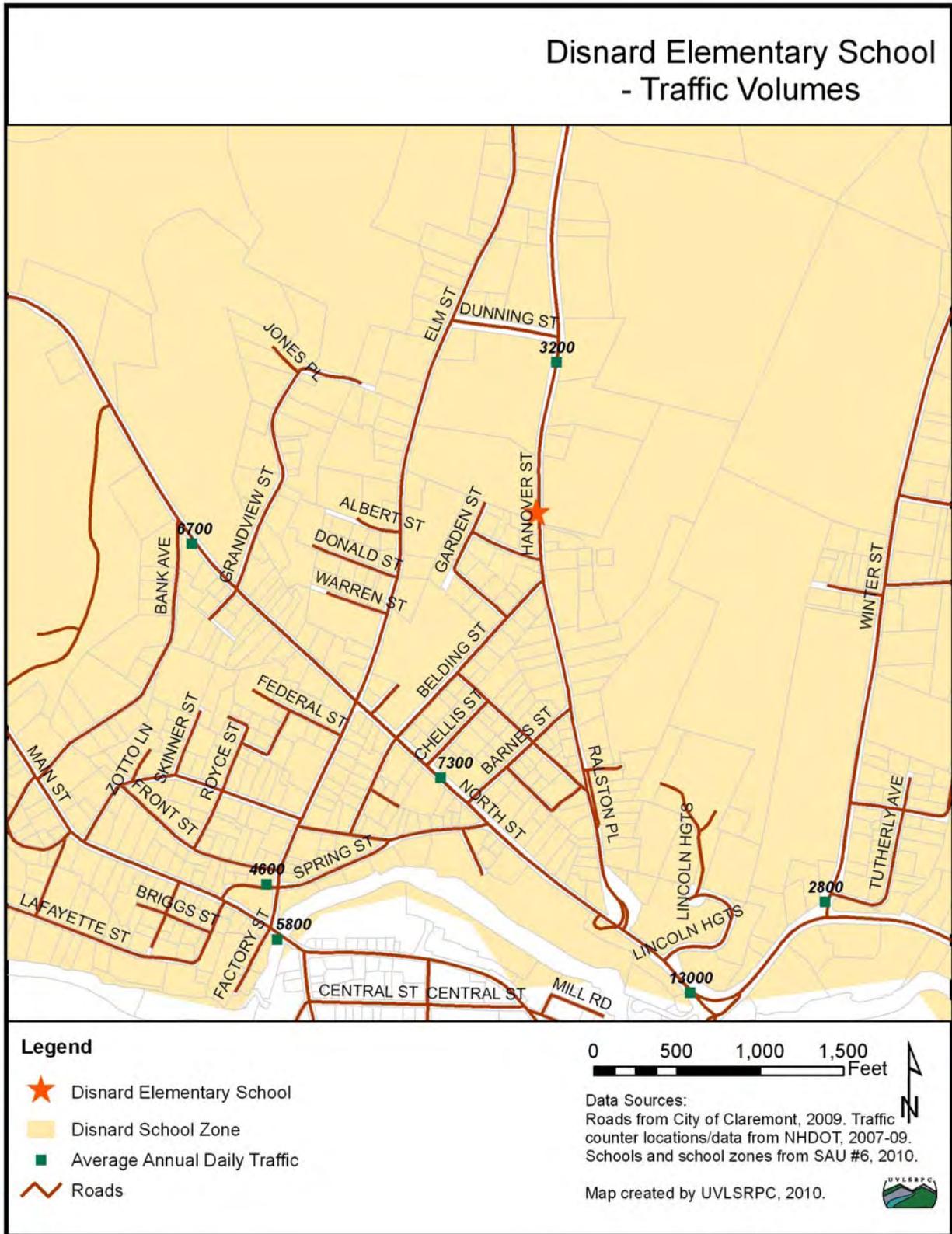
Map 3-2: Adjacent Land Uses



Map 3-3: Sidewalk Inventory and Qualitative Assessment



Map 3-5: Adjacent Street Traffic Volumes



Observed Conditions

The following photographs illustrate observed conditions in the City and the surrounding transportation network. These examples include general, city-wide observations and specific observations in the streets surrounding Disnard School.

Aerial View of Disnard School



This aerial image of the Disnard School and surrounding properties illustrates the adjacent residential neighborhoods and Valley Regional Hospital (north of the site). Barnes Park is located south of the school.

Disnard Afternoon Pick-up



The principal issue for traffic circulation and safety at the Disnard School revolves around the afternoon pick-up. While buses use the turn-around loop at the school entrance, the parents waiting to pick-up kids park along Hanover Street and Shannon Street. Some students get picked-up along Shannon Street and others living nearby continue along Hanover Street. Issues of concern include children crossing Hanover Street to a car parked on the northbound side (there is no crossing guard), vehicles speeding through the school zone and vehicles blocking the adjacent hospital ambulance entrance.

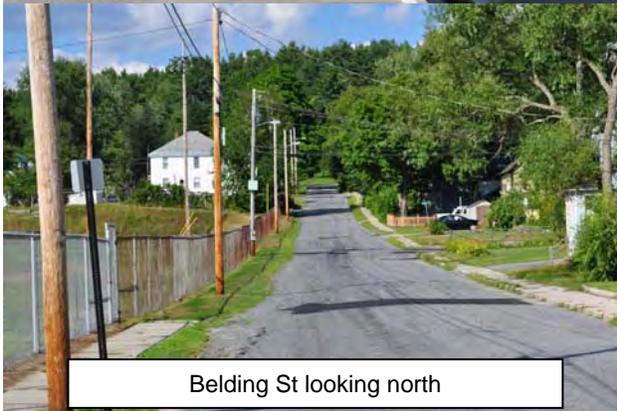
Pedestrian Facilities in the Vicinity of Disnard School



Southbound Hanover St



Sidewalk and access to Disnard School



Belding St looking north



Winter St looking north



Garden St looking toward Disnard School



Elm St looking north near hospital

The local street network in the Disnard School Attendance Zone includes state highways (Hanover and Washington Streets), local collector streets (Elm and North Streets), and neighborhood streets (Belding and Garden Streets). As illustrated in Map 3-3 (Page 16), the sidewalks along these streets vary in quality with some gaps in the network. The following collection of photos provides examples of the sidewalk conditions in the Disnard School project area.

Mulberry Street Neighborhood



Good quality pedestrian facilities and gaps in the pedestrian network can be observed in the project area; often on the same street. Dead-end or impassable sidewalks require maintenance or reconstruction and gaps in the pedestrian network exist in many places (see Figure 3-4, Page 24). Maintaining clearly defined and contiguous pedestrian and bicycle facilities will be an important aspect of promoting active transportation.

Education and Encouragement

The current education and encouragement programs include:

- The Claremont School District encourages physical activity by its students and is incorporated into its overall school curriculum.

- Special walking school bus events occur in the spring and fall.
- Periodic safety classes and for students, facilitated by the Claremont Police Department.

The current education and encouragement programs include:

- The Claremont School District encourages physical activity by its students and is incorporated into its overall school curriculum.
- Special walking school bus events occur in the spring and fall.
- There are periodic safety classes and events for students, facilitated by the Claremont Police Department or other community groups.

Enforcement

The enforcement policy in the Claremont Police Department encourages officers to patrol school areas during the school arrival and departure times. Officers tend to patrol these school zones unless they are called away on emergencies. The officers address general enforcement and area-specific traffic issues as needed. In addition to the officer enforcement, the Police Department shares a speed trailer with other communities in Sullivan County and, when it is available, deploys the trailer in school zones to inform motorists of their travel speed. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the presence of the speed trailer is effective at reducing travel speeds.

The Police Department also manages crossing guards citywide. These are paid positions and have recently been cut-back due to budget constraints. While there has been discussions regarding volunteer crossing guards, there is an inherent concern about liability to the City when there is a volunteer program of this nature. While there is a recognized need for more crossing guards, there is no funding source for expanding the program.

Engineering

The Claremont Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the road and sidewalk infrastructure. Coordination with the City would be necessary if the School District determined improvements would be necessary within the public rights of way including roads, sidewalks, or other public travel ways. There are no planned engineering or construction projects planned for the Disnard School property that would alter the site layout, pedestrian, or vehicle circulation. The following sections provide detailed information on the City's Capital Improvement Program and the sidewalk inventory conducted for this Travel Plan.

Capital Improvement Program

The City of Claremont regularly updates its Capital Improvement Program, which includes infrastructure construction projects to improve roadways and associated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Claremont Department of Public Works has placed high priority on infrastructure improvement projects that will improve pedestrian and bike safety including substantial improvements to Belding Street and adjacent streets and sidewalk rehabilitation and construction along Elm and Dunning Streets. Additionally, the City has set-aside an annual allotment of \$500,000 for city-wide paving and roadway improvements. Table 3-1 provides a comprehensive summary of present and future projects that will benefit pedestrians and cyclists.

Table 3-1: Sidewalk Improvement and Construction Project List for Claremont DPW

TARGET ROAD SEGMENT	PROJECT SCOPE	PROJECT STATUS
Mulberry Street from Myrtle Street to Park Avenue	Repaving project includes installation of a bituminous pavement sidewalk.	Included as part of the 2012 Street Resurfacing Program.
Myrtle Street from Pleasant Street to Mulberry Street	Repaving project includes sidewalk maintenance.	Included as part of the 2012 Street Resurfacing Program.
Belding Street, Chellis Street, Centennial Street	Street reconstruction, including sidewalk improvements.	Funding Required
Elm Street, Dunning Street, Hanover Street (in the vicinity of Valley Regional Hospital)	Construct new sidewalks extending north along Elm and Hanover Streets to connect with new sidewalk along Dunning Street	Funding Required
Maple Avenue from Drapers Corner to Buena Vista Road	Sidewalk maintenance.	Funding Required
Charlestown Road from Buena Vista Road to Glenwood Drive	Construct new sidewalk (approx. 3,000 ft) along Charlestown Road	Funding Required
Grove Street and Summit Road	Shift street alignment, shift sidewalk to one side of the street and widen to meet ADA minimum sidewalk width.	Funding Required

Note: Gray-shaded projects are in the Disnard School Study Area.

The limited budget for maintenance of roads and sidewalks presents a challenge in a small, historic city like Claremont. Even if the City has a priority project, it is possible the project is on hold due to lack of funding (see Table 3-1, above). Any projects listed that are consistent with the goals of this Comprehensive Travel Plan could be funded through a number of grants or low interest loans. Any such projects need to be completed in partnership with the City and follow City protocols to ensure the project is in the public interest.

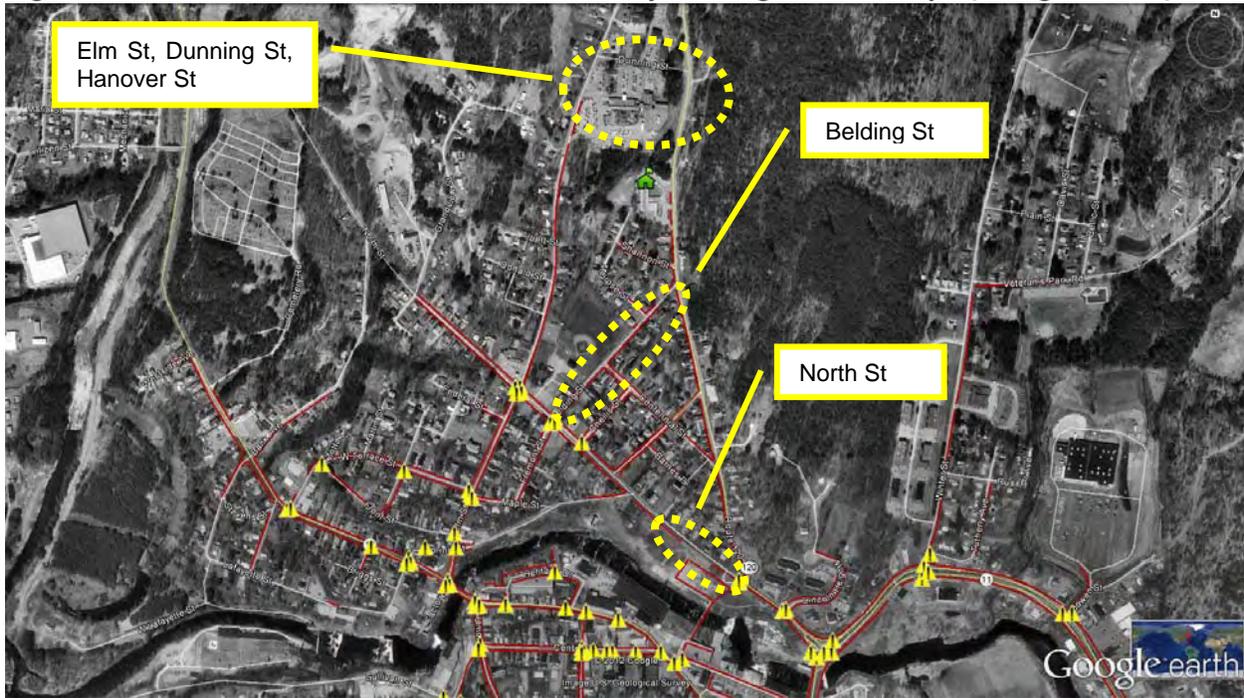
Sidewalk Inventory

The sidewalk inventory completed as part of this study was limited to within one mile of each of the elementary schools in Claremont and could be supplemented and refined by the SRTS Task Force in coordination with City Staff as the opportunities arise. Map 3-3 (Page 16) is the result of a digital inventory assembled by UVLSRPC Staff and preliminary sidewalk assessments developed by volunteers for the Claremont City Center Project.

This inventory and mapping exercise provides some understanding of the condition of existing sidewalks in the City, which can help prioritize which areas require further study. The inventory also demonstrates where there are significant gaps in pedestrian facilities in the project area. Gaps can serve as effective barriers to walking and biking activity. An example may be a hiking trail that is missing a bridge across a river; without the bridge crossing the river may be difficult and people would choose not to use the otherwise functional trail.

- A sidewalk ends mid-block for a short distance and starts again further along the block. The reason behind this occurrence is not clear and probably cannot be linked to a single cause.
- Road segments without sidewalks break the pedestrian network in the City. Examples include Dunning Street and North Street (illustrated on Figure 3-4).

Figure 3-4: Sidewalk and Crosswalk Inventory and Significant Gaps (Google Earth)



Note: Sidewalks appear as red lines and crosswalks appear as yellow triangles on this image.

Identified Barriers

The Task Force has collected comments throughout this process and, combined with the analyses and other background information, identified the following are the primary barriers to walking and biking to school:

- Child safety along walking routes.
- Roadway traffic volumes and speeds.
- Intersection safety and the need for crossing guards.
- Claremont has resident, registered sex offenders.
- The street network around Disnard School is too dangerous to allow students to bike to school.
- Aging and narrow sidewalks in need of repair and poorly defined pedestrian routes.

Identified Solutions to Overcome Barriers

The following text provides recommendations to address barriers to safe walking and biking to Disnard School. The three elementary school travel plans share common solutions and have unique solutions to overcome these barriers. The SRTS Task Force should take the recommendations of the three Travel Plans, and develop an implementation matrix, or an Action Plan. The following chapter provides an outline for developing an Action Plan.

Ensure Good Quality Bike and Pedestrian Facilities on the Disnard School Property

- Identify pedestrian routes on school property, particularly in the vicinity of vehicle circulation routes. Provide pavement striping (e.g. crosswalks or designated paths) and signage to identify the routes for motorists and pedestrians.
- Encourage school faculty and staff to walk, bike, or carpool to school (possibly from a remote parking area) to set an example for the students and to better manage the limited parking available on the property.

Ensure Good Quality Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Serving Disnard School

- Formalize principal pedestrian and bike routes to Disnard School. The SRTS Taskforce should coordinate with the City and advocate for maintaining high quality bike and pedestrian facilities along these routes and make it a priority for improvements, maintenance and repairs. The recommended principal routes to Disnard School are illustrated in Figure 3-5 (Page 26) and include Hanover, Belding, Elm, and Dunning Streets.
- Identify principal walking and biking routes to school with signage and painted symbols on the sidewalk in coordination with the City.
- Work with the Department of Public Works to develop a plan to prioritize winter clearing and maintenance of the principal walking and biking routes among the overall City priorities .
- Reconstruct at least one full-length sidewalk along Belding Street.
- Correct gaps that exist in the existing sidewalk network.
- Construct new sidewalks along Elm Street to the Dunning Street intersection, along Dunning Street, and along Hanover Street from the Dunning Street intersection to the Disnard School property (where the existing sidewalk ends). The sidewalk segment along Hanover Street should take into consideration how the sidewalk and curbing will affect the queued cars waiting for the afternoon release. It may cause cars to encroach into the Hanover Street travel lanes requiring an analysis of vehicle safety and options for mitigating potential safety issues.
- Utilize the easy access and extra circulation capacity at Barnes Park to serve as a satellite drop-off location for the school. Such an activity would require completion of a full sidewalk along Belding Street from the park to Hanover Street and the presence of volunteer chaperones to monitor student safety.
- Educate students, parents, and local residents of the special route designation and to take care when operating vehicles near students walking or biking to school.

IV. IMPLEMENTING THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

The Disnard Elementary School is located in a historic residential area that abuts a commercial and industrial district along the Sugar River. The Disnard School serves many of the residents that live in the City's downtown. During the evaluation phase of work for this study, survey responses and field investigations indicated that the critical barriers to promoting walking to and from school were travel distance and safety. A secondary issue that likely influences parental decisions to let children walk to Disnard School is the aging of the pedestrian infrastructure and challenges to maintaining sidewalks seasonally and reconstructing damaged sidewalks on a limited budget. While there continues to be a need to improve and maintain infrastructure for the benefit of safe walking and biking routes, an effective way to promote SRTS goals is to increase student and parent education, and increasing the number of organized SRTS events to raise awareness of the opportunities to safely walk to and from school.

The prior chapter identifies recommended solutions to overcoming barriers to students walking and biking to school. The following text provides an outline to formulating an implementation plan based on the recommendations from all three Travel Plans. This Implementation Plan will be the product of continued work by the SRTS Task Force to determine the means to improve student walking and biking to school City-wide. It will be important for the Task Force to complete the exercise to clearly identify City-wide priorities to communicate to local, regional, and statewide decision makers and potential funders.

The following bullets provide information on commonly used information in an Implementation Plan. A blank table with these fields is included in Appendix B.

- **Action Item:** Summarize the recommendation with emphasis on specific actions. A given recommendation from the Travel Plans may be broken into separate actions or combined with others as appropriate.
- **School/District:** Specify if the action item applies to all schools or just an individual school.
- **Priority:** The Task Force should identify which action items have a higher priority. Values in this field may identify "High", "Moderate", and "Low" priorities for the individual action items.
- **Target Completion:** Should the action items be implemented in the "Short-term" (within 2 years), "Mid-term" (3-5 years), or "Long-term" (6+ years) timeframe?
- **Responsible Party:** Each action item requires a responsible party to ensure it is completed.
- **Funding Source:** Funding for individual action items may vary. Identifying existing or potential funding sources will be important to implementation. If the funding relies on a grant that has not yet been awarded, it is important to identify the grant program and application deadline.
- **Task Complete:** Record whether the action item has been completed and the date completed.

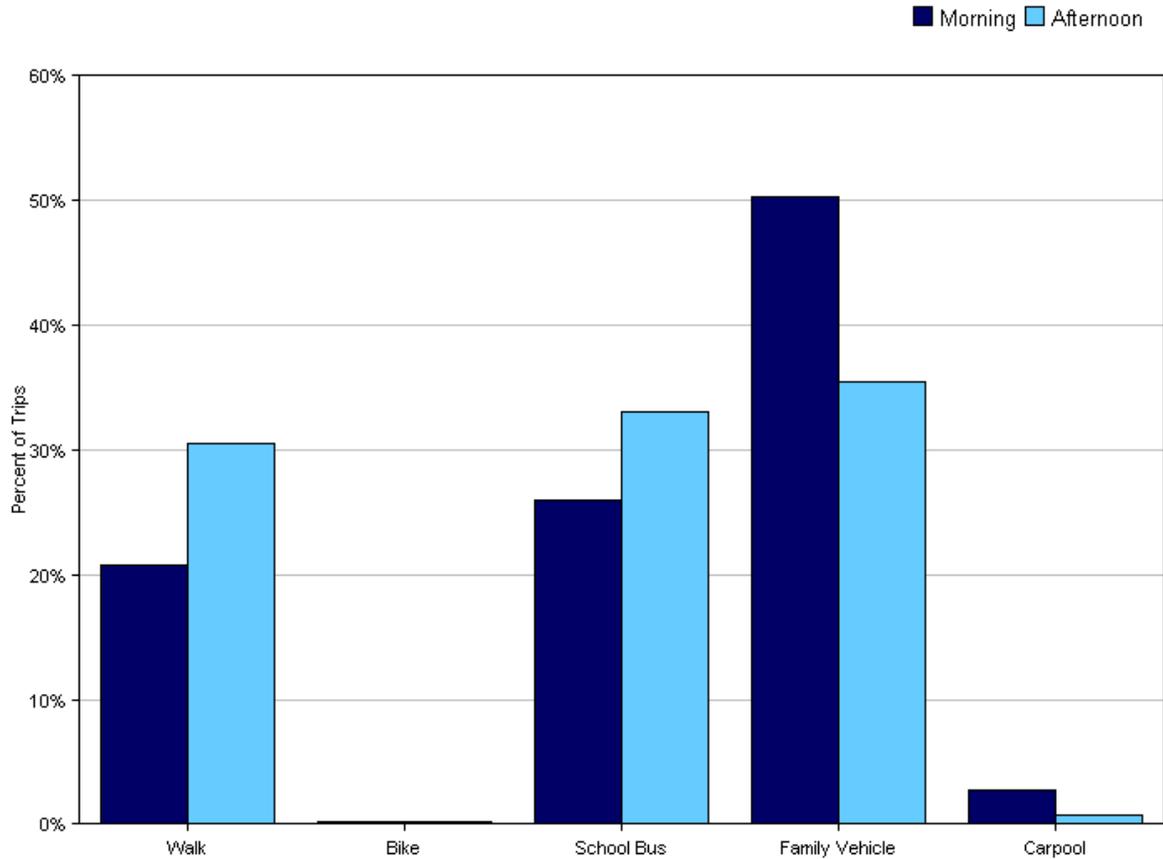
The Implementation Plan, once complete, should be reviewed by the Task Force or an appointed subcommittee on a regular basis to ensure goals and priorities are being met.

APPENDIX A – EVALUATION SURVEYS

Tally Report

Program Name:	Claremont Elementary SRTS	Month and Year Collected:	October 2010
School Name:	Disnard Elementary School	Set ID:	5909
School Enrollment:	269	Date Report Generated:	02/18/2011
Enrollment within Grades Targeted by SRTS Program:	269	Number of Classrooms Included in Report:	10
Number of Classrooms in School:	12		

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

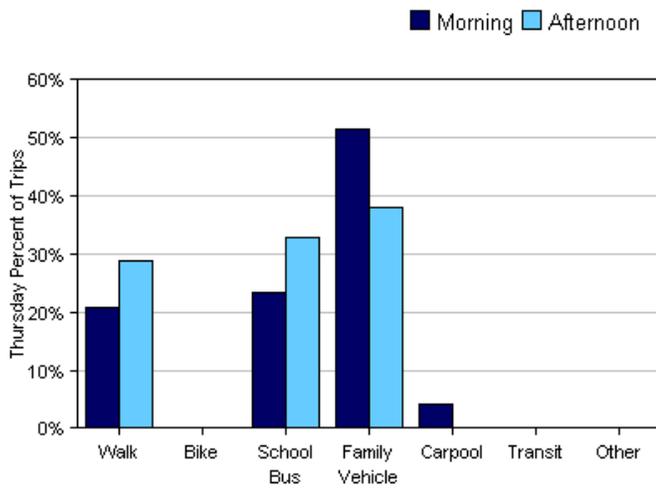
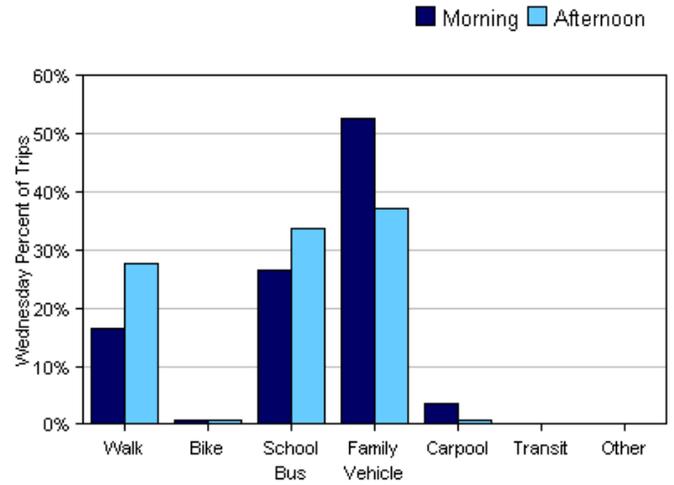
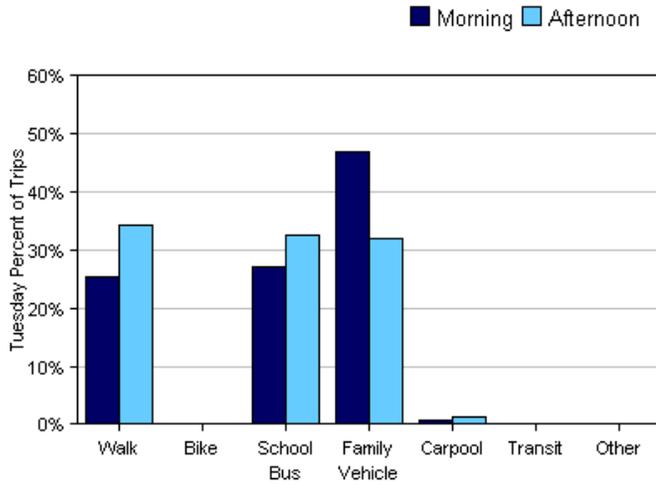


Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	447	21%	0.2%	26%	50%	3%	0%	0%
Afternoon	426	31%	0.2%	33%	35%	0.7%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

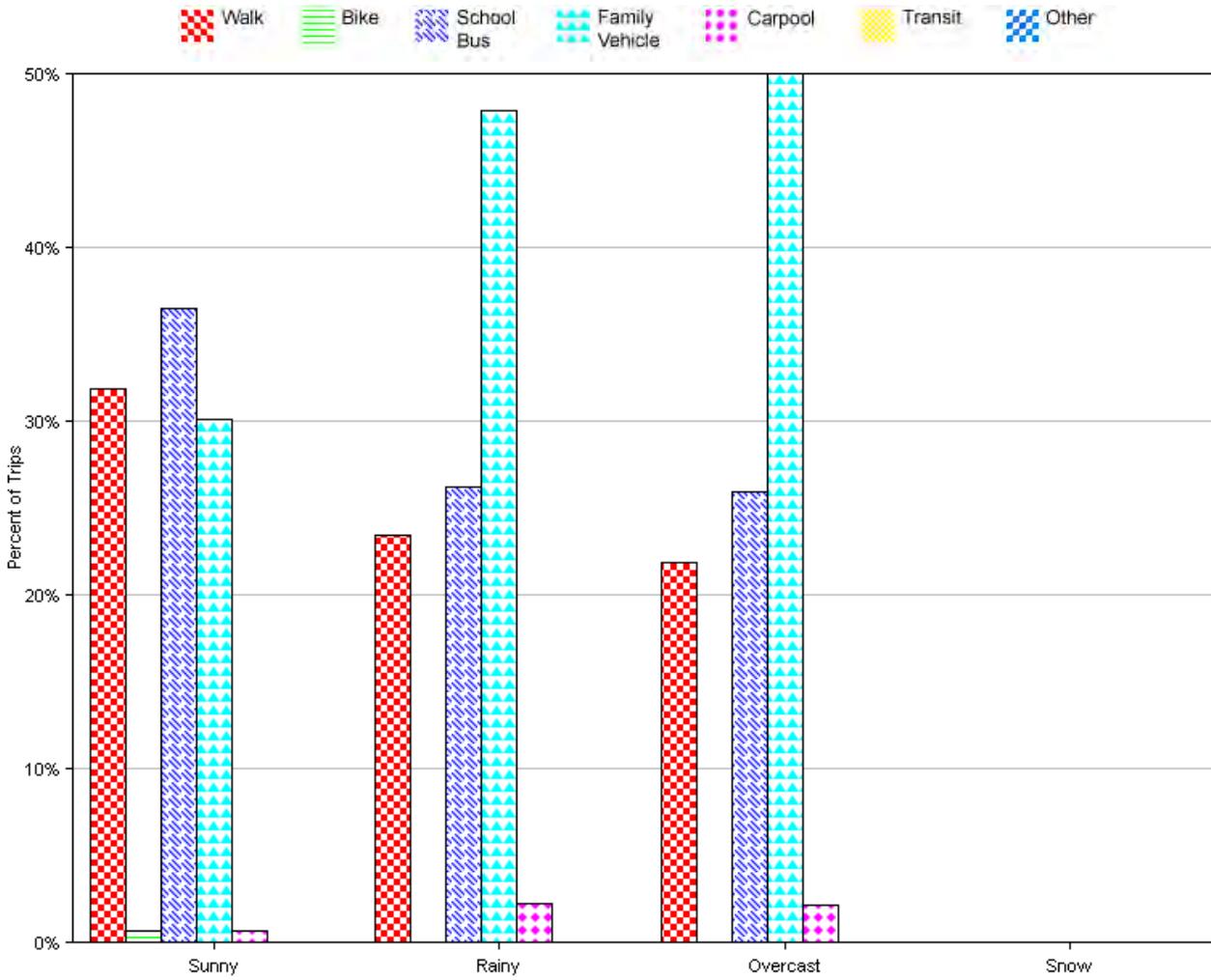


Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tuesday AM	158	25%	0%	27%	47%	0.6%	0%	0%
Tuesday PM	160	34%	0%	33%	32%	1%	0%	0%
Wednesday AM	169	17%	0.6%	27%	53%	4%	0%	0%
Wednesday PM	169	28%	0.6%	34%	37%	0.6%	0%	0%
Thursday AM	120	21%	0%	23%	52%	4%	0%	0%
Thursday PM	97	29%	0%	33%	38%	0%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Travel Mode by Weather Conditions



Travel Mode by Weather Condition

Weather Condition	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Sunny	282	32%	0.7%	37%	30%	0.7%	0%	0%
Rainy	217	24%	0%	26%	48%	2%	0%	0%
Overcast	374	22%	0%	26%	50%	2%	0%	0%
Snow	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

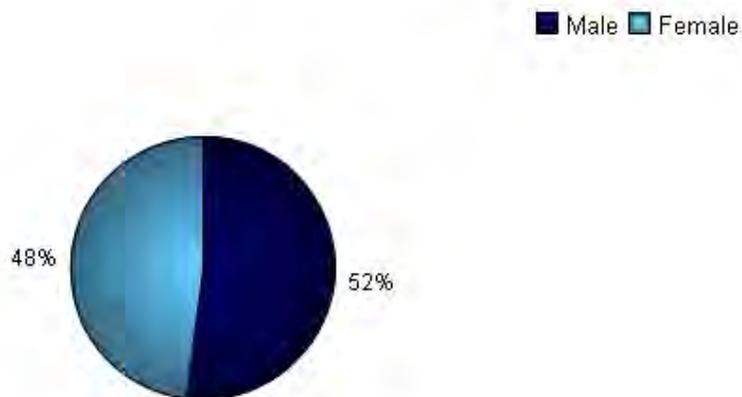
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Parent Survey Summary

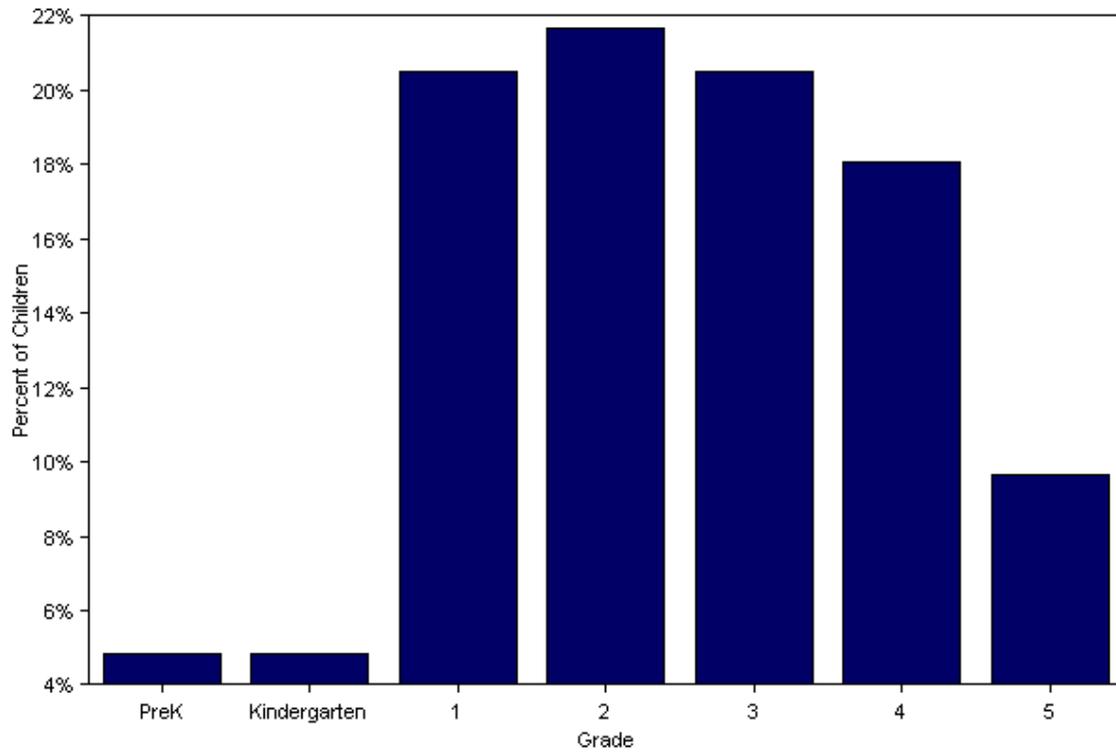
Program Name:	Claremont Elementary SRTS	Month and Year Collected:	October 2010
School Name:	Disnard Elementary School	Set ID:	4940
School Enrollment:	0	Date Report Generated:	02/18/2011
Enrollment within Grades Targeted by SRTS Program:		Number of Questionnaires Analyzed for Report:	83
Number of Questionnaires Distributed:	178		

This report contains information from parents about their children's trip to and from school. The report also reflects parents' perceptions regarding whether walking and bicycling to school is appropriate for their child. The data used in this report were collected using the Survey about Walking and Biking to School for Parents form from the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

Sex of children for parents that provided information



Grade levels of children represented in survey

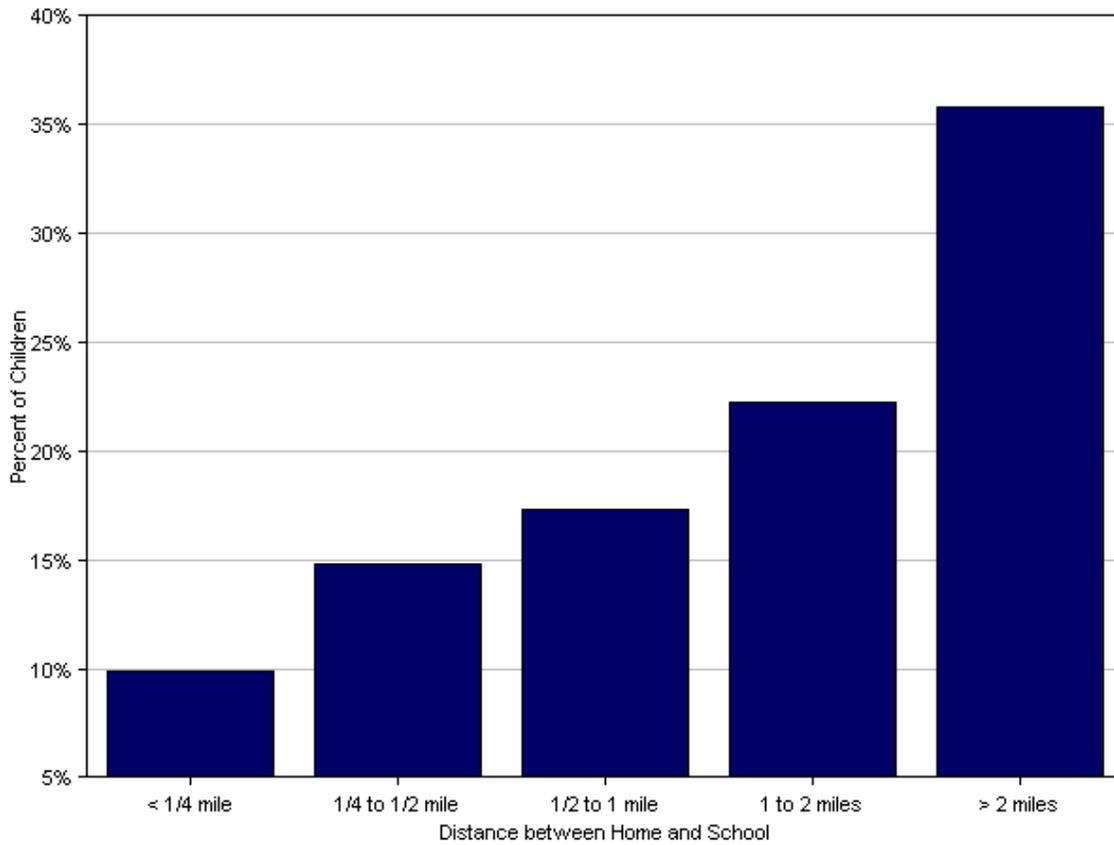


Grade levels of children represented in survey

Grade in School	Responses per grade	
	Number	Percent
PreK	4	5%
Kindergarten	4	5%
1	17	20%
2	18	22%
3	17	20%
4	15	18%
5	8	10%

No response: 0
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

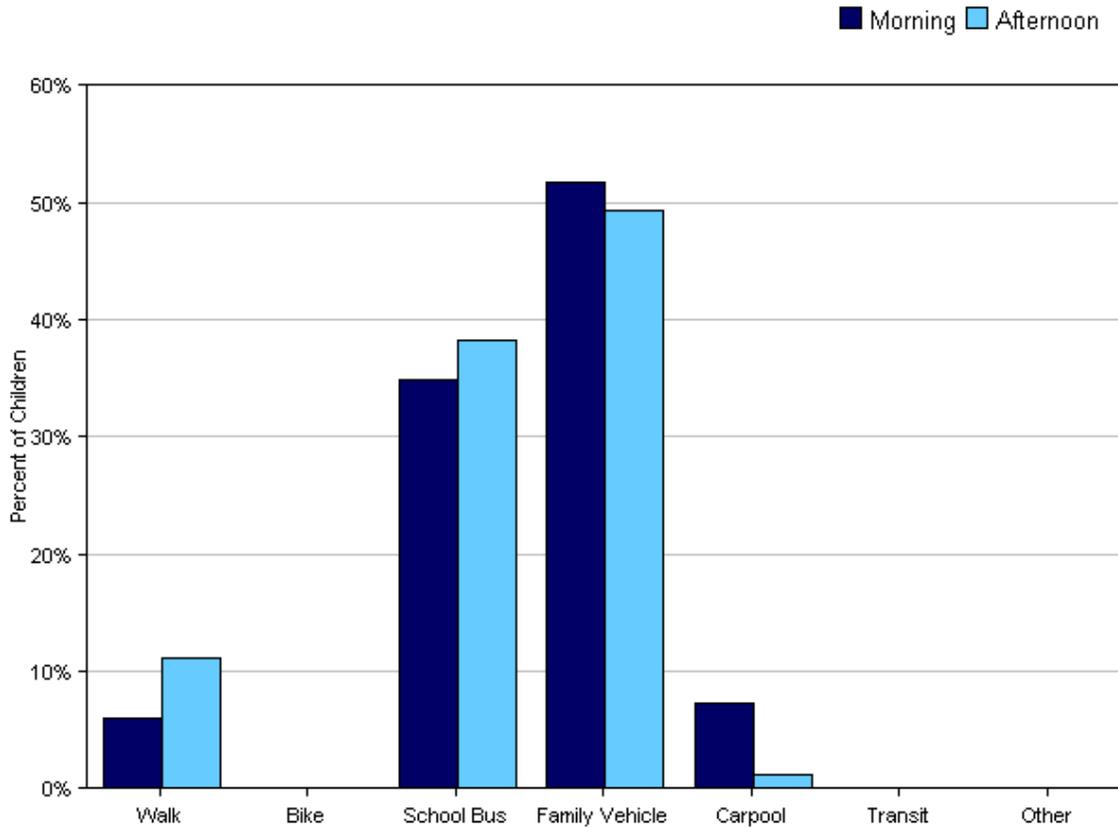


Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

Distance between home and school	Number of children	Percent
Less than 1/4 mile	8	10%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	12	15%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	14	17%
1 mile up to 2 miles	18	22%
More than 2 miles	29	36%

Don't know or No response: 2
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school



Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

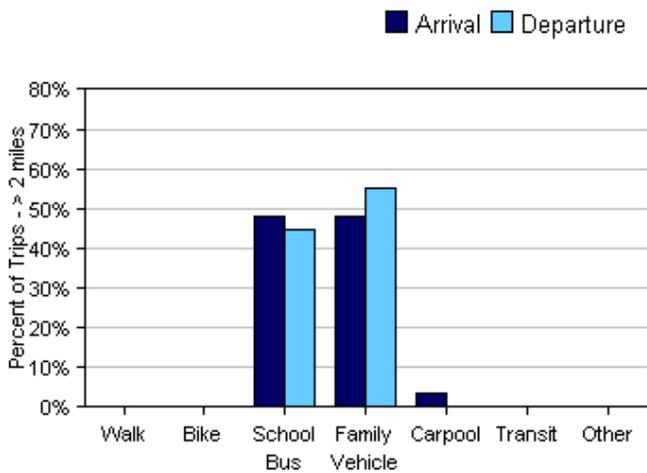
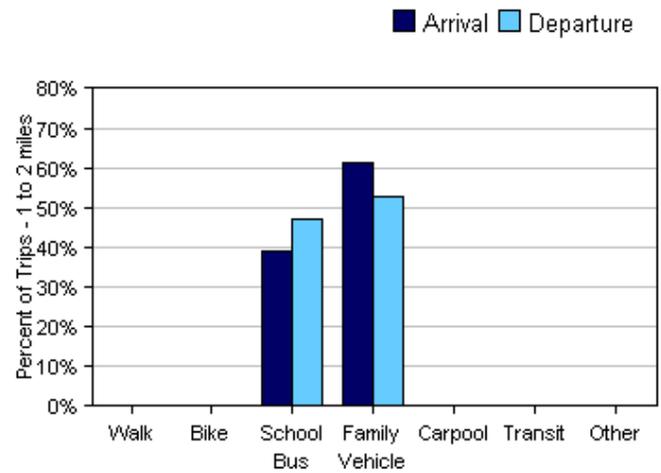
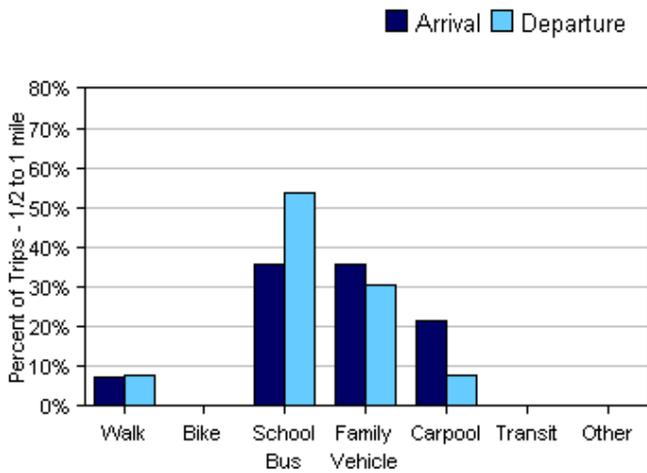
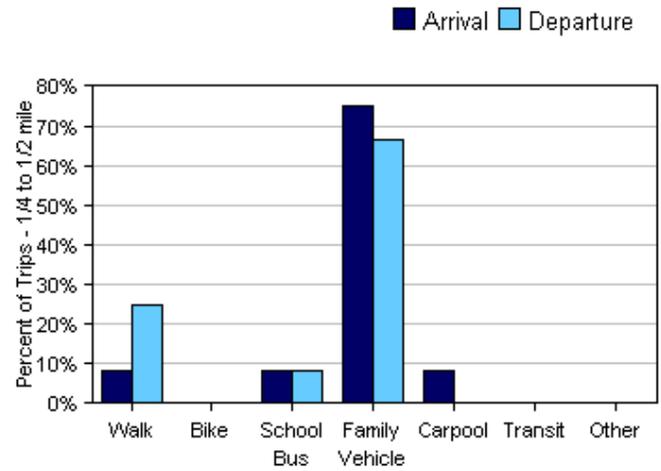
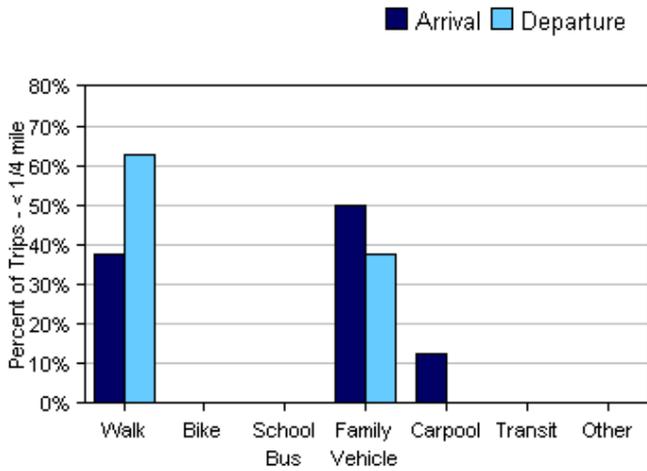
Time of Trip	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	83	6%	0%	35%	52%	7%	0%	0%
Afternoon	81	11%	0%	38%	49%	1%	0%	0%

No Response Morning: 0

No Response Afternoon: 2

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school



Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school

School Arrival

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	8	38%	0%	0%	50%	13%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	12	8%	0%	8%	75%	8%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	14	7%	0%	36%	36%	21%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	18	0%	0%	39%	61%	0%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	29	0%	0%	48%	48%	3%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 2

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

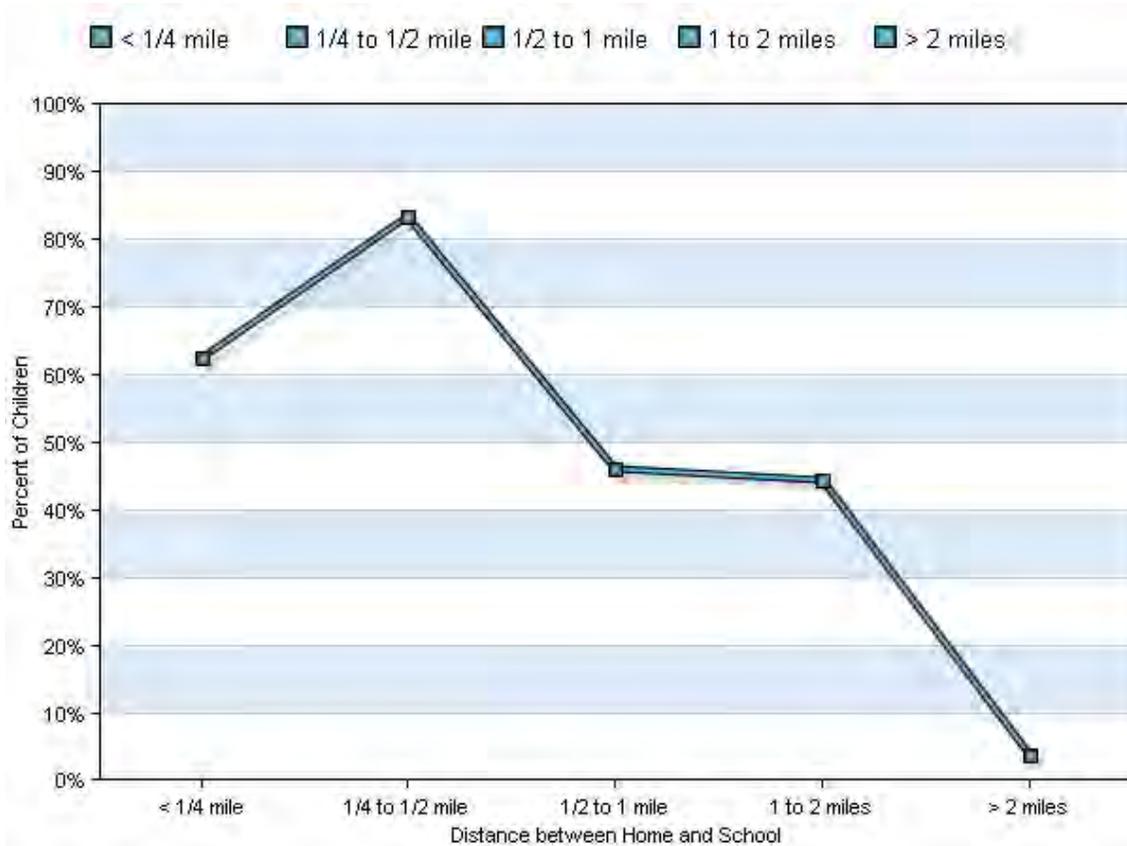
School Departure

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	8	63%	0%	0%	38%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	12	25%	0%	8%	67%	0%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	13	8%	0%	54%	31%	8%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	17	0%	0%	47%	53%	0%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	29	0%	0%	45%	55%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 4

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

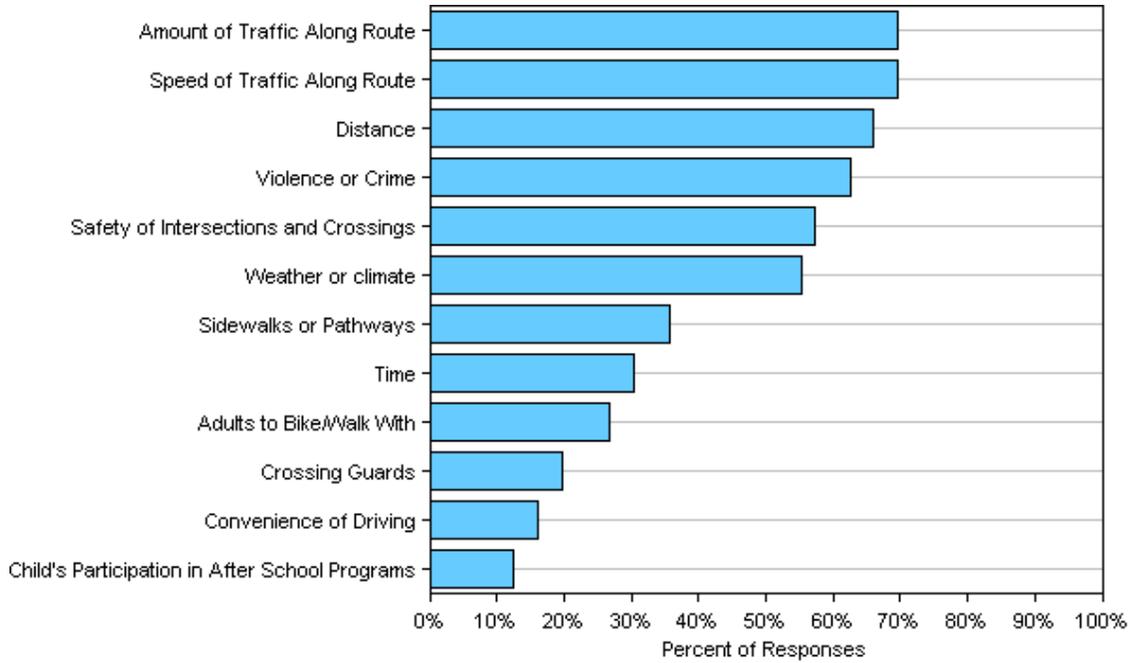


Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school

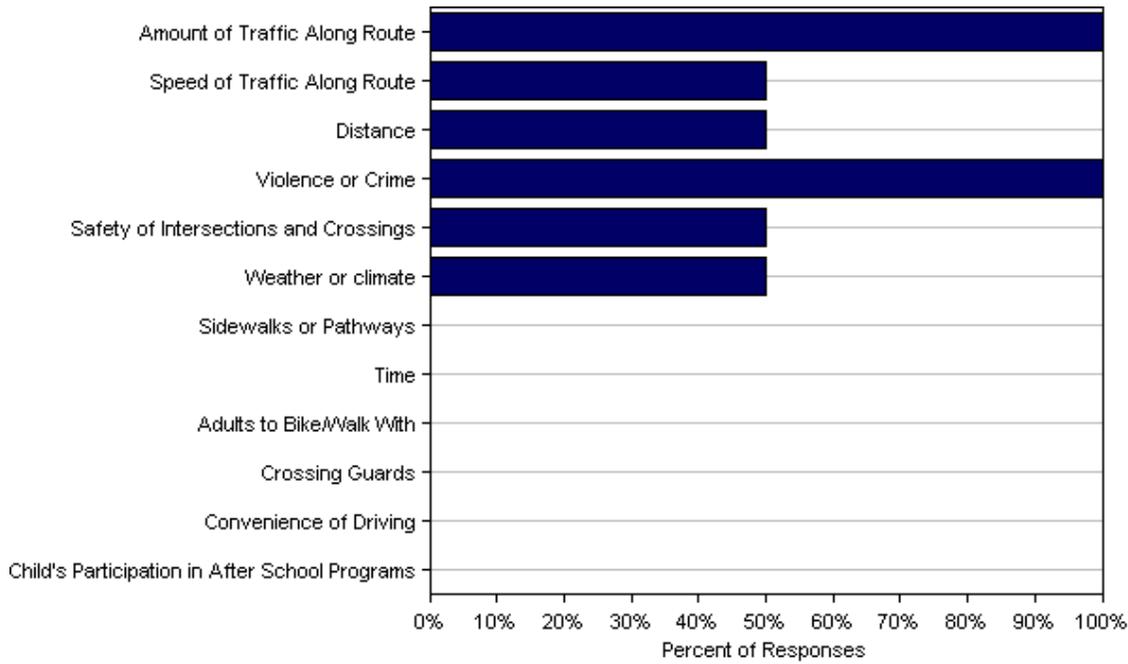
Asked Permission?	Number of Children	Less than 1/4 mile	1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1/2 mile up to 1 mile	1 mile up to 2 miles	More than 2 miles
Yes	30	63%	83%	46%	44%	4%
No	48	38%	17%	54%	56%	96%

Don't know or No response: 5
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school



Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school



Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school

Issue	Child does not walk/bike to school	Child walks/bikes to school
Amount of Traffic Along Route	70%	100%
Speed of Traffic Along Route	70%	50%
Distance	66%	50%
Violence or Crime	63%	100%
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	57%	50%
Weather or climate	55%	50%
Sidewalks or Pathways	36%	0%
Time	30%	0%
Adults to Bike/Walk With	27%	0%
Crossing Guards	20%	0%
Convenience of Driving	16%	0%
Child's Participation in After School Programs	13%	0%
Number of Respondents per Category	56	2

No response: 25

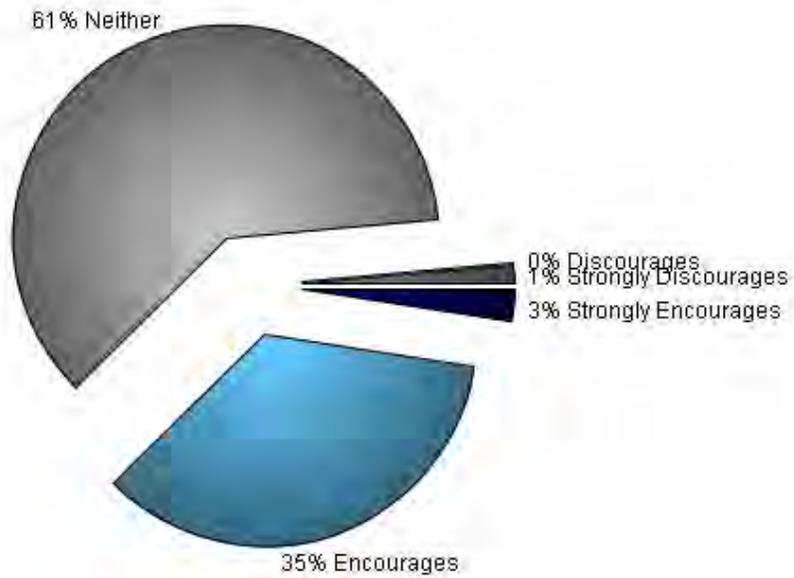
Note:

--Factors are listed from most to least influential for the 'Child does not walk/bike to school' group.

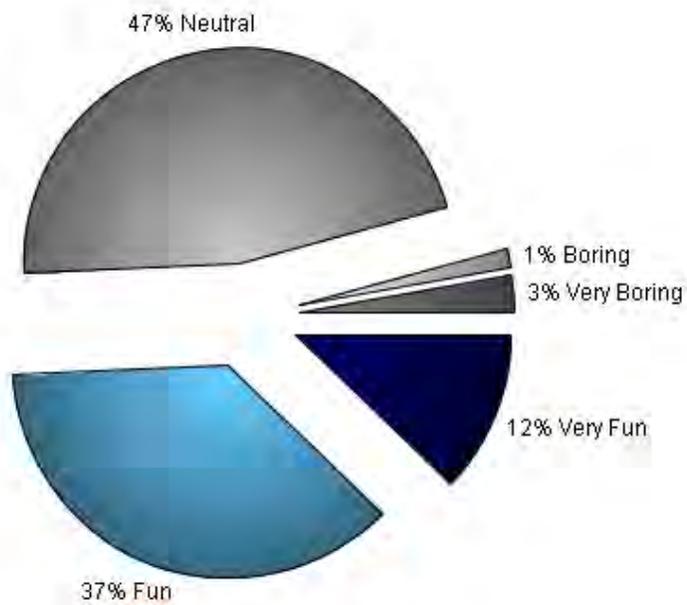
--Each column may sum to > 100% because respondent could select more than issue

--The calculation used to determine the percentage for each issue is based on the 'Number of Respondents per Category' within the respective columns (Child does not walk/bike to school and Child walks/bikes to school.) If comparing percentages between the two columns, please pay particular attention to each column's number of respondents because the two numbers can differ dramatically.

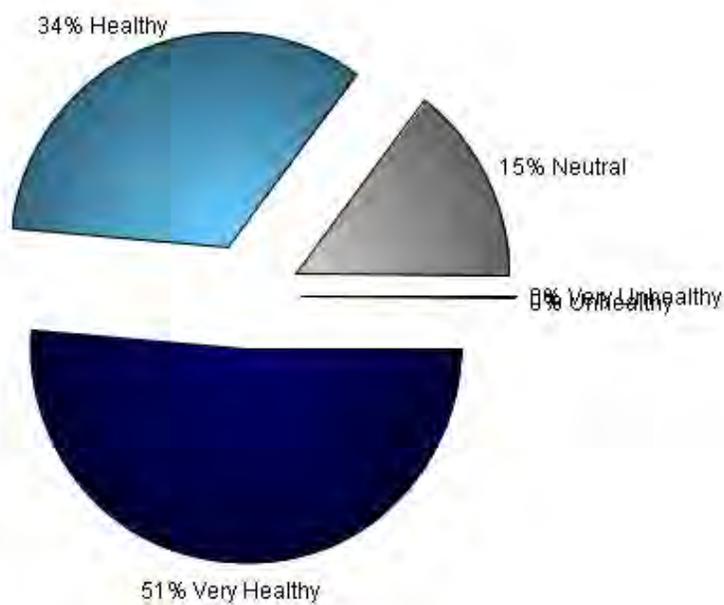
Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school



Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to/from school is for their child



Parents' opinions about how healthy walking and biking to/from school is for their child



Comments Section

SurveyID	Comment
515592	1. REASON FOR IS MY DAUGHTER IS SPECIAL NEEDS-HAS DOWN SYNDROME, WALK WITHOUT AN ADULT OR ME WOULD NOT BE A GOOD CHOICE FOR HER AND 2. THERE ARE BAD DRIVERS AND TOO MANY LISTED "P" IN TOWN! P.S. SHE'S NOT AFRAID OF STRANGERS OR CARS
515626	I WALK MY DAUGHTER HOME FROM SCHOOL ANY TIME I GET A CHANCE BUT THERE ARE TOO MANY CREEPY PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN TO ALLOW HER TO WALK WITHOUT ME.
515664	SHE DOESN'T ACT HER AGE AND WOULD TALK TO STRANGERS AND GET INTO THEIR CAR. SHE ALSO DOESN'T PAY ATTENTION TO CARS AT ALL AND MIGHT GET HIT BY A CAR.
515674	OUR CHILD IS IN KINDERGARDEN...WALKING OR RIDING A BIKE IS NOT SAFE AT THIS AGE BY HERSELF WITHOUT ANOTHER ADULT.
515679	I WOULD LET MY DAUGHTER WALK HOME WITH HER OLDER BROTHER BUT I GET NERVOUS ABOUT THEM CROSSING NORTH ST. ALONE.
515723	I THINK WALKING/BIKING IS A HEALTHY LIVING PRACTICE. WE SIMPLY LIVE TOO FAR AWAY AND ON ROADS THAT HAVE NO SIDEWALKS.
515610	WE LIVE JUST AROUND THE CORNER AND WE MONITOR THIS ISSUE CLOSELY!
515655	BECAUSE WE LIVE ON ROBERSTS HILL RD OFF OF WASHINGTON STREET THE DISTANCE AND DANGEROUS TRAFFIC IS THE FACTOR AS TO WHY I SAID "NO" TO WALKING/BIKING TO SCHOOL.
515660	WHEN MY OLDER SON WAS IN 8TH GRADE I ALLOWED HIM TO WALK FROM THE CMS HOME-TO BARNES ST. I WOULD NO LONGER ALLOW THAT WITH THE AMOUNT OF HARASSMENT AND BULLYING THAT WENT ON EVEN IN THAT SHORT DISTANCE AND THE TIME IT TOOK TO WALK IT! I ENDED UP REARRANGING MY WORK SCHEDULE TO PICK HIM UP AND DROP OFF.
515673	MY SON HAS A DISABILITY AND DOES NOT PAY ATTENTION CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE TRAFFIC AND THAT'S WHY I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT'S SAFE ENOUGH FOR HIM TO WALK HOME BY HIMSELF AT THIS TIME.
515676	MY SON DOES WALK HOME AFTER SCHOOL BUT IT STILL MAKES ME NERVOUS WITH ALL ATTEMPTED ABDUCTIONS IN NH RIGHT NOW.
515685	AIDEN WOULD LOVE TO WALK HOME, HE ASKS TO ALL THE TIME, BUT I JUST DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH THE FACT THAT THERE ARE NO CROSSING GUARDS ON NORTH ST. CROSSING NORTH ST. IS SCARY FOR ME AND I'M AN ADULT.
515689	SIDEWALKS NEED IMPROVEMENTS ESPECIALLY ON BELDING STREET, IT'S UNSAFE IN AREAS AND THERE IS NO SIDEWALK IN SOME PLACES.
515695	MY CHILD WALKS HOME WITH A 3RD GRADER AND IT WORKS OUT GOOD!
515707	I HAVE WITNESSED PEOPLE USING THIR PHONE AND NOT WATCHING THE ROAD AT ALL. I DON'T TRUST DRIVERS MUCH ANY MROE. MOSTLY TEENS, AT ALL!!!
515711	I WOULD LOVE TO ALLOW HIM TO WALK/BIKE BUT I FEEL IT IS JUST A BIT TOO FAR AND THERE ARE TOO MANY BUSY ROAD TO TRAVEL ON. I'D RATHER JUST DRIVE HIM.
515728	MY CHILD HAS MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND SHOULD NEVER BE ALONE. SOMETIMES WE PARK AT BARNES PARK AND WALK A LITTLE. IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE MORE SIDEWALKS WHERE WE DON'T NOW, ESPECIALLY ALONG BUSY ROADS.
515597	REGARDING QUESTION 11, I WOULD ALLOW MY DAUGHTER TO WALK TO SCHOOL IF THE CONDITIONS WERE IMPROVED, BUT WHEN SHE'S OLDER- PERHAPS BY GRADE 4. I DON'T FEEL SHE'D BE MATURE/STREET SMART ENOUGH BEFORE THEN. ALSO, THE PEDESTRIAN LIGHTS AT THE CORNER OF NORTH AND ELM STS. ARE USUALLY NOT WORKING!!! NOT GOOD.
515657	I FEEL WALKING IS HEALTHY BUT CAN BE VERY UNSAFE. TEXTING WHILE DRIVING ALSO SCARES ME TOO MANY PEOPLE DO IT AND IT MAKES IT VERY UNSAFE FOR KIDS.
515717	BUT SOME PEOPLE DON'T HAVE A LICENSE AND HAS TO DO IT ALL YEAR LONG AND HAVE OTHER KIDS. AND THATS WHY MY KIDS WILL MISS A LOT OF SCHOOL THIS YEAR. AND THE BUS GARAGE IS SO MESSY, THEY TOLD ME THAT KINDERGARDEN KIDS HAVE PRIORITY BUT 1ST-6TH AND MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CAN RIDE THE BUS, MAKES NO SENSE TO ME.

515651	I FEEL WE LIVE TOO FAR AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL FOR ANY OF OUR KIDS TO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL. THEY RIDE THE BUS AND WE DRIVE THEM TO ACTIVITIES.
515700	MY CHILDS AGE AND SAFETY ARE THE MAIN REASONS, ADN I ENJOY BRINGING HIM TO AND FROM SCHOOL.
515714	WHEN WEATHER PERMITS, MY NEIGHBOR AND I TAKE TURNS WALKING THE CHILDREN. THERE IS A PATH BEHIND THE SCHOOL IN FRONT OF VRH THAT IS VERY DANGEROUS FOR THE CHILDREN DUE TO HAZAREDS MADE BY OLDER CHILDREN MAKING A BIKE PARK AND THEY HAVE DESTROYED THE BRIDGE THAT WENT OVER THE CREEK. ALSO AN ISSUE IS TRANGERS, I WOULDN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE LETTING ANY OF MY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN WALK ALONE OR WITH FRIENDS.
515682	I THINK SOMETHING STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE ABOUT TRAFFIC AT SCHOOL AND BUSES ARE ALWAYS LATE SO CARS WAIT FOR TOO LONG.
515643	I DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH MY CHILD WALKING TO SCHOOL UNIL HE IS IN AT LEAST 8TH GRADE.
515686	THE LOCATION THAT WE LIVE IN IS MY MAIN REASON TO NOT ALLOW MY CHILD TO WALK TO SCHOOL AND THE DISTANCE. I LIKE TO DROP HER OFF, SO THAT I KNOW SHE IS AT SCHOOL SAFE AND SOUND.
515698	MY CHILD WILL NOT WAKL OR BIKE BECAUSE OF AGE AND DISTANCE!
515647	I LIVE TOO FAR AWAY TO EVER LET MY SON WALK OR RIDE A BIKE.
515668	MY CHILD IS AT A CAREGIVERS AND ITS TOO FAR FOR HIM TO WALK. GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES HE IS INCAPABLE OF MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES.

APPENDIX B – EXAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TABLE

Action Item	School / District	Priority	Target Completion	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Task Complete