

EXISTING CONDITIONS MEMO

Fond du Lac SRTS – January 27, 2021

CONTENTS

School Environment and Policy Assessment Results 2
Walk Audit Results 3

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Administration at Fond du Lac Ojibwe School completed MnDOT's School Environment and Policy Assessment in December 2020. Below is a summary of results from this assessment.

Policies and Practices

- School wellness policy promotes walking and biking
- School transportation policy does not address walking and biking
- School collaborates with local law enforcement
- Plan in place for evaluating Safe Routes to School efforts
- School participates in walking/biking programs
- School participates in walk/bike safety curriculum

Property and Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

- Bus loading/unloading area are separate from parent pick-up/drop-off area
- School arrival/dismissal policy does not address walking and biking

School Zone

- All speed limits around school are 30 mph or less
- Sidewalks/trails are present near school, but there are gaps
- Some sidewalks/trails are maintained during winter
- Sidewalks/trails are in good condition
- Sidewalks/trails have few or no obstacles
- School does not have designated walking routes
- Some road crossings are marked, but none have pedestrian crossing signals
- Crossing guards and student school patrols are not present

WALK AUDIT RESULTS

Select members of the Safe Routes to School Team participated in a walk audit on January 13, 2021. These SRTS Team members walked a loop near the school (see photo) to observe and discuss walking conditions. Ideas shared during this exercise are listed below.

- Some students whose parents work at the RBC will ride with their parents to work and then walk to school. In cold weather times, sometimes a shuttle is provided for these students. The corner on the east side of the building can be difficult for both pedestrians and drivers to see around, creating a hazard. A future project will add sidewalks and a crossing to the area.
- Most people on the Reservation seem knowledgeable about walking against/facing traffic as a safety practice. But at certain places, like the north entrance to the RBC and going toward the intersection of Big Lake Road and University Road, no road shoulder is available. This is uncomfortable for a person walking.
- Across Big Lake Road, a new cultural center just opened. There currently isn't walking infrastructure to support pedestrian movements to this new community space. Crossing Big Lake Road, which is posted at a 50 mph speed limit, does not feel comfortable for a person walking, and crossing at the intersection, where additional turn lanes widen the travel way, feels even more unsafe. With the potential for additional development along Big Lake Road, participants asked if sidewalks should be constructed after or before more destinations are created. Developing the corridor with trails and trees was noted as an interest.
- Crossing the intersection of Big Lake Road and University Road did not feel safe. This intersection has been studied extensively in the past, and a demonstration project was installed in Fall 2020 with bumpouts, crossing medians, and painted crosswalks. Community members who provided feedback about these temporary changes were not positive about them, but data was not collected on how these people went through this intersection (on foot vs. in a car).
- Some conversations have taken place about how to safely cross roadways in the intersection area. One idea is to have crossings 200 feet or so away from the intersection on each leg, with trail infrastructure and possibly flashing beacons to support these crossings. There was concern noted about whether drivers would yield to pedestrians, even with a flashing beacon.
- The Big Lake Trail feels comfortable and safe to use. Participants noted that many different groups and people of all ages use this trail.
- In the winter, most people will walk along University Road, where a wide shoulder is available. An upcoming sidewalk project will construct a path on the west side of the roadway that will be cleared during the winter for use by people walking. This will create a full connection between Fond du Lac Ojibwe School and the Big Lake Trail.

