

Fond du Lac Safe Routes to School Plan Update

SRTS Team Meeting #3
March 26, 2021, 10:00 a.m.
Zoom Video/Audio Conference

SUMMARY

Introductions

Russell Habermann, Senior Planner at ARDC Planning, welcomed everyone and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Attendees: Jamie Adams (FDL Planning), John Babineau (Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, PE Teacher), Miyah Danielson (FDL Executive Director), Antonio Flores (Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, Community Services Director), Conor Henneberry (FDL Americorps VISTA), Alexandra Houchin (FDL Planning), KaRee Liimatainen (FDL Human Services), Samantha Martin (FDL SHIP Coordinator), Jennifer Murray (Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, Superintendent), JinYeene Neumann (Carlton County Transportation Department, Engineer), Rick Norrgard (Carlton County Transportation Department, Assistant Engineer), Fred Petite (FDL Police), Valerie Tanner (Fond du Lac Ojibwe School, Principal), Maren Webb (MnDOT District One), Russell Habermann (ARDC Planning)

Action Plan Review

Habermann started by presenting a revised vision statement. Habermann then directed the group to review the goals and strategies in the draft action plan. Below are comments for each project sheet.

In-School Bike Education

- Maintenance of the forthcoming bike fleet should be mentioned; there are possibilities with teaching students bike maintenance by having them perform bike maintenance. The plan for maintaining the fleet should be further explored.
- Carlton County's bike fleet could be kept in mind if needed for use as well.

Road Safety Education

- Youth should also be included in community education.
- A comment was made about a portion of driver's education requiring parents to be involved, but it was clarified that this parent involvement only pertains to parents being educated about new driver restrictions.
- There was concern that bringing a driver's education class to Fond du Lac would involve a lot of work and expense. These details, including the feasibility of having a designated class, can be explored further.
- Related to education during road projects, it was noted that education takes place for students, but education aimed toward adults should be expanded.

Bike Programs

- With the incentive program, John Babineau (PE teacher) said he would station himself near the bike rack in the morning and help with that program.

- It would be a good idea to incentivize staff to bike to school too.
- Related to “renting out” equipment, it was noted different possibilities would need to be explored, specifically for bicycles. Could these bikes be housed in the bike fleet trailer? Is it too much work to administer the system and maintain the bikes? It was noted that 30 bikes could be reclaimed from the FDL Police, but the bikes would need extensive maintenance.
- It was clarified that “handlebar” maps would be laminated maps that could be fastened to the handlebars of a bike; it would be like a no-tech GPS. It would be good to pair distribution of this map to students with having an adult ride the routes with them, perhaps during a group ride.

Public Policies

- Related to the health policy group, it was noted that there have been pop-up groups that deal with things as they are brought up; a group that meets regularly to discuss and move forward multiple health-related items may be helpful.
- It would be difficult to figure out late arrival/early departure; it would be better to focus energy on getting bike racks on school busses.
- More than 90% of students live more than a mile and a half away from the school.

Youth Engagement

- The student council could be the basis for the youth council.

Bike Infrastructure

- Bus bike racks have turned out to be more complex than previously thought. It was suggested to reach out to Mike Quam from the school to discuss; the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA) also put bike racks on the front of a few buses, and contacts could be made there.
- Off-road and nature trails for bikes should be added to this list as well.

Walk Infrastructure

- Any projects would require funding that Carlton County currently doesn’t have. Securing external funding would need to be a part of this conversation.
- Speed limits along Big Lake Road are set by the Commissioner of Transportation, and stop lights would not be allowed at the intersection of Big Lake Road and Brevator Road based on national regulations for traffic control.
- Crossings at the intersection of Trettel Lane and Big Lake Road should also be included.
- Infrastructure along Airport Road should also be included.
- Toucan traffic signals (i.e. high-intensity activated crosswalk or rectangular rapid flashing beacons) should be explored for enhancing crossing safety.

Habermann will revise the plan document based on these comments and reach out to individuals to address strategies under the *Walk Infrastructure* section.

Spring SRTS Activities

Habermann shared that a couple evaluation tools still need to be completed before the end of the school year: Student Travel Tallies and School Zone Observation. If students aren’t participating in in-person learning, it will be okay if these tools are only partially completed or not completed.

KaRee Liimatainen, FDL Human Services, also mentioned that work is currently being planned for bike education and encouragement, but how they look will depend on COVID-19 restrictions. She will be meeting with other members of the SRTS Team on Monday to discuss steps going forward. They may include K-5 virtual education, a Walk/Bike to School Day with incentives, a bike rodeo, and development of the forthcoming bike fleet.

Next Steps

- ARDC Planning will develop a meeting summary and distribute it to the SRTS Team.
- ARDC Planning will reach out to individuals on the SRTS Team to talk about directions for strategies under the Walk Infrastructure section.
- ARDC Planning will connect with the school in May to work on Student Travel Tallies and School Zone Observation work.
- ARDC Planning will reach out to the SRTS Team about setting a fourth and final meeting date, tentatively for May.

The meeting adjourned at 11:11 am.