

# Charlotte's City Wide and Multi District Approach to Safe Routes to School



Safe Routes to School

# Presenters & Moderators

---

## Ellen Dreps

Manager, ALIVE Health and Wellness  
University of Michigan Health-Sparrow  
Eaton



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH-SPARROW

---

## Kristian Foondle

Rail Safety Manager  
MDOT – Office of Rail

## Alexis Louth

Local Grade Crossing Analyst  
MDOT – Rail Safety & Administration Section



---

## Dr. Mandy Stewart

Superintendent  
Charlotte Public Schools



---

## Evan Stowell

SRTS Intern  
Michigan Fitness Foundation

## Colleen Synk, MSPH

Sr. Operations & Evaluation Coord.  
Michigan Fitness Foundation



# Safe Routes To School Goals

---

Encourage and enable all school children, to walk and bicycle to and from school when distance is reasonable and routes are safe

---

Promote lifelong habits of physical activity

---

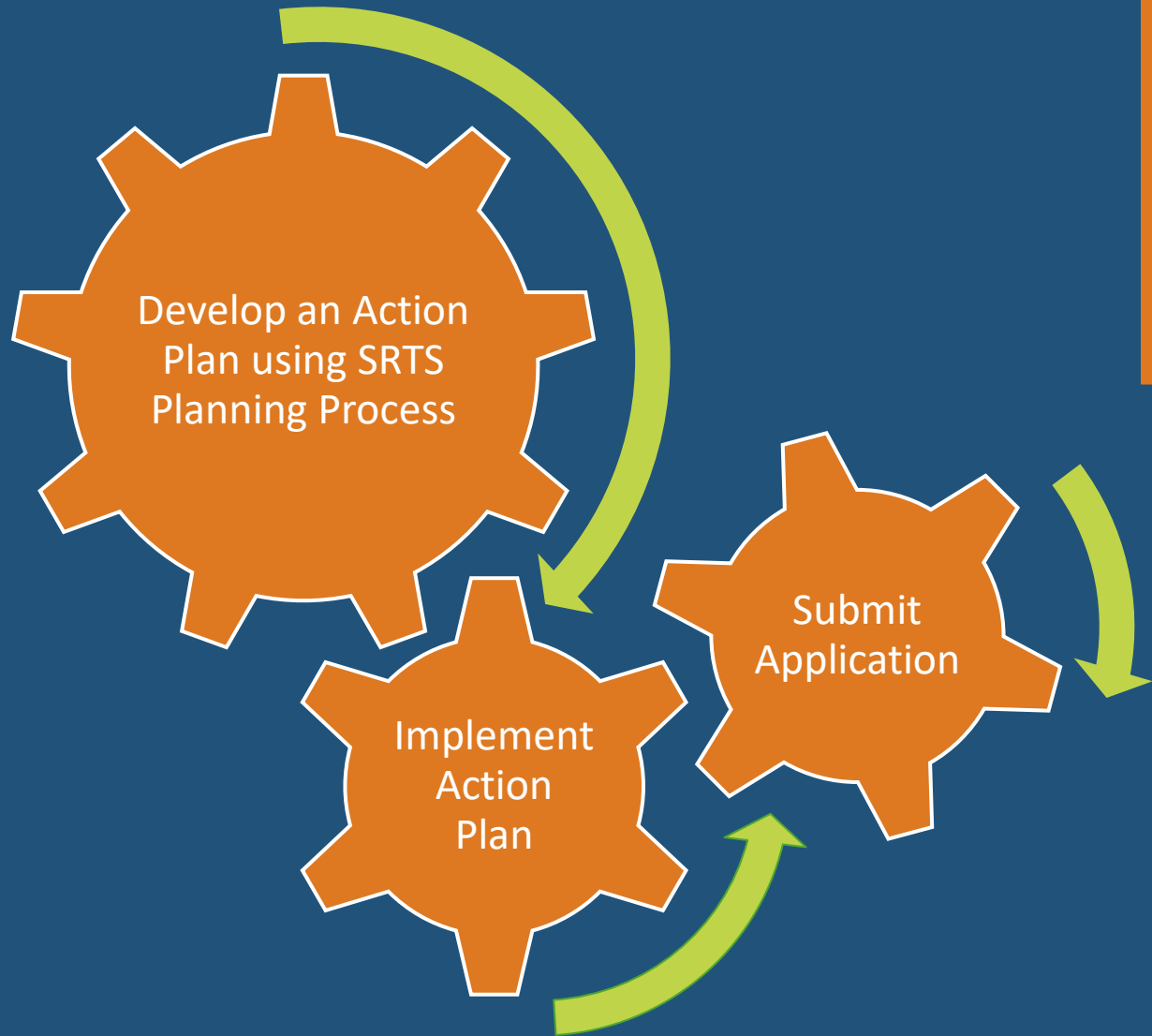
Make walking and bicycling routes to school safer

---

Reduce traffic around schools

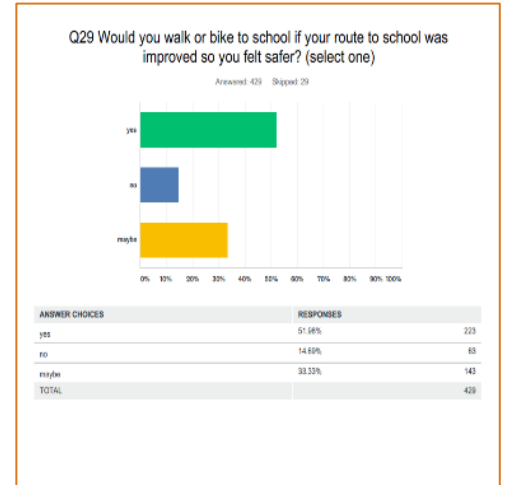
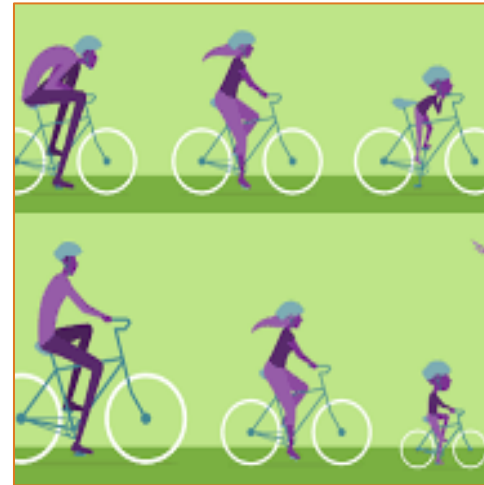


# Safe Routes to School It's more than money



# The Six Es

1. Engagement
2. Equity
3. Engineer
4. Encourage
5. Educate
6. Evaluate





# mini vs. MAJOR

## SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANT

---

### mini Grant:

A programming (non-infrastructure) only grant, administered by the Michigan Fitness Foundation. Funds available average up to **\$15,000/school** or up to **\$120,000 for district** applicants with 8 or more schools. Annual call for application proposals in January.

### MAJOR Grant:

Administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Generally, up to **\$300,000/school** in funds to help you build infrastructure (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.) around your school plus up to **\$15,000/school** in programming funds. On-going rolling deadlines for applications.





# MDOT/SRTS Regional Grant Coordinator



To be assigned to a coordinator, please  
contact Max Fulkerson:  
517-908-3832  
MFulkerson@michiganfitness.org

**METRO ♦ SOUTHWEST**

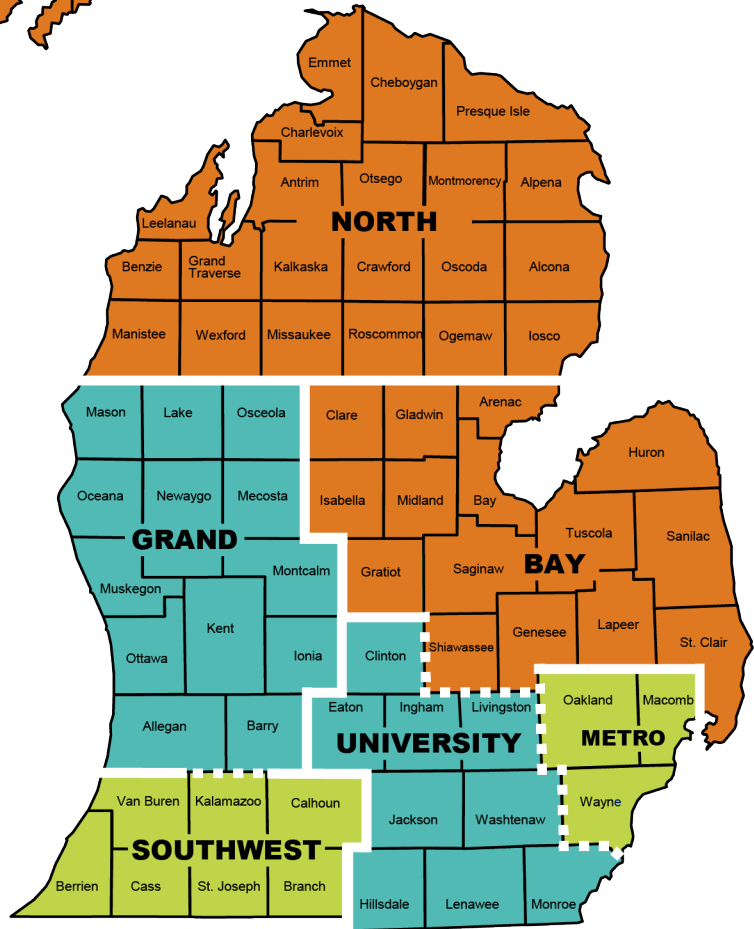
**Adam Jenks, M.U.R.P.**

**GRAND ♦ UNIVERSITY**

**Colleen Synk, M.S.P.H.**

**BAY ♦ NORTH ♦ SUPERIOR**

**Erin Paskus**





# Michigan Technical Assistance

Need Help With?	Contact
<p>Information from MDOT SRTS State Infrastructure Program Leadership</p>	<p><b>Bryan Armstrong, SRTS MDOT Program Manager</b> armstrongb@michigan.gov 517.335.2636</p>
<p>SRTS Director</p>	<p><b>Max Fulkerson, SRTS MFF Program Director</b> mfulkerson@michiganfitness.org 517.908.3832</p>
<p>SRTS Training, Evaluation &amp; Surveys, Website Assistance, Newsletters Grand and University Region Schools</p>	<p><b>Colleen Synk, Sr. Operations &amp; Evaluations Coordinator</b> csynk@michiganfitness.org 517.908.3826</p>
<p>SRTS Mini Grants (Non-infrastructure) Walk/Bike &amp; Roll to School Day Bay, North, and Superior Region Schools</p>	<p><b>Erin Paskus, Program Coordinator</b> epaskus@michiganfitness.org 517.908.3840</p>
<p>SRTS Contracts and Invoicing Metro and Southwest Region Schools</p>	<p><b>Adam Jenks, Sr. Contracts &amp; Data Coordinator</b> ajenks@michiganfitness.org 517.908.3816</p>



# Charlotte Timeline Cont.

## Pre-Planning

- 2017- Ellen took over the Step by Step group with Community Wellness Manager at Hayes Green
- Late 2017- Step by Step identified SRTS as a funding program to review for alignment with their goals
- Dec 2017- Step by Step had Colleen as University Grant Regional Coordinator speak about the grant
- Feb 2018- Ellen and Charlotte Public Schools Transportation Director attend Transportation Bonanza
  - Created a presentation to promote grant and get stakeholder buy in to pursue the planning process and built a robust leadership team.





# SRTS Team Leadership

- CanDo (Charlotte Area Networking Development Organization)
  - Step by Step committee
  - lead by Ellen Dreps from ALIVE-Community Wellbeing Place, inside UM Health-Sparrow Eaton (formerly Hayes Green Beach Memorial Hospital)
- Charlotte Public Schools
  - Kathy Vance (Transportation Services Supervisor)
  - Mandy Stewart (Superintendent)
  - Michelle Sine (Business/Operations)
  - Jeff Bennett (IT Support)
  - Principals
- St. Mary's Catholic School
  - Mandy Wildern (Principal)
- Barry-Eaton District Health Department
- City of Charlotte
  - Amy Gilson (Director of Public Works)
- Eaton County Road Commission
  - Matt Hannahs





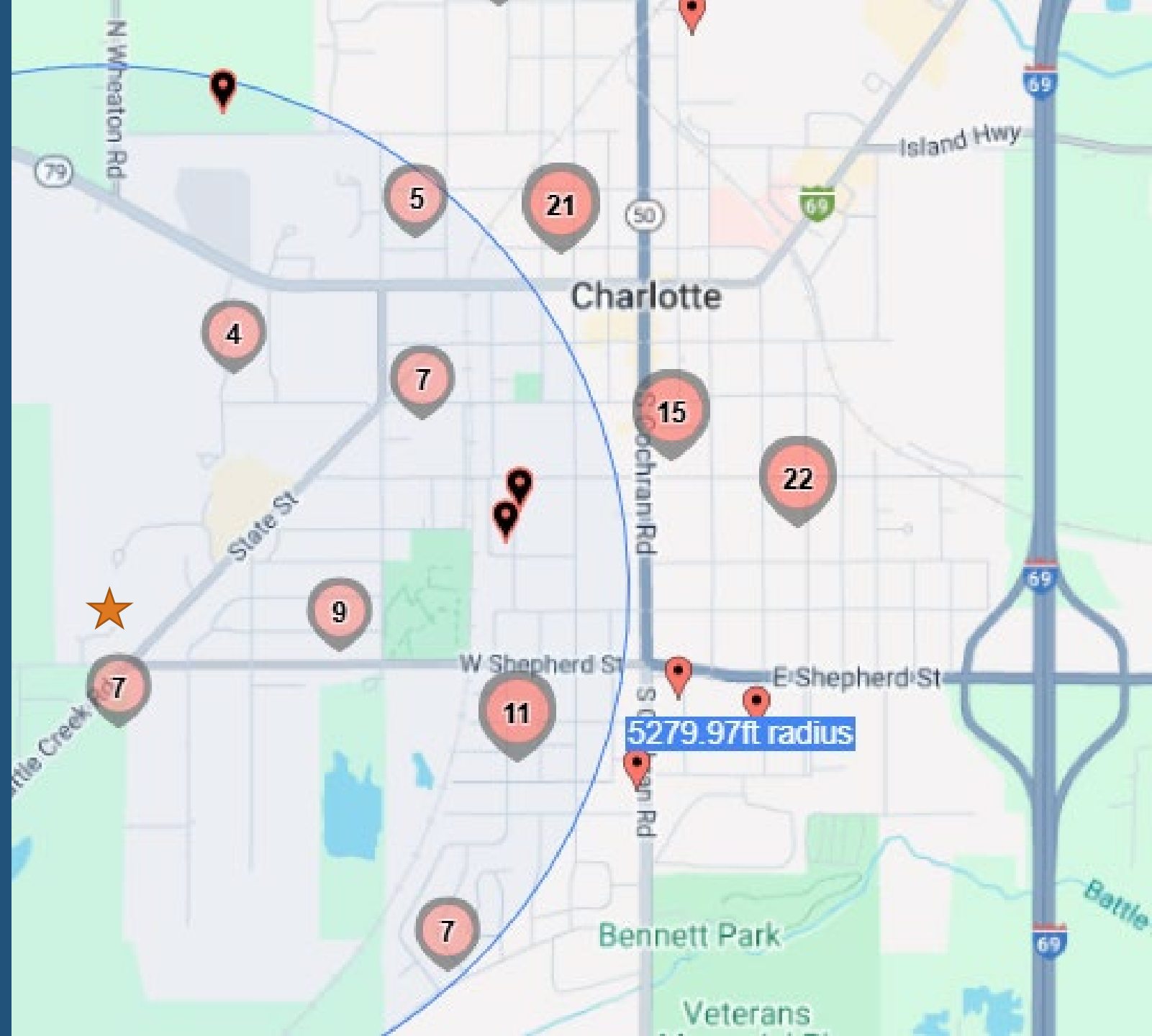
# Charlotte Timeline

## Planning Process

- Aug 2018- Formal SRTS kick-off meeting
- Sept 2018- Walking audits with public invitation
- March 2019- Distribution of Student & Parent/Caregiver surveys and Travel Tallies
- July 2019- Local team review of data with City and key stakeholders to prepare for action planning meeting
- Sept 2019- Public Action Planning meeting
- Oct 2019- Review application project and requirements



# Surveys & Student Housing Maps







# Walking Audits







# Bringing it all together

- The team held meetings to start gathering the information needed to submit the grant.
- Information included:
  - Which schools would meet the criteria of the 2-mile radius, which included 6 total schools in Charlotte
  - Mapping of current student housing
  - Current number of students bussed to school
  - Walking Audits identifying barriers students have when they walk or bike to school
  - Surveys on barriers they see for children to walk or bike to school
  - Gathering costs needed for the program



# IMPACT Grant



- Funds were needed to assist with pre-engineering
- With the help of Barbara Fulton, Ellen Dreps completed the IMPACT Community Foundation Grant
- Submitted in April, 2019
- Approved and awarded \$75,000 July, 2019



# Charlotte Timeline Cont.

## Application

- Sept 2019- Application opened in the MDOT Grant System
- Oct 2019- Application submission
- Dec 2019- Application presented to the Application Review Committee
- July 2020- Office of Rail meeting about Charlotte sidewalk priority





# Scope of Work

The five schools distributed across the city that made it into the final grant scope had a high coverage of improvements broadly applied throughout the community.





Safe Routes to School

# Charlotte Sidewalk RR Crossings

**MICHIGAN  
FITNESS  
FOUNDATION**



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Highway  
Administration**



# Problem: Sidewalk gap on south side of local street



- What are the rules for adding a pedestrian crossing facility?
- Who is responsible for doing the work to construct new sidewalk?
- What level of detail is required for design?
- How much does something like this even cost?
- How do we contact and engage the railroad?
- When can we expect the work to get done?
- Where do we even start?





# Solution: Contact the MDOT Rail Safety Office



- MDOT has regulatory authority over all public railroad crossings
- MDOT has staff experts to assist in answering your questions
- MDOT can assist communities with project administration
- MDOT has extensive contact on a regular basis with all railroads
- MDOT has access to industry design standards and costs
- MDOT can provide guidance on project timelines
- Email address: [MDOT-RailSafety@michigan.gov](mailto:MDOT-RailSafety@michigan.gov)





# Process: Provide us with your proposed project detail



- If possible, please contact us at least 24 months in advance
- Railroad design and material acquisition may take up to a year or more
- The railroad will be responsible for the sidewalk surface at the tracks
- The community is responsible for the sidewalk approaches to the track
- A sidewalk crossing may not require a Diagnostic Study Team Review
- A pathway crossing will require a Diagnostic Study Team Review



# Process: We will review your inquiry and provide guidance



- If a Diagnostic Study Team Review (DSTR) is required, we will schedule
- If the community and the railroad agree on the new sidewalk, no DSTR
- If there is no agreement, the DSTR will result in an Order for the RR work
- If the work is being funded through SR2S or TAP or LAP, we will assist
- MDOT Office of Rail has standing Master Agreements with most railroads
- Office of Rail will solicit and review and approve RR estimates
- Office of Rail will provide authorization and oversight for RR work





# Overview: How does Rail Safety fit in with active transportation needs?



- We have statewide oversight and authority on all public grade crossings
- We routinely monitor conditions and issue corrective notices as needed
- We review all project submittals with RR crossings for safety purposes
- We provide advice and guidance for project development
- We serve as a liaison between communities and railroads
- We are here to assist the public with safety at RR crossings



# Charlotte Timeline Cont.

## LAP to Construction

- Nov 2020- Conditional Commitment issued with grant award for 2022
- April 2021- LAP kick-off meeting
- Feb 2022- Revision of the grant to remove Parkview priorities
- Jan 2023- Grant awarded
- March 2023- Tree removal
- May 2023- Other prep work
- June 2023- Sidewalk construction starts
- Oct 2023- Open to Traffic
- Oct 2024- Final Completion (water and cultivating pay items complete)



# Charlotte SRTS Project Overview

- 6 schools—Charlotte Upper Elementary, Charlotte Middle School, Parkview\*, Washington, Galewood, and St. Mary’s.
- Each school registered could get up to \$200,000, which is a total typical award of up to \$1.2 million.
- Funding:
  - The CanDo! Step by Step Committee contributed \$4,018
  - The SRTS awarded a grant capped at \$1,306,048
    - Grant increased to \$1,828,489, (with award limit shift)
- Eligible construction of up to two miles from a school covered most of Charlotte!
- Application’s physical improvements included railroad crossing alongside with educational components to serve students.
- Public engagement included \*CJ Article, Tim Talk live, BOE Meetings, City Council, Rotary program, Can Do public meeting, FB posts, Feedback Public Session.
- Full project timeline started in 2017 and finished construction in 2024.





# Educational Program



Part of the grant covered planning hours for the educational program

- Walking School Bus Days
- Bike/Walking Safety Lessons
- Projects Related to Healthy Exercising
- Community Outreach Events
- School Sponsored Walking Programs
- Programs to Connect Community Partners for Exercise/Education (e.g., AL!VE, etc.)

## CPS – SRTS Positive Impact

- Increased use of sidewalks all around the community
- Increase in biking/scooters/walking for our youth
- Safer conditions for travel to our schools, (sporting events & practices)
- Safer conditions for community travel (ALIVE, library, downtown)
- Visual improvement to the area, and access for senior citizens/wheelchair users
- Positive stakeholder relationships/trust







**GROW. LEARN. PLAY.**  
**THE ORIOLE WAY.**



**Safe Routes to School**



**Q & A**



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH-SPARROW

**MICHIGAN  
FITNESS  
FOUNDATION**



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Highway  
Administration**



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH-SPARROW

**Ellen Dreps**, ALIVE Health and Wellness Manager  
Ellen.Dreps@UMHSparrow.org  
517-541-5812



**MDOT-RailSafety@michigan.gov**  
**Kris Foondle**, Rail Safety Manager  
FoondleK@Michigan.gov  
517-648-7588

**Alexis Louth**, Local Grade Crossing Analyst  
LouthA@Michigan.gov  
517-897-2103

# Contact Information



**Dr. Mandy Stewart**, Superintendent  
Stewarmr@Charlottenet.org  
517-541-5100



**Colleen Synk**, Sr. Operation & Evaluation Coord.  
CSynk@MichiganFitness.org  
517- 908-3826





**GROW. LEARN. PLAY.**  
**THE ORIOLE WAY.**



**Safe Routes to School**



**THANK YOU**



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH-SPARROW



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Highway  
Administration**