

**SAFE
ROUTES
TO SCHOOL**
CENTRAL ALABAMA





What is Safe Routes to School?

- Safe Routes to School is the movement to create safe, convenient, and fun opportunities for children to bicycle or walk to and from school.
- Local Programs are built on collaborative partnerships between parents, educators, elected officials, planners, engineers, business and community leaders, and health officials.



From 1979 to 2009, the number of K-8 students who walk or bike to school has dropped from 48% to 13%. Now, approximately 40% of school trips are made on a school bus, and 45% of children arrive at school in private automobiles. The decline in daily physical activity in walking to and from school has coincided with the increased prevalence of childhood obesity.



Why is SRTS Important?

- Childhood obesity has tripled nationally in the last thirty years. In Alabama the obesity rate has risen from less than 10 percent in 1989 to 32 percent – the fifth highest in the nation (National Center for Disease Control)
- It provides children the opportunity to safely bicycle and walk to school. This improves community and personal health, benefits the environment, and helps to decrease traffic congestion around schools.



Why is SRTS Important?

- There is substantial evidence that physical activity can help improve academic achievement, enhance concentration and attention, and result in better classroom behavior.
- Many school districts bus children short distances due to hazardous walking conditions, forcing school districts to choose between safety and budget. Adding infrastructure like sidewalks can reduce long-term costs.



Supporting SRTS in the Community

1. Projects: Alter & improve the built environment for walking, cycling, and active living in general.
2. Programs: Build awareness, support, skills, & encourage active behavior
3. Policies: Educate and influence decision-making so regulations are changed and best practices become the standard



Safe Routes to School Federal Funding

- The federal Safe Routes to School program was created in 2005 under SAFETEA-LU, and existed through 2012.
- The program was administered in Alabama by the Alabama Department of Transportation with joint agreements with the Alabama Department of Public Health and the State Department of Education.
- Through December 31, 2012, ALDOT awarded projects to 167 schools/programs totaling \$17.3 million.



Safe Routes to School Federal Funding

- Under the new federal transportation bill (MAP-21) Safe Routes to School was consolidated into the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).
- The State of Alabama had the discretion to dedicate TAP funding specifically for SRTS, but did not do so. As a result, ALDOT will discontinue their state SRTS program and coordination.

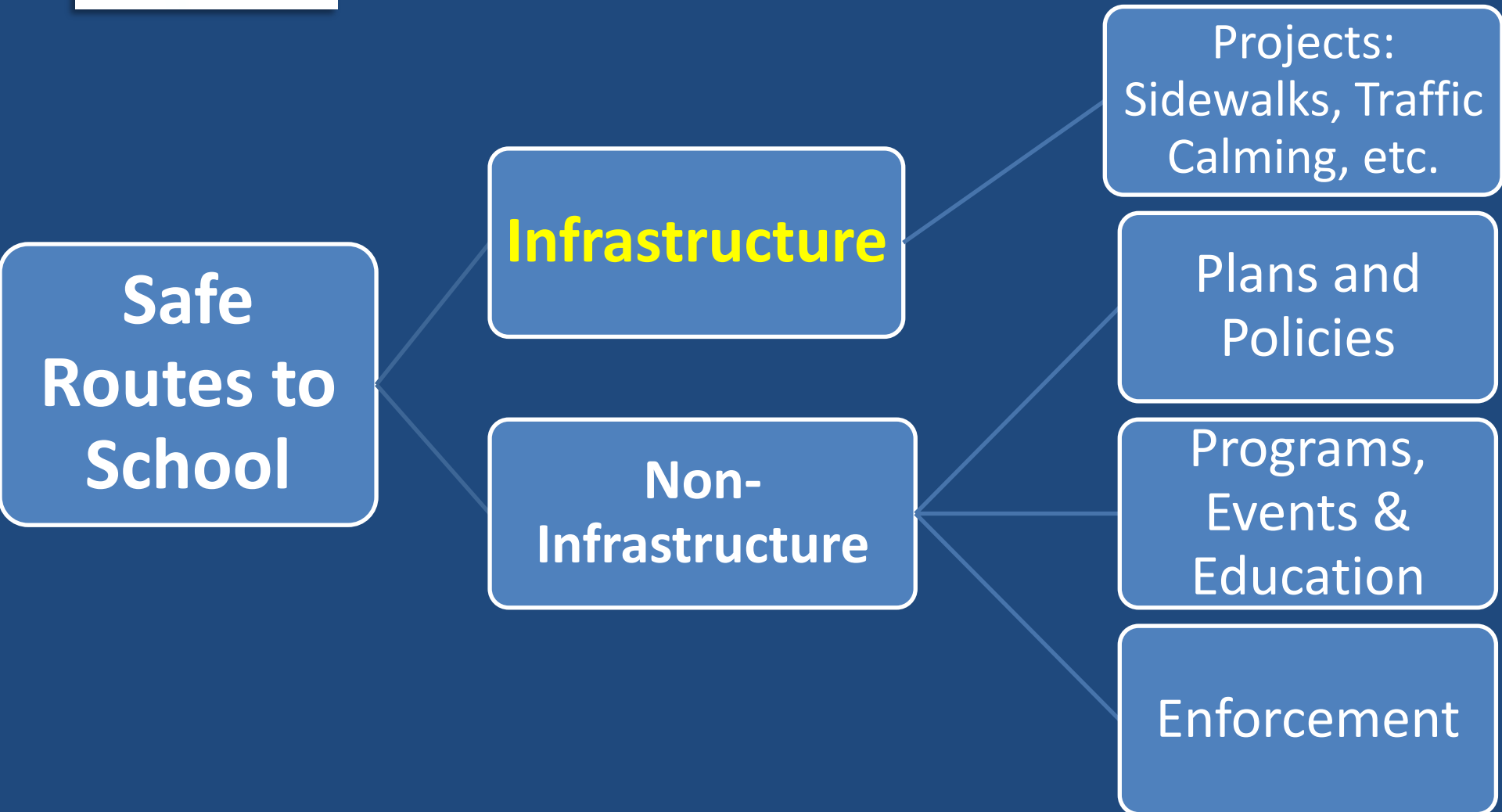


Safe Routes to School Federal Funding

- The Alabama Dept. of Public Health & the Alabama State Dept. of Education has previously offered statewide assistance for Safe Routes to School, but ALDOT's contract with them ends in September 2013.
- TAP includes numerous other funding categories, which results in more competition and less total funding for Safe Routes to School. The program is now known as Safe Routes for Non-Drivers.



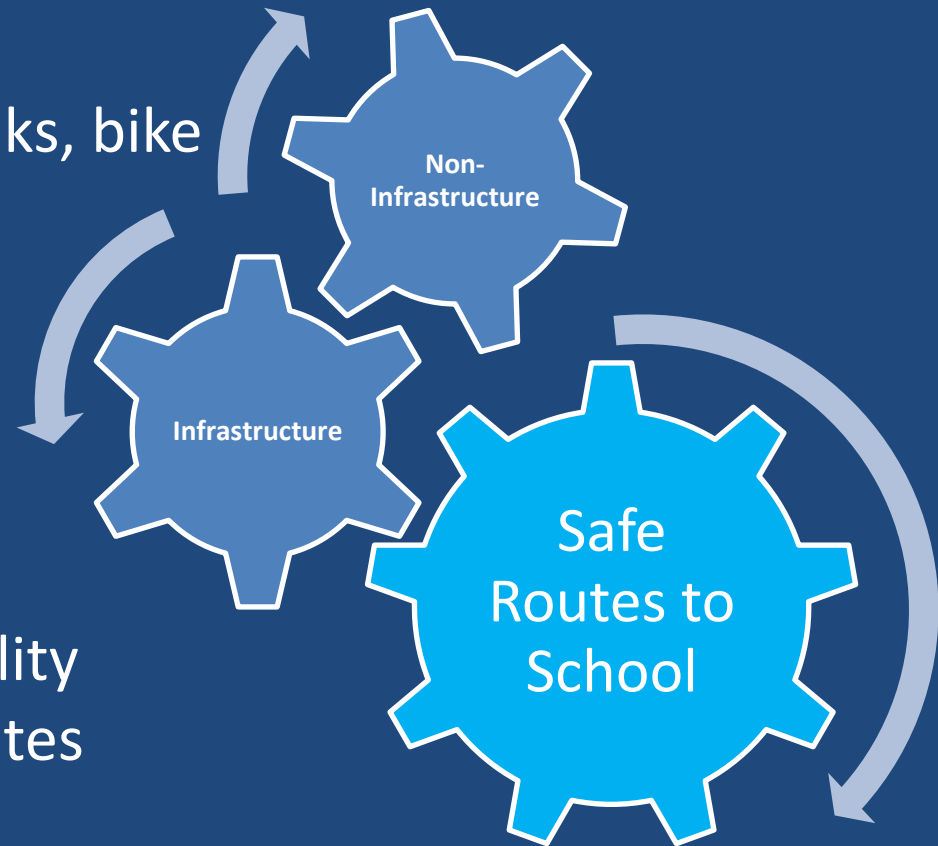
Safe Routes to School





Infrastructure

- installing new sidewalks
- installing street striping (crosswalks, bike lanes)
- installing bicycle parking facilities
- installing signs
- providing facilities to slow traffic
- increasing connectivity between locations
- improving handicapped accessibility
- developing alternative drop-off sites
- developing off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities



Walkability Assessments-

Identifying Community Projects and Priorities













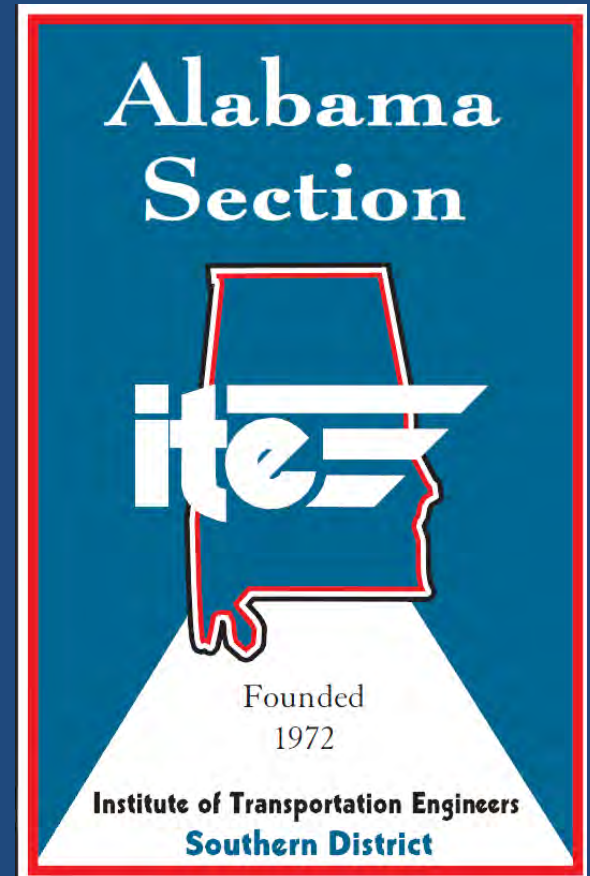
Engineering Support

Service project of the Alabama
Section Institute of Transportation
Engineers

Provided free of charge

Services include:

- traffic data collection
- project development
- ADA compliance
- safety and crash studies
- cost estimates





SRTS Opportunities

Improve Handicap accessibility and Crosswalk
Striping and Signals



SRTS Opportunities

Extend sidewalk in central Civic area



SRTS Opportunities

Develop alternative drop-off sites

Project Location



Community Meeting for feedback on Safe Routes to School project



Funding Awarded



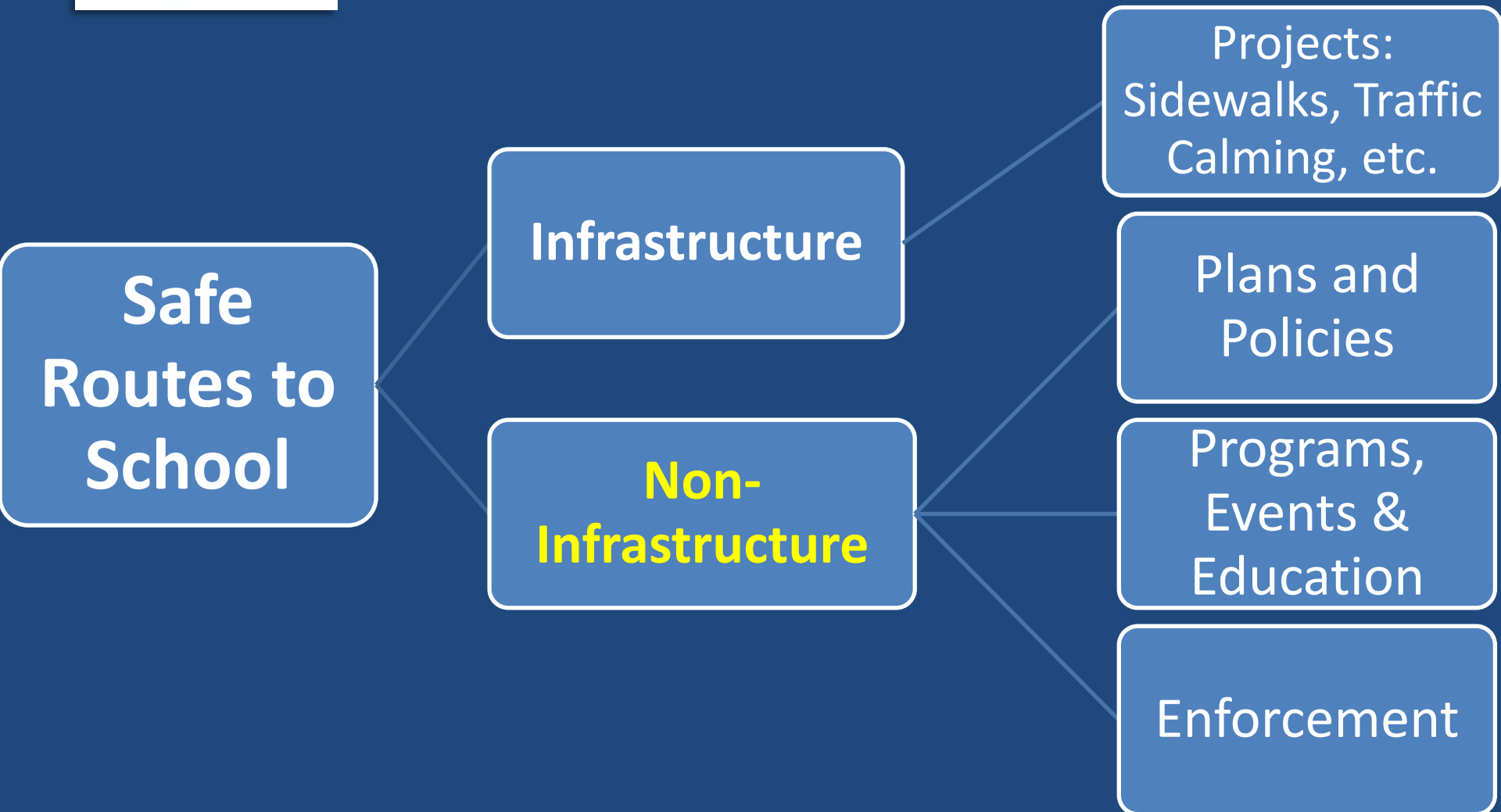


ALDOT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL FUNDING

Year	Project ID	Amount	School System	Project Description
2012	AL 5865	\$132,525	Jefferson County BOE	Sidewalks and crosswalks near Chalkville Elementary
2012	AL 5871	\$150,000	Bessemer	Drainage improvements, curb and gutter, crosswalks near Abrams Elementary
2012	AL 5876	\$150,000	All of Jefferson County	Activities including a SRTS Coordinator and walking school bus programming
2012	AL 5863	\$150,000	Shelby County BOE	Sidewalks, crosswalks & pedestrian signage near Montevallo Elementary
2012	AL 5862	\$148,983	Jefferson County BOE	Sidewalks along 2 streets near Pleasant Grove Elementary & Pleasant Grove M.S.
2011	AL 3	\$149,815	Hoover	Sidewalks, crosswalks & pedestrian signage
2011	AL 20	\$114,369	Midfield	Sidewalks, alternative drop-off site, crosswalks, bike lane striping, ADA accessibility ramps
2011	AL 18	\$150,000	Calera	Sidewalks, crosswalks, curbs, gutters, pedestrian bridge, striping, drainage
2011	AL 1	\$150,000	Trussville	Sidewalks
2009	AL 3931	\$154,223	Hoover	Install sidewalks near Bluff Park Elementary School
2009	AL 3936	\$14,981	Birmingham	4 Thermoplastic crosswalks; 2 bike racks near Barrett Elementary School (CANCELLED)
2009	AL 3941	\$12,047	Birmingham	Digital pedestrian signal; 1 crosswalk; 1 bike rack near Hill Elementary School (CANCELLED)
2009	AL 3937	\$3,790	Birmingham	4 Thermoplastic crosswalks near Robinson Elementary School (CANCELLED)
2009	AL 3940	\$3,698	Birmingham	1 Crosswalk; 1 bike rack near Booker T Washington K-8 (CANCELLED)
2009	AL 3947	\$1,527	Birmingham	1 Crosswalk; 1 bike rack near Daniel Payne Middle School (CANCELLED)
2009	AL 3949	\$13,900	Birmingham	Mapping software; educational training program benefiting Birmingham School System
2009	AL 3945	\$138,901	Fairfield	Install sidewalks; signs; pedestrian crossing light near CJ Donaldson Elementary & Fairfield High School
2009	AL 3934	\$144,065	Hoover	Install sidewalks; handicap ramps, crosswalks; signage near Green Valley Elementary School
2009	AL 3948	\$300,000	Leeds	Install sidewalks near Leeds Elementary School
2008	AL 17	\$302,988	Homewood	Infrastructure for Shades Cahaba Elementary School
2008	AL 21	\$779,435	Mountain Brook	Infrastructure for Cary Woods Elementary, Crestline Elementary, Mountain Brook Elementary
2008	AL 26	\$527,552	Vestavia Hills	Infrastructure for Cahaba Heights Elementary, Dean Road Elementary, Vestavia Hills Elementary School West



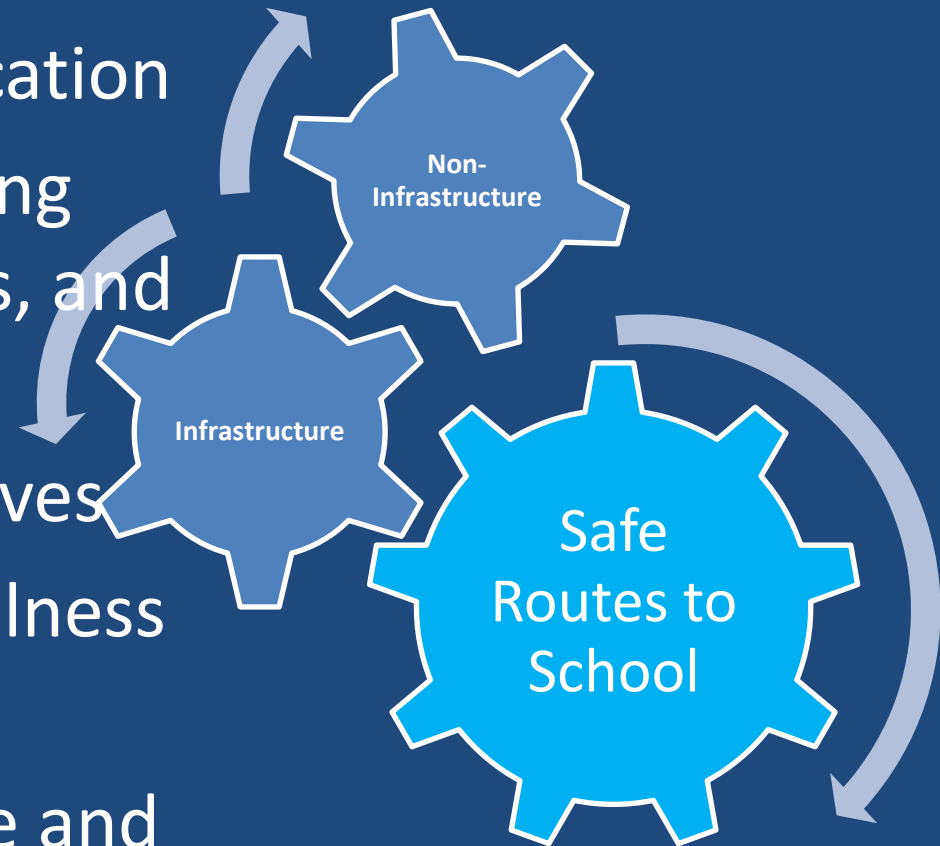
Safe Routes to School





Non-Infrastructure

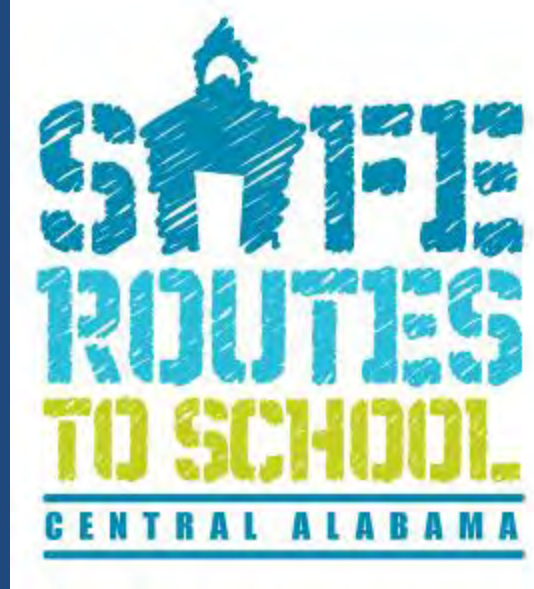
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Education
- Programs such as the Walking School Bus, Corner Captains, and School Pool
- Encouragement and Incentives
- School Travel Plans and Wellness Policies
- Enforcement of School Zone and other Traffic Laws





Program: Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

- *Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities* is a cornerstone of RWJF's \$500 million commitment to reverse the country's childhood obesity epidemic by 2015.
- HKHC targets improvements in local policies and our community environment—changes that research indicates could have the greatest impact on healthier eating, more active living and obesity prevention.
- Jefferson County is one of 50 sites selected.



An initiative of:

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities of Jefferson County

United Way of Central Alabama

YMCA of Greater Birmingham

Jefferson County Department of Health

Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

Health Action Partnership

Alabama Department of Education

Alabama Department of Public Health

Alabama Department of Transportation



Our Progress

2010

Community Meetings / National Center for Safe Routes to School Trainings at 4 schools (Homewood, Birmingham)

2011

April: Walking School Bus Workshop

May: School Meetings/Kresge Arts in Birmingham

June: Wellness Policy Workshop

July: Walking School Bus Policy Workshop

August-Sept: Walking School Buses Launch

October-December: Continued Participation/Awards

2012

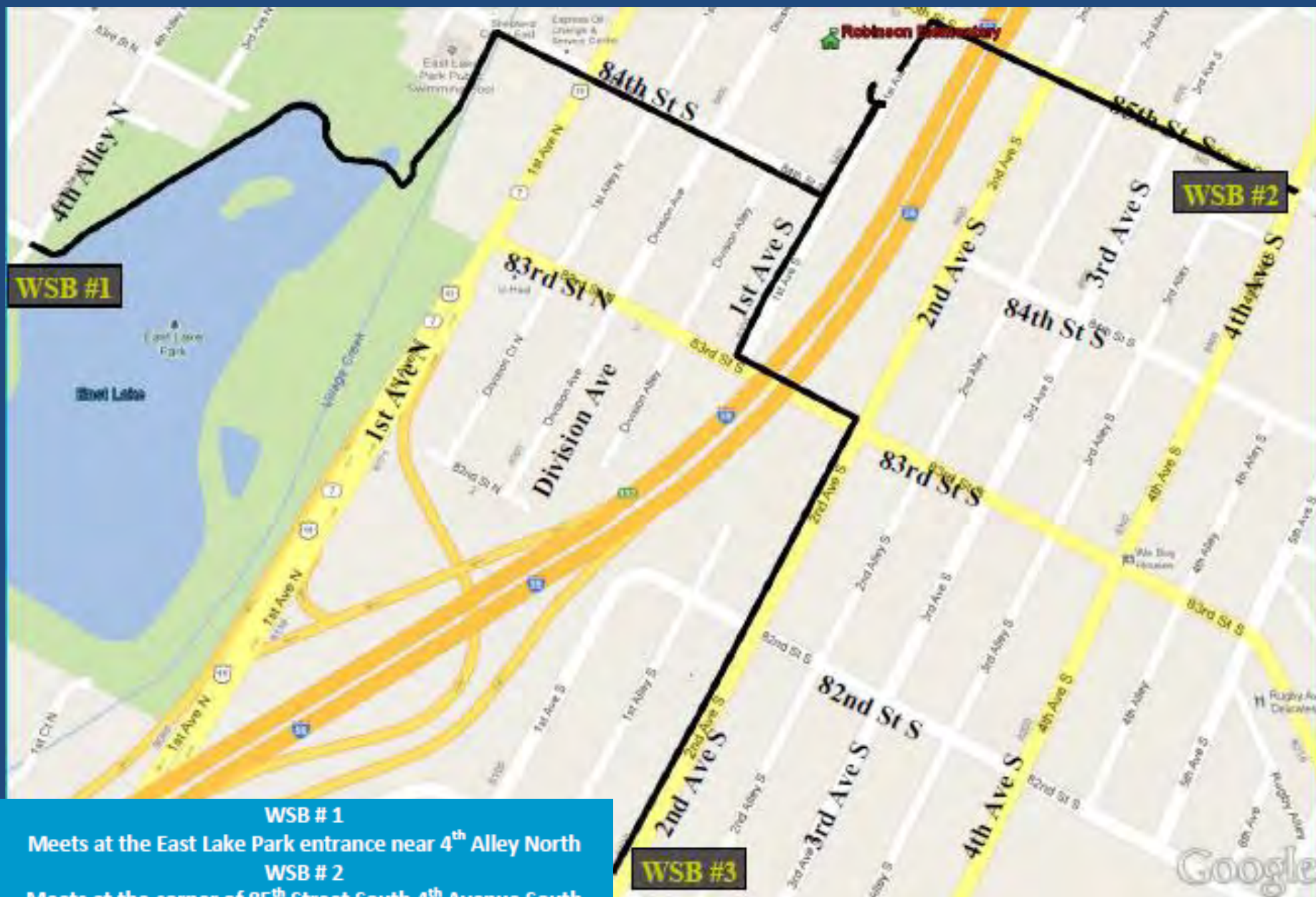
March: Spring Walking School Buses launch / SRTS Applications



What are Walking School Buses?



- Groups of children, led by a trained adult, walk to school on a predetermined route
- Engages people throughout a community
- Encourages physical activity for EVERY child



WSB # 1

Meets at the East Lake Park entrance near 4th Alley North

WSB # 2

Meets at the corner of 85th Street South 4th Avenue South

WSB # 3

Meets at the corner of 2nd Avenue South and 81st Street South



**Participating students walked over
561 miles in 2011-12!**

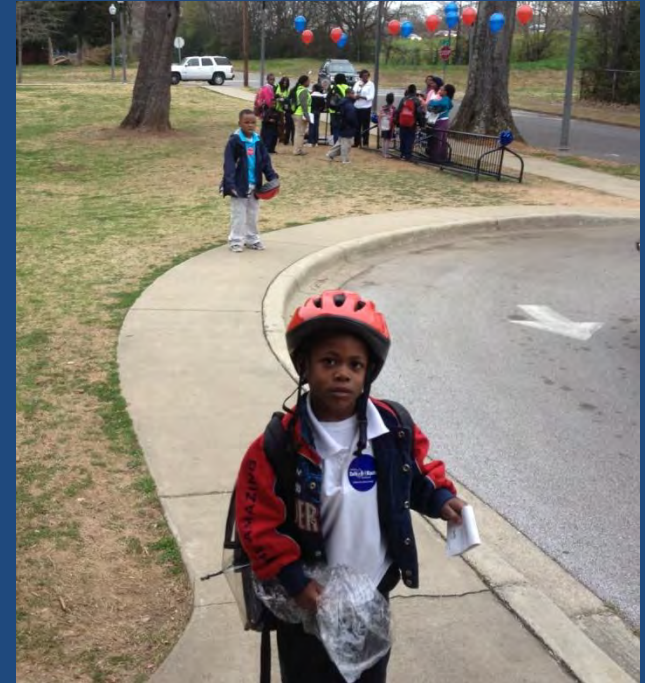


2011-2012 WALKING SCHOOL BUS

- Robinson Elementary
- Hemphill Elementary
- Hudson Elementary



2012-2013 WALKING SCHOOL BUS



Fall Results

- Robinson Elementary: 48 students participated, walking 81 miles
- Hemphill Elementary: 150 students participated, walking 472 miles
- Phillips Academy: 78 students participated, walking 141 miles

WHAT DO YOU SEE ON YOUR WAY TO SCHOOL?



SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL OF CENTRAL ALABAMA



is working with communities to make transportation to and from school easier and safer.



When the kids walk through their neighborhoods, they see beauty in their communities. But they also see things that need improvement. These pictures highlight the need for maintenance, safety, and accessibility. Just some of the reasons why communities must make safe routes a priority.



Recently, children from Birmingham City Schools were given an opportunity to capture photos and videos of their walk to school—from their perspective. All of the images you see here are what local kids see on their journey.



In the past, we built communities where it was easier to bike and walk from home to school. Sidewalks connected neighborhoods and were safe ways to get where you wanted to go. Today, however, most students get to school on buses or in private cars. Not only do these trips to school have significant costs, but today's youth are missing out on a chance to get more physical activity into their daily routine. Several communities have made safe routes a priority and have discovered a fun way to encourage walking to school.



The Walking School Bus works just like a traditional school bus route, but kids are walking instead of riding. Adult "bus drivers" help kids stay safe while they get a chance to exercise with their friends on the way to school. When communities create safe routes to school, everyone benefits. In order to have a successful Safe Routes to School program, streets need to be designed to accommodate all users. Safe, well-maintained streets, sidewalks and trails will encourage students and residents to be more active, resulting in improved public health, a cleaner environment, and community vitality.



Safe Routes to School of Central Alabama
Contact: saferroutes@uwca.org



**SAFE
ROUTES
TO SCHOOL**
CENTRAL ALABAMA





Policies

- School Travel Plans to support walking and biking to school as a method of transportation
- School Wellness Policies to include Safe Routes to School language & encouragement
- Complete Streets policies at the municipal level to ensure the construction and maintenance of appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities

WHAT MAKES A STREET COMPLETE?



LOOK FOR THESE AND OTHER COMPLETE STREET SOLUTIONS

1. SIDEWALKS 2. PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS 3. BIKE LANES 4. CURB EXTENSIONS & CURB RAMPS
5. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION STOPS 6. SAFE CROSSING OPPORTUNITIES

Complete Streets: Designing Streets For All Users

Resolution **PASSED** the Birmingham Planning Commission

Resolutions **PASSED** by Montevallo, Midfield, Sylvan Springs, Pleasant Grove, Homewood, and Bessemer City Councils

Subdivision Regulations **REVISED** to include Complete Streets language in Birmingham and Clay

Comprehensive Plan **INCLUDES** Complete Streets language in Graysville

CONSERVATION ALABAMA FOUNDATION

Let's Complete Alabama's Streets

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS:

- Improves air quality
- Reduces carbon footprint
- Encourages reuse of existing infrastructure - in-fill development
- Preserves open space
- Reduces traffic congestion

HEALTH ACTION
TAKES COMMUNITY

For more information contact:
Conservation Alabama Foundation - www.conservationalabama.org
Greater Birmingham Regional Planning Commission - www.gbrpc.org
Alabama County Department of Land Planning & Development Services - www.alldhs.org



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