

# Setting the Pace:

## Safe Routes to a Sustainable Lawrence

# Objectives

- I. Safe Routes to School Background
- I. Report Vision & Purpose
- I. Recommendations
  - i. Ecology
  - ii. Economy
  - iii. Equity
- I. Concluding Thoughts



<http://www2.ljworld.com>

# Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

- 1970s - Began in Odense, Denmark 1970s (subsequently spread rapidly to several countries)
- 2000 - First SRTS programs sponsored in the United States
- 2005 - Federal-Aid Safe Routes Program created
- 2012 - Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) makes SRTS program eligible to compete for aid.

Safe Routes in Lawrence, Kansas is a collaboration of the Lawrence Public School District (USD 497), the Lawrence-Douglas County Department of Public Health and an array of public and private partners.

## SafeRoutes



<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>

# Vision



<http://www2.ljworld.com>

**“To use the foundation created by Safe Routes to School and the best practices of communities nationwide to establish a sustainable, integrated, and accessible multimodal transportation network for Lawrence, Kansas.”**

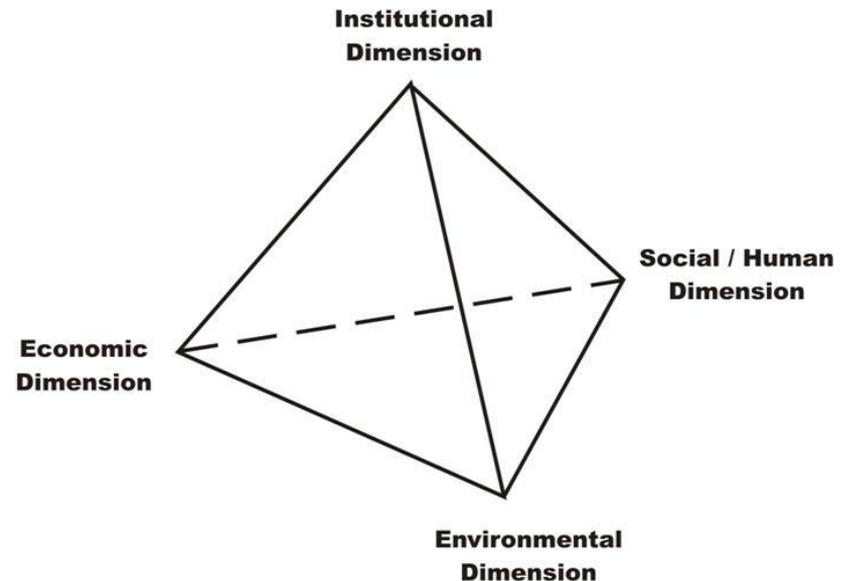
# Purpose

Lawrence's Safe Routes for All program can benefit from the past efforts and existing policies and plans implemented by school districts, cities, counties, and states nationwide.

To facilitate this, the Sustainable Land Use and Transportation Implementation course reviewed numerous programs and selected twelve recommendations that can complement the Lawrence Health Department's policy and programming.

Recommendations Complement the 5 E's of SRTS with the principles of sustainability to assure:

- ecologically harmony;
- economic resilience; and
- accessibility through equity.



<http://keralarm.kerbabel.net/node/101>

# Ecology

**Goal:** To reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and encourage active modes of transportation through policy and programming.



[www.affordable-solar.com/traffic-solar](http://www.affordable-solar.com/traffic-solar)

Human ecology theory aims to understand the interaction of humans and their environment. Applying this approach to Safe Routes to School helps understand policy and programming needed to provide a healthy, safe, and equitable environment for students walking and biking to school.

A multi-faceted approach is recommended to improve environmental design, reduce exhaust emissions around schools, and increase students safely walking and biking to school.

# Subdivision Regulations and Design Guidelines

Change city regulations to incorporate specific ordinances in order to encourage a pedestrian/bicyclist-friendly environment.

## Subdivision Regulations

- Installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, and school zone flashers;
- Donation of green space;
- Connection to existing trails; and
- Installation of bicycle lanes and community bicycle areas.

## Design Guidelines

- Addition of trees between pedestrians and motorized vehicles;
- Integration of landscaping in school zones and heavily-traveled roadways; and
- Installation of medians.



[www.affordable-solar.com/traffic-solar](http://www.affordable-solar.com/traffic-solar)

# Idling Policy

Develop an idling policy to decrease the amount of harmful emission given off by vehicles waiting in the carpool lane.

Adapt the policy to make it apply not only within school districts but also to the entire city.

## Benefits to enacting an idling policy:

- Saves fuel;
- Reduces excessive wear on engines;
- Protects public health; and
- Decreases negative effects on the atmosphere.



[www.wpcog.org](http://www.wpcog.org)



[www.examiner.com](http://www.examiner.com)

# Stakeholder Environmental Steering Committee

Develop policies for schools and raises awareness of effects of transportation on the environment.

School administration, parents, teachers, and community representatives.

Activities and programming to get students and parents wanting to use active transportation:

- Walk and bike to school days;
- Classroom contests;
- Walking school buses; and
- Bike trains.



[www.saferoutestoschools.org](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org)



[www.albanyca.org](http://www.albanyca.org)

# After School Bike Club

Pilot an after-school bike club to give students the opportunity to embrace a healthy, rewarding, and life-long passion.

Encourages a commitment to multimodal transportation opportunities.

Activities and programming will allow students to:

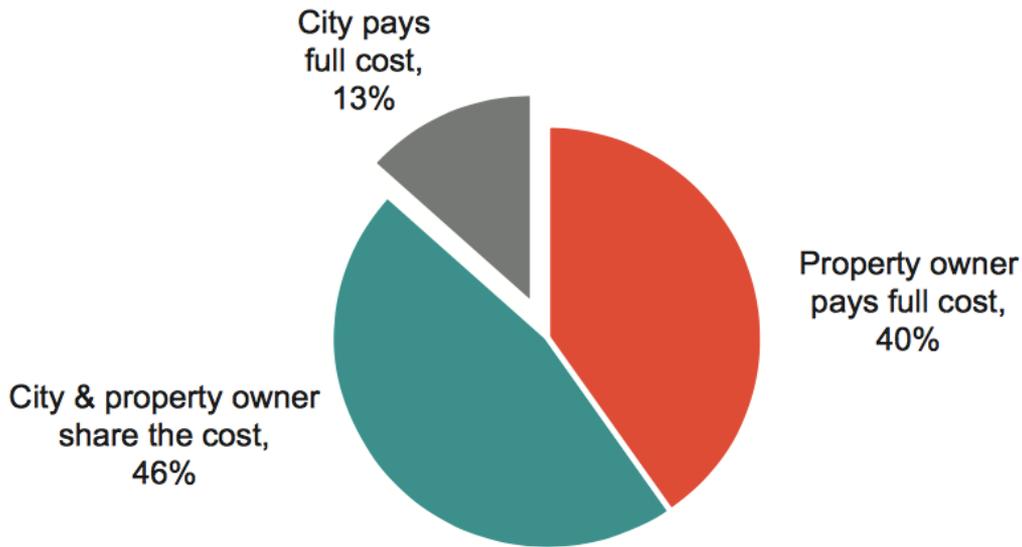
- Practice proper bicycling safety;
- Learn how to maintain their bikes; and
- Potentially learn how to build a bike.



[www.tulsahub.org](http://www.tulsahub.org)

# Economics of Sustainable Sidewalks

## Who pays for sidewalks?



Source: Advocacy Advance

\*Based on a 2010 survey of 85 cities in 42 states

When thinking of funding for programs, federal and state grants are often the first ones that come to mind. However, they are not necessarily a sustainable funding mechanism as they are usually granted on a year-by-year basis and therefore are not guaranteed. It is recommended Lawrence look to these grants for funding, but also look for other funding opportunities through sidewalk utility fees, local sales tax, a sidewalk improvement district, and public-private partnerships.

# Sidewalk Utility Fees

- Fee may be a specific line item, such as a sidewalk maintenance fee collected directly by the municipality, or may be a tax on electric or natural gas service collected by the utility.
- Monthly charge to generate revenue to pay for repairs to existing sidewalks and to “fill the gap” with new sidewalks in decided areas.\*
- Calculation for Lawrence Possible Fee:

$\$150,000$  (annual cost to repair sidewalks\*) /  $37,342^*$  (utility customers) / 12 (months) =  $\$0.334$  (rounded to  $\$0.33$ )

\*Sidewalk Inventory

\*\* ACS-2013 5 year household estimate

# Local Sales Tax

- In 2008, Lawrence citizens approved an additional 3/10<sup>th</sup> cents per dollar sales tax for infrastructure projects. This is set to expire in 2019.
- From 2009-2014, actual revenues exceeded yearly budget projections by an average of 3.2% and generated over \$24.3 million over 5 years.
- The City of Lawrence should ask voters to approve an increase to 1/2 cent sales tax to help fund improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network.

# Sidewalk Improvement District

- Creating SIDs which include almost all properties in the city, and a special annual assessment fee in property tax raise funding for sidewalk construction, improvement and maintenance.
- Creating a feasible range and assessment formula for properties assessed in SIDs. (Annual maintenance fee for land lot/ Square Footage Fee of buildings/ Frontage Fee of the front yard)
- Douglas County Treasurer's Office collect assessment fee with city property taxes. City Council will approve and administrate this funding, and engage SIDs for public hearing or meeting for policy refine. The Public Works Department will recommend a budget and schedule of work to Council.

# Public-Private Partnerships

## Seven Keys to a Successful Public-Private Partnerships

- Public Sector Champion;
- Statutory Environment;
- Public Sector's Organized Structure;
- Detailed Contract (Business Plan);
- Clearly Defined Revenue Stream;
- Stakeholder Support; and
- Pick Your Partner Carefully.

## Recommendations:

- Bring together a variety of organizations.
  - Geographically
  - Types of business partners.
  - Also look to hospitals, schools, elected officials, churches, non-profits that work with children and parents, neighborhood associations, etc.
- Utilize and build strong partnerships.
- Find a champion for your program!



# Equity

Equity is often cited as the most difficult to address in sustainability efforts. Equity is challenging to define, quantify, and therefore evaluate, so our efforts to make LSRTS equitable will require creative approaches and partnerships with a variety of other programs and departments. LSRTS would be well served by considering these recommendations:

- Defining equity;
- Appropriate evaluation measures;
- Equity concerns and ADA; and
- Food Security and Community Gardens.

# An Inclusive Definition of Equity

- The City of Lawrence should adopt a definition of equity based on the intersections of **race, gender, income, housing, and disability services**.
- This could be reflected in a city equity plan, and as part of an update to USD-497's Educational Equity and Excellence Plan (2011).
  - This effort could be coordinated with LSRTS, using translated parent surveys, information packets, and school meetings to obtain community input.
- Frame definition according to areas of need: Advocacy, access to resources, equity in the workplace, cultural awareness and family support.

**Lawrence Public Schools  
Educational Equity and Excellence Plan**

In order to achieve educational equity and excellence for students of all races and backgrounds, the Lawrence Board of Education and Superintendent will establish a learning climate of high expectations, set annual equity and achievement goals, and charge district- and school-level teams with responsibilities for developing strategies to eliminate racial achievement disparities while improving achievement for all students.

**Mission**  
Lawrence USD 497 is a learning community committed to ensuring educational equity and excellence so that students of all races and backgrounds achieve at high levels and graduate prepared for success in college, careers and life in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

**Vision**  
The school board, administration, teachers and staff build positive relationships, seek multiple perspectives, set high expectations and hold each other accountable for ensuring that through equitable access to rigorous, culturally relevant and seamlessly aligned curriculum and effective, research-based instruction, all students achieve at high levels, graduate on time and are well prepared for their future.

**Beliefs**  
We believe:

- All students can learn and achieve at high levels.
- The knowledge and skills to effectively educate all students already exist in the field of education.

As a school community, we must:

- Demonstrate courageous leadership to enact systems change and successfully educate all students.
- Ensure all decisions are data-driven and align our actions to achieve educational equity and excellence for all students.
- Identify and correct district and school policies, procedures and practices that perpetuate racial achievement disparities.

**Expectations**  
To fulfill our mission and achieve our vision of educational equity and excellence, we will:

1. Teach all students using culturally relevant, rigorous and research-based instructional strategies, curriculum, materials and assessments.
2. Establish annual educational equity and excellence goals to improve the achievement of all students and eliminate racial achievement disparities.
3. Disaggregate and convert multiple sources of data into meaningful information to identify strengths and needs of individual students as well as groups of students to inform instructional practices and decision making.
4. Enact a system of accountability and support at all levels – board, administration, teachers, staff and students.
5. Monitor and report to the USD 497 school community progress toward the elimination of racial achievement disparities.

*Revised June 7, 2011*

<http://www.usd497.org/Page/586>

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# Inclusive and Informed Programming

- What is fair?
  
- How to evaluate equity?
  - Public Participation;
  - Evaluations of each school's needs;
  - Parent/student surveys that address specific local issues (infrastructure, crime, traffic...);
  - Traffic studies, GIS mapping (sidewalks, distances to schools...); and
  - Include pictures of things that need improvements to justify specific needs.
  
- These pieces of information can help planners to make equitable decisions.

# Equity and ADA

Students with disabilities can be forgotten in the equity dialogue. LSRTS can ensure that students with disabilities are present and considered in the equity dialogue by considering the following recommendations:

- Increase awareness and build relationships with people who represent interests of disabilities within the city;
- Create special education programs, events and training for children with disabilities; and
- ·Ensure proper supervision and support when implementing the activities for disabilities.



[www.vdot.virginia.gov/programs/ted\\_rt2\\_school\\_pro.asp](http://www.vdot.virginia.gov/programs/ted_rt2_school_pro.asp)

# Health Equity: Community Gardens and Food Security

The school gardening program in Lawrence could promote broader health benefits of SRTS:

- School gardens could be expanded to elementary schools, especially those with high % free and reduced lunch students.
- Possibility: a network of gardens linking schools to Common Ground program.
- A school garden program would provide students with practice and experience on how to produce and eat healthy foods.
- In summer months, could establish volunteer gardening program to keep kids active at schools they could still access safely by walking or biking.



[www.thewhofarm.org/](http://www.thewhofarm.org/)

# Conclusion

- Safe Routes can benefit the entire community.
- Health, ecology, and equity goals of Safe Routes can challenge conventions and set new objectives for our community.
- Safe Routes can be a catalyst in incorporating sustainability into all of Lawrence's comprehensive and transportation planning.
- Supporting Safe Routes directly in planning activities will be mutually beneficial to both Lawrence and the Safe Routes program.



# Special Thanks...

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City of Lawrence



# Questions & Comments?

