

# Comprehensive Travel Plan for Bluff Elementary School

FINAL REPORT  
August 2012

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and

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# I. INTRODUCTION

This report addresses the Bluff Elementary School Travel Plan for the City of Claremont Comprehensive Safe Routes To School (SRTS) Travel Plan. This Travel Plan is one of three completed for the three Claremont elementary schools. Each individual Travel Plan responds to the unique conditions of the study school while addressing city-wide opportunities to increase student participation in active transportation, or walking and biking to and from school.



*Organized walking school bus events are gaining popularity as a seasonal event and a weekly exercise among students.*

The Claremont SRTS Task Force, the principal group sponsoring the Comprehensive Travel Plan initiative, wishes to enhance and encourage student and community health and welfare by promoting walking and biking to and from school. The Task Force membership demonstrates a strong, collaborative relationship between the City of Claremont and the Claremont School District and includes interested community members. It is important that the Task Force continues to make the SRTS program a community-based initiative.

Bluff Elementary School, or Bluff School. This report summarizes the extensive survey information collected as part of the Plan's evaluation phase, details existing efforts in educating students and encouraging student participation local enforcement practices to help maintain a safe environment for active transportation, and provides recommended practices and possible engineering/infrastructure projects to improve the physical environment in support of Claremont's SRTS initiative.

This Report reviews the identified barriers to, and opportunities for promoting, walking and biking to

It will be important for the Claremont SRTS Task Force to use the three elementary school Travel Plans to develop an Action Plan for a comprehensive SRTS initiative. Steps in developing the Action Plan are detailed in this study and will serve as a principal resource for implementing recommendations in the three Travel Plans.

## II. COMMUNITY INFORMATION

### SRTS Task Force Membership and Community Partnerships

The SRTS Task Force has been fortunate to have strong support from the City and the School District. The Task Force membership includes many individuals who have personal or professional interest in implementing a successful SRTS program. The Task Force also has support from many other community organizations interested in promoting walking and biking activities.

**Table 2-1: Lebanon Safe Routes to School Task Force**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Linda Brenneman	Principal, Bluff Elementary School
Melissa Lewis	Principal, Disnard Elementary School
Daniel Cherry	Principal, Maple Avenue Elementary School
Bruce Temple	Director, Claremont Department of Public Works Member of Claremont Traffic Safety Committee
Richard A. Bergeron	Chief, Claremont Fire Department Member of Claremont Traffic Safety Committee
Alexander Scott	Chief, Claremont Police Department Member of Claremont Traffic Safety Committee
Scott Hausler	Director, Claremont Parks & Recreation
Nancy Merrill	Director, Claremont Planning & Development Department
John Lambert	Owner, Claremont Cycle Depot

The following individuals and organizations participated in the development of the Comprehensive Travel Plan initiative and deserve the gratitude of the Task Force for their valuable contributions. Without their help, these Travel Plans would not have been possible. Continued community involvement will ensure success for the Claremont SRTS program.

**Table 2-2: Present and Past Travel Plan Participants and Champions**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Disnard School PTA	Disnard School Parents and Teachers
Bluff School PTO	Bluff School Parents and Teachers
Catherine Davignon	Principal (Retired), Maple Avenue Elementary School
Peter Chase	Chief (Retired), Claremont Fire Department

### Claremont School District

According to the NH Department of Education the Claremont School District had a total student enrollment of 1,923 students for the 2011-2012 school year. The current SRTS travel planning effort focuses on the three elementary schools in Claremont (Kindergarten through Grade 5) with a total enrollment of 833 students (2011-2012 enrollment excluding Pre-Kindergarten

students). Table 2-3 summarizes the Claremont schools and student composition and Map 2-1 (Page 4) illustrates the student attendance zones for the three elementary schools.

The Claremont School District is dedicated to the health and welfare of its students and supports the principles and goals of this Comprehensive Travel Plan. The School District should pursue and support partnerships with the City, community members, and organizations to achieve the goals of this Travel Plan.

**Table 2-3: Claremont Schools and Student Composition (2011-2012 School Year)**

SCHOOL	GRADES	ENROLLMENT
Bluff Elementary School	K to 5	223
Disnard Elementary School	Pre-K to 5	280
Maple Avenue Elementary School	Pre-K to 5	367
Claremont Middle School	6 to 8	421
Stevens High School	9 to 12	632

Source: NH Department of Education (<http://my.doe.nh.gov/profiles/>)

## City of Claremont

Claremont is the largest community in Sullivan County with a 2010 population of 13,355 and serves as an economic and retail center for surrounding communities. The City is currently working to improve upon its existing assets and infrastructure to maintain a high quality of life for its residents. The City’s Master Plan provides comprehensive overview of the high value placed on supporting and improving upon opportunities for physical activity and reinforcing pedestrian activity city-wide. The City has an extensive transportation network with an historic, pedestrian-scale city center. A map of the road network is illustrated in Map 2-2 (Page 5).

### Claremont Master Plan

The Master Plan (revised June 2011), the central land use planning document for the City, presents a consistent and strong message of support for healthy activity and non-motorized modes of transportation as important assets to community quality of life. The following bullets provide an overview of specific goals and recommendations included in the Master Plan:

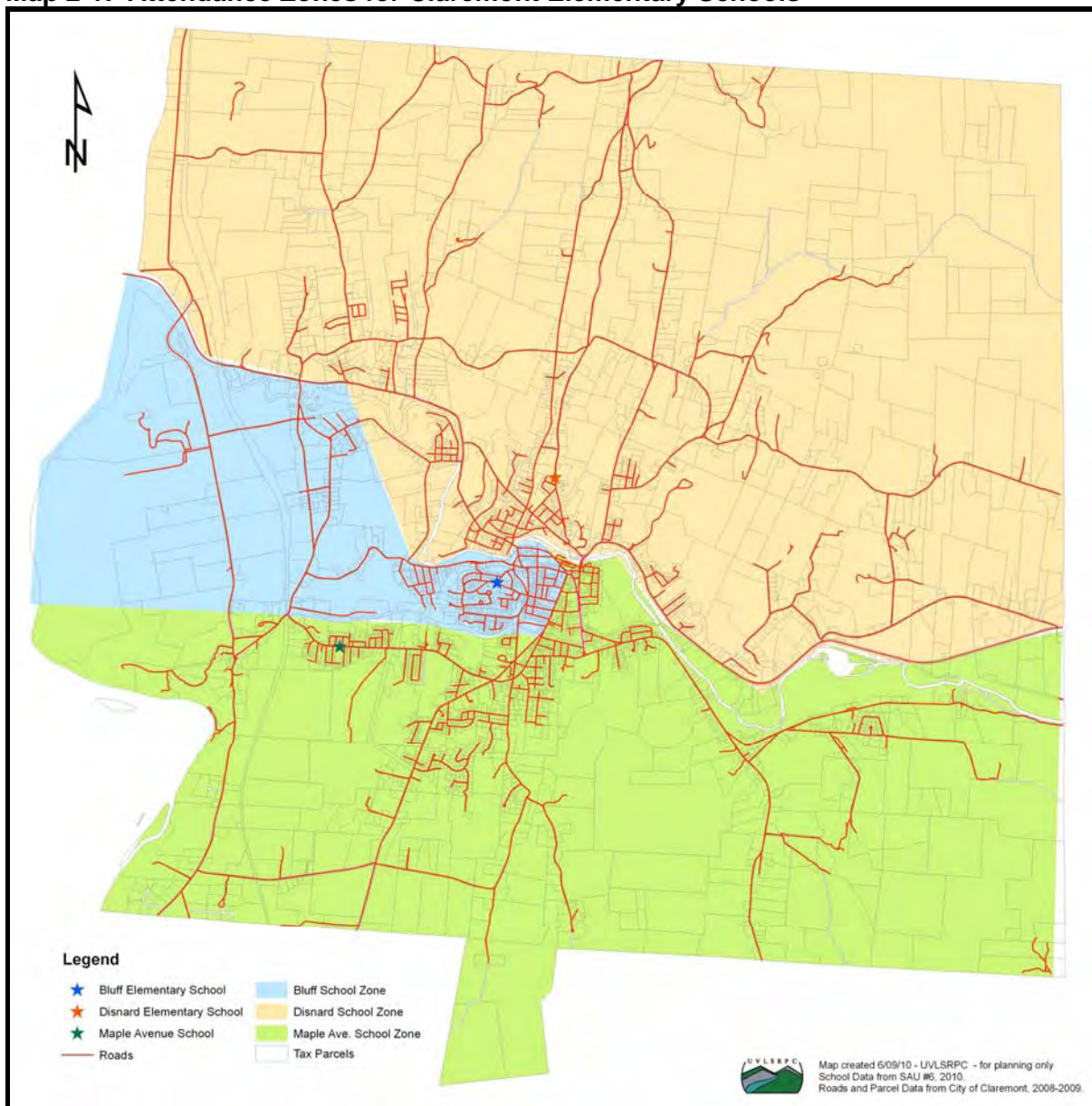
- The Vision Statement for the Master Plan states, “Claremont should be a livable community and regional center that... provides a multiple modal transportation system that connects the City’s neighborhoods. Claremont should strive to be a healthy community by supporting cultural and recreational opportunities through the support of facilities, programs, and events as well as to encourage an interconnection of trails, bikeways, sidewalks, and river walks connecting all parts of the City.”
- Maintain and promote pedestrian linkages in existing and new residential neighborhoods including promoting active transportation to and from schools by students.
- Provide choices and safety in transportation to create a livable and walkable community that will increase accessibility for people of all ages, whether on foot, bicycle, or in motor vehicles. Support multi-modal transportation choices as the City grows.
- Support ongoing sidewalk repair, rebuild roads to provide for pedestrian and bicycle facilities including new sidewalks where feasible and not currently available.

- Improve traffic flow and safety in the central business district including improvements to pedestrian crossings and implementing traffic calming techniques.
- One of the principal goals for the Master Plan is to establish, “corridor management techniques to allow for compatible pedestrian and vehicular activity.”

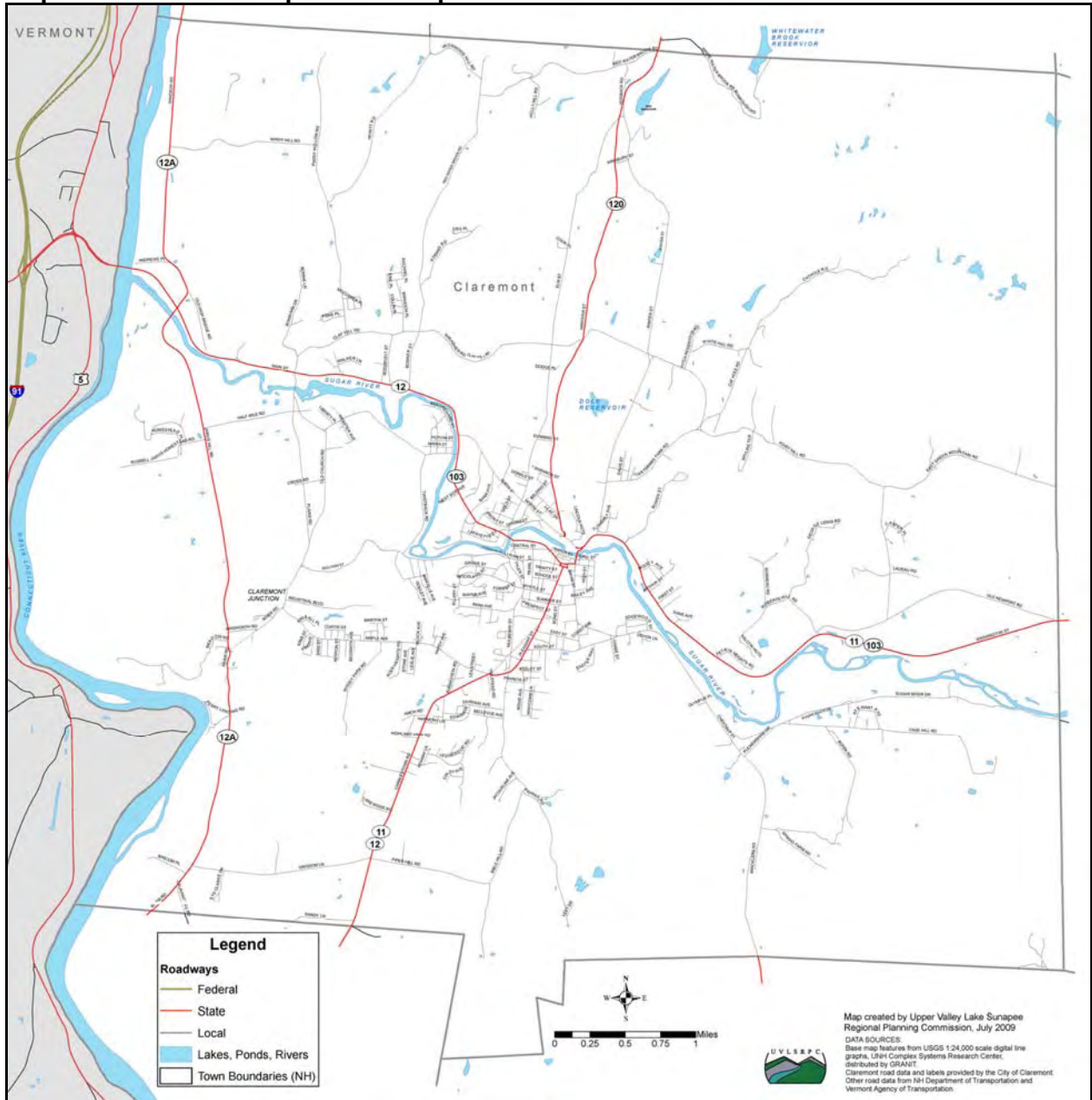
Capital Improvement Program

The City updates its Capital Improvement Program, effectively based on the Master Plan’s goals and recommendations, establishes a five-year plan for substantial City expenditures that may range from equipment and facility improvements to infrastructure projects. Later sections of this report address pedestrian and roadway improvement projects included in the Capital Improvement Program or in the planning stages.

**Map 2-1: Attendance Zones for Claremont Elementary Schools**



**Map 2-2: Overall Transportation Map**



### III. BLUFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

The Bluff Elementary School (Bluff School) had a 223-student enrollment in Kindergarten through Grade 5 in the 2011-2012 school year. The school is located on the northern edge of the Bluff residential area of Claremont with some commercial and industrial uses within ¼-mile to the north of the school. The school's designated attendance zone, or the area of the City from which it draws students, includes much of the City's downtown and surrounding moderate-density residential neighborhoods. Map 3-1 (Page 7) illustrates the attendance zone for the school.

It is important to note that the topography and geometry of the surrounding streets and sidewalks present a challenge to bicycle safety at Bluff School. In the interest of general student safety, Bluff School Administrators discourage students riding bikes to or from school.

The following sections address the "5 Es" of the Comprehensive Travel Plan:

- **Evaluation:** Review of the Parent and Classroom Surveys, as well as summaries of interviews with City and School representatives and comments from the Community Forum. Additional information in this portion of the Travel Plan will include mapping of the road and pedestrian network around Bluff School.
- **Education and Encouragement:** This section reviews two of the "5 Es" in one section because of their closely related and complimentary functions in Claremont's present SRTS program.
- **Enforcement:** This topic covers practices by the School District and the Claremont Police Department to help maintain a safe environment for school children during morning arrival and afternoon release.
- **Engineering:** Overview of City-wide infrastructure projects and discussion of site specific improvements that may benefit the Bluff School students.

#### Evaluation

The evaluation phase of work included collecting and compiling surveys, interviewing City and School representatives, conducting field assessments, compiling available data on the existing infrastructure, and mapping the study areas.

#### Travel Plan Surveys

##### *Classroom Tally*

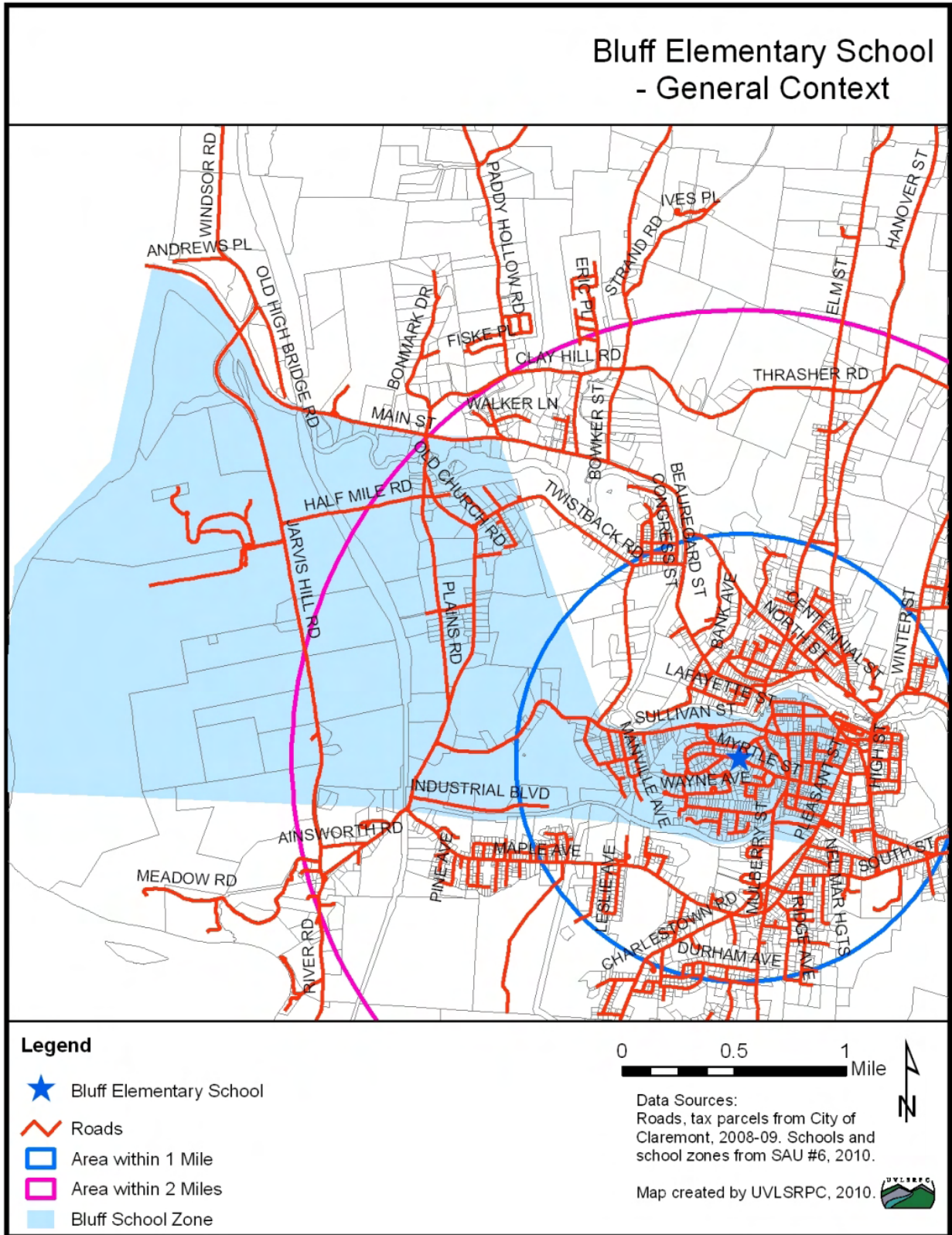
The Bluff School teachers participated in a classroom survey of students in Bluff School in the fall of 2010. The purpose was to obtain information regarding mode of travel to and from school for three consecutive days in the week (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). A summary of the Classroom Survey is included in Appendix A.

Figure 3-1 (Page 8) and the following bullets provide a summary of the Classroom Tally results:

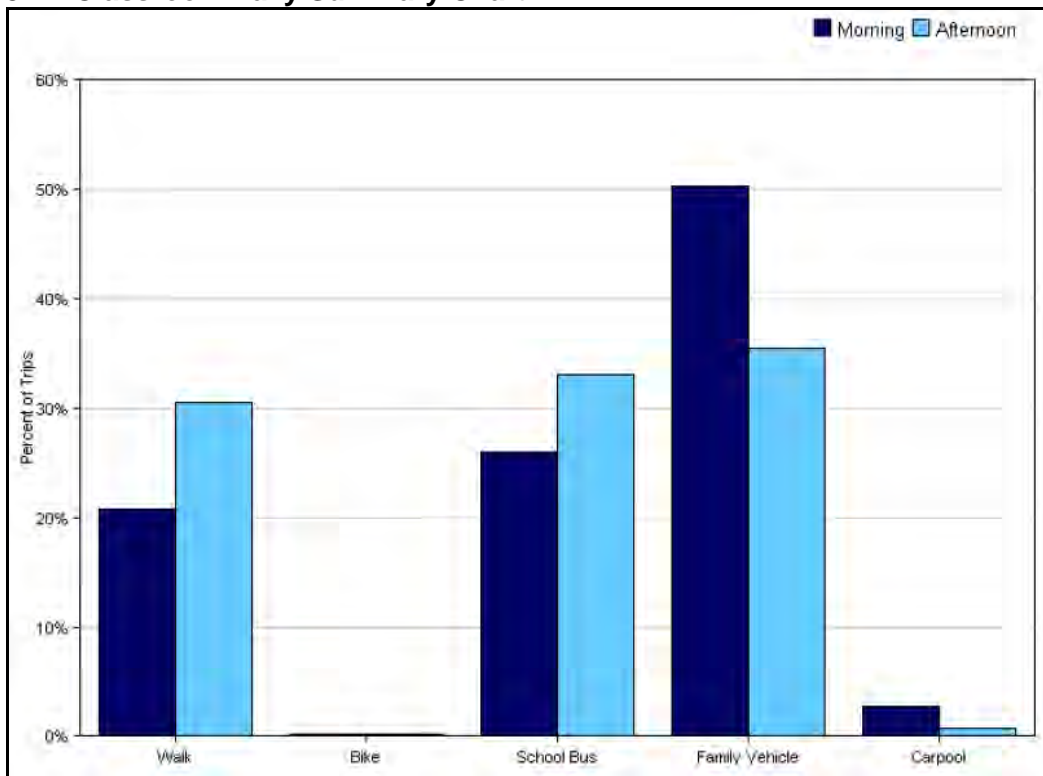
- On sunny days students are far more likely to walk to school.
- Rainy and overcast days apparently cause more students to arrive or depart by family vehicles while all other modes (including school bus) are used less.



Map 3-1: Study Area Map



**Figure 3-1: Classroom Tally Summary Chart**



### *Parent Survey*

The School District distributed paper copies of a Parent Survey for students to take home during fall 2010. This survey was developed by the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS), which is a standard survey endorsed by the NH Department of Transportation. The response rate for this survey was 45%. A detailed summary of the Parent Survey results is included in Appendix A.

The following bullets and Figure 3-2 (Page 11) summarize the survey responses:

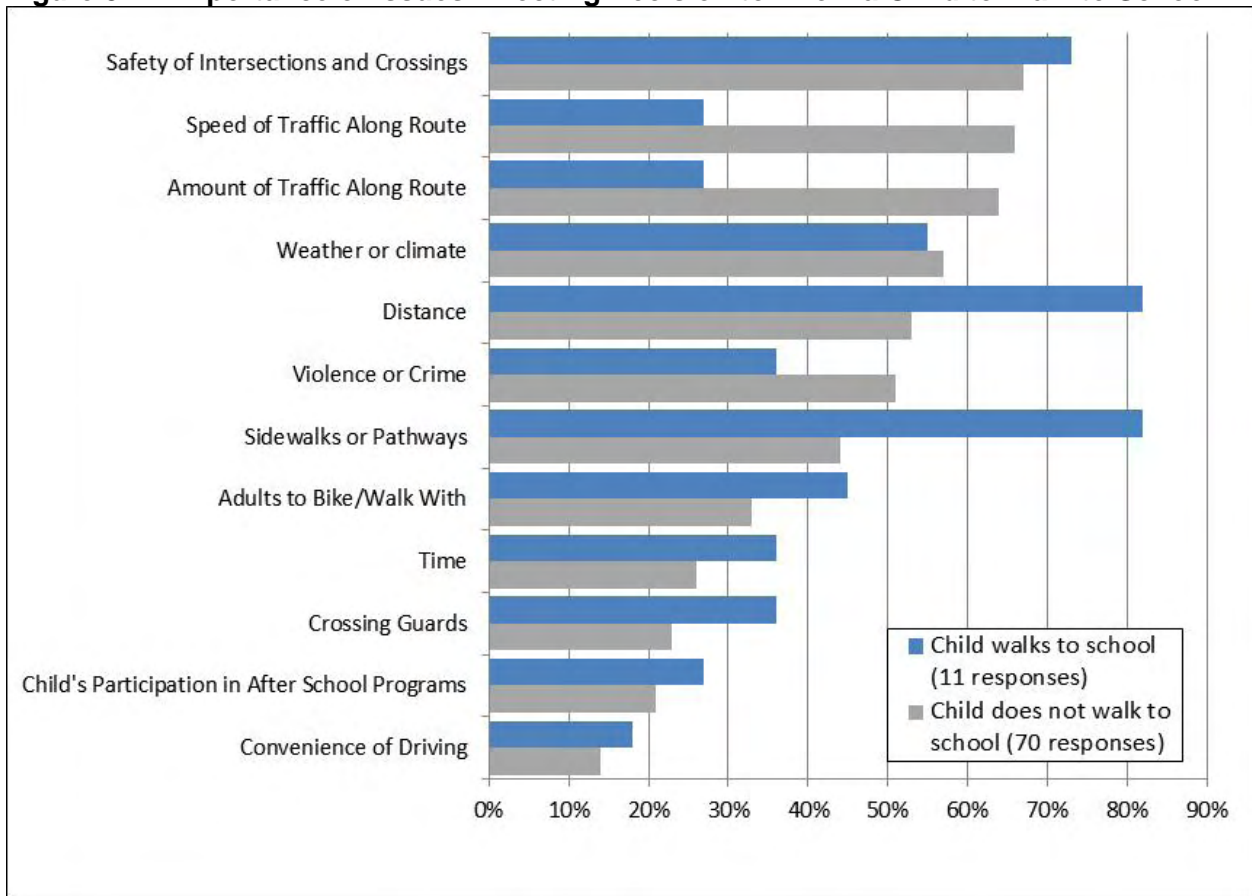
- 50% of parents and students report that morning trips to school are made by family vehicle
- A moderately higher percentage of students ride the bus and engage in active transportation methods in the afternoon trip from school than do in the morning trip.
- Distance from home to school affects the types of transportation elected by families:
  - School busses are most utilized by students living more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  mi away from school; among this population, bus transportation is the most common method of transportation both to and from school.
  - Nearly 50% of students who live within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mi of school walk to and from school; a much higher percentage than those students who live further away.
  - Carpools are not a popular mode of transportation.
- Students who live near school are more likely to ask permission to walk to school than those who live further away.

- Over half of students living within ½ mi of the school have asked to walk to school.
- The most prominent concerns among parents who do not permit their children to walk or bike to/from school include:
  - Traffic dangers
  - Weather
  - Violence and other physical dangers
  - Travel distance
- Among parents who do allow their children to walk or bike to and from school similar concerns persist, but with greater emphasis on distance and sidewalks/path availability rather than the presence of traffic, violence, or crime. (See Figure 3-2, below)
- Parent Attitudes toward Active Transportation:
  - 51% of parents believe active transportation can be fun or very fun for their child while only 2% believe it is a negative experience
  - 85% of parents believe walking and biking to/from school is healthy or very healthy for their children while the other 15% remains neutral
  - 31% of parents believe the school encourages or strongly encourages active transportation to/from school

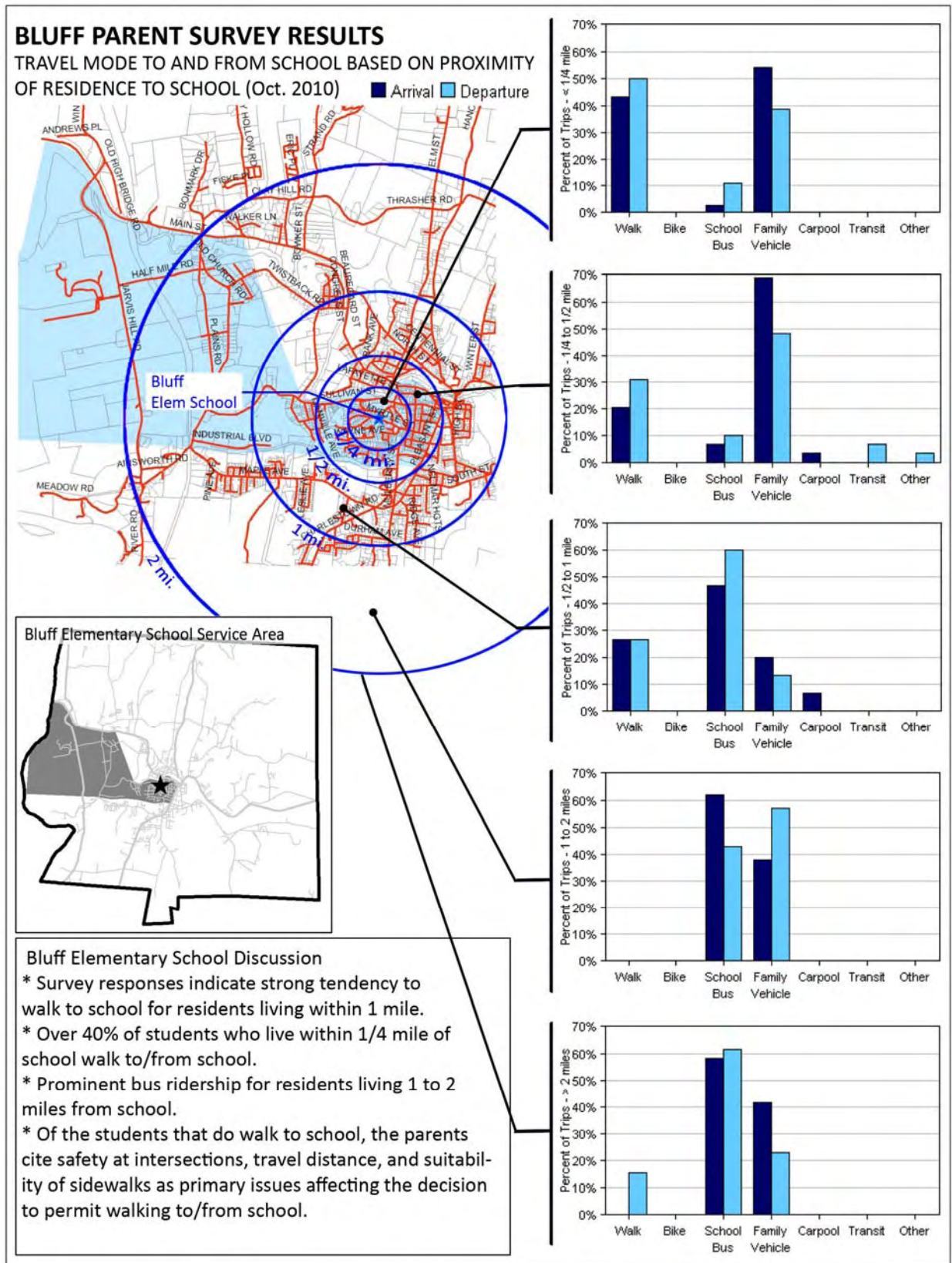
In addition, parents were given the opportunity to provide written comments about the topics addressed in the survey. The full responses are included in Appendix A and the following bullets summarize recurring topics:

- Concern for child safety, especially of the child is traveling alone. This includes:
  - Bullies,
  - Sex offenders and strangers,
  - Traffic safety.
- Adult chaperones (either walking with the groups of kids or stationed at intersections) would be appropriate for watching after walking children.
- Crossing guards are important for child safety at street intersections or other crossings.

**Figure 3-2: Importance of Issues Affecting Decision to Allow a Child to Walk to School**



**Figure 3-3: Parent Survey Responses – Travel Distance and Means of Travel to School**



### School and City Representative Interviews

Interviews with representatives from the Bluff School, Claremont Police Department and Claremont Department of Public Works provide valuable insights into the existing efforts in support of a Save Routes to School Program, assets of the school, as well as barriers and methods how the School District and City work together to address them. The following bullets provide a brief summary of these interviews. This information is repeated in later sections in this report:

- The City Department of Public works tries to clear all sidewalks within 24 hours, but this task is difficult for some neighborhoods because of the narrow sidewalks and obstructions (e.g. utility poles).
- There is a limited annual budget for City maintenance and construction of sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle projects. Typically, crosswalk striping is repainted annually and sidewalk maintenance is integrated into the annual roadway paving and maintenance projects.
- The Police Department places a high priority on patrolling the schools during arrival and departure times to monitor safety and congestion. The Police Department is responsible for designating a school resource officer and employing crossing guards. The City budget is sometimes limited and managing these resources with other law enforcement responsibilities is challenging.
- The City Police Department shares a speed trailer, which has a sign indicating the street speed limit and the motorist's speed, with other communities in Sullivan county. This speed trailer is a useful tool to help slow-down traffic speeds near schools during the morning arrival and afternoon departure times.
- Limited City budget to pay for crossing guards has affected nearby intersections. There is interest in establishing crossing guards at the Tyler Street/Summit Street and Mulberry Street/Myrtle Street/Tyler Street intersections. The latter intersection has had a crossing guard in the past, but was discontinued due to budget cuts.
- Narrow city streets and sidewalks require careful planning to incorporate or improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The City makes such improvements where there are opportunities to do so.
- The existing street network is difficult to manage during the arrival and departure times. The School District worked with the City to change the roadway operations and vehicle circulation during these times. Additionally, there is a dedicated individual watching after traffic and bus circulation during arrival and departure to ensure safe conditions.
- Observed issues with winter road and sidewalk maintenance make safe walking to/from school difficult.
- Concerns about children walking to/from school include bullying and sex offenders. School staff address these issues through a school program to prevent bullying and staff periodically touring the neighborhood around the school to ensure student safety in the morning and afternoon.
- Biking is not allowed to the Bluff School for safety reasons, particularly due to the tight road network and narrow sidewalks. Some students have been observed riding bikes and hiding them off-site.

### Community Forum

UVLSRPC Staff presented a draft of this report to the Bluff School Principal, Claremont School District Superintendent and the City of Claremont Staff and held a publicly noticed meetings to review and discuss the draft Travel Plan. The Bluff School PTO hosted one of the public meetings.

The following bullets summarize comments and responses from the community:

- Crossing guards are important at Myrtle Street/Mulberry Street and Tyler Street/Summit Road intersections.
- Students prefer to travel along Summit Road to Tyler and Sullivan Streets. The existing crossings and sidewalks need improvement to better define pedestrian areas and crosswalks. Further consideration should be given to constructing a sidewalk along Tyler Street.
- The school and Bluff School PTO should identify staff and volunteers willing to assist with SRTS advocacy, activities and coordination efforts.
- Ongoing safety education programs are important for the long-term safety of students.
- The DPW Staff understand that current City operations prioritize road clearing over sidewalk clearing after a winter storm. Given the limited resources and staffing available at the time of this study, the DPW does not have the capacity to dedicate any staff to sidewalk clearing without limiting its ability to clear roads or conduct other priority winter time activities.
- There are significant liability issues that prevent the City from organizing or allowing a volunteer program to clear sidewalks or road crossings during the winter.
- Promoting chaperones for walking and/or biking groups would help overcome issues of student safety. One opportunity is to use trained high school students as walking group chaperones.

### Mapping

The following maps provide an overview of the geographic context for Bluff School, as well as provide information on the overall student densities in the school's attendance zone, pedestrian infrastructure, existing traffic volumes, and adjacent land uses.

This map combines the Bluff School Attendance Zone and the areas within 1-mile and 2-mile radii from the Bluff School.

#### *Map 3-1: Bluff School Study Area (Page 7)*

This planning-level mapping provides an overview of the Attendance Zone, 1-mile and 2-mile radii from Bluff School. It is important to note that the school district provided a map depicting the locations of students' residences (not included in this report). This mapping exercise indicated a high density of students live within the 1-mile radius of Bluff School.

#### *Map 3-2: Adjacent Land Uses (Page 15)*

This map provides an overview of the principal Zoning Districts surrounding the Bluff School. The historic nature of the City Center is reflected in the variety of zoning districts illustrated, particularly the industrial and commercial uses along the Sugar River and intermixed with the

residential neighborhoods. The proximity of the school to commercial and industrial districts introduces a challenge to identifying walking routes for students. (Page 13)

*Map 3-3: Sidewalk Inventory and Qualitative Assessment (Page 16)*

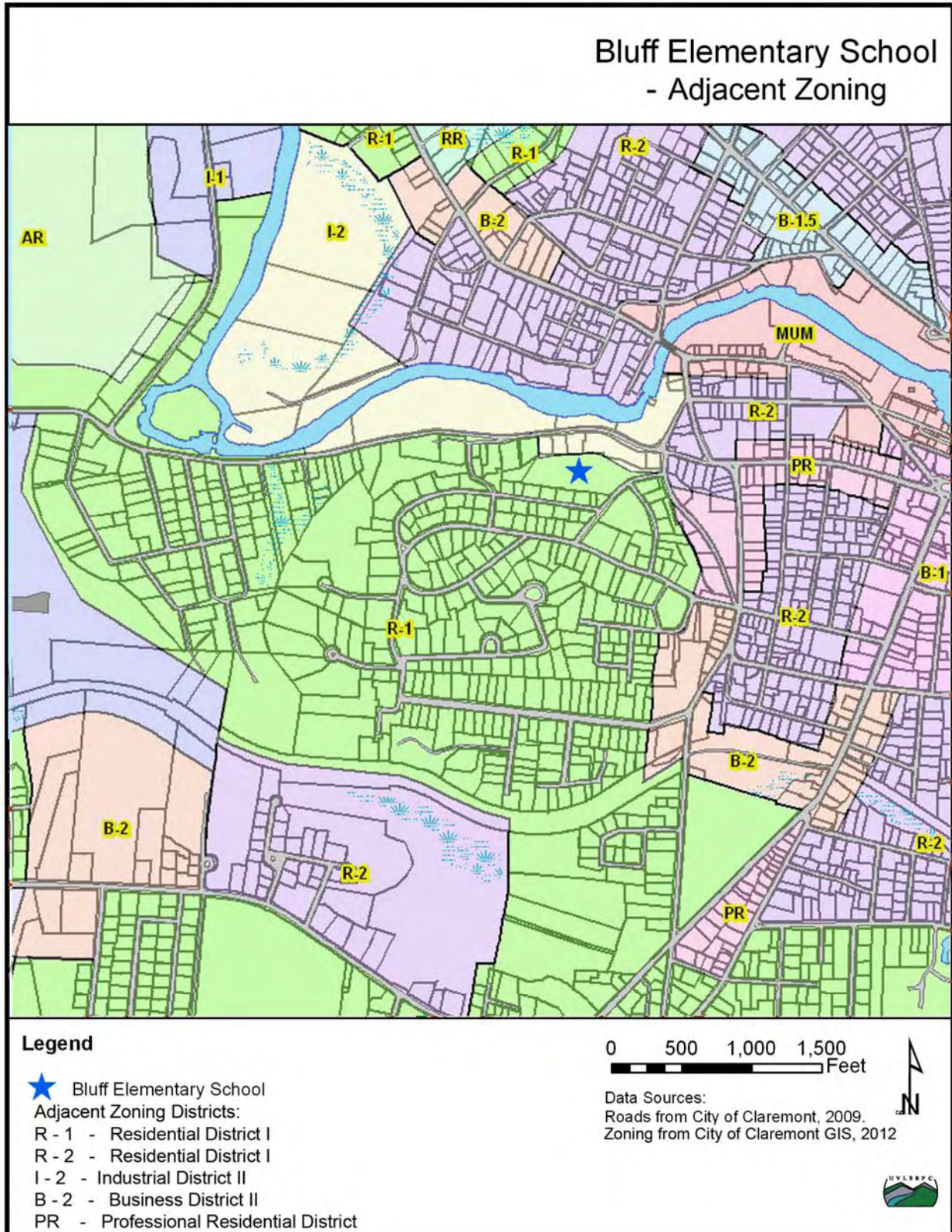
This map is the combination of information for this study and from a concurrent planning study under way: The Claremont City Center Project. This map provides an inventory of sidewalks within one mile of the three elementary schools. Claremont City Center Project volunteers conducted qualitative assessments of existing sidewalks and that information was added to the sidewalk inventory. This map, for the first time, provides an inventory of most of the sidewalks in the City and documents their general condition. This map can be the basis of future assessments.

*Map 3-4: Adjacent Street Traffic Volumes (Page 17)*

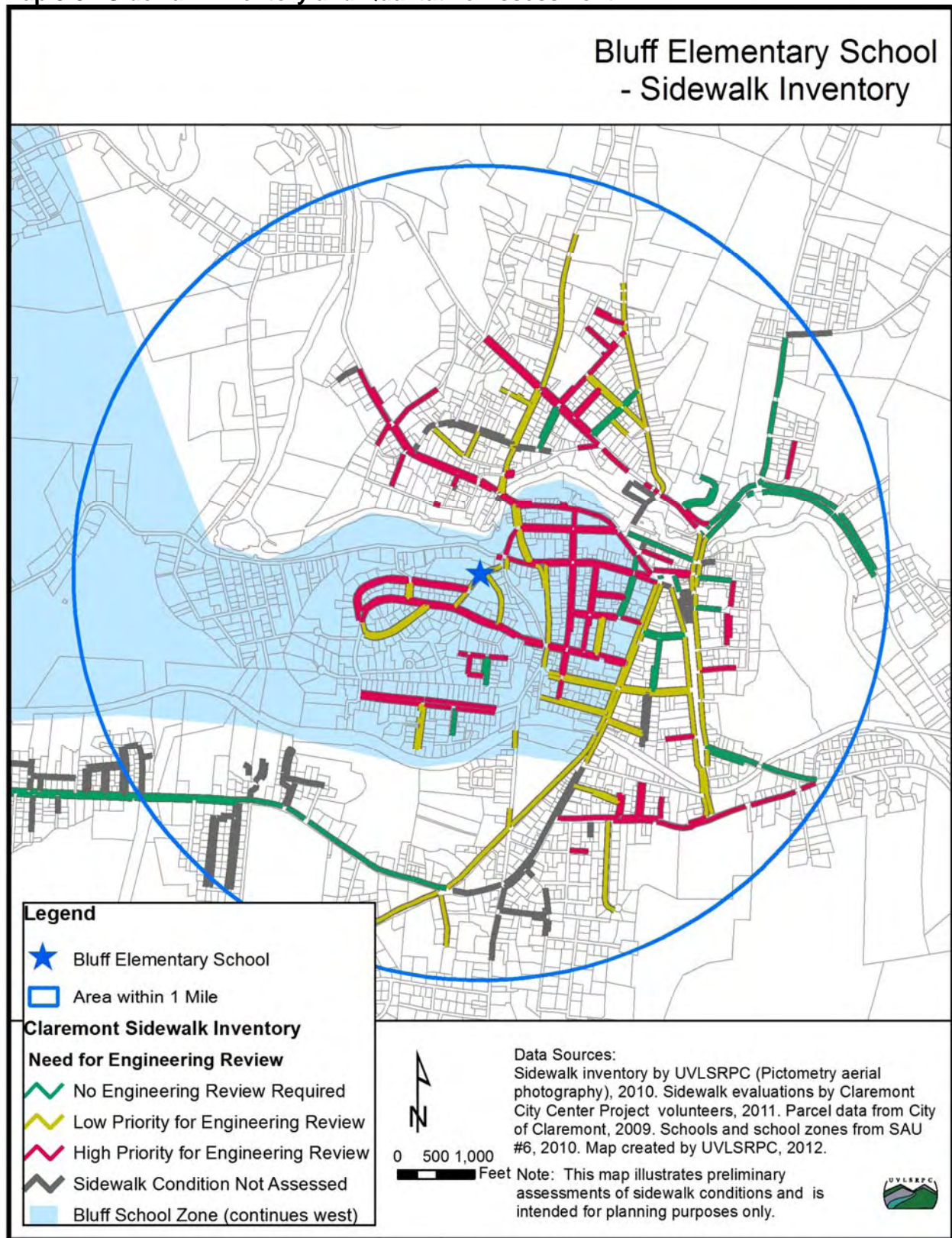
The vehicle traffic information illustrated in this map is based on currently available data published by the NH Department of Transportation. The volume numbers are adjusted average annual daily traffic volumes at the survey locations.



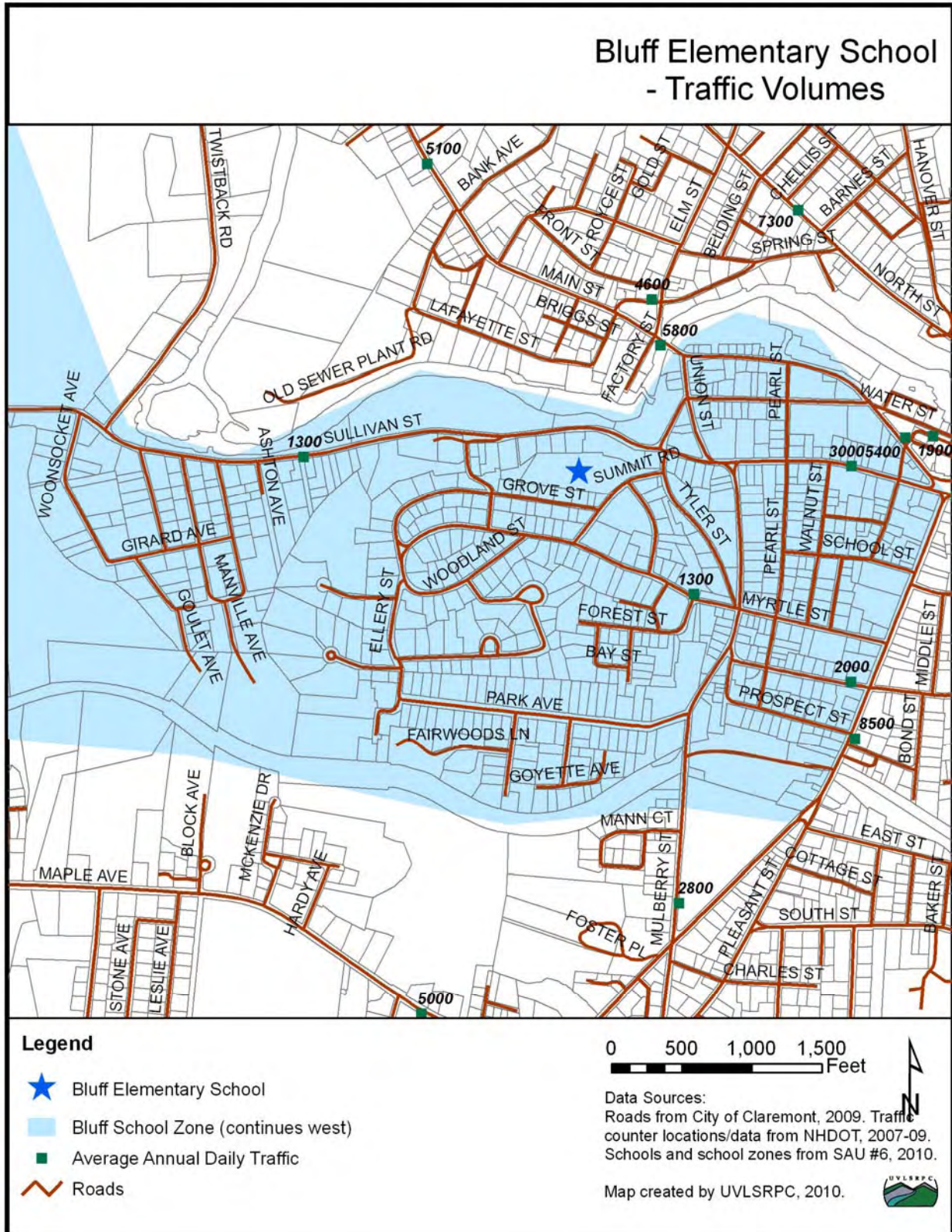
Map 3-2: Adjacent Land Uses



**Map 3-3: Sidewalk Inventory and Qualitative Assessment**



Map 3-5: Adjacent Street Traffic Volumes



Observed Conditions

The following photographs illustrate observed conditions in the City and the surrounding transportation network. These examples include general, city-wide observations and specific observations in the streets surrounding Bluff School.

**Aerial View of Bluff School**



This aerial image of the Bluff School and surrounding buildings illustrates the proximity of the school to commercial and industrial properties along the Sugar River. (Source: Bing.com)

**Intersection of Sullivan Street and Tyler Street**



This intersection, near the bottom of Summit Road and within 500 feet of the Bluff School, has sidewalks in need of repair and large paved areas that serve the nearby industrial uses rather than possible pedestrian use.

### Summit Road, Vicinity of Bluff School



Bluff School



Traffic control for Summit Rd



Summit Rd – Down toward Tyler St



Toward Bluff School from Myrtle St



Morning drop-off management



Morning drop-off management

The Summit Road approach to Bluff School is a narrow, uphill road from the Summit Road/Tyler Street intersection. The School District has coordinated with the City of Claremont to establish Summit Road as a one-way street during arrival and departure times. Additionally, there is an attendant on duty to direct and monitor traffic with on-site student monitoring by School Staff. Due to its geometry and surrounding topography, Summit Road is and will likely remain a local neighborhood street with limited opportunity for geometric improvements to improve safety or circulation.

## Mulberry Street Neighborhood



Intersection of Mulberry St and Summer St



Poor sidewalk conditions along Myrtle Street



Vehicles obstructing sidewalk along Myrtle St



Myrtle/Tyler/Mulberry intersection



Overhanging vegetation and poor sidewalks

The Mulberry Street neighborhood in the vicinity of Myrtle Street provides some examples of physical barriers to safe use of sidewalks by children on their way to school. The intersections of Mulberry Street with Summer Street and Myrtle Street are challenging points for safe crossing because of poorly defined pedestrian facilities and the overall scale of the intersections (the amount of pavement for a pedestrian to cross). Also the poor condition of sidewalks and obstructions on the sidewalks (including overgrown vegetation and parked vehicles) impede safe use of the sidewalks. It is important to note that the Department of Public Works will be making improvements to sidewalks along Myrtle and Mulberry Streets in 2012.

## Bluff Neighborhood



Ellery St approaching Woodland St



Park Ave



Vegetation overhanging sidewalk along Myrtle



Grove St



Grove St



Myrtle St/Grove St intersection

The Bluff area is a neighborhood of similar residential streets that appear to have been constructed around the same time period with narrow (except Park Ave), low volume streets with narrow sidewalks. The principal streets in this residential area are Grove Street, Myrtle Street, Woodland Street, Ellery Street, and Park Avenue. Ellery Street could serve as a primary route for children to travel to Bluff School, but that segment of road has no pedestrian facilities and appears dark and unsafe according to public input. The Claremont Department of Public

Works is considering long-term plans to reconstruct these streets to relocate the utility poles, widen the sidewalks, and improve the roadways.

## **Education and Encouragement**

The current education and encouragement programs include:

- The Claremont School District encourages physical activity by its students and is incorporated into its overall school curriculum.
- Special walking school bus events occur in the spring and fall.
- Periodic safety classes and for students, facilitated by the Claremont Police Department or other community group.

The community and individual feedback support the following programs to further promote SRTS initiatives:

- Provide a crossing guard at the Mulberry Street/Myrtle Street intersection.
- Crossing guards at the Summit Road/Tyler Street and Myrtle Street/Mulberry Street intersections.
- Use signs and painted symbols to identify principal travel routes for Bluff School.

## **Enforcement**

The enforcement policy in the Claremont Police Department encourages officers to patrol school areas during the school arrival and departure times. Officers tend to patrol these school zones unless they are called away on emergencies. The officers address general enforcement and area-specific traffic issues as needed. In addition to the officer enforcement, the Police Department shares a speed trailer with other communities in Sullivan County and, when it is available, deploys the trailer in school zones to inform motorists of their travel speed. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the presence of the speed trailer is effective at reducing travel speeds.

The Police Department also manages crossing guards citywide. These are paid positions and have recently been cut-back due to budget constraints. While there has been discussions regarding volunteer crossing guards, there is an inherent concern about liability to the City when there is a volunteer program of this nature. While there is a recognized need for more crossing guards, there is no funding source for expanding the program.

## **Engineering**

The Claremont Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the road and sidewalk infrastructure. Coordination with the City would be necessary if the School District determined improvements would be necessary within the public rights of way including roads, sidewalks, or other public travel ways. There are no planned engineering or construction projects planned for the Bluff School property that would alter the site layout, pedestrian, or vehicle circulation. The following sections provide detailed information on the City's Capital Improvement Program and the sidewalk inventory conducted for this Travel Plan.



Capital Improvement Program

The City of Claremont regularly updates its Capital Improvement Program, which includes infrastructure construction projects to improve roadways and associated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Claremont Department of Public Works has placed high priority on infrastructure improvement projects that will improve safety for all modes of travel: Drapers Corner (the intersection of Route 11/12, Maple Ave, and Pleasant Street), intersection of Route 11/12 and Buenavista Road, and reconstruction of a 0.4-mile segment of Main Street in downtown Claremont. Additionally, the City has set-aside an annual allotment of \$500,000 for city-wide paving and roadway improvements. Table 3-1 provides a comprehensive summary of present and future projects that will benefit pedestrians and cyclists.

**Table 3-1: Sidewalk Improvement and Construction Project List for Claremont DPW**

TARGET ROAD SEGMENT	PROJECT SCOPE	PROJECT STATUS
Mulberry Street from Myrtle Street to Park Avenue	Repaving project includes installation of a bituminous pavement sidewalk.	Included as part of the 2012 Street Resurfacing Program.
Myrtle Street from Pleasant Street to Mulberry Street	Repaving project includes sidewalk maintenance.	Included as part of the 2012 Street Resurfacing Program.
Myrtle Street from Pleasant Street to Mulberry Street	Sidewalk maintenance and repair.	2012 Maintenance Program
Belding Street, Chellis Street, Centennial Street	Street reconstruction, including sidewalk improvements.	Funding Required
Elm Street, Dunning Street, Hanover Street (in the vicinity of Valley Regional Hospital)	Construct new sidewalks extending north along Elm and Hanover Streets to connect with new sidewalk along Dunning Street	Funding Required
Maple Avenue from Drapers Corner to Buena Vista Road	Sidewalk maintenance.	Funding Required
Charlestown Road from Buena Vista Road to Glenwood Drive	Construct new sidewalk (approx. 3,000 ft) along Charlestown Road	Funding Required
Grove Street and Summit Road	Shift street alignment, shift sidewalk to one side of the street and widen to meet ADA minimum sidewalk width.	Funding Required

Note: Gray-shaded projects are in the Bluff School Study Area.

The limited budget for maintenance of roads and sidewalks presents a challenge in a small, historic city like Claremont. Even if the City has a priority project, it is possible the project is on hold due to lack of funding (see Table 3-1, above). Any projects listed that are consistent with the goals of this Comprehensive Travel Plan could be funded through a number of grants or low interest loans. Any such projects need to be completed in partnership with the City and follow City protocols to ensure the project is in the public interest.

### Sidewalk Inventory

The sidewalk inventory completed as part of this study was limited to within one mile of each of the elementary schools in Claremont. This inventory does not include the full city and could be supplemented and refined by City Staff as the opportunity arises. Map 3-3 (Page 16) is the combination of the sidewalk inventory digitized into a geographic information system by UVLSRPC Staff and qualitative sidewalk assessments developed by volunteers for the Claremont City Center Project. This is not a complete inventory, but it is a strong basis for identifying critical areas of need for the pedestrian infrastructure.

This inventory and mapping exercise provides some understanding of the condition and location of existing sidewalks in the City. The inventory also demonstrates where there are significant gaps in sidewalks or observable pedestrian facilities in the project area. Observed gaps can fall into one of two categories:

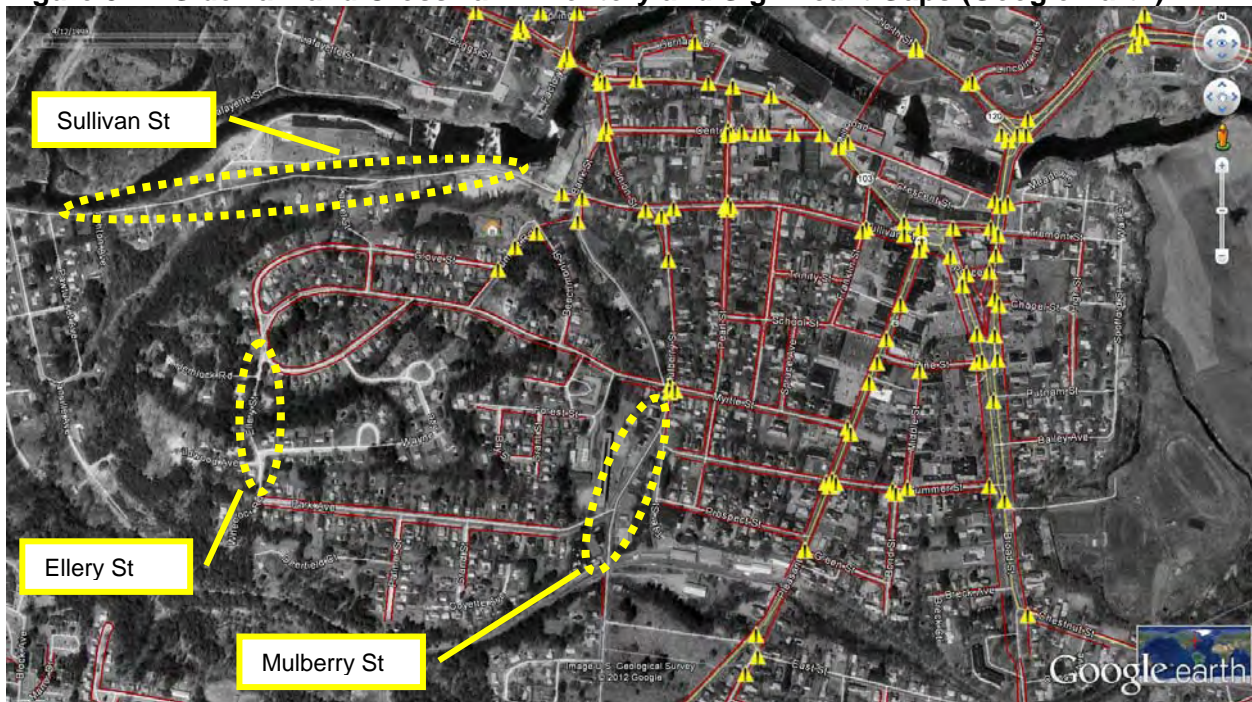
- A sidewalk ends mid-block for a short distance and starts again further along the block. The reason behind this occurrence is not clear. A photographic example is provided below.

#### **Example of Sidewalk Ending Mid-Block**



- Road segments without sidewalks break the pedestrian network in the City. Examples include Ellery Street and Mulberry Street (illustrated on Figure 3-4).

**Figure 3-4: Sidewalk and Crosswalk Inventory and Significant Gaps (Google Earth)**



Note: Sidewalks appear as red lines and crosswalks appear as yellow triangles on this image.

### **Identified Barriers**

The Task Force has collected comments throughout this process and, combined with the analyses and other background information, identified the following are the primary barriers to walking and biking to school:

- Child safety along walking routes.
- Roadway traffic volumes and speeds.
- Intersection safety and the need for crossing guards.
- Claremont has resident, registered sex offenders.
- The street network around Bluff School is too dangerous to allow students to bike to school.
- Aging and narrow sidewalks in need of repair and poorly defined pedestrian routes.

### **Solutions to Overcome Barriers**

The following text provides recommendations to address barriers to safe walking and biking to Bluff School. The three elementary school travel plans share common solutions and have unique solutions to overcome these barriers. The SRTS Task Force should take the recommendations of the three Travel Plans, and develop an implementation matrix, or an Action Plan detailed in the following chapter.

### Ensure Good Quality Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Serving Bluff School

- Encourage school faculty and staff to walk, bike, or carpool to school (possibly from a remote parking area) to set an example for the students and to better manage the limited parking available on the property.
- Formalize principal pedestrian route to Bluff School. The SRTS Taskforce should coordinate with the City and advocate for maintaining high quality pedestrian facilities along this route and make it a priority for maintenance and repairs, as necessary. Recommended pedestrian routes are illustrated in Figure 3-5.
- Work with the Department of Public Works to develop a plan to prioritize winter clearing and maintenance of the principal pedestrian routes to Bluff School among the overall City priorities.
- Identify principal walking routes to school with signage and painted symbols on the sidewalk in coordination with the City.
- Place crossing guards or safety monitors at the Summit Road/Tyler Street and Mulberry Street/Myrtle Street intersections.
- Construct a sidewalk along Tyler Street.
- Evaluate improvements in the Summit Road/Tyler Street/Sullivan Street intersections.
- Educate students, parents, and local residents of the special route designation and to take care when traveling past students walking or biking to school.

### Continue and Expand Existing Education and Encouragement Program

- Identify at least one champion in the school or the School District to promote SRTS programs. A district-wide champion would be able to coordinate common walking and biking programs among all schools.
- Identify a community organization or business that would be willing to help (either through donated time or funding) with promoting a Safe Routes initiative. Identify specific, attainable goals for the initiative and share news of events and successes with parents and local residents.
- Continue organizing an annual event for all schools, like a back to school fair, that includes information and instruction on safe walking and biking activities.
- Schedule regular walk and/or bike to school days, possibly monthly, with major kick-off events early in the fall and spring to remind parents and students of the opportunity to walk and bike to school.
- Identify a pool of volunteers to assist in organizing or monitoring walk and bike to school days. Study respondents commented that high school students, who need to satisfy community service commitments prior to graduation, may be a good volunteer resource. Regardless of the source of volunteers a training program would be necessary.

**Figure 3-5: Recommended Principal Walking Routes (Google Earth)**



## IV. IMPLEMENTING THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PLAN

The Bluff Elementary School is located in a principally residential area south of Claremont's city center. The school is located on the northern edge of the Bluff residential area of Claremont with some commercial and industrial uses within ¼-mile to the north of the school. The school's designated attendance zone, or the area of the City from which it draws students, includes most of the central business district and surrounding moderate-density residential neighborhoods. During the evaluation phase of work for this study, survey responses and field investigations indicated that the critical barriers to promoting walking to and from school were sidewalk conditions, distance, and safety. While there continues to be a need to improve and maintain infrastructure for the benefit of safe walking and biking routes, an effective way to promote SRTS goals is to increase student and parent education, and increasing the number of organized SRTS events to raise awareness of the opportunities to safely walk to and from school.

The prior chapter identifies recommended solutions to overcoming barriers to students walking and biking to school. The following text provides an outline to formulating an implementation plan based on the recommendations from all three Travel Plans. This Implementation Plan will be the product of continued work by the SRTS Task Force to determine the means to improve student walking and biking to school City-wide. It will be important for the Task Force to complete the exercise to clearly identify City-wide priorities to communicate to local, regional, and statewide decision makers and potential funders.

The following bullets provide information on commonly used information in an Implementation Plan. A blank table with these fields is included in Appendix B.

- **Action Item:** Summarize the recommendation with emphasis on specific actions. A given recommendation from the Travel Plans may be broken into separate actions or combined with others as appropriate.
- **School/District:** Specify if the action item applies to all schools or just an individual school.
- **Priority:** The Task Force should identify which action items have a higher priority. Values in this field may identify "High", "Moderate", and "Low" priorities for the individual action items.
- **Target Completion:** Should the action item be implemented in the "Short-term" (within 2 years), "Mid-term" (3-5 years), or "Long-term" (6+ years) timeframe?
- **Responsible Party:** Each action item requires a responsible party to ensure it is complete.
- **Funding Source:** Funding for individual action items may vary. Identifying existing or potential funding sources will be important to implementation. If the funding relies on a grant that has not yet been awarded, it is important to identify the grant program and application deadline.
- **Task Complete:** Record whether the action item has been completed and the date completed.

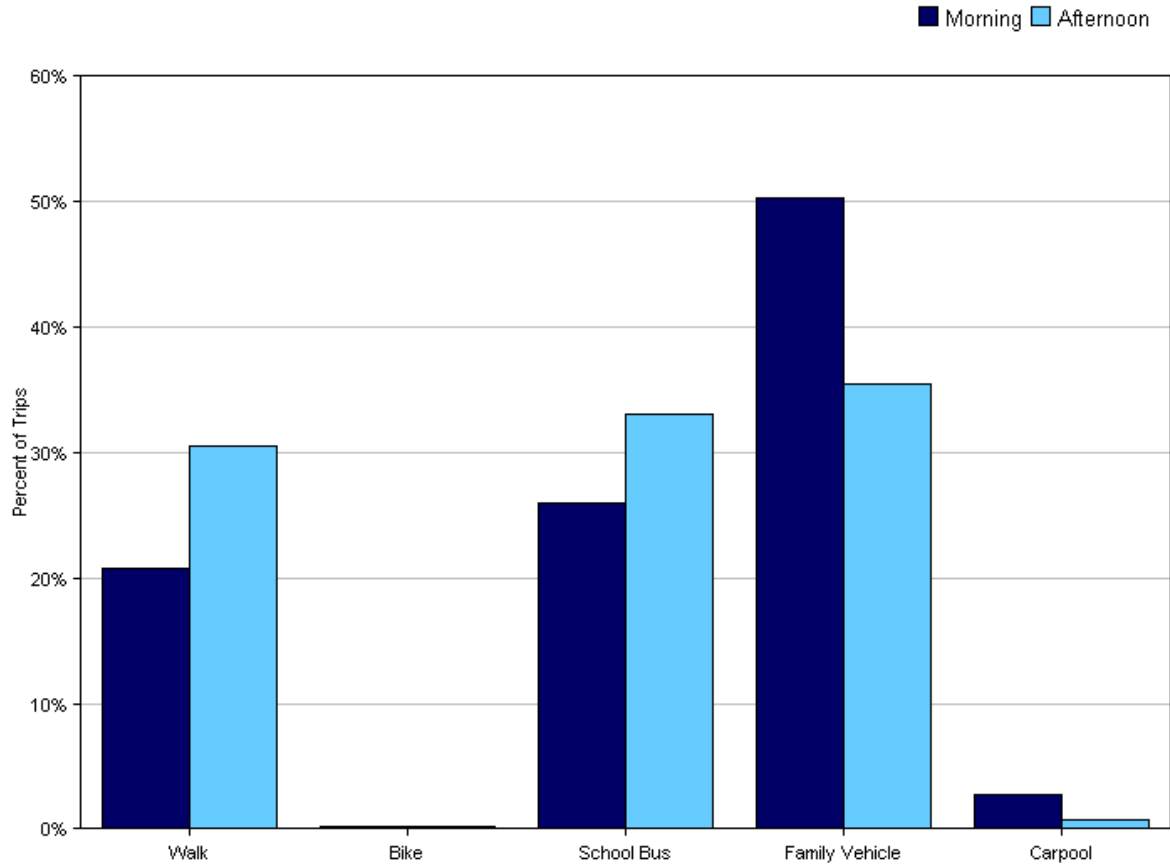
The Implementation Plan, once complete, should be reviewed by the Task Force or an appointed subcommittee on a regular basis to ensure goals and priorities are being met.

# APPENDIX A – EVALUATION SURVEYS

## Tally Report

<b>Program Name:</b>	Claremont Elementary SRTS	<b>Month and Year Collected:</b>	October 2010
<b>School Name:</b>	Bluff Elementary School	<b>Set ID:</b>	5909
<b>School Enrollment:</b>	269	<b>Date Report Generated:</b>	02/18/2011
<b>Enrollment within Grades Targeted by SRTS Program:</b>	269	<b>Number of Classrooms Included in Report:</b>	10
<b>Number of Classrooms in School:</b>	12		

### Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison



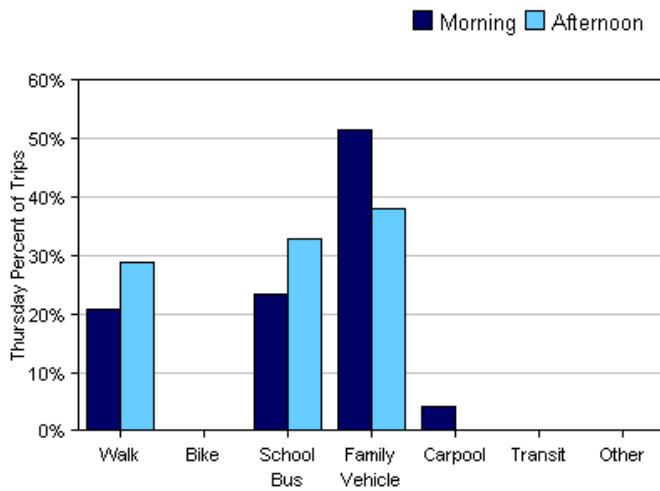
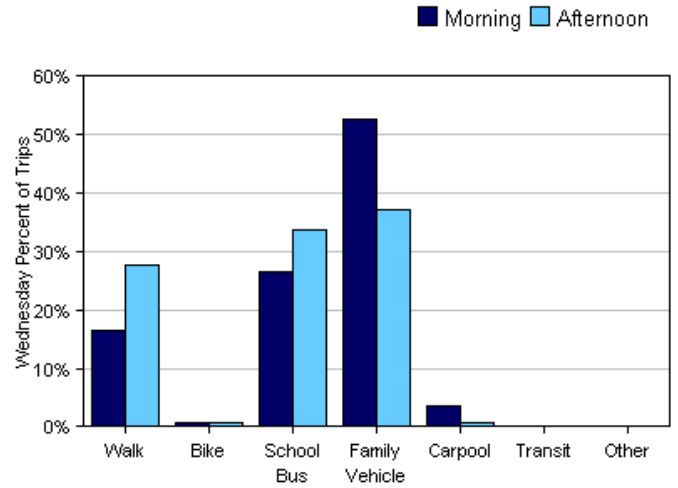
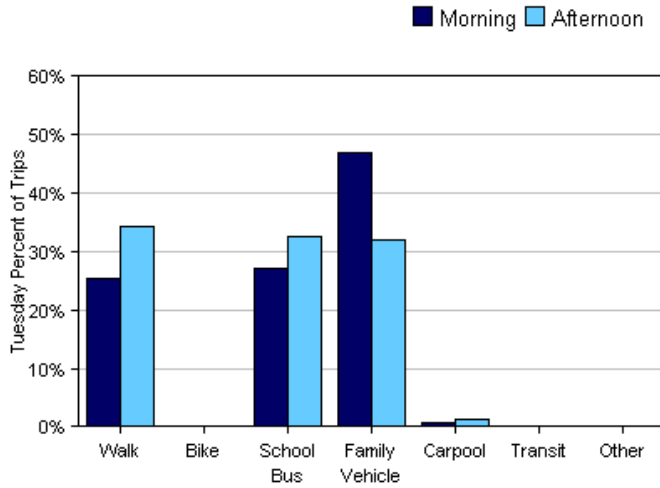
### Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	447	21%	0.2%	26%	50%	3%	0%	0%
Afternoon	426	31%	0.2%	33%	35%	0.7%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.



### Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

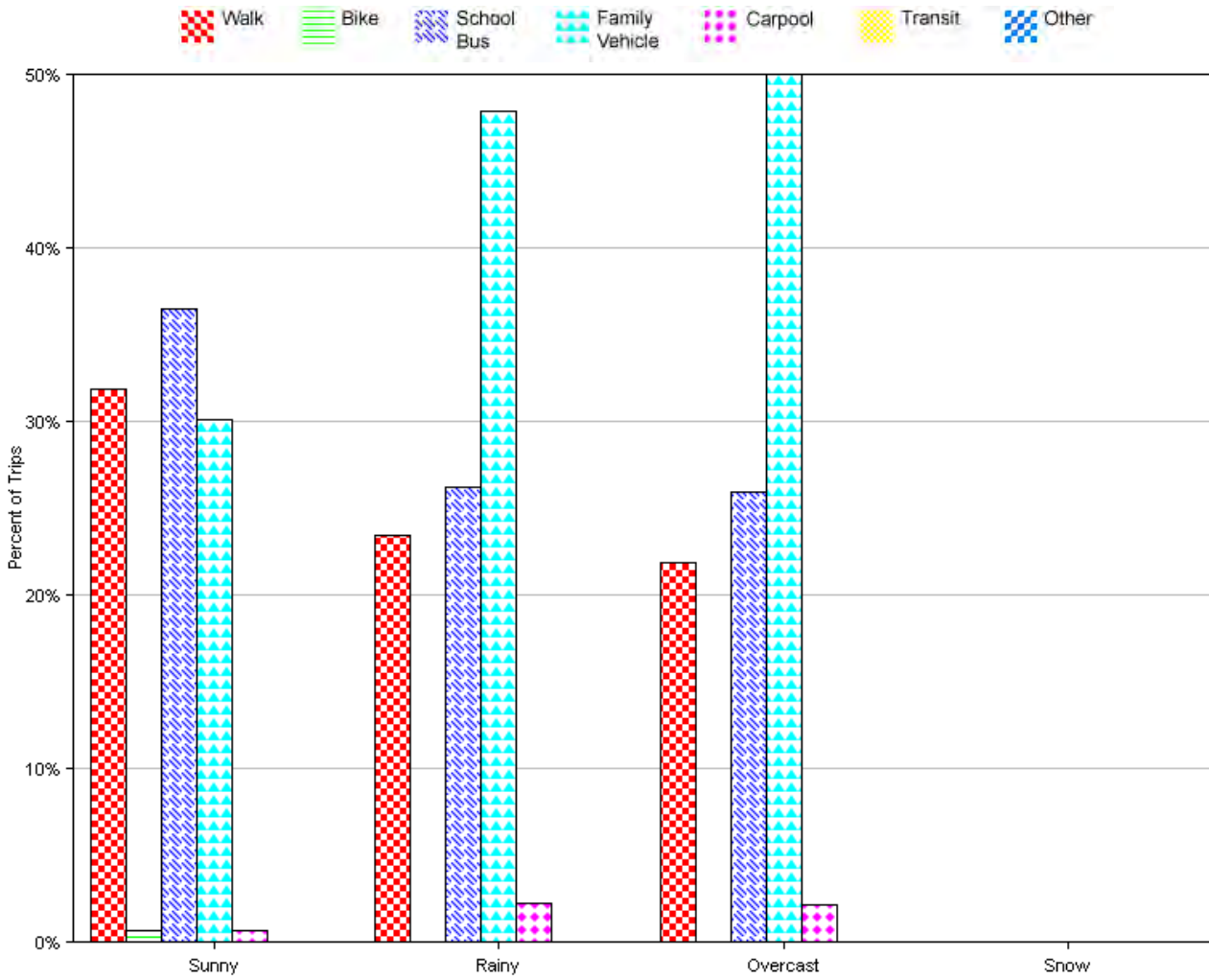


### Morning and Afternoon Travel Mode Comparison by Day

	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Tuesday AM	158	25%	0%	27%	47%	0.6%	0%	0%
Tuesday PM	160	34%	0%	33%	32%	1%	0%	0%
Wednesday AM	169	17%	0.6%	27%	53%	4%	0%	0%
Wednesday PM	169	28%	0.6%	34%	37%	0.6%	0%	0%
Thursday AM	120	21%	0%	23%	52%	4%	0%	0%
Thursday PM	97	29%	0%	33%	38%	0%	0%	0%

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Travel Mode by Weather Conditions



### Travel Mode by Weather Condition

Weather Condition	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Sunny	282	32%	0.7%	37%	30%	0.7%	0%	0%
Rainy	217	24%	0%	26%	48%	2%	0%	0%
Overcast	374	22%	0%	26%	50%	2%	0%	0%
Snow	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

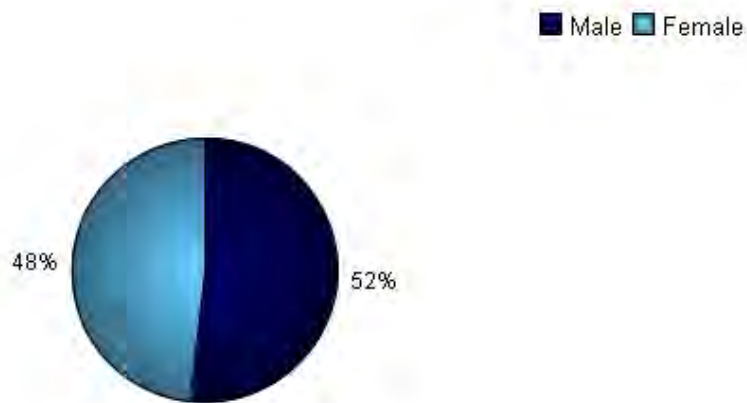
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

# Parent Survey Summary

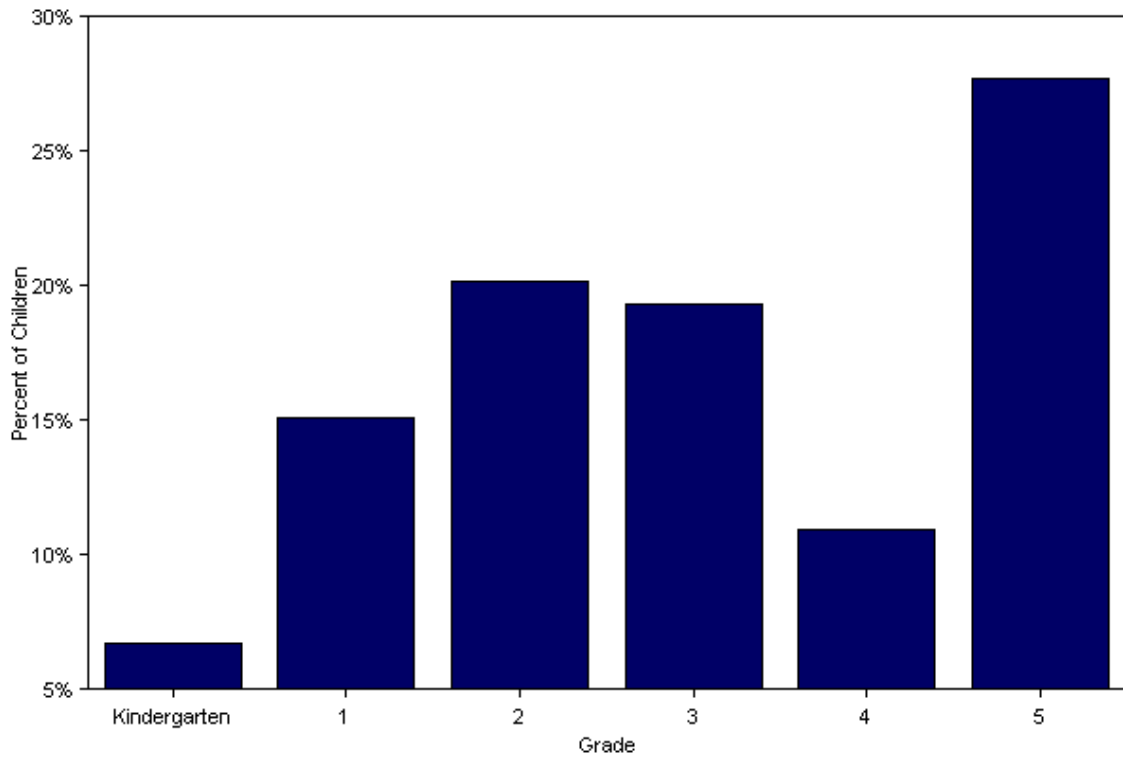
<b>Program Name:</b>	Claremont Elementary SRTS	<b>Month and Year Collected:</b>	October 2010
<b>School Name:</b>	Bluff Elementary School	<b>Set ID:</b>	4948
<b>School Enrollment:</b>	269	<b>Date Report Generated:</b>	02/18/2011
<b>Enrollment within Grades Targeted by SRTS Program:</b>	269	<b>Number of Questionnaires Analyzed for Report:</b>	120
<b>Number of Questionnaires Distributed:</b>	269		

This report contains information from parents about their children's trip to and from school. The report also reflects parents' perceptions regarding whether walking and bicycling to school is appropriate for their child. The data used in this report were collected using the Survey about Walking and Biking to School for Parents form from the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

## Sex of children for parents that provided information



### Grade levels of children represented in survey

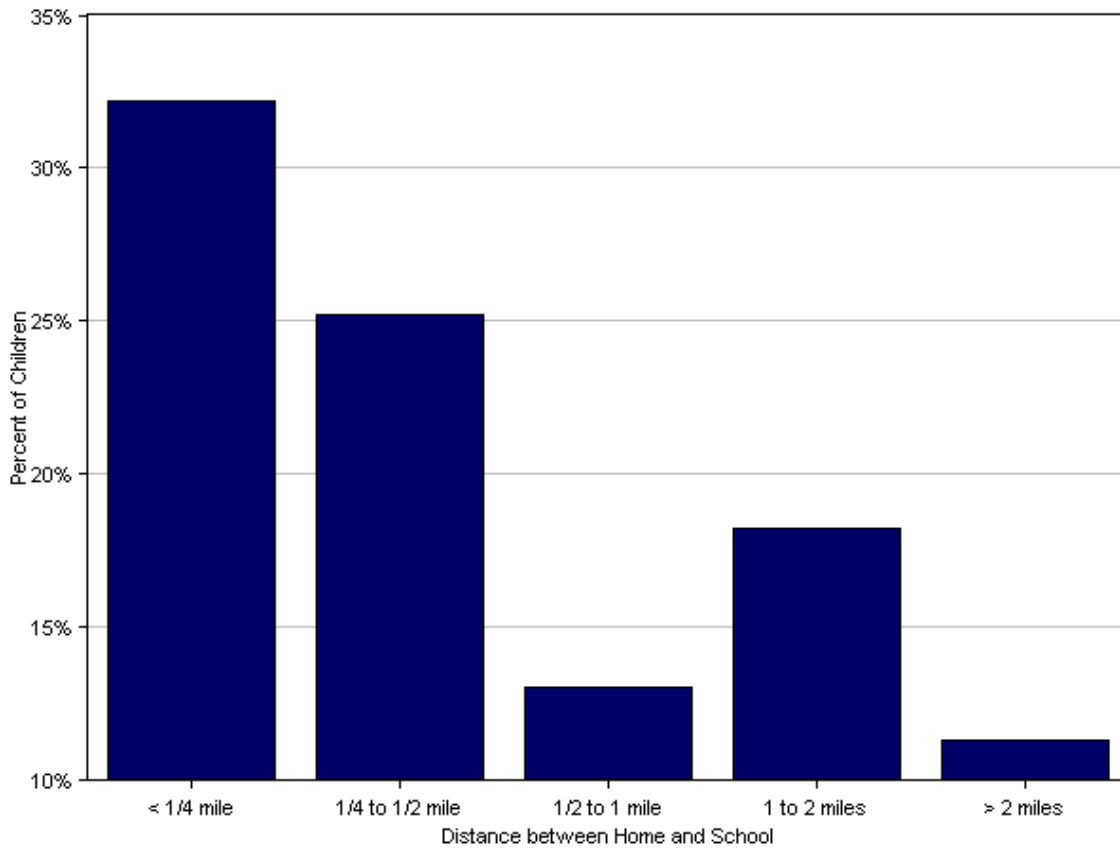


### Grade levels of children represented in survey

Grade in School	Responses per grade	
	Number	Percent
Kindergarten	8	7%
1	18	15%
2	24	20%
3	23	19%
4	13	11%
5	33	28%

No response: 1  
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

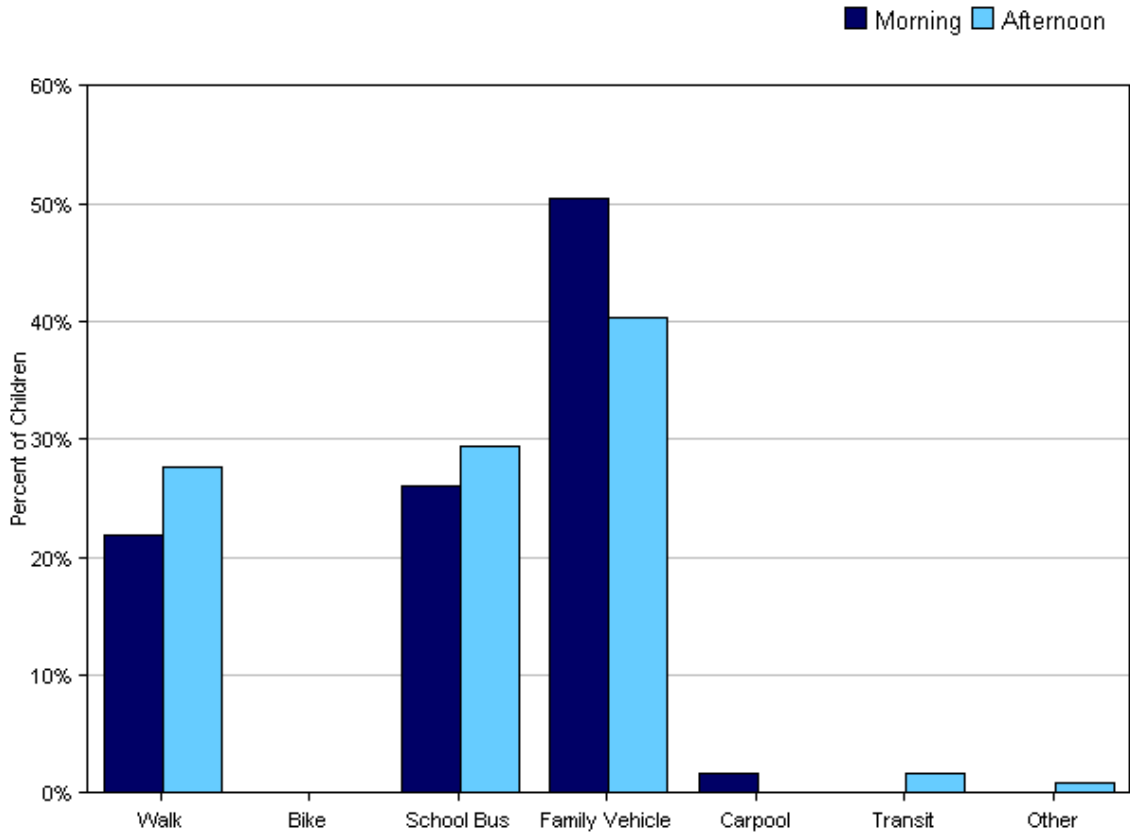


### Parent estimate of distance from child's home to school

Distance between home and school	Number of children	Percent
Less than 1/4 mile	37	32%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	29	25%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	15	13%
1 mile up to 2 miles	21	18%
More than 2 miles	13	11%

Don't know or No response: 5  
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school



### Typical mode of arrival at and departure from school

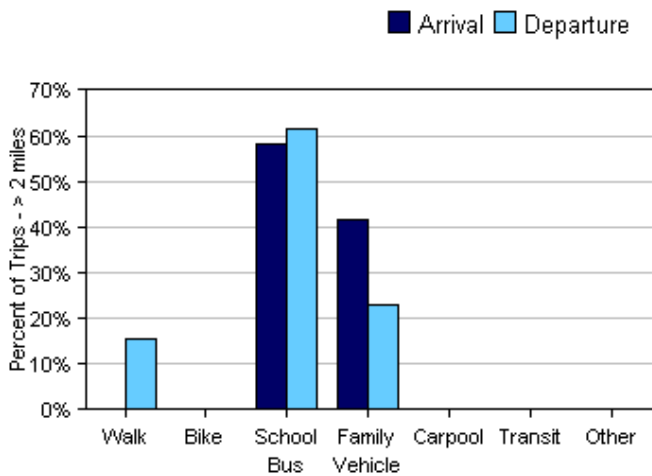
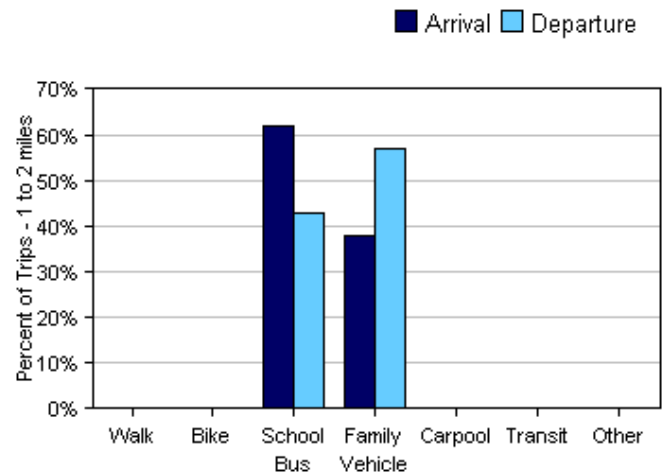
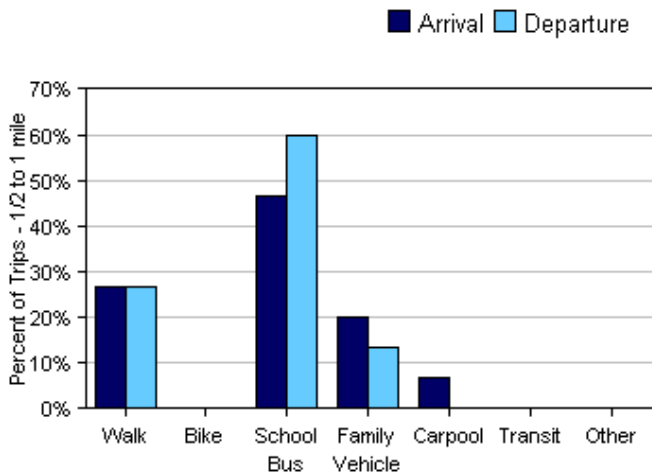
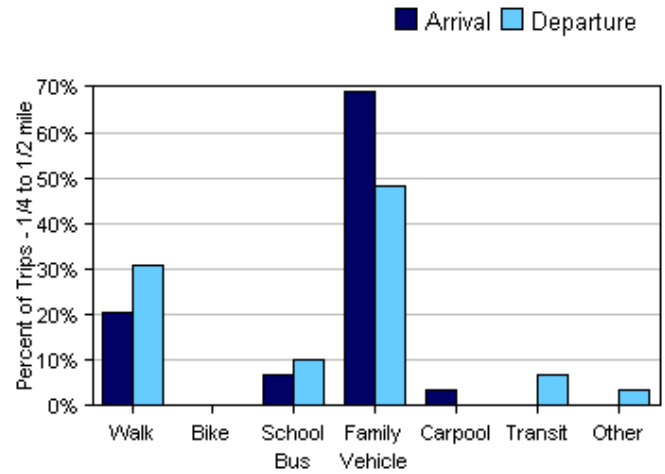
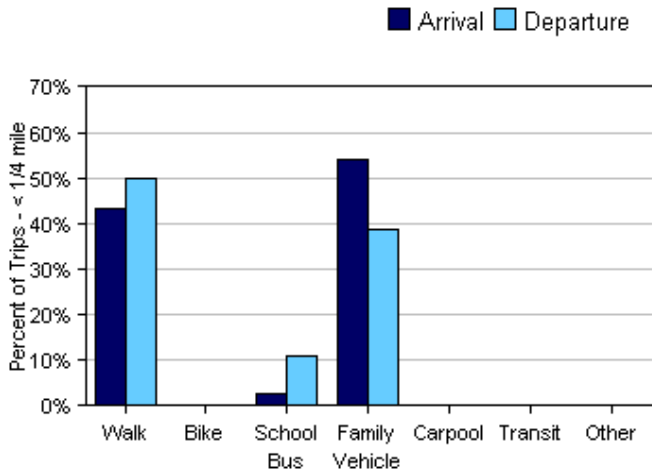
Time of Trip	Number of Trips	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Morning	119	22%	0%	26%	50%	2%	0%	0%
Afternoon	119	28%	0%	29%	40%	0%	2%	0.8%

No Response Morning: 1

No Response Afternoon: 1

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

## Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school



## Typical mode of school arrival and departure by distance child lives from school

### School Arrival

Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	37	43%	0%	3%	54%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	29	21%	0%	7%	69%	3%	0%	0%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	15	27%	0%	47%	20%	7%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	21	0%	0%	62%	38%	0%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	12	0%	0%	58%	42%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 6

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

### School Departure

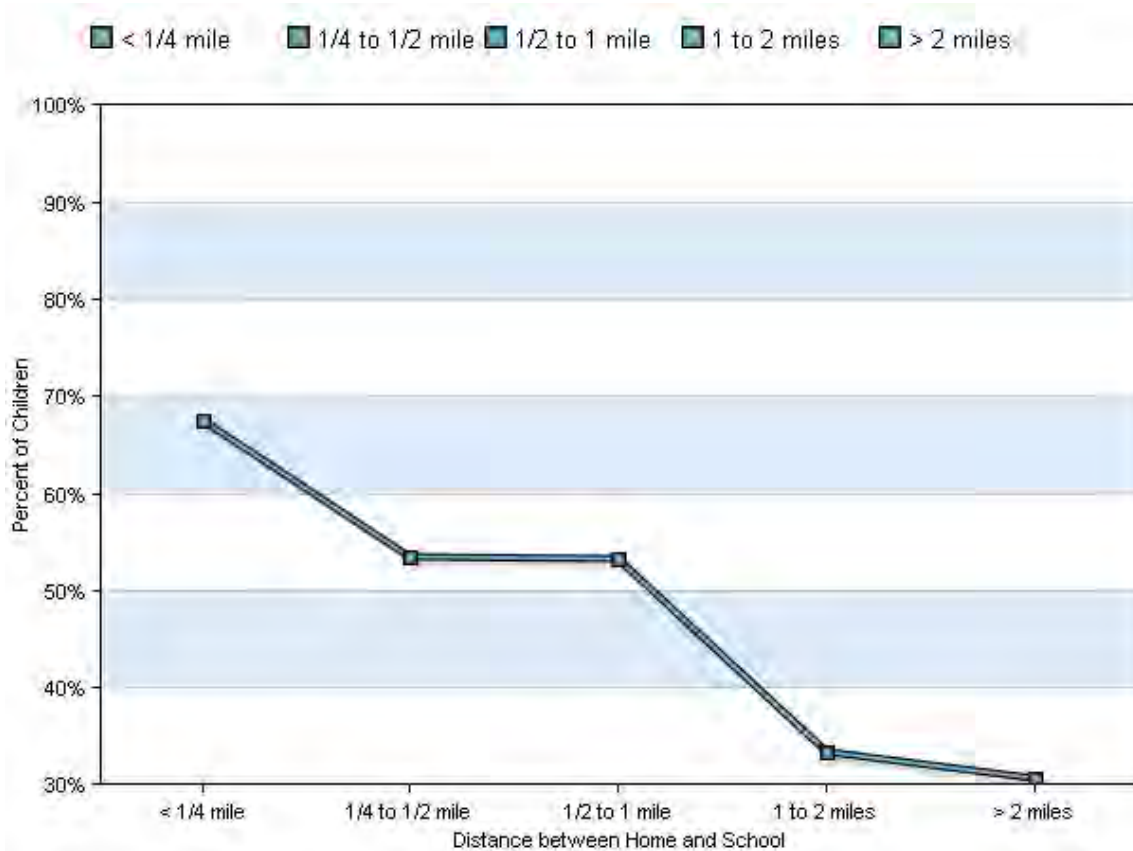
Distance	Number within Distance	Walk	Bike	School Bus	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Transit	Other
Less than 1/4 mile	36	50%	0%	11%	39%	0%	0%	0%
1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	29	31%	0%	10%	48%	0%	7%	3%
1/2 mile up to 1 mile	15	27%	0%	60%	13%	0%	0%	0%
1 mile up to 2 miles	21	0%	0%	43%	57%	0%	0%	0%
More than 2 miles	13	15%	0%	62%	23%	0%	0%	0%

Don't know or No response: 6

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.



**Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school**

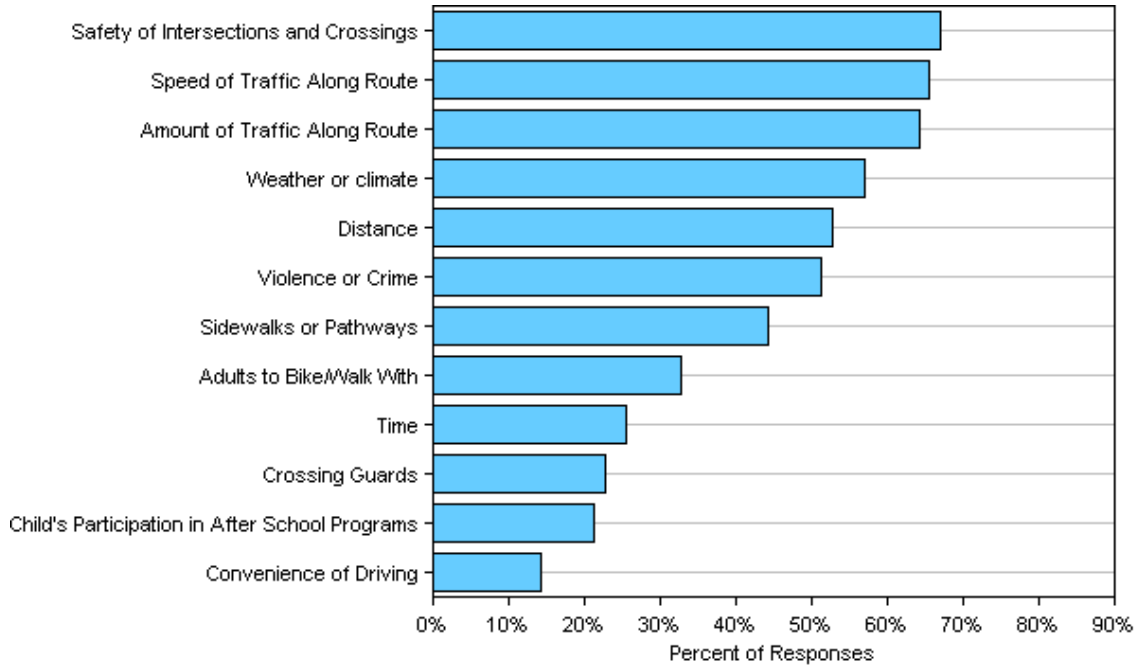


**Percent of children who have asked for permission to walk or bike to/from school by distance they live from school**

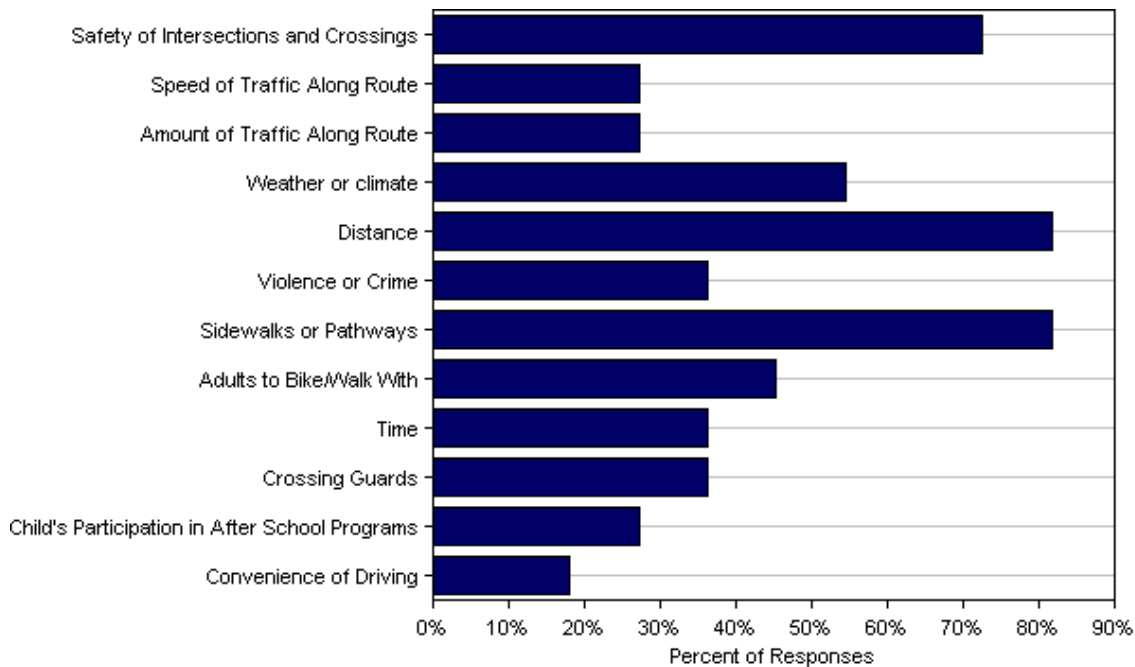
Asked Permission?	Number of Children	Less than 1/4 mile	1/4 mile up to 1/2 mile	1/2 mile up to 1 mile	1 mile up to 2 miles	More than 2 miles
Yes	59	68%	54%	53%	33%	31%
No	55	32%	46%	47%	67%	69%

Don't know or No response: 6  
 Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

**Issues reported to affect the decision to not allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who do not walk or bike to/from school**



**Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school**



**Issues reported to affect the decision to allow a child to walk or bike to/from school by parents of children who already walk or bike to/from school**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Child does not walk/bike to school</b>	<b>Child walks/bikes to school</b>
Safety of Intersections and Crossings	67%	73%
Speed of Traffic Along Route	66%	27%
Amount of Traffic Along Route	64%	27%
Weather or climate	57%	55%
Distance	53%	82%
Violence or Crime	51%	36%
Sidewalks or Pathways	44%	82%
Adults to Bike/Walk With	33%	45%
Time	26%	36%
Crossing Guards	23%	36%
Child's Participation in After School Programs	21%	27%
Convenience of Driving	14%	18%
<b>Number of Respondents per Category</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>11</b>

No response: 39

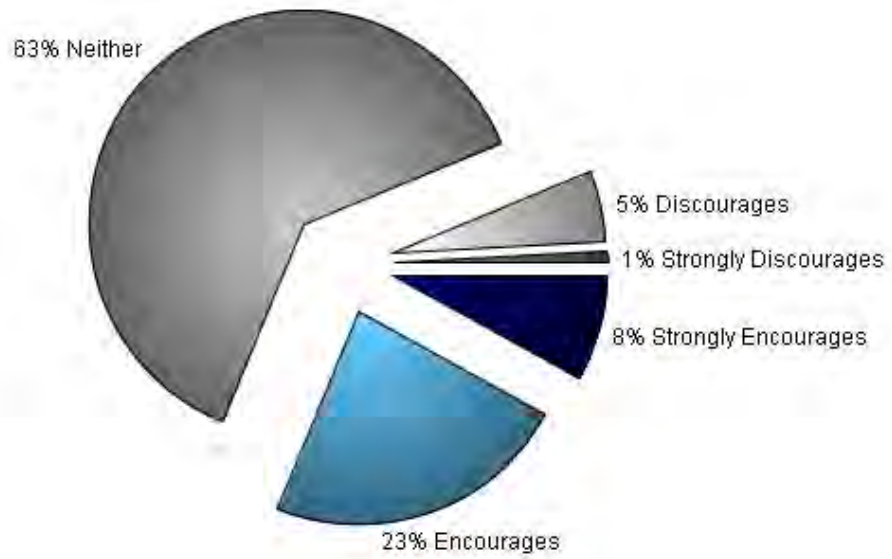
Note:

--Factors are listed from most to least influential for the 'Child does not walk/bike to school' group.

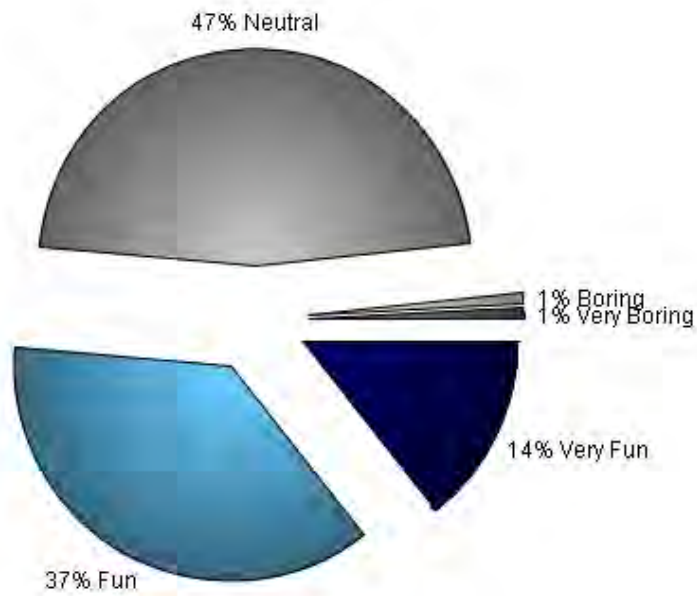
--Each column may sum to > 100% because respondent could select more than issue

--The calculation used to determine the percentage for each issue is based on the 'Number of Respondents per Category' within the respective columns (Child does not walk/bike to school and Child walks/bikes to school.) If comparing percentages between the two columns, please pay particular attention to each column's number of respondents because the two numbers can differ dramatically.

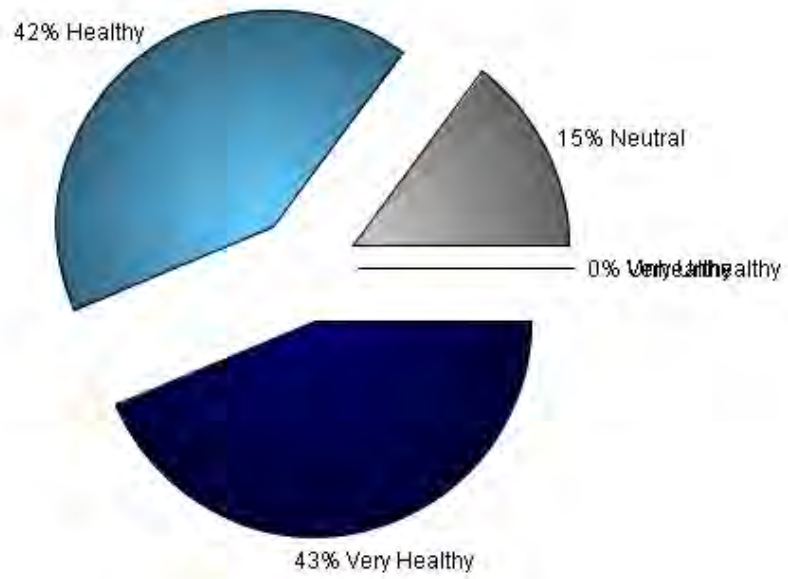
**Parents' opinions about how much their child's school encourages or discourages walking and biking to/from school**



**Parents' opinions about how much fun walking and biking to/from school is for their child**



**Parents' opinions about how healthy walking and biking to/from school is for their child**



## Comments Section

SurveyID	Comment
515740	THEY DON'T LET MY DAUGHTER WALK HOME WHEN HER BROTHERS STAY FOR GROUP, IT UPSETS ME BECAUSE WE DON'T LIVE THAT FAR.
515768	I HAVE SEVERAL CONCERS IN REGARDS TO MY CHILDREN WALKING TO OR FROM SCHOOL ALONE. MY MAIN CONCERN IS PREDATORS. ANOTHER CONCERN IS SAFETY, NOT JUST IN REGARDS TO TRAFFIC BUT HOW POORLY THE SIDEWALKS ARE MAINTAINED IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE WINTER. MY CHILDREN DO WALK HOME FROM SCHOOL WITH THEIR TEENAGE BABYSITTER, I AM MORE COMFORTABLE WITH A PEER BEING WITH THEM.
515777	I JUST DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH MY CHILDREN WALKING TO SCHOOL.
515781	I THINK KIDS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO RIDE THEIR BIKES TO SCHOOL, IF THEY'RE IN 5TH GRADE OR HIGHER.
515788	NOWADAYS IT IS VERY UNSAFE FOR ANY CHILD TO WALK OR RIDE A BIKE BY THEMSELVES. THERE SHOULD BE AN ADULT WITH THEM AT ALL TIMES.
515881	A LOT OF OLDER MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILDREN USE A LOT OF FOUL LANGUAGE WHEN MY CHILD AND I WALK HOME FROM SCHOOL. I DON'T THINK THEY NEED TO BE THERE AND IF THEY DO A TEACHER OR PRINCIPAL NEEDS TO BE OUTSIDE SUPERVISING.
515886	THERE ARE 3 TO 4 BULLIES THAT GO TO BLUFF. THEY ARE MEAN TO HER. I WORRY THAT IF SHE WALKS HOME THEY WILL HURT HER OR BULLY HER!
517703	IF IT WAS SAFER FOR MY CHILDREN AT THEIR YOUNG AGE AND IF THERE WERE MORE CROSSING GUARDS OR SOME KIND OF PEOPLE TO BE WATCHING THEM IN CASE OF VIOLENCE OR CRIME THEN I MIGHT LET THEM.
517715	PLEASE NOTE THAT I WOULD NOT EVEN ALLOW MY CHILD TO WALK ALONE TO OR FROM SCHOOL, SO IT WOULD BE 5TH GRADE BUT ONLY IF THEY ARE ABLE TO WALK TOGETHER. WE ALSO HAVE A SEX OFFENDER WITHIN A CLOSE PROXIMITY OF OUR SCHOOL, SO THIS ALSO MAKES ME WEARY! WE ALSO TEND TO WALK ON DAYS OF NICE WEATHER!
517722	MY CHILD LIVES WITH HER MOTHER ONE WEEK THEN WITH ME THE NEXT WEEK. WITH ME SHE RIDES THE BUS. WITH HER MOTHER SHE WALKS.
517723	MY KIDS WALK JUST ABOUT EVERYDAY AFTER SCHOOL BECAUSE THEIR AUNT LIVES ABOUT 3 MINUTES FROM BLUFF.
517752	I AM VERY WORRIED ABOUT GETTING KIDNAPPED, HURT, OR BULLIED WHEN GOING TO AND FROM SCHOOL. OR "BAD" PEOPLE REFERRING DRUGS TO CANDY. I THINK ALL SCHOOLS SHOULD STUDY THE "STRANGER" ISSUES AND I WOULDN'T ALLOW MY CHILDREN TO WALK IF I HAD A VEHICLE, BUT I HAVE NO CHOICE.
515743	DOESN'T HAVE MORE SAFETY INFO OR TEACH THEM NOW. I TRY BUT THEY RUN AND DON'T LOOK BEFORE CROSSING.
515870	MY KIDS WALK JUST ABOUT EVERYDAY AFTER SCHOOL TO MY SISTERS. IT IS ABOUT A 3 MINUTE WALK FROM SCHOOL.
517727	THERE IS A 5 WAY INTERSECTION WITH A LOT OF TRAFFIC AND NO CROSSING GUARD THAT REALLY WORRIES ME THE MOST.
517731	THE SCHOOL DOES NOT ALLOW MY DAUGHTER TO WALK HOME WHEN THE BOYS HAVE GROUP ON WEDNESDAYS, IT UPSETS ME BECAUSE I DON'T LIVE THAT FAR AT ALL.
517737	DOESN'T HAVE MORE SAFETY INFO OR TEACH THEM HOW. I TRY, BUT THEY RUN AND DON'T LOOK BEFORE CROSSING.
517742	THEY DON'T LET MY DAUGHTER WALK HOME AND IT UPSETS ME BECAUSE WE DON'T LIVE THAT FAR.
517767	PLEASE NOTE THAT I WOULD NOT EVER ALLOW MY CHILD TO WALK ALONE TO OR FROM SCHOOL, SO IT WOULD BE 5TH GRADE BUT ONLY IF THEY ARE ABLE TO WALK TOGETHER. WE ALSO HAVE A SEX OFFENDER THAT LIVES WITHIN A CLOSE PROXIMITY OF OUR SCHOOL, SO THIS ALSO MAKES ME VERY WEARY! WE ALSO TEND TO WALK ON NICE DAYS!

517789	HAVING A TEACHER OR CROSSING GUARD AT EACH INTERSECTION MAY HELP PREVENT BULLYING ON THE WAY TO/FROM SCHOOL.
517811	MY CHILDS MATURITY LEVEL IS NOT ADEQUATE TO ALLOW HIM TO BIKE TO SCHOOL!
517836	WE MOSTLY WALK UNLESS THE WEATHER IS BAD OR WE'RE RUNNING LATE. WOULD LIKE TO SEE A WAY FOR STUDENTS TO SAFELY BIKES TO SCHOOL.
515787	I DON'T KNOW WHEN I WILL ALLOW MY CHILDREN TO WALK TO SCHOOL. I DON'T FEEL CONFIDENT THAT THEY'LL BE SAFE.
517754	MY CHILD ALREADY WALKS HOME FROM SCHOOL WITH HER OLDER SISTER.
517762	IT WOULD BE GREAT TO HAVE STRATEGICALLY PLACED CROSSING GUARDS ALONG MYRTLE, MULBERRY, MAIN, AND SULLIVAN STREET AREAS TO ASSIST WITH TRAFFIC SAFETY ISSUES.
517793	MAYBE A STREET BUDDY WALKING PROGRAM COULD BE SAFER, KIDS ON THE SAME STREET WALKING TOGETHER.
517788	ON NUMBERS 10 TO 11 I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH MY CHILD WALKING TO SCHOOL.
517844	BOTH OF MY CHILDREN ARE TOO YOUNG TO WALK TO SCHOOL. ANGELO WHO ATTENDS BLUFF IN CLAREMONT BUT STAYS IN WINDSOR DOESN'T HAVE THE OPTION TO WALK MONDAY-THURSDAY.
517730	I DROVE MY SON TO SCHOOL FOR 3 YEARS BECAUSE THE BUS DRIVER CHANGED HIS PICK UP TO THE NEAREST INTERSECTION AND 1. COULDN'T SEE HIM FROM THE HOUSE AND 2. EXCESSIVE TRAFFIC AND SPEED OF TRAFFIC. HE WAS TARDY A COUPLE MINUTES DAILY BECAUSE I HAVE NARCOLEPSY AND COULDN'T ALWAYS SAFELY DRIVE AS SOON AS NEEDED. I WOULDN'T LET HIM WALK ALONE BECAUSE OF MY CONCERN WITH PREDATORS, BULLIES, AND TRAFFIC ISSUES.
517732	I'M A BUS DRIVER AND MY KIDS GO TO WORK WITH ME AND THE SCHOOL THEY ATTEND IS NOWHERE NEAR WHERE WE LIVE, ITS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN.
515794	I DO NOT APPROVE OR THINK IT IS SAFE FOR ANY CHILD TO WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL AT AN ELEMENTARY AGE.

**APPENDIX B – EXAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TABLE**



Action Item	School / District	Priority	Target Completion	Responsible Party	Funding Source	Task Complete