

April 15, 2025



AGENDA ITEM 7 A

CRTPA SCHOOL SAFETY STUDY

TYPE OF ITEM: Action

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

The CRTPA's School Safety Study, titled "[Take the Safe Route - Safe Access to School Study](#)" (TTSR), has been completed for Board approval.

CRTPA COMMITTEE ACTIONS

The CRTPA's Technical Advisory Committee and Citizen's Multimodal Advisory Committee met on April 1 and both committees voted to recommend the CRTPA approve the study.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Option 1: Approve the "Take the Safe Route - Safe Access to School Study".

THE LATEST

An update on the project was most recently provided to the CRTPA at its January 21 Retreat. Subsequent to Retreat, the study's report has been finalized. The report outlines the projects and includes details associated with specific recommendations for each of the analyzed schools. In addition to specific school recommendations, the report includes broader programmatic and systemic recommendations for consideration.

BACKGROUND

In late 2023, the CRTPA initiated a study to identify schools in the CRTPA region with the greatest need for improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The TTSR study provided a targeted, data-driven effort that resulted in the identification of needed bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, specifically related to school access. Implementation of the study's recommendations will assist in promoting safe, sustainable transportation options, as well as enhancing community connectivity.

The TTSR study was developed in two (2) phases, discussed below.

PHASE 1

Phase 1 of the study involved a comprehensive data analysis of schools in the CRTPA region (elementary, middle, and high schools) to identify those with the greatest need for capital improvements related to biking and walking facilities. This phase began with conducting a desktop

data analysis utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) examining factors including connectivity, accessibility, and equity. Specifically, this analysis examined the following data:

- Identified hazardous walking condition data
- Pedestrian and bicycle crash data
- Relevant socioeconomic and demographic data
- Transportation data

The initial analysis allocated points based on the data from the GIS analysis and was shared with stakeholders in the relevant counties to solicit feedback. A further analysis was conducted that refined the list of identified schools.

This analysis involved consideration of several additional factors using GIS and Google Earth within a specific buffer distance around schools. These factors included:

- Residential density
- Existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Sidewalk Connectivity
- Roadway Signage
- Street lighting

Phase I analyses ultimately resulted in the identification of the following recommended schools in the CRTPA region from which a more detailed study was initiated:

- **Shanks Middle School** (Gadsden County)
- **Wakulla Middle School** (Wakulla County)
- **Amos P. Godby High School** (Leon County)
- **John G. Riley Elementary School** (Leon County)
- **Raa Middle School + Ruediger Elementary School** (Leon County)
- **Griffin Middle School** (Leon County)
- **Leon High School** (Leon County)
- **Nims Middle School**
- **Rickards High School** (Leon County)
- **Pineview Elementary School** (Leon County)
- **Fairview Middle School** (Leon County)

PHASE 2

The second phase of the study was initiated in Spring 2024 and provided a focused safety and accessibility analysis for the recommended schools in Phase 1.

The analysis, which occurred in mid to late May 2024, included on-site visits and an inventory of the existing facilities and infrastructure at each of the selected schools. The assessments identified a number of potential improvements including the opportunity to address or improve sidewalk gaps,

crosswalk/intersections, lighting, bicycle facilities and off-road trails. Specific recommendations for each school were identified during the site visits (to be detailed in the project report) and include some of the following observations:

- Need for improved crosswalks
- Presence of sidewalk gaps
- Speeding concerns

Phase 2 of the study also included development and implementation of a student and parent survey for each of the identified schools. This task was completed through coordination with each school related to assisting in conducting the student travel tallies and parent surveys.

PROJECT STAKHOLDER GROUPS

The TTSR study was guided by separate stakeholders' groups for Gadsden, Leon, and Wakulla counties comprised of local staff associated with schools, law enforcement, public works, and planning agencies. The stakeholders' groups have each met four times with the most recent meetings occurring in December 2024.

PROJECT MILESTONES/TIMELINE

The following provides the timeline associated with the "Take the Safe Route – Safe Access to School Study"

2023

- December 7 – Initial stakeholder meetings conducted (Gadsden, Jefferson & Leon County stakeholder groups)

2024

- January 16 – Project kick off at CRTPA Retreat
- February 7 & 8 – Second stakeholder meetings conducted
- April 9 & 10 – Third stakeholder meetings conducted
- May 7 & 21 – Project update provided CRTPA TAC, CMAC, and Board
- Spring/Fall – Conduct site visits & survey selected schools
- Fall/Winter – Develop study/recommendations
- December – Fourth stakeholder meetings conducted

2025

- January – CRTPA Retreat Update
- April – Project presented for approval at CRTPA Board and Committee meetings

Ultimately, the “Take the Safe Route - Safe Access to School Study” has identified needed bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including the identification of potential funding sources, from which further study and implementation efforts can occur. In addition to engineering and infrastructure improvements, various programmatic recommendations have been identified to facilitate a safer culture of walking and bicycling for students. These programmatic recommendations focus on utilizing education, enforcement, student arrival and dismissal programming, and collaboration with schools, parents, and caregivers to ensure that student safety needs are met and to encourage more students to walk and bicycle to school.

OPTIONS

- Option 1: Approve the “Take the Safe Route - Safe Access to School Study”.
(Recommended)
- Option 2: CRTPA Board Discretion.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: [LINK TO REPORT](#)