



Safe Routes Action Plan

A two-year plan for making New Orleans a safe place to walk and bike for youth, families, and communities



Health | Safety | Equity | March 2018

Table of Contents

Letter from the Health Director	2
Executive Summary	3
I. Background	4
History of the Program	5
Program Framework	6
Strategies	7
II. 2017 Accomplishments	8
2017 Highlights	9
Crescent City Crossings	10
School Travel Safety Plans	12
III. Two Year Action Plan	13
Goals	14
Programs	15
Program Implementation Plans	16

Letter from the Health Director

I am pleased to present this report that describes the progress made by the New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) during the first year of its Safe Routes program and our plans to expand in the coming years. In January 2017, NOHD launched a Safe Routes program focused on the journey to school. This effort uses a variety of strategies to promote health and safety for youth and families in school zones, drawing upon national best practices of the Safe Routes National Partnership and the Vision Zero Network. This program has implemented strategies such as infrastructure upgrades, safety education, and community crossing guards. To date, we have been able to improve travel safety at over 17 public schools across the city, making it safer for our children to get to school each day.



A healthy community is one in which children, youth, and all community members can travel safely to the places they go every day. Under the leadership of Mayor Mitch Landrieu, New Orleans has seen a dramatic expansion in bike lanes and extensive improvements to streetscapes and sidewalks, making active transportation easier. It is a priority for the Health Department to continue to build on these improvements and ensure that all community members have access to opportunities for safe and active transportation that meets their daily needs. For that reason, over the next two years, we hope to expand our Safe Routes program to include more schools as well as other types of locations where people go to be healthy and well, starting with early childhood through their senior years.

It takes a concerted effort among government and community partners to create healthy communities. We implemented Safe Routes programming in collaboration with agencies across the City of New Orleans, including the Department of Public Works, the New Orleans Police Department, Code Enforcement, Parks & Parkways, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, and the Orleans Parish School Board, and we are grateful for their partnership.

We look forward to continuing our Safe Routes journey to help make New Orleans a healthier and safer place for our children, families, and communities.

Joseph M. Kanter, MD, MPH
Director of Health
City of New Orleans

About the New Orleans Health Department: The mission of the nationally accredited New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) is to protect, promote and ensure the health of all who live in New Orleans. NOHD aims to build a healthy New Orleans through equitable social and environmental conditions and through policies, programs and partnerships that promote health. Learn more at www.nola.gov/health.

Executive Summary

The goal of the New Orleans Health Department's (NOHD) Safe Routes program is to improve the health, safety, and well-being of New Orleans residents by affecting how we travel to and access our community resources. Through a health equity lens that uses national best practices and cross-sector approaches, the program focuses on serving children, families and vulnerable users in public places, encouraging active transportation and helping them get to and from their destination safely.

Accomplishments from 2017 to date

In 2017, NOHD focused its Safe Routes program on school travel safety. It successfully implemented the following:

- The ***Crescent City Crossings*** project improved travel safety at ten public schools in New Orleans by implementing a crossing guard program at these schools in partnership with the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), training physical education teachers to provide bike and pedestrian safety education for students, procuring a fleet of 15 bicycles to lend to physical education teachers for teaching travel safety, and implementing "Walk and Roll to School Week" programming.
- The ***School Travel Safety Plan*** project produced actionable plans to improve school travel safety at seven public schools in New Orleans, four of which are within the South Claiborne Avenue Corridor. This project leveraged the resources of City agencies including the NOPD, the Department of Public Works, Parks & Parkways, and Code Enforcement to make infrastructure improvements around these schools.
- By assisting seven additional schools with management of their ***individual Safe Routes to School infrastructure grants*** (progress of which had been stalled), work on these projects was resumed, and one was completed.

NOHD also served on transportation safety committees to advance transportation-safety-related policies, including the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee, the Complete Streets Working Group, and the New Orleans Regional Traffic Safety Coalition.

Plans for 2018-2019

NOHD's Safe Routes program intends to scale-up school-related programming and to expand its programming to other types of public places. Pending funding availability, we plan to:

- Provide technical assistance for **additional schools to create School Travel Safety Plans** (working with 4 schools per semester)
- **Expand Travel Safety Plans to community hubs** such as parks, community centers, and health care facilities, with an emphasis on locations serving youth, families, seniors, and populations with greatest need.
- **Continue to coordinate crossing guard trainings** by supporting and offering semi-annual trainings for crossing guards and assistance to schools to manage their guards.
- **Lead PE teacher trainings** for PE teachers at additional schools to enable them to bring more traffic skills to more students in grades 3-5, and lending out the bicycle fleet for their educational use.
- **Celebrate Walk and Roll to School Week** annually to promote excitement around safe and active transportation to school.

I. Background



Why Safe Routes?

History of the Program

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the New Orleans public school system was dramatically reformed. Currently, over 90% of public school students attend an independently operated charter school. These charter schools are overseen by three school boards: Recovery School District (RSD), Board for Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB). All except four public schools are operated either individually or by charter management organizations (CMOs). Between schools closed as a direct result of Hurricane Katrina and the frequent moving from temporary facilities to permanent ones under the charter system, the City must constantly shift infrastructure. As charter schools open and close, the City must keep up with marking drop-off zones, painting crosswalks and posting school zone signs.

Each school is tasked with providing transportation for its students. The routes and stops are managed by the schools, the bus companies, or the CMOs. As a result, there is no aggregate system-wide data about school transportation modes or routes, nor is there information about other modes of transportation. The decentralized nature and lack of oversight of school transportation has resulted in a disjointed, structurally inefficient, and potentially dangerous transportation environment. Costs have more than doubled per pupil. Over the course of seven years, the Orleans Parish student population has decreased by 15,302 students while losing 21 schools. Meanwhile, transportation costs have increased by more than \$17,000,000.¹

In addition, after the conversion to the “One App” process for choosing schools, the number of students attending school near their homes has declined precipitously. Most public schools are open enrollment citywide, as opposed to serving as traditional neighborhood schools. As a result of this policy, students across the city can attend schools anywhere in the city, allowing more choice but also causing long journeys for some students. The percentage of students who live more than five miles from their schools has increased by 17% from 2004 to 2013, while the average distance between students and their schools has increased from 1.8 miles in 2004 to 3.5 miles in 2013.²

Figure 1: Safe Routes Timeline 2005-2017



In February 2014, six-year-old Shaud Wilson was tragically killed by a “hit-and-run” driver while crossing multiple lanes of traffic on his way to his school bus stop. In the aftermath of Shaud’s death, City Councilmember (now Mayor-elect) LaToya Cantrell convened a School Transportation Safety Working Group, which was charged to identify issues and problems that needed to be addressed in the rapidly changing school landscape. Based on the recommendations from this working group, it became clear that the City of New Orleans needed to take a more active role in promoting school travel safety. The City of New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) was selected to lead the charge to advance safety because of the relevance of this project to its mission and its ability to reach a citywide audience.

The working group and NOHD submitted two regional grant applications to the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) Safe Routes to Schools Program in spring 2015. The two grants, “Crescent City Crossings” and the “South Claiborne Corridor Coordinated School Travel Safety Plan Project,” were both ultimately awarded in 2016. With this funding in place, OPSB also joined in a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with NOHD to pay the first year salary of a coordinator to run the funded programming and to explore expanding the program to further safety goals.

¹ Louisiana Department of Education

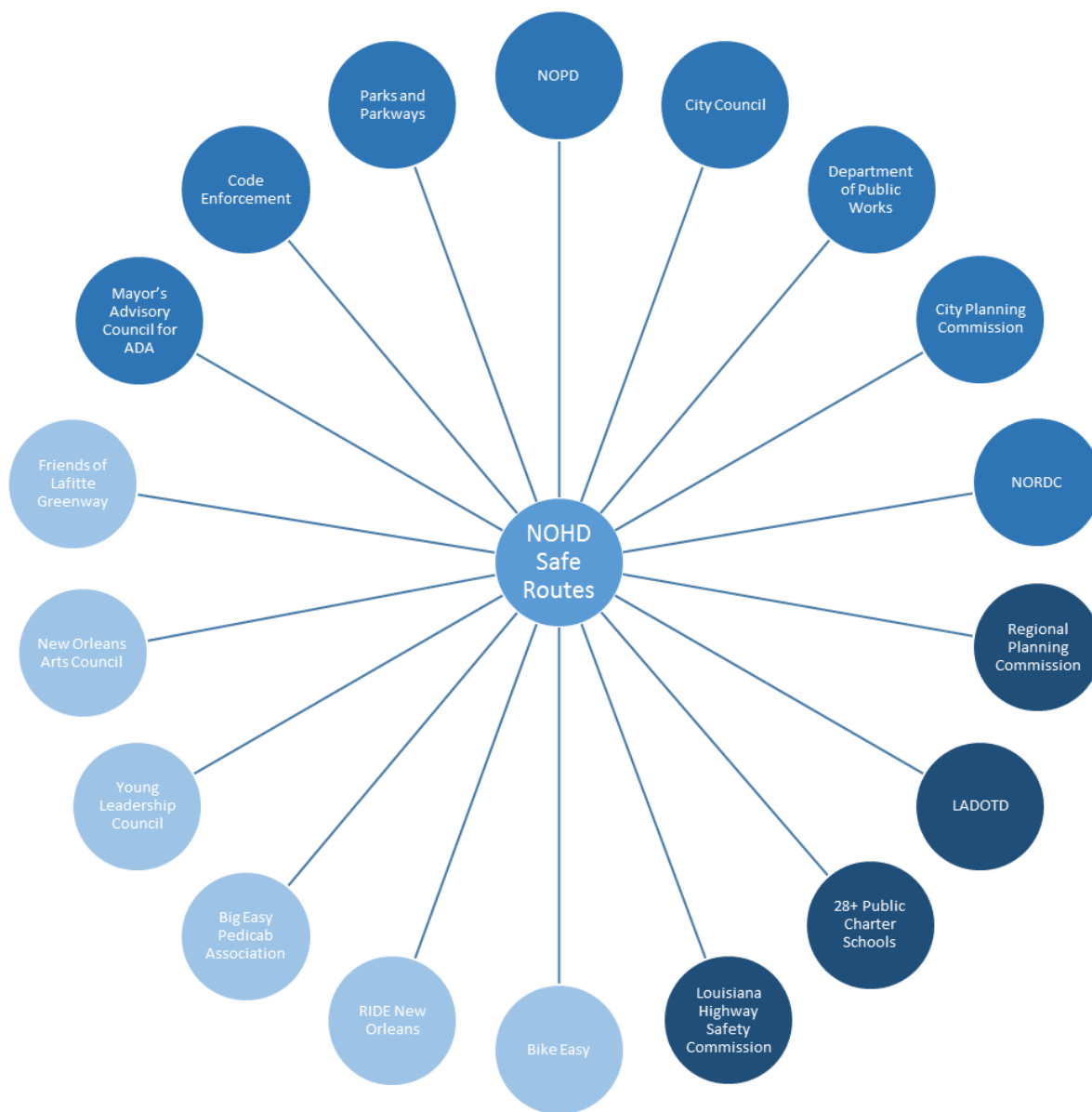
² Louisiana Department of Education

Program Framework

Since transportation safety and equitable access to safe transportation opportunities influence the health of individuals and communities, NOHD set out to take a more active role in transportation issues across New Orleans for schools and beyond. NOHD's Safe Routes program aims to improve the health and safety through upgrades to the built environment, targeted education efforts, and promotion of healthy behaviors. In January of 2017, NOHD hired Meg Young to serve as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Coordinator. In this role, her duties were defined as (1) managing Safe Routes to Schools grants, (2) coordinating bicycle and pedestrian safety activities across the City, and (3) developing partnerships and future programming.

Locating this program in the Health Department has defined the framework and priorities of the program. NOHD applies a "health equity" lens to this work, meaning that efforts are focused on the people and locations that have the greatest need for travel safety interventions. NOHD also applies a "health in all policies" approach, which acknowledges the role of agencies and institutions across sectors in shaping the health of our community. In 2017, NOHD partnered with organizations across New Orleans to engage them in Safe Routes initiatives and served on key transportation-related coalitions including the City's Complete Streets Working Group and the New Orleans Regional Traffic Safety Coalition.

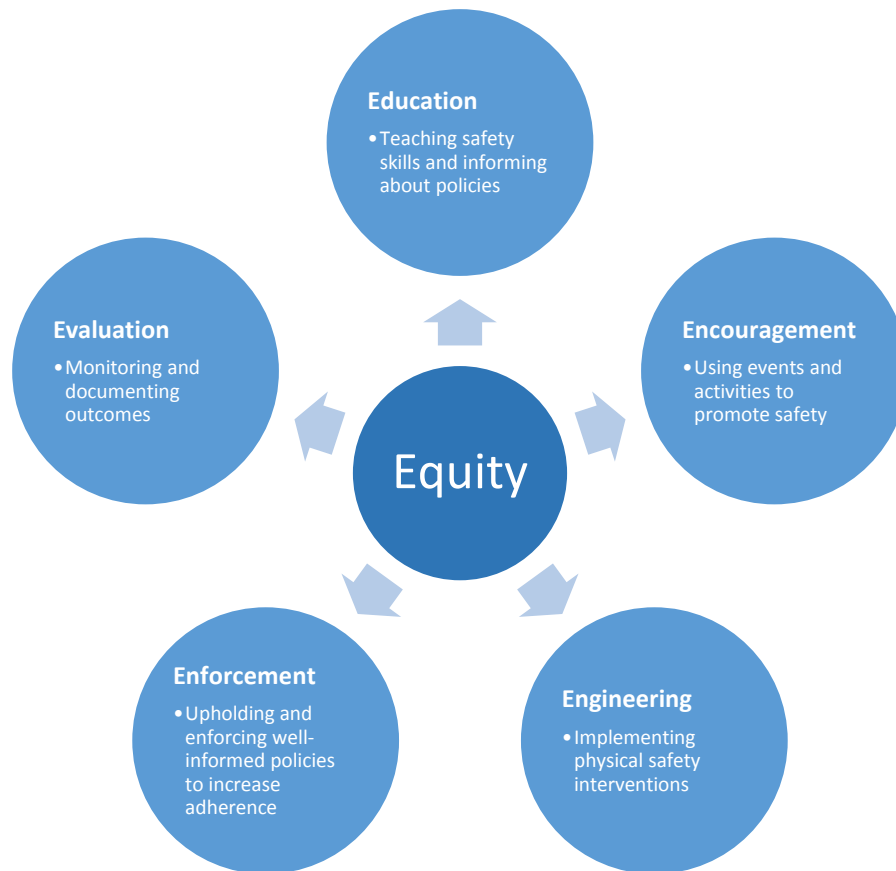
Figure 2: NOHD Safe Routes Citywide Partners



Strategies

The NOHD Safe Routes program is based on national best practices, including guidance from the Safe Routes National Partnership. The strategies utilized are derived from the framework of six E's: Equity, Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation.

Figure 3: The 6 E's of Safe Routes



Utilizing these strategies allows a holistic approach to travel safety and requires the coordination of various City agencies. None of these strategies can stand on its own; for example, you can paint a crosswalk, but you must teach a child to cross there. Utilizing a health equity lens can inform the painting of the crosswalk in a neighborhood where a higher percentage of households do not have access to a vehicle.

II. 2017 Accomplishments



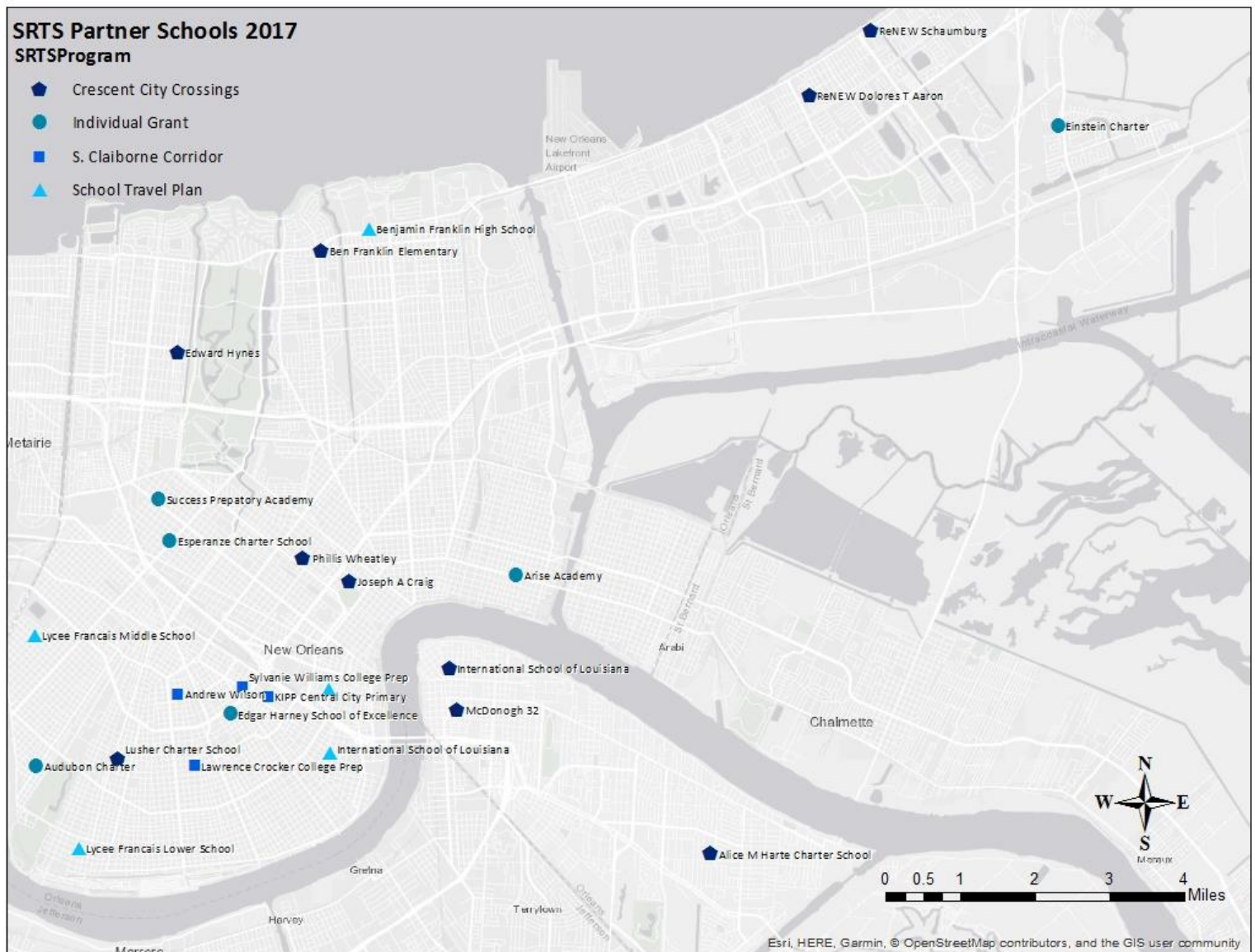
Year in Review

2017 Highlights

In 2017, NOHD launched its Safe Routes program with a focus on schools. Two multi-school grants were awarded from the applications submitted by School Transportation Safety Working Group: Crescent City Crossings and the School Travel Safety Plan Project. Through these projects, NOHD re-established a crossing guard program, launched a physical education (PE) teacher training program, celebrated Walk & Roll to School Week, developed a process to make School Travel Safety Plans, and built a coalition of City agencies to address school zone safety hazards.

In addition to these two grants, NOHD assisted seven schools in Orleans Parish monitor their individual SRTS grants. Due to personnel changes and coordination issues, none of these individual grants had been completed and all had been stalled as of 2016, even those dating back to 2007. With a coordinator in place, work on these projects resumed, and one was completed in 2017.

Figure 4: Safe Routes Partner Schools, 2017



Crescent City Crossings

The Crescent City Crossings (CCC) program kicked off in 2017 as a non-infrastructure project funded through LaDOTD. This pilot program was launched at 10 Orleans Parish schools selected for their safety needs, geographical diversity, capacity and interest in the program. The program consists of three main components (see Figure 5 for the full program model):

- Re-establishing a crossing guard program;
- Training PE teachers to teach traffic safety skills; and
- Creating a safety campaign around “Walk & Roll to School Week.”

CCC introduced a new type of crossing guard program to New Orleans in which guards were trained by the NOPD Traffic Division but received a stipend and were managed by the school which they serve. This is a departure from the pre-Katrina model, under which the NOPD Traffic Division completely managed crossing guards. With the decrease in NOPD manpower and the decentralization of the charter school system, the program had been dropped and no new guards had been trained since 2005. The new model allows for NOPD oversight and check-ins, but allows schools the choice in selecting guards and monitoring their performance. Funding covers the equipment and stipend for two guards at each of the 10 schools for the 2017-2018 school year. In 2017, 18 guards were trained and placed at each of the schools. School Resource Officers from the NOPD districts have begun performing monthly check-ins to monitor the guards in November 2017.

A new PE teacher training was also launched under CCC. Bike Easy, a local non-profit organization, trained teachers at each participating school in teaching traffic skills to students. PE teachers first attended a day long training, followed by onsite co-teaching and observation. In 2017, NOHD also purchased a 15-bicycle fleet to loan to trained teachers to teach safety units in class; this fleet became available for use in Q1 of 2018.

Lastly, CCC launched an annual “Walk and Roll to School Week” to encourage active transportation and safety at schools. The City released a PSA and communications campaign to bring awareness to school zones to coincide with the week. In 2017, all 10 CCC schools and two additional schools celebrated by hosting safety events, holding in-school competitions, and incorporating safety examples into lesson plans.

NOHD has contracted the University of New Orleans Transportation Institute to evaluate the CCC project and produce an official report including recommendations for the possible continuation and scale-up of each program activity. This report is expected in mid-2018.

18

*Crossing Guards
trained and equipped
by NOPD*

12

*PE teachers trained in
teaching traffic safety*

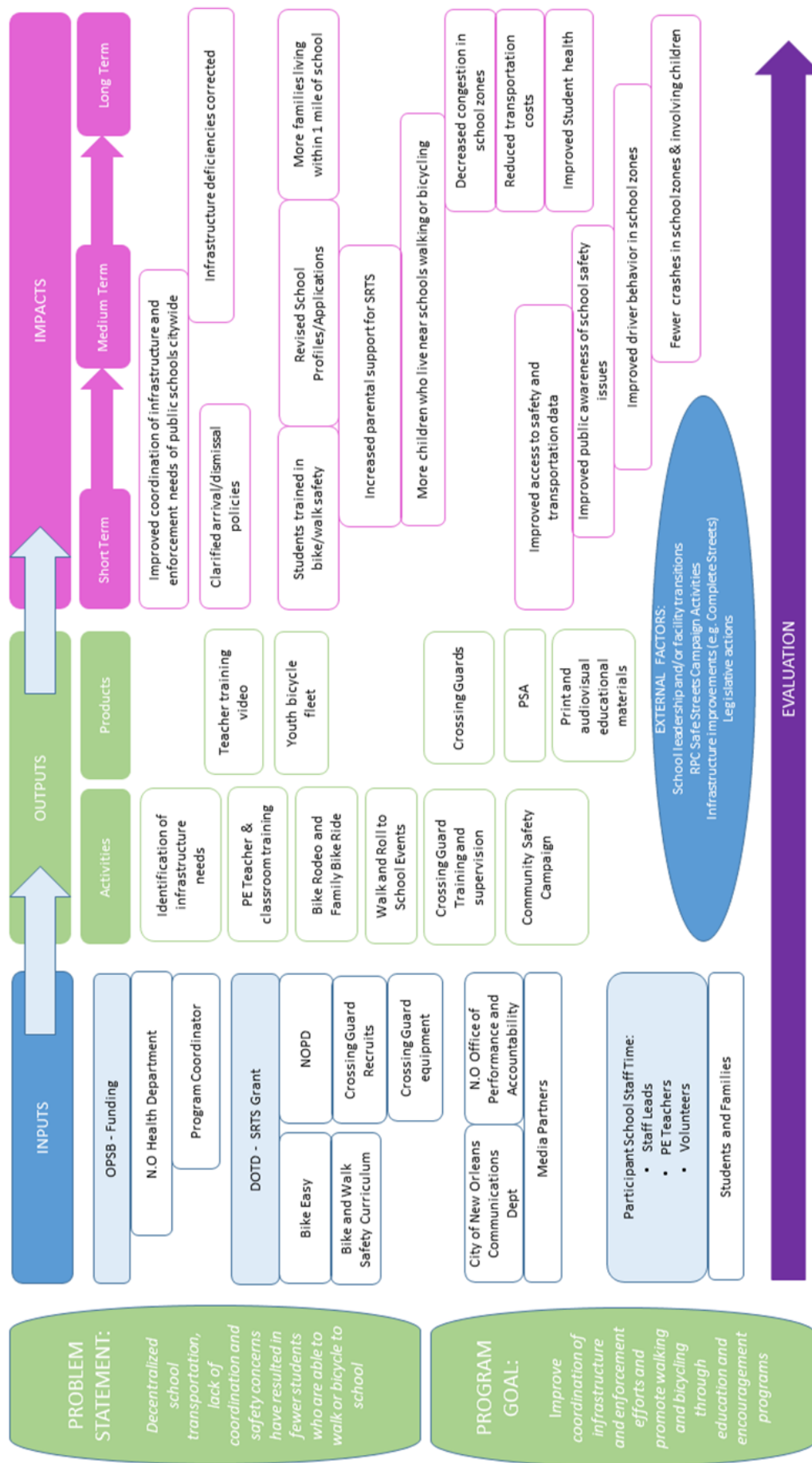
12

*Schools Celebrated
Walk & Roll to School
Week*

15

*Bikes purchased for
the NOHD fleet*

Figure 5: Crescent City Crossings Program Action Model



School Travel Safety Plans

Management of the South Claiborne Corridor Coordinated School Travel Safety Plan Project (SCC), also funded by LaDOTD, was shifted from the City of New Orleans Department of Public Works (DPW) to NOHD in Q2 of 2017. Through this pilot program, four schools along the South Claiborne Corridor participated in a pilot process to create an individualized School Travel Safety Plan. This corridor was selected due to the concentration of schools and of crashes involving pedestrians. In 2018, corridor infrastructure improvements provided by DPW will complement the plans and address the most severe safety hazards identified in the plans. Participating schools are Andrew Wilson Charter School, KIPP Central City Primary, Lawrence Crocker College Prep, and Sylvania Williams College Prep.

The process for development of school travel safety plans through SCC was data-driven and informed by the experience of all stakeholders. Data collection was the first step and included parent surveys, tracking of transportation modes, and a walking audit. Once this data was compiled, NOHD analyzed it to identify the main safety hazards. With this information, school staff engaged in a strategy session in which the participants identified strategies, created an implementation timeline, and named a responsible lead for each activity.

As the subject area experts, NOHD and DPW staff provided sample plan components from schools across the nation and connections to local resources. Additionally, partnering City agencies, including NOPD, DPW, Parks & Parkways, and Code Enforcement, agreed to prioritize work orders requested by project staff to alleviate safety hazards identified during this process. At the end of the SCC process, each of the four schools had a yearlong plan, with quarterly check-ins scheduled with NOHD to evaluate the implementation of the plans.

With the success of this program, NOHD decided to expand it and, in October 2017, NOHD received funds from the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission to continue to offer this technical assistance to up to five schools per semester and to continue trainings for school staff. By the end of 2017, three additional schools had completed travel safety plans, and three more signed up to start the process in 2018.



Mr. Coco, a neighbor of Andrew Wilson School, participates in a walking audit

7

School Travel Safety Plans developed

44

School Zone work orders completed by City agencies

*17 crosswalk and striping upgrades
13 signage upgrades
10 blighted properties addressed
4 sidewalks cleared of overgrowth*

III. Two Year Action Plan: 2018-2019



What's next?

Goals

The vision of the NOHD Safe Routes program is to improve the health, safety, and well-being of New Orleans residents by affecting how we travel to and access our community resources. Through a health equity lens, the program focuses on serving children, families and vulnerable users in public places. For the continuation of the Safe Routes program, NOHD will utilize monitoring and evaluation data to build upon 2017 efforts and to inform future programming. **Going forward, NOHD aims to expand Safe Routes beyond schools to community hubs such as parks, libraries, community centers, and healthcare facilities.** The following goals will guide the programs and strategies for 2018-2019:

- Continue to build a coalition and staff to increase the impact of Safe Routes.
- Research and strive for national best practices for strategies and implementation.
- Track data in real time to create safety plans, coordinate across agencies, and improve processes.
- Integrate health equity and health in all policies into City transportation initiatives, including but not limited to Complete Streets and Vision Zero programs.
- Seek out funding opportunities for the long term sustainability of the Safe Routes program.

Figure 6: The Intersection of Safe Routes Goals, Programs, and Strategies



Programs

During 2018-2019, the NOHD Safe Routes program is planning the following programs:

Continue to provide technical assistance for schools to create School Travel Safety Plans. Through this program, NOHD provides technical assistance to schools to develop yearlong plans to improve their travel safety. The plans are developed through engagement of stakeholders and result in action by City agencies, connections to existing resources, and actionable steps to be undertaken by the school. With the current capacity of the NOHD Safe Routes program, this assistance will be offered at a rate of four schools per semester. For the continuation of this program, NOHD will begin to advertise the program more and seek out schools in greater need. Additionally, as OPSB takes over the oversight of all public charter schools in 2018, NOHD will seek to establish standard minimum requirements for the safety plans.

Expand Travel Plans to community hubs. Pending funding availability, NOHD will offer safety plan development assistance to community hubs such as parks, community centers, and healthcare facilities. Through a similar process as School Travel Safety Plans, this program will improve safety and access to public places. By approaching this through a health equity lens, these projects will target locations serving youth, families, seniors, and underserved populations. NOHD plans to pilot this process in 2018 and expand to two additional locations in 2019. Pending funding availability, this program will be opened for community applications in 2019 to receive both plan development assistance and a mini-grant for self-directed safety interventions.

Continue to coordinate Crossing Guard Trainings. Based on the pilot Crescent City Crossings program, NOHD plans to continue working with NOPD to coordinate twice annual trainings for crossing guards. These guards serve as visible reminders of school zone hours, assist students in crossing streets safely, and reinforce good traffic habits. Pending the completion of CCC in May 2018 and the full evaluation, NOHD will provide training and equipment, but schools will manage their guards. Schools in high crash or traffic locations will be recruited for this program, with the goal of training 10 guards per session.

Lead PE Teacher Trainings. Continuing with the model set in the Crescent City Crossings program and with the certification of the NOHD Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Coordinator by the League of American Bicyclists, NOHD will lead PE teacher trainings in 2018. These trainings focus on teaching traffic skills to grades 3-5 such as pedestrian safety, passenger safety, and cycling safety. Group trainings will be held twice annually, followed by in-class observations. Once teachers are trained, they will have access to the NOHD bicycle fleet and “safety town” practice area for in-school use. NOHD aims to train a minimum of eight teachers per session.

Continue to celebrate Walk and Roll to School Week. NOHD plans to celebrate Walk & Roll to School Week annually and to expand its reach each year. In 2018, NOHD plans once again to contract Bike Easy to lead individual school events and a larger community event. NOHD will also compile a toolkit so schools may participate individually. Working with the Mayor’s Office of Communications, NOHD will also launch a campaign to promote school zone safety. The goal is to have 20 schools join in the celebration in 2018 and 25 in 2019.

Program Implementation Plans

School Travel Safety Plans

Actions	Strategies	Benchmarks	Timeline	Cost (source)	Partners
Develop a matrix to guide interventions to make the greatest and most equitable impact.	Equity	Contact top 10 schools to make Safety Plans.	Ongoing 2018 Q1- 2019 Q4	Personnel	Office of Performance and Accountability (OPA) Partner Schools
Set a baseline for transportation data collection.	Evaluation	Decide on metrics by Q3 2018 and have all participating schools start collection.		Personnel	OPA DPW OPSB
Assist schools in developing stakeholder surveys and community outreach.	Evaluation	Assist all participating schools, reach a 20% return rate on surveys.		Personnel	Partner Schools
Perform walking audits at participating schools.	Evaluation Engineering	Perform walking audit at every participating school		Materials (LHSC)	DPW Partner schools
Collect school zone infrastructure data in a central inventory.	Evaluation Engineering	Create a live database of sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA accessibility, and safety hazards.		Personnel	CNO IT Department DPW
Revise existing school policies.	Education Enforcement	Review policies and enforcement at all participating schools.		Personnel	Partner schools
Distribute flyer templates with safety tips for parents and students.	Education	Achieve a 75% distribution rate at participating schools.		Personnel	Partner Schools CNO Communications
Develop recommended routes for students.	Education Encouragement	Develop recommended routes with all participating schools.		Personnel	
Distribute work order to city agencies who have agreed to prioritize school zones.	Engineering Enforcement Equity	Completion of accepted work orders within 3 months.		Personnel	DPW Parks & Parkways Code Enforcement
Connect schools to existing resources.	Education Encouragement	Recommend appropriate resources to each participating school.		Personnel	UMC Sudden Impact Bike Easy TBD community partners
Install bike racks at participating schools.	Engineering	Connect operations manager at all schools without bike parking to Where Ya' Rack program.		Personnel	YLC
Enforce parking and speeding laws in school zones.	Enforcement	Coordinate enforcement twice a year at all schools which provide a request letter.		Personnel	NOPD Parking Enforcement
Perform quarterly check-ins with schools after plan development.	Evaluation	Check-in with all participating schools at least twice annually.		Personnel	Partner schools

Expanded Community Travel Safety Plans

Actions	Strategies	Benchmarks	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Develop a matrix to guide interventions to make the greatest and most equitable impact.	Equity	Develop weighted metrics for matrix which consider health, socio-economic, and access disparities.	2018 Q3	Personnel	OPA
Refine outreach tools for public users and neighbors	Evaluation	Develop baseline survey and interview questions for various stakeholder groups.	2018 Q3-2019 Q4	Personnel	Office of Community Engagement Partner Org.
Perform walking audits around participating community centers.	Evaluation Engineering	Perform walking audit at every participating organization.		Materials (LHSC)	DPW Partner Org.
Collect infrastructure data in a central inventory.	Evaluation	Create a live database of sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA accessibility, and safety hazards.		Personnel	CNO IT Department DPW
Revise existing traffic safety policies and programming.	Evaluation Enforcement	Review policies and enforcement at all participating organizations.		Personnel	DPW Partner Org.
Develop process map for safety plans at public places.	Evaluation	Refine pilot process to make a standard process for creating travel safety plans.	2018 Q4	Personnel	DPW
Develop a website and application process for community centers to develop safety plans. **	Equity Education	Publicize new program and attract 5 applications in 2019.	2019 Q2	Personnel	CNO Communications
Provide mini-grants to community centers to implement self-directed safety strategies. **	Encouragement	Assist each partner org. in creating a self-directed safety strategy, monitoring, and evaluating its success.	2019 Q2-Q4	Grant funds (TBD)	Partner Org.

** Pending additional staff and funding availability

Crossing Guard Program

Actions	Strategies	Benchmarks	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Contact schools in high traffic and crash areas to join crossing guard program	Equity	Contact top 10 schools per year	2018 Q2 2019 Q2	Personnel	OPA Public Schools
Coordinate with NOPD for training and equipping of crossing guards	Education Enforcement	Hold trainings twice annually. Goal of 10 participants per training.	2018 Q3 2019 Q1 & Q3	NOPD overtime & guard equipment (CCC)	NOPD
Perform bi-annual check-ins with crossing guards.	Evaluation	Hold 2 check-ins annually with every participating school.	2018 Q4 2019 Q2 & Q4	Personnel	Public Schools

PE Teacher Training Program

Actions	Strategies	Benchmarks	Timeline	Cost (source)	Partners
Lead group PE teacher training session	Education	Goal of 8 attendees per training	2018 Q2 2019 Q1	Personnel	Partner schools
Coordinate in school observations and co-teaching **	Education Evaluation	Observe each trained teacher at least 1 per year	2018 Q3 – 2019 Q4	\$100/check-in (TBD)	Bike Easy Partner schools
Loan bike fleet and safety town to trained teachers.	Education	Loan fleet to 50% of trained teachers.	2018 Q2- 2019 Q4	Bike Maintenance (CCC & LHSC)	YEP Bike Works Partner Schools

**Pending funding availability

Walk & Roll to School Week

Actions	Strategies	Benchmarks	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Sponsor a biannual free family ride.	Encouragement Education	100 attendees, 10% increase in attendance each subsequent ride	2018 Q2 & Q3 2019 Q2 & Q3	\$2,000 (CCC grant)	Bike Easy Blue Bikes
Launch online toolkit.	Education Encouragement	Launch toolkit by 2018 W&R week	2018 Q3	Personnel	National SRTS Partnership
Coordinate events at SRTS partner schools. **	Education Encouragement	Coordinate 10 events in 2018, 15 in 2019.	2018 Q3 2019 Q3	\$600/event including materials (CCC)	Bike Easy Partner schools
Launch a citywide safety in school zones campaign	Education Enforcement	Release Press Release, Media advisory, editorial, and social media posts	2018 Q3 2019 Q3	Personnel	CNO Communications
Provide donations of safety equipment for students in need.	Equity Encouragement	Supply donations to 50% of partner schools in 2018, develop an inventory of donations in 2019.	2018 Q1- 2019 Q4	\$4,000 (Safe Streets donation)	Regional Planning Commission

**Pending funding availability

