

O’Keeffe Middle Safe Routes to School Plan (June 2026)

About the School	
Number of Students ^a	Approximately 440
% Economically Disadvantaged	43%
% Non-white	48%
Arrival / Dismissal Times	9:00 AM / 2:45 PM (Mon) 9:00 AM / 4:25 PM (Tue-Fri)

^aStudent data source: *Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*

Major Streets and Highways	Average Weekday Traffic (AWT) ^a
Williamson Street	16,800
Eastwood Drive at Division	11,500
Atwood Avenue at Division	9,000
Milwaukee Street at Corry	11,150

^aSource: *City of Madison Street Centerlines*

Safety Concerns at O’Keeffe

What we heard from the Principal (or Designee)

- Some students cross S Thornton Avenue midblock in between or in front of yellow buses towards the Yahara River Pedestrian bridge.
- Some students not eligible for busing have long (20-25 minute) walks and must cross busy streets such as Fair Oaks Avenue, Milwaukee Street, or E Washington Avenue.
- There is a weekly bike-to-school program led by an O’Keeffe teacher as an MSCR program that runs from September–October and April–June. The route is from East Madison Community Center (EMCC) and is popular.
- At dismissal, the 6th grade entrance on Spaight Street is supposed to be designated for specialized transportation vehicles, but caregivers line up in those areas.

Hazardous Transportation Busing

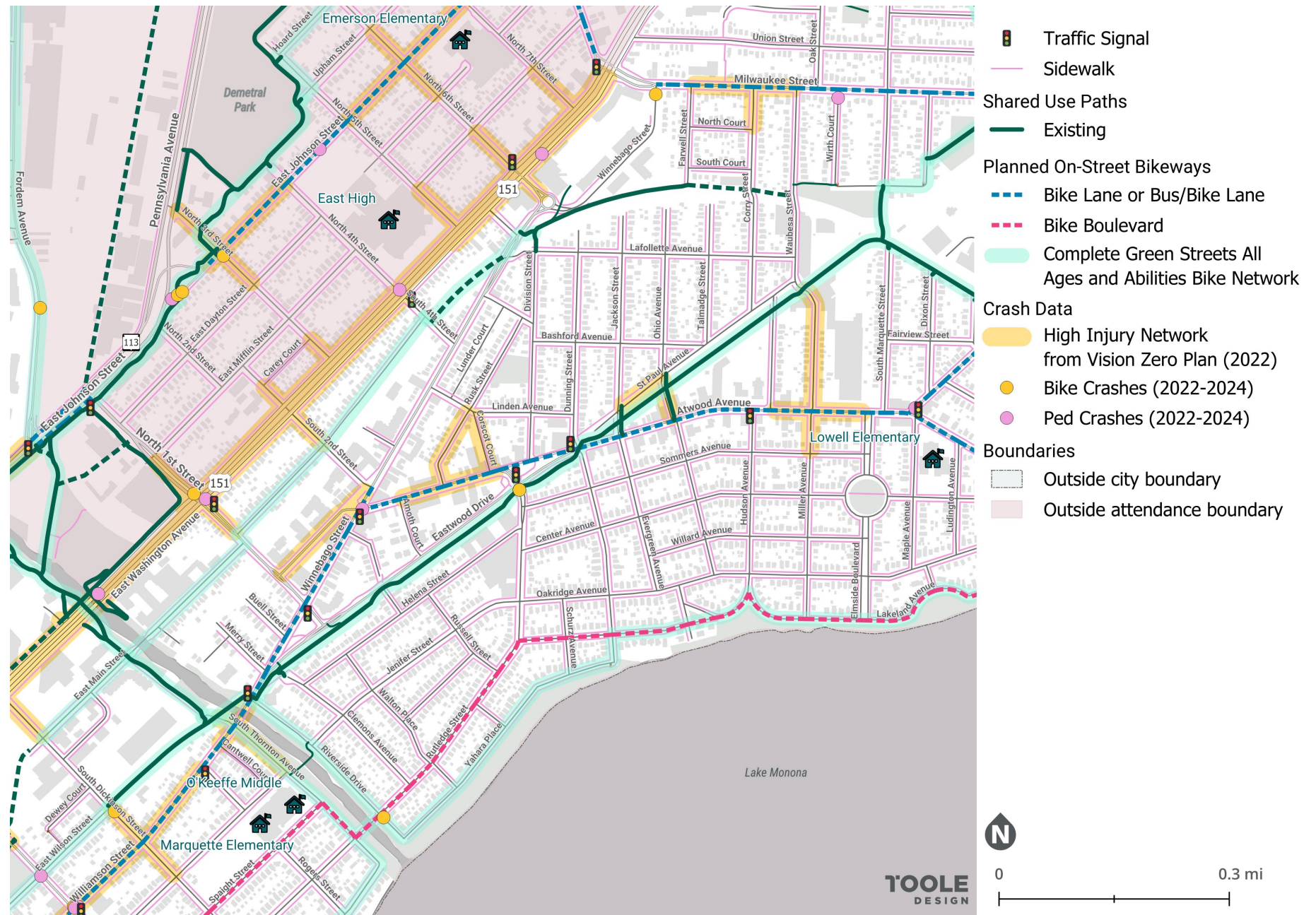
There are no areas designated as unusual hazards for O’Keeffe Middle.

What we learned from surveys and other caregiver feedback

- Out of the 17 respondents for this school, 8 believed that the most common way students get to school is through walking, rolling, or bicycling, 4 believed that it was being driven by parents, 2 answered by taking the bus, and 3 answered that they don’t know.

- Many caregivers are concerned by the intersections of Williamson Street and Winnebago Street at S Thornton Avenue and at Riverside Drive (where the Capital City Path crosses). **At Riverside Drive**, eastbound drivers sometimes run or ignore the traffic signal at the Capital City Path. The southeast corner of the intersection is often crowded with bike/ped traffic. **At Williamson Street and S Thornton Avenue**, drivers sometimes ignore the RRFB. Eastbound drivers have trouble seeing the crossing during the morning at certain parts of the year, due to sun glare.
- S Thornton Avenue and Jenifer Street is active with drivers turning while pedestrians/cyclists try to cross.
- Stop signs at the intersection of Spaight Street and Rogers Street are not as visible as they could be. An authorized school van will often park here near the 6th grade entrance (Door 2) and partially obscure a sign. Drivers going west are known to speed and not stop.
- People on the Capital City Path crossing Division Street must deal with drivers turning right from Eastwood Drive on Division Street. It is also not easy for people coming from the north to navigate this intersection to access the path.

Existing Conditions (and Previously-Planned Bikeways and Paths)



Arrival and Dismissal Observations

Observation Details	
Observation Date	The consultant team observed dismissal on Tuesday, October 14.
School Buses	Three school buses lined up on the west side of S Thornton Avenue.
Specialized Transportation	- The aftercare transportation vehicle bringing students to the Goodman Community Center picked up students on the west side of S Thornton Avenue, directly behind where the school buses waited. - Specialized transportation vehicles picked up students on the north side of Spaight Street, just east of the intersection with Rogers Street.
Caregiver Vehicles	- At dismissal, caregivers picked up students on all sides of the school on Spaight Street, S Thornton Avenue, and Jenifer Street. - Some caregivers were observed driving west on Spaight Street very quickly after picking up their students, including one who did not stop at the stop sign at the Rogers Street intersection. This creates the potential for conflict, especially with the students who were observed crossing Spaight Street midblock to reach caregiver vehicles parked on the south side of the street.
School Staff Roles	- One staff member monitored the specialized transportation area on the north side of Spaight Street. - Several staff monitored the bus loading area on the west side of S Thornton Avenue. Staff stationed near the intersection with Spaight Street also monitored students on the Spaight Street sidewalk, reminding them to cross S Thornton Avenue at the Jenifer Street intersection.
Adult Crossing Guards	The City of Madison Adult School Crossing Guard Policy does not provide for crossing guards at middle schools.
Bike Rack Locations and Use	- There are three areas with bike racks around the school, each associated with a door used by one grade at arrival: one near Spaight Street and Rogers Street for 6th graders, one near S Thornton Avenue and Spaight Street for 7th graders, and one near S Thornton Avenue and Jenifer Street for 8th graders. - There were many bicycles and a handful of scooters parked at the bike racks on the day of observation. All bike parking areas were full, and the 7th and 8th grade parking areas appeared over capacity, with bicycles and/or scooters observed chained to other fixed objects. - Many of the bike racks, particularly at the 7th grade door, are located in the grass, which can be muddy or snow covered.
Students Walking and Biking	- Many students were observed walking and biking away from school. Some students crossed in front of the buses parked along S Thornton Avenue, which had limited visibility. - Some students were observed walking or biking to the pedestrian bridge over the Yahara River. Fewer students were seen walking or biking west. Many students were observed walking or biking north across Williamson Street.

Priority Recommendations at O’Keeffe Middle



The numbered issues and recommendations in the table correspond to the points in the Recommendations Map (shown on previous page).

Recommendations for School Leadership or MMSD Building Services

#	Location	Issue	Recommendations
1	Spaight Street between Thornton Avenue and Rogers Street	- Specialized transportation vehicles picked up students on the north side of Spaight Street, just east of the intersection with Rogers Street. - Stop signs at the intersection of Spaight Street and Rogers Street are not as visible as they could be. An authorized school van will often park here near the 6th grade entrance (Door 2) and partially obscure a sign. Drivers going west are known to speed and not stop; this behavior was observed by the project team. - Caregivers in vehicles wait on both sides of the street. The No Parking sign on the north side of the street does permit waiting in vehicles. There is a striped dashed centerline that is offset so that north side of the street has one travel lane and no space for stopped vehicles, which creates a confusing situation for drivers traveling westbound past waiting vehicles. - Students were observed crossing between caregiver vehicles to reach other caregiver vehicles on the other side of the street.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Communicate expectations by sharing the school's Traffic Safety Brochure. Encourage more walking and biking to school to reduce the number of caregiver vehicles. Encourage caregivers who drive to use locations farther from the school, such as Riverside Drive. Continue to use sandwich board signs to communicate parking restrictions.

#	Location	Issue	Recommendations
2	Spaight Street and Thornton Avenue	- There is no marked crossing of Thornton Avenue here, and no sidewalk or curb ramps on the east side of the street. The only stop-controlled approach is Spaight Street. - School buses and one aftercare vehicle wait on the west side of Thornton Avenue. The frontmost bus parks just north of the yellow-painted curb. - Drivers were observed blocking the intersection. - Although students are asked to cross Thornton Avenue at Jenifer Street, several staff members are posted at the intersection to remind students. Staff report that students sometimes cross midblock between buses to reach caregiver vehicles on the other side of the street. - Seventh grade students who bicycle to school secure their bicycles at racks located by the entrance. These racks were over capacity, with several bicycles or scooters locked to railings and other fixed objects. Existing bicycle racks are placed on grass and not securely anchored.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Improve capacity and security for bicycle parking by building a concrete pad and anchoring bicycle racks to pad. New racks should support the bike frame in at least two places and enable secure locking. - Request that the first bus park an additional 30 feet north of the yellow painted curb to improve visibility.
4	Jenifer Street and Thornton Avenue	- Eighth grade students who bicycle to school secure their bicycles at racks located by the entrance. These racks were over capacity, with several bicycles or scooters locked to railings and other fixed objects. Existing bicycle racks are anchored to a concrete base. - Many people commuting on bicycles use the pedestrian bridge over the Yahara during peak hours. The consultant team observed some conflicts during dismissal from O'Keeffe Middle. Students both walking and biking cross these two crosswalks and use the bridge during both arrival and dismissal.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Improve capacity and security for bicycle parking by building a concrete pad and anchoring bicycle racks to pad. New racks should support the bike frame in at least two places and enable secure locking.

Recommendations for City of Madison

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1	Spaight Street between Thornton Avenue and Rogers Street	- Specialized transportation vehicles picked up students on the north side of Spaight Street, just east of the intersection with Rogers Street. - Stop signs at the intersection of Spaight Street and Rogers Street are not as visible as they could be. An authorized school van will often park here near the 6th grade entrance (Door 2) and partially obscure a sign. Drivers going west are known to speed and not stop; this behavior was observed by the project team. - Caregivers in vehicles wait on both sides of the street. The No Parking sign on the north side of the street does permit waiting in vehicles. There is a striped dashed centerline that is offset so that north side of the street has one travel lane and no space for stopped vehicles, which creates a confusing situation for drivers traveling westbound past waiting vehicles. - Students were observed crossing between caregiver vehicles to reach other caregiver vehicles on the other side of the street.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Do not refresh centerline markings on Spaight Street. - Add advance stop ahead sign (W3-1) on Spaight Street approaching Rogers Street. - On the north side of the street, review school specialized transportation needs and replace parking restriction signs to ensure specialized transportation vehicles have enough space and expectations for caregivers are clear (for example, by installing "Drop off Pick Up/No Parking School Day" signs). Paint the curb yellow in areas desired by school leadership. <i>Medium Term (2-6 Years):</i> - Add curb extensions on both sides of the east leg of the Rogers Street intersection to increase visibility of intersection, slow drivers, and deter vehicles from blocking the crosswalk.

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3	Thornton Avenue between Rutledge Street and Williamson Street	Many students bicycle to school and there was not enough space for bicyclists, pedestrians, and students queuing for the bus on the sidewalk in front of the school.	<i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> Construct a sidewalk on the east side of Thornton Avenue between Jenifer Street and Spaight Street.

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4	Jenifer Street and Thornton Avenue	• Eighth grade students who bicycle to school secure their bicycles at racks located by the entrance. These racks were over capacity, with several bicycles or scooters locked to railings and other fixed objects. Existing bicycle racks are anchored to a concrete base. • Many people commuting on bicycles use the pedestrian bridge over the Yahara during peak hours. The consultant team observed some conflicts during dismissal from O'Keeffe Middle. Students both walking and biking cross these two crosswalks and use the bridge during both arrival and dismissal.	<i>(The recommendation below is also included in the Marquette Elementary SRTS Plan)</i> <i>Immediate Priority:</i> • Install Bicycles Yield to Peds (R9-6) signs for the eastbound approach to Thornton Avenue and the westbound approach where bicyclists are leaving the bridge.
5	Winnebago Street between Thornton Avenue and Riverside Drive/Capital City Path	• Williamson Street is on the City's High Injury Network. • This crossing is heavily used by students walking and bicycling, including students who prefer the signalized crossing over the crossing of Williamson Street at Thornton Avenue. • Pedestrians and bicyclists wait to cross here, and there is limited space for queuing. • The path width has not been expanded to accommodate both modes as it has been on newer shared-use path segments. • This intersection is signalized, with a high visibility path crosswalk. There is a leading pedestrian signal phase during which right turns on red from Riverside Drive onto Winnebago Street are prohibited. However, caregivers reported that some drivers turn right on red here.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> • Consider replacing the existing sign prohibiting right turns on red from Riverside Drive onto Winnebago Street with a No Right Turn (R3-1) LED blank-out sign. <i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> • Reconfigure the Riverside Drive intersection to allow for more space for bicyclists to queue. • Reconfigure the Yahara River Bridge from four vehicle lanes to three to discourage use of the curb lanes for passing west of the intersection with Thornton Avenue.

#	Location	Issue	Recommendations
6	Eastwood Drive and Division Street	- This crossing is used by students bicycling to school from the northern and eastern portions of O'Keeffe's attendance area. - Crosswalk markings across Division Street are high visibility. - An advance sign on Eastwood Drive indicates the path crossing. The crossing is signalized. Right turns from Eastwood Drive onto Division Street are allowed. Crosswalk markings across Eastwood Drive are transverse. - There is a bike-and-pedestrian-only phase, and signage prohibits right turns from Division Street onto Eastwood Drive at all times. However, caregivers reported that some drivers turn right on red here.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Add high-visibility crosswalk across Eastwood Drive. <i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> - Install a raised crossing or changing the geometry of the intersection so the path is more visible to turning drivers and to reduce turning speeds.
7	Milwaukee Street and Corry Street	- Milwaukee Street is on the City's High Injury Network. Residents report vehicles drive too fast for conditions. - Caregivers report that this is one of two crossings of Milwaukee Street that O'Keeffe students use to get to the Capital City Path and the school. - The crossing has transverse markings. There is not a median crossing island for pedestrians.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Add high visibility crosswalk markings, parking restrictions on the crosswalk approach, and crossing warning signs for the crosswalk across Milwaukee Street. <i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> - Add pedestrian refuge islands in Milwaukee Street to shorten crossing distances, slow traffic, and improve pedestrian safety.
8	Milwaukee Street and Waubesa Street	- Milwaukee Street is on the City's High Injury Network. Residents report vehicles drive too fast for conditions - Caregivers report that this is one of two crossings of Milwaukee that students use to get to the Capital City Path and the school. - The crossing has high visibility markings and an RRFB. - Although there are medians, they are mountable, do not extend through crosswalks, and are not wide enough to be used as median crossing islands for pedestrians.	<i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> Extend the existing median to provide a raised pedestrian refuge for pedestrians.

Information contained in this document is for planning purposes and should not be used for final design of any project. All results, recommendations, concept drawings, and commentary contained herein are based on limited data and information and on existing conditions that are subject to change. Further analysis and engineering design are necessary prior to implementing any of the recommendations contained herein.