

Wright Middle Safe Routes to School Plan (June 2026)

About the School	
Number of Students ^a	259
% Economically Disadvantaged	74%
% Non-white	88%
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	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) ^a
Fish Hatchery Road	28,550
S Park Street	24,250
W Wingra Drive	4,200
W Badger Road	9,000

^aSource: City of Madison Street Centerlines

Safety Concerns at Wright

What we heard from the Principal (or Designee)

- There have been several crashes in the parking lot in front of the school. A driver rolled over a student's foot and a caregiver crashed into a staff member's car.
- Caregivers try to drive through the wheelchair access gap in the parking lot near the school to get out of the lot faster.
- Buses have gotten stuck in the staff parking lot; they cannot make turns without mounting some of the curbs.
- It is hard for caregivers to turn left out of the parking lot onto Fish Hatchery Road, making traffic back up in the parking lot.
- Caregivers trying to avoid the left turn onto Fish Hatchery Road from the parking lot use the bus only lane behind the building.
- The school has been encouraging more caregivers to use Plaenert Drive to drop off and pick up safely on the school side.
- Many students do not want to use yellow school buses because they do not arrive early enough to eat breakfast and get to class on time.

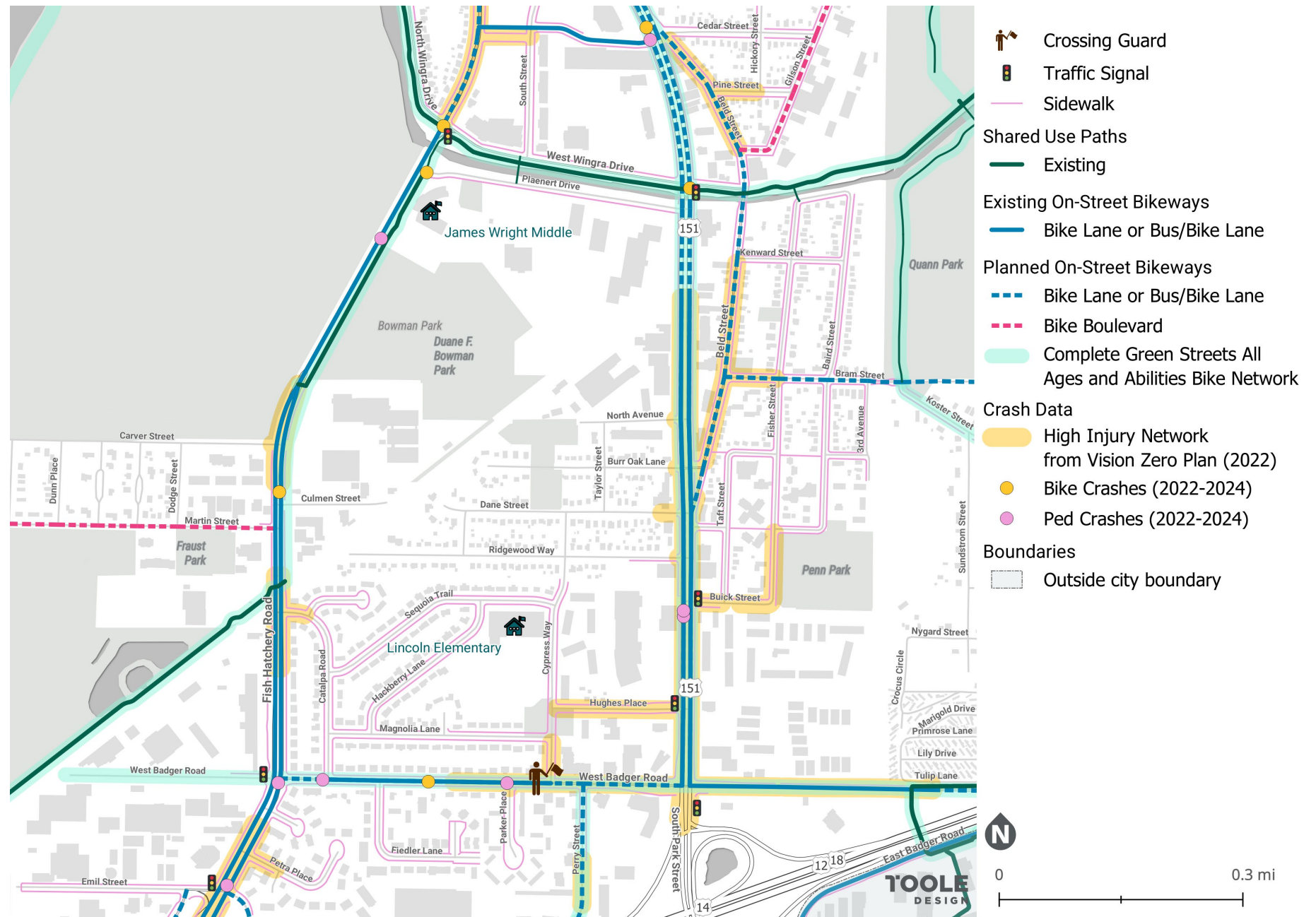
Hazardous Transportation Busing

There are no areas designated as unusual hazards for Wright Middle School.

What we learned from surveys and other caregiver feedback

- Survey respondents for Wright thought that the most common way students got to school was by being driven by a parent, guardian, or caregiver, followed by bussing, and finally by walking and biking.
- Survey respondents for Wright thought that students were mostly driven due to concerns about traffic safety, lack of safe street crossings, and distance between home and school.
- The Wingra Creek bike path crossing of Fish Hatchery Road feels unsafe due to the width of Fish Hatchery Road and the slip lane from Fish Hatchery Road northbound turning right onto W Wingra Drive eastbound.
- The crosswalk from South Street crosses W Wingra Drive where it is wide and straight, with drivers speeding. Growth in the number of apartments in this part of the neighborhood has led to more students using this crossing.
- The intersection of Fish Hatchery Road and Carver Street is busy, and drivers often speed through the crosswalk and disregard the flashing school zone beacon.
- At the crosswalk on Fish Hatchery Road near the Cannonball Path north of Catalpa Road, drivers often disregard the Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) and speed through the crosswalk and bicycle path.

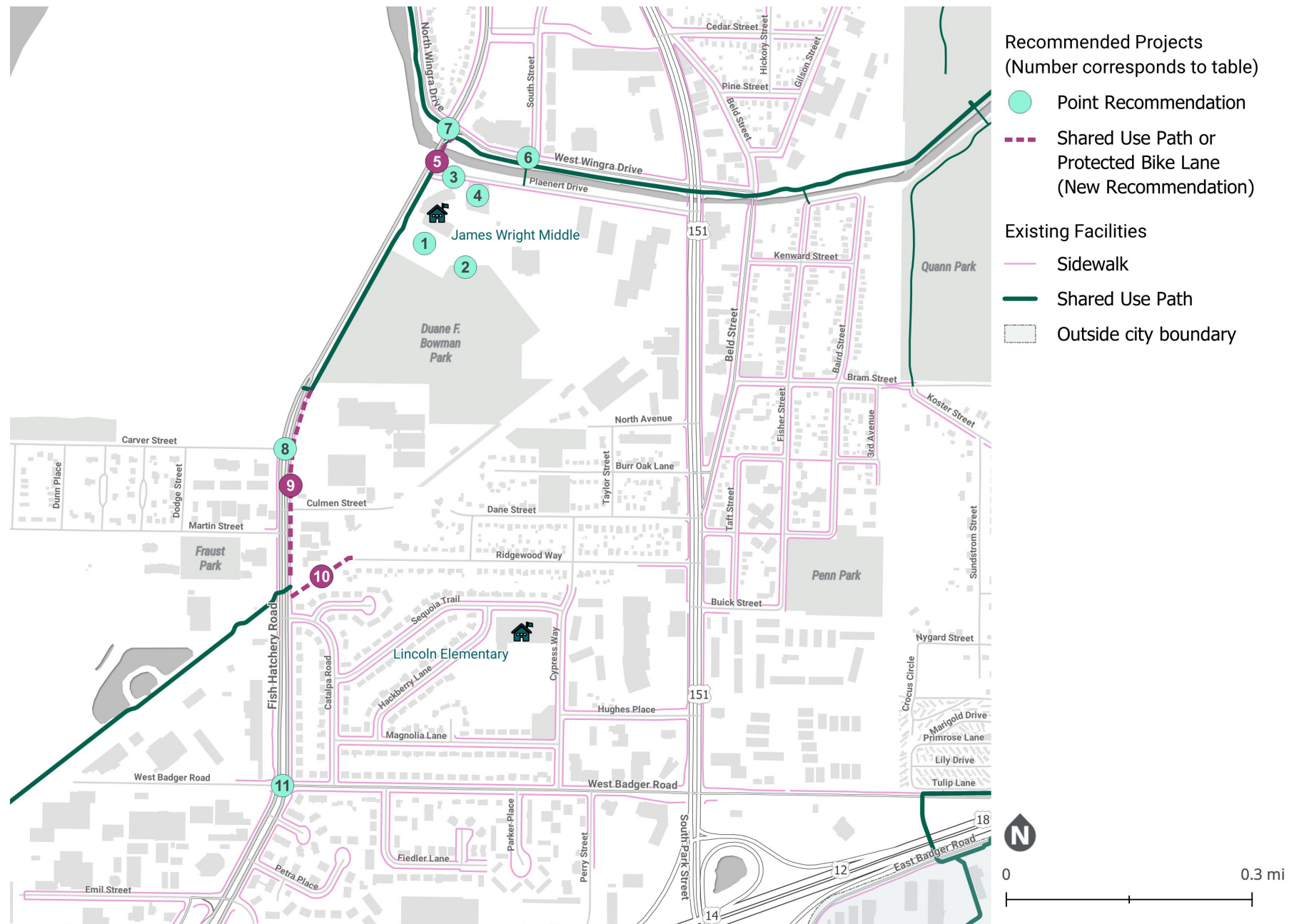
Existing Conditions (and Previously-Planned Bikeways and Paths)



Arrival and Dismissal Observations

Observation Details	
Observation Date	The consultant team observed dismissal on Thursday, May 8.
School Buses	Three school buses entered the service road off Plaenert Drive to wait for students.
Specialized Transportation	Aftercare and specialized transportation vehicles also enter the service road off Plaenert Drive to wait for students.
Caregiver Vehicles	- During dismissal, caregivers are supposed to wait for their students on Plaenert Drive; some were observed entering the staff parking lot off Fish Hatchery Road. The pick-up line extends east down Plaenert Drive. - Many caregivers were observed entering or leaving the service road off Plaenert Drive which is supposed to be for buses only. - One caregiver stopped their vehicle on the opposite side of Plaenert Drive facing west, requiring their students to cross the street at an unmarked crossing and walk in between stopped vehicles. - Several caregivers waited in their vehicles in the adjacent pump station parking lot, and several students crossed the service road in between buses and specialized transportation vehicles to reach their vehicles. - Less than 10 caregiver vehicles were observed picking up in the staff parking lot. Most of those vehicles left via the service road towards Plaenert Drive, rather than turning onto Fish Hatchery Road.
School Staff Roles	- Several school staff monitor the service drive entrance off Plaenert Drive. Duties mostly consisted of reminding students to walk to the sidewalk and not cross in between buses. - No staff were present in the staff parking lot the day of observation.
Bike Rack Locations and Use	There were several bicycles parked on the bike racks on the day of observation. All the bicycles were on the rack on the east side of the building near the playground, and the principal indicated that the rack in the staff parking lot is intended to serve as a barricade preventing vehicles from entering or exiting the line early.
Students Walking and Biking	- Few students were observed walking and biking from school. - A few students were observed walking east along Plaenert Drive. - Some students were observed walking south on Fish Hatchery on the sidepath.

Priority Recommendations at Wright 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	Issues or Observations	Recommendations (Responsible Party)
1	Staff parking lot	- Staff report there have been several crashes in the parking lot in front of the school. A driver rolled over a student's foot and a caregiver crashed into a staff member's car. - Staff report that it is difficult to make left turns onto Fish Hatchery Road, which causes delays in the parking lot and creates a temptation to use the service drive on Plaenert Drive. - Staff report that caregivers attempt to "cut the line" by driving through the wheelchair access gap in the parking lot. School staff moved a bicycle rack between two bays of parking adjacent to the school to discourage this. - Buses have gotten stuck in the staff parking lot; they cannot make turns without mounting some of the curbs.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Communicate expectations by sharing the school's Traffic Safety Plan, which should limit the use of the staff parking lot for pick-up and drop-off, and restrict access to the service drive both enter and exit the parking lot. - Install sign restricting left turns onto Fish Hatchery Road during arrival and dismissal. - Remove the bicycle rack and install bollards to prevent driving through the wheelchair access gap. <i>Long Term:</i> - Reconstruct the parking lot so that it has smaller bays of parking, marked pedestrian circulation areas, and can accommodate bus turning movements.
2	Service drive and bus loop	- Students were observed crossing between the yellow school buses on the service drive to reach caregiver vehicles on Plaenert Drive. - The sign limiting access from the staff parking lot was badly weathered. - Many caregivers entered and/or exited the parking lot through the service drive while buses were parked.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Communicate expectations by sharing the school's Traffic Safety Plan, including that the service drive and bus loop are to be used by buses and specialized transportation vehicles only. - Place cones at both ends of the connection between the parking lot and the bus loop during arrival and dismissal to discourage caregivers from using this route. - Install new BUS ONLY/ DO NOT ENTER signs.

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations (Responsible Party)
3	Plaenert Drive	- The sign limiting access from Plaenert Drive was partially blocked by vehicles. The sign limiting access from the staff parking lot was badly weathered. - Signs on both sides of the street prohibit parking but not stopping or standing. - The school asks caregivers to only wait on the south (school) side of the street. Most caregivers complied and only one caregiver was observed across the street.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Install a sign at the Plaenert Drive entrance to the service drive that is visible from the street and limits access to buses and specialized transportation vehicles. - Communicate expectations by sharing the school's Traffic Safety Plan, which should encourage caregivers of 6th, 7th and 8th graders to wait on the south side of Plaenert Drive. - Place "pick-up/drop-off only (no parking)" sandwich boards on the south side of the street during arrival and dismissal hours.
4	City of Madison Park pump station	Several caregivers waited in the parking lot attached to the pump station. Students were observed crossing the service drive between school buses to reach these vehicles, which was made more dangerous by caregiver vehicles driving in both directions using the service drive to enter and exit the school.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Communicate expectations by sharing the school's Traffic Safety Plan discouraging caregivers from waiting in this parking lot. - Work with Madison Parks to limit access to this parking lot through signage or physical control. (School leadership, City of Madison)

Recommendations for City of Madison or Dane County

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations (Responsible Party)
3	Plaenert Drive	- The sign limiting access from Plaenert Drive was partially blocked by vehicles. The sign limiting access from the staff parking lot was badly weathered. - Signs on both sides of the street prohibit parking but not stopping or standing. - The school asks caregivers to only wait on the south (school) side of the street. Most caregivers complied and only one caregiver was observed across the street.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Install “no stopping, standing, or parking” signs on the north side of the street and drop off pick up only (no parking) signs on the school side of the street.
4	City of Madison Park pump station	Several caregivers waited in the parking lot attached to the pump station. Students were observed crossing the service drive between school buses to reach these vehicles, which was made more dangerous by caregiver vehicles driving in both directions using the service drive to enter and exit the school.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> Work with Madison Parks to limit access to this parking lot through signage or physical control. (School leadership, City of Madison)
5	Fish Hatchery Road at Wingra Creek Bridge	The sidewalk on the bridge over Wingra Creek is 5 feet wide and is a substandard bicycle facility.	<i>Long Term:</i> Install a path or separated bike lane that meets bicycle facility design standards.
6	W Wingra Drive at South Street	- Some students walked north across the pedestrian bridge. - Vehicles appear to exceed the posted speed limit during school dismissal times. The street here is flat, straight, and wide. In particular, there is concern about driver speeds at the midblock crossing in line with the pedestrian bridge.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Add a high-visibility crosswalk across W Wingra Drive. - If warranted, add a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon to further improve the safety of the crossing. <i>Medium Term (2-6 years):</i> - Add pedestrian refuge islands or curb extensions to shorten crossing distances and improve pedestrian safety.

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations (Responsible Party)
7	Fish Hatchery Road at W Wingra Drive	- Fish Hatchery Road is a high speed and high traffic street. Vehicles appear to exceed the posted speed limit during school dismissal times. - The Wingra Creek path intersects Fish Hatchery Road at W Wingra Drive. People using the path must cross a slip lane and four lanes of traffic, and caregivers and students reported that this crossing does not feel safe.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Conduct a speed study to consider speed management measures or other traffic calming modifications. (City of Madison, Dane County) - Repaint stop lines eight to ten feet from the pedestrian and path crossings. (City of Madison, Dane County) - Add FINES HIGHER (R2-6P) or FINES DOUBLE (R2-6aP) plaques to the school speed limit assemblies in both directions on Fish Hatchery Road. (City of Madison, Dane County) <i>Long Term:</i> - Remove the slip lane and tighten the curb radii. Consider other changes to Fish Hatchery from Carver Street to High Street to narrow the roadway, add left turn lanes, add or widen side paths, and slow traffic. (City of Madison, Dane County) - If the slip lane cannot be removed, install a raised path for crossing the slip lane on the south leg of the intersection. (City of Madison, Dane County)
8	Fish Hatchery Road at Carver Street	- Fish Hatchery Road is a high speed and high traffic street. Vehicles appear to exceed the posted speed limit during school dismissal times, despite the presence of driver speed feedback signs on both approaches to the intersection. - Caregivers and students reported that drivers disregard the RRFB in this location. Fish Hatchery Road has multiple lanes in each direction and as a result, there is the possibility of multiple threat crashes.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Conduct a speed study to consider speed management measures or other traffic calming modifications. (City of Madison, Dane County) - Install planned traffic signal as part of Cannonball Path extension project. (City of Madison, Dane County)
9	Cannonball path extension	Previous planning efforts have recommended an extension of the Cannonball Path to connect to the Wingra Creek Path.	<i>Immediate Priority</i> Install a sidepath along Fish Hatchery Road as part of Cannonball Path extension project. (City of Madison, Dane County)

#	Location	Issues or Observations	Recommendations (Responsible Party)
10	Ridgewood Way at future Cannonball Path extension	Previous planning efforts have recommended a connection from the Ridgewood Way cul de sac to a future extension of the Cannonball Path. This connection could shorten the trip significantly for many students living in the Burr Oaks neighborhood.	<i>Long Term</i> Construct a connection from the Ridgewood Way cul-de-sac to Fish Hatchery Road.
11	Fish Hatchery Road at Badger Road	Most students living south of Badger Road need to cross Badger Road on the east leg of this intersection. Crossings are uncomfortable because of wide corner radii, and many vehicles turning from Fish Hatchery Road.	<i>Immediate Priority:</i> - Add Leading Pedestrian Interval (if not already) and convert northbound green left turn arrows to lagging operation. (City of Madison, Dane County) - Add ten-foot-wide high visibility crosswalk on all legs of the intersection and repaint stop lines eight to ten feet from the crosswalks. (City of Madison, Dane County) - Conduct a study to consider ways to improve signal operations and safety for pedestrians at this crossing, including turning speeds, near-miss analysis, and southbound left turn gap acceptance. (City of Madison, Dane County)

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.