



Quarterly Newsletter

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The Importance of Public Engagement

A message from Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway

We have all been invited to share opinions or participate in meetings and open houses that help shape the path forward for new policies, programs, and city projects. But how is this public input used?

Community engagement helps local government make decisions that reflect our values, while giving the community a better understanding of the project timeline and process. For Vision Zero, this practice is used when redesigning streets and continuing to connect and expand our award-winning bicycle network. Every comment is read and taken into account to help determine the types of features that will be considered for inclusion in the final plans. While public input is used to identify spots that need improvement, it isn't generally used to design those improvements – we rely on the expertise of our city staff for that.

The City of Madison views public engagement opportunities in several ways:

- To ensure that the public is included and informed throughout the decision-making process.
- To inform the public by providing information — including maps and pictures — to help build understanding of the project, explain options, and share the potential steps forward.
- To discuss plans and possible alternatives, identify the preferred solutions, hear what we may not have considered, and obtain feedback.

- To empower the public by welcoming collaboration in features, outcomes and design in an effort to create a Madison for everyone.

The City also hosts meetings on a variety of topics — in-person and virtually — to present details of projects in development and encourage the public to share opinions. The type of input included in each plan can vary depending on the project and scale. We rely on resident knowledge of their neighborhoods to help pinpoint areas of concern that will shape future projects. This method may help us learn about a dangerous intersection in your neighborhood. Sharing your observations could trigger a study of the location which could result in a stop sign or other safety measure being installed.

Madison staff regularly invites the public to weigh in on topics from street redesign features to create a safer user experience, to incorporating natural elements in construction developments. Community participation is integral in creating cohesive plans that benefit all aspects of life in Madison. Without the sharing of these perspectives, rooted in diverse experiences, the City cannot move forward in ways that account for the needs of people who live, work and play in Madison. To everyone who has already attended a City meeting or open house, thank you! Your service makes Madison a better city. If you haven't yet – please join us in the future.

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Safe Routes to School - Crossing Guard Kid Counts

How does the City of Madison know where to place Crossing Guards? And how do we know that, during each school day's start and dismissal, Madison Crossing Guards guide over 2,000 students safely across the city's streets? It's through data collection!

At existing Crossing Guard corners, each member of our staff make careful note of the number of students crossing with us, as well as the exact times of day that the first and last student safely crosses with us during each shift. This helps us ensure we are there when the students need us and that we are serving the correct intersections based on student counts. Having

count data is one important tool that the City of Madison Traffic Engineering staff use to make City of Madison Traffic Engineering staff make data-informed decisions to ensure our student pedestrians have safe routes to and from school.

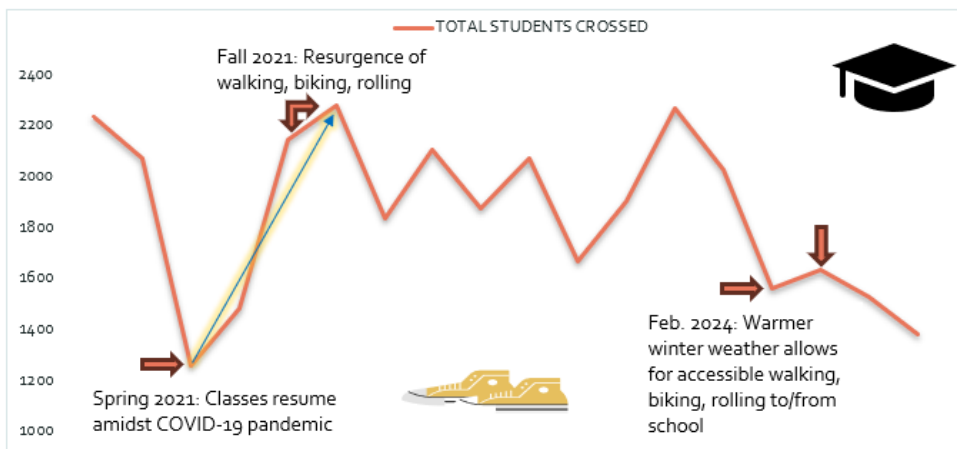
Collecting student count data from our crossing guards, even over just the past five years, allows us to notice patterns and trends in the volume of students walking, biking or rolling to or from school, both before COVID-19 shuttered in-person instruction in early 2020 compared to the semesters since classroom instruction resumed in spring 2021. The return of in-person instruction presented a noticeable

resurgence of students choosing to walk, bike, or roll to and from school, even reaching beyond pre-pandemic levels.

During the 2023-24 school year, Crossing Guards conducted a student count day in the middle of winter. This was the first such winter count in the city's Crossing Guard program's 50+ year history, and the date in early February 2024 was chosen without attempting to control for nice weather. The relatively warmer winter weather observed that day feels representative of increasing climate change which continues to bring more warmer temperature days to Madison. We expect to see students choosing to walk, bike, or roll to and from school during more days of the school year than ever before, including during winter months.

STUDENT COUNT TRACKING - Madison, WI

FALL 2019 through SPRING 2024: Walking, Biking, and Rolling to/from School



INFO: Student counts are conducted on a select date during the morning and afternoon on a nice weather day in each of the Fall and Spring semesters of each school year. An additional winter count was conducted in early-February 2024 on what happened to be a comparably warmer winter day for the time of year.

We encourage students and parents to be part of our count. Get out there and try walking, biking, or rolling to or from school!

Learn more about the City of Madison's [Crossing Guard Program](#)

Madison Continues to Keep Pedestrians Safe!

Madison ranks as the 2nd safest city for pedestrians out of the largest 101 metropolitan areas across America, according to Smart Growth America and the National Complete Streets Coalition's [Dangerous by Design 2024](#) report. This continues our ranking from 2019 when Madison also ranked as the 2nd safest City and builds upon a long history of prioritizing the safety of people walking.

"I am proud to say we are among the safest cities for pedestrians; however, we still have more work to do." said Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway. "Our efforts to make

Madison the safest city to walk, bike, and drive will not stop until we reach zero deaths on our city streets, so our team will continue to work hard to provide safe travel for all."

The Dangerous by Design report looks at pedestrian fatality statistics, where Madison is a national leader. Madison is also rated a Gold level Walk Friendly Community but as the City continues to grow, we know that we need to continue and expand our work to ensure our streets are safe for pedestrians of all ages and all abilities. That's why the City adopted [Vision](#)

[Zero](#) in 2020 and has focused on safety improvements and closing gaps in the walking and biking network through the City's Safe Streets Madison program. The City also built upon our longstanding Complete Streets policy by adopting a [Complete and Green Streets Guide](#) which considers all road users in the roadway design process and specifically prioritizes pedestrians and safety in street design.

Learn more about how the City of Madison is working towards safer streets for all: [2024 Vision Zero Safe Streets and Speed Management Projects](#).

Speed Humps in School Zones — Making our Kids Safer

City staff is part of a School Traffic Safety Team that includes representatives from City of Madison Traffic Engineering, Parking Enforcement, Madison Police Department, Madison Metropolitan School District, Wisconsin Bike Fed and First Student Inc. The School Traffic Safety Team meets regularly to review school traffic plans and evaluate project requests at schools throughout the city.

Typical small requests involve changes to signing or pavement markings to better designate drop-off and pick-up zones. Larger improvements often include flashing beacon lights at crosswalks, speed management or new sidewalks and the Team assists schools with communications to parents and students on the proper school traffic plan.

The following schools were identified by the Team as streets with busy walking routes, safety concerns and high speeds within the designated School Zones or on adjacent walking routes. Each location was evaluated and prioritized within the Safe Streets Madison program to receive funding for their safety projects.

This summer, City contractors will be installing speed humps as part of the Safe Streets Madison program at the following schools:

- East High School—N Fourth Street
- Henderson Elementary—Tompkins Drive
- Kennedy Elementary—Meadowlark Drive
- Leopold Elementary - Traceway Dr
- Mendota Elementary—School Road

In addition to the speed humps, a new midblock pedestrian crossing will be constructed on Donald Drive, at Sandburg Elementary and on Moorland Rd, near Southside Elementary.



Vision Zero Community Pairing Program

The Vision Zero Community Pairing Program provides an opportunity for Vision Zero peer cities to share information on best practices, discuss strategies, and forge beneficial learning relationships. Leveraging these relationships is intended to foster long-term partnerships dedicated to preventing fatal and serious injury traffic crashes, while increasing the accessibility of resources and general success of Vision Zero programs around the globe.

The City of Madison has been selected to participate in the Community Pairing Program's peer partnership. In the peer partnership communities in similar stages of adopting their Vision Zero programs work together. They share experiences, policies and practices and use one another as a sounding board to address their concerns and goals, creating a new way forward with shared knowledge.

Madison is entering into a peer partnership with Arlington, Virginia. In 2019 Arlington County Board committed to a goal of eliminating serious and fatal crashes and approved their first [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) in May 2021. Like Madison, Arlington is working on improving data, prioritizing safety in all their plans, policies and projects and working to engage with a diverse population to better understand their experiences around safety. Through this partnership with the Arlington staff we look forward to learning and growing our work and make positive

strides forward in making both our cities places where people can move safely, no matter the mode of transportation chosen.



[Attribution](#)

Summer Construction Updates

Since 2020, [Vision Zero Madison](#) has implemented safety improvement and speed management projects every year to enhance safe travel on City streets. These projects focus on incorporating [Proven Safety Countermeasures](#) into our roadway infrastructure, such as high visibility crosswalks, green bike markings, rapid flashing beacon lights, and increased signal visibility, as well as lowering speed limits across the City in high injury zones.

Vision Zero infrastructure improvements happen along with larger reconstruction projects and through smaller improvements at critical locations as a part of the Safe Streets Madison Program. Every infrastructure project in the City provides an opportunity to be proactive in building safer streets.

Some examples of Vision Zero safety improvements under construction or already completed include:

- [Segoe Road and Sheboygan Avenue Project](#) (Under Construction)
- [Atwood Avenue Project](#) (Complete)
- [Wilson Street Project](#) (Partially Complete)

This year's Safe Streets projects include many school safety, traffic calming, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs), traffic signal safety, and other pedestrian bicycle improvements.

Starting in June, the City continued its efforts to set safe speed limits with speed management projects on the following streets:

- **Zeier Road:** E Washington Avenue to Lien Road (35 mph to 30 mph)
- **Thierer Road:** E Washington Avenue to Lien Road (35 mph to 30 mph)
- **Lien Road:** E Washington Avenue to N Thompson Drive (35 mph to 30 mph)
- **Sycamore Avenue:** Walsh Road to N Thompson Drive (35 mph to 30 mph)
- **Pflaum Road/Agriculture Drive:** S Stoughton Road to Femrite Drive (35 mph to 30 mph)
- **Campus Drive:** (40 mph to 35 mph)
- **Regent Street:** Midvale Boulevard to Whitney Way (30 mph to 25 mph)
- **Sheboygan Avenue:** Segoe Road to Whitney Way, with reconstruction (30 mph to 25 mph)
- **S High Point Road:** Mineral Point Road to Mid Town Road (35 mph to 30 mph)

Data shows that Madison's speed limit reductions are making a difference. 31 out of 38 locations studied had seen a decrease in the number of vehicles traveling 10+ mph over the speed limit. Even 5 mph can drastically change the likelihood of a serious injury or fatality crash, especially when the crash involves a pedestrian or bicyclist.

To achieve safer streets, Madison needs to continue to improve walking, biking and accessibility connections to other transportation alternatives throughout the community.

Everyone deserves to have safe streets to get to work, to school, for play and to enjoy our vibrant city.

Vision Zero is a data driven strategy intended to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on all roadways, bikeways and sidewalks by 2035.

The City of Madison Vision Zero initiative strives to improve safety for all roadway users throughout the city, and improve the identified high injury intersections and roadway segments, all in an effort to prevent avoidable fatal crashes.

Safety starts with all of us.

We can't control human error, but we can help create more forgiving infrastructure and change systems to prevent crashes from being serious and fatal.

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