



Michigan Safe Routes to School in Action... Donald L. Pavlik Middle School, Alma

During the summer of 2012, the City of Alma and the Alma public Schools met to discuss helping their students walk and bike to school more safely, which was warmly received in the community that had already



invested in a number of other healthy child initiatives. A committee was formed, and walking audits conducted around the schools. By October the team decided to focus on Donald L. Pavlik Middle School, a school serving grades 6-8 on the far north end of the city. The greatest need was for a large number of students living in an income-based apartment complex located just under two miles from the school, for whom there is no bussing available. While they had a good sidewalk across town, these students were walking nearly a half mile along the unpaved shoulder of Charles Road, which has a speed limit of 45 mph, to get to that sidewalk. Thus, the infrastructure improvements

requested for this Safe Routes to School project was a non-motorized path, including a boardwalk over a wetland area and a railroad crossing.

The community also noted that in addition to installing a non-motorized path along Charles Road to the sidewalk on Warwick, it was only .3 mile further to the existing Fred Meijer Heartland Trail. The city's decision to pair this connection with the Safe Routes project creating an added benefit for the students and the community by providing a more robust, equitable network connection between the trail and different points in the city.

In addition to the infrastructure improvements, Alma Public Schools have engaged in education and encouragement activities to promote the safe usage of the new facilities. These initiatives include a bike rodeo, health education, family kick-off and walk led by the community policing officer and volunteers, and pedometers distributed to all participating students.

This project was made possible through the collaborative efforts of the Alma Public Schools, Alma Public School Board, Alma Police Department, City of Alma, Alma Wellness Committee, Gratiot Healthy Children Initiative, and parents, staff, and students of Donald L. Pavlik Middle School.

- Total Project Amount:\$479,253.81
 - Infrastructure investment: \$367,851.56
 - Match from City of Alma: \$105,089.75
 - Noninfrastructure investment: \$6,312.50
- Project Impact:
 - 284 of Donald L. Pavlik's nearly 507 students now have a safer route to school

