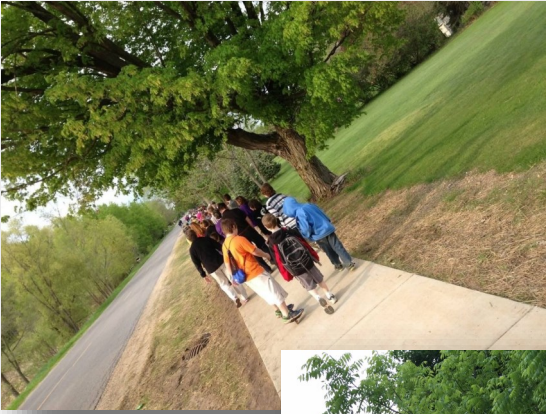




## Michigan Safe Routes to School in Action... Farwell Elementary & Farwell Middle School Farwell, Michigan



The tiny village of Farwell, located in mid-Michigan embarked on a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning process in 2009 with the hopes of making walking a biking to school a viable option for all their students. During their walking audit and survey process, it became clear that while there were sidewalks in the main downtown area, there were some key links missing, and there was a huge gap between the main downtown area and a neighborhood directly north. Residents regularly walked along the busy 1.5 mile stretch of Superior and North Road, but were forced to walk along the shoulder, which was not a safe option, particularly for young students. This meant that the families in the northern neighborhood often elected to drive their children to the elementary and middle school, creating more traffic and congestion. Parents indicated via the Parent Survey that if there were a safer route, they would allow their children to walk to school, so the route to improve was clear: they requested that a sidewalk be installed on the west side of North/Superior Roads from Surrey Road south to Ohio Street (1.4 miles), and on the south side of Ohio Street from Superior Road, past the elementary school and ending at the

middle school. Since the students were not accustomed to walking that routes, the n SRTS committee developed a plan to implement a Path Buddy and walking school bus program, which would help the students to walk the distance accompanied by friends and other adults. A frequent walker program paired with participation prizes was also implemented as part of their non-infrastructure funding to encourage students to walk after many years of being driven.

The program united the north neighborhood to the downtown area, and has additionally benefitted high school students. Driving down Superior/North Roads on a calm summer evening, one will see families out walking the route, establishing new habits for the next generation.



Total Project Amount:\$442,936

- Infrastructure investment: \$434,830
- Noninfrastructure investment: \$8,106

Project Impact:

- United the north neighborhood to the downtown area and schools, reduced traffic around the schools, and created a safe option for pedestrians.

