



## Michigan Safe Routes to School in Action... Palmer Elementary, Grand Rapids Public Schools



With nearly all of Palmer Elementary's 306 students living in a walkable distance, this Safe Routes to School project's goal was to use pedestrian safety measures to reconnect the Creston Neighborhood for the students: the Creston Neighborhood Association recognized that the students were walking in some very unsafe conditions. To create safer routes for these students, this project provided for the installation of a pedestrian refuge island with pedestrian actuated warning light at the intersection of Plainfield Avenue and Palmer Street. Further improvements include installation of LED pedestrian countdown signals at the intersections of Plainfield

Avenue and Ann Street, Plainfield Avenue and Quimby Street, Plainfield Avenue and Sweet Street, and Ann Street at Coit Avenue, and improved crosswalks at several intersections near the school.

Additionally a speed hump was installed on Palmer Avenue to reduce traffic speed coming off the obtuse-angled intersection of Plainfield and Palmer near the school. Finally, three bicycle racks were installed at the school. The Safe Routes to School project also included funding for Walking School Bus and pedestrian safety education programs coordinated in partnership with the Creston Neighborhood Association. These improvements have served to connect the east and west side of the Creston Neighborhood along Plainfield Avenue, a busy road (15,922 AADT at time of application), for Palmer's students. As a result of this project, the Grand Rapids Public Schools have begun talks on developing a district-wide approach to planning for Safe Routes to School. The Palmer project has been a great example of community, school, and city working together, and thinking about future potential.

- Federal SAFETEA-LU SRTS: \$108,850
  - Infrastructure investment: \$104,399
  - Noninfrastructure investment: \$4,451
- This project was made possible through the collaborative efforts of Palmer Elementary, Grand Rapids Public Schools, City of Grand Rapids, and the Creston Neighborhood Association.

### Project Impact:

- This project has reconnected the east and west side of Plainfield avenue at several points.
- Palmer's 306 students can now safely walk to school, reducing the number of parents driving students to school.

