



TOOLE
DESIGN



Safe Routes in Action: Austin's Comprehensive Approach to School Safety

Austin Transportation and Public Works

Toole Design Group

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Presentation Road Map:

- Austin's Safe Routes to School Team
- Crossing Guard Program
- Education and Engagement Program
- Planning Infrastructure
- From Planning to Projects
- Questions



Safe Routes to School Team



- 18 Full-Time Staff
- 210 Part-Time Seasonal Staff
- 3 Program Areas:
 - Crossing Guards
 - Education & Engagement
 - Infrastructure



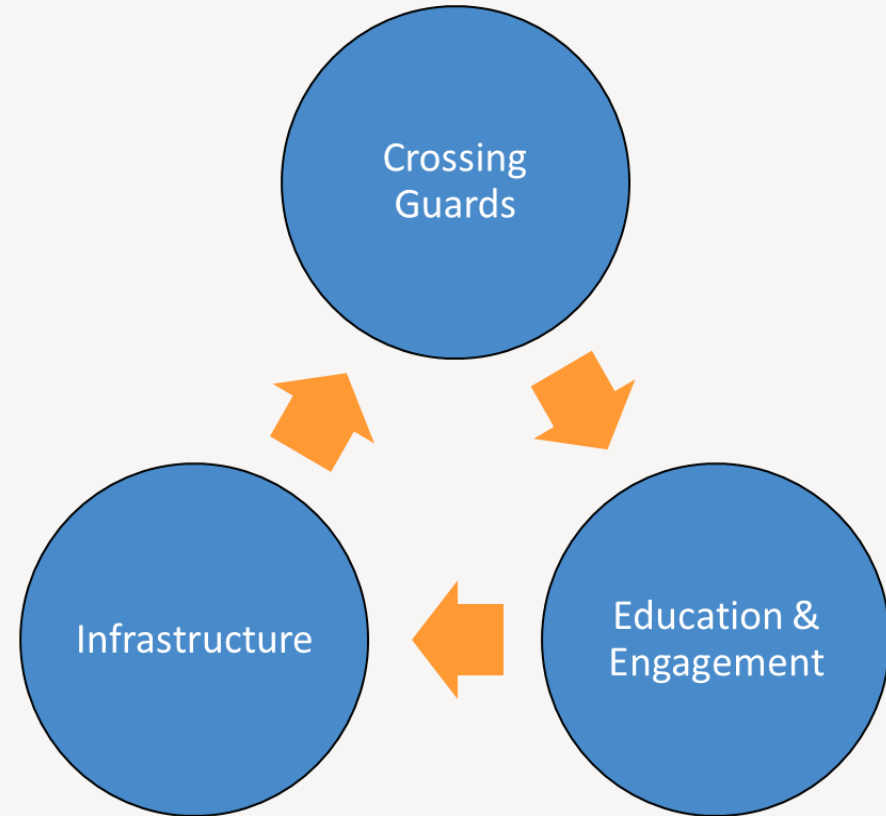
Mission and Vision

Mission:

To increase the number of students walking and biking to school by creating a safer, healthier and more equitable environment that fosters human-powered transportation.

Vision:

Engage with the community to create a safer, healthier and more equitable environment that fosters human powered transportation as the first choice for City of Austin Students.



Crossing Guard Program



Background

Origin

- Expanded in 1991 through the state's creation of a Child Safety Fund
- The purpose of this program is to make it safer for those students walking and biking to school

Who We Serve

- Elementary and Middle School students attending nearly 100 schools in the 7 school districts that fall within the City of Austin full-purpose jurisdiction



Who Do We Serve?

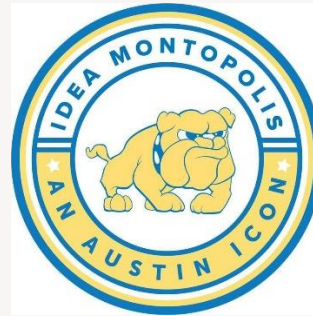


Seven Public School Districts



Who Do We Serve?

Charter and Montessori Campuses



Crossing Guards

Team

- One Program Manager
- Seven Crossing Guard Supervisors
- 14 Supervisor Assistants
- 210 Crossing Guards



Initiatives

- Crossing Guards
- Differed Disposition
- External Partner Trainings
- Pedestrian Counts
- Walking School Buses
- Fall Training
- Spring Training
- Team Building
- New Employee Orientation
- Crossing Guard Rewards and Recognition

SRTS Walking School Buses



Hart Elementary School



Guerrero-Thompson Elementary School





Education & Engagement

Background

Origin

- The Education program was created in 1992, and Engagement was added in 2012
- The purpose of these programs are to teach students to be safe pedestrians and bicyclists and to encourage more students to choose human power to get to school

Who We Serve

- Elementary School students attending approximately 90 schools in the 7 school districts that fall within the City of Austin full-purpose jurisdiction



Education and Engagement

Team

- One Program Manager
- Two Education Leads
- Two Education Technicians



Initiatives

- Elementary School Education
 - Pre-K-2nd Grade Lessons
 - 3rd-5th Grade Lessons
- School Fitness Nights
- Community Fairs
- Adult Education
- Safety Patrol Training
- Bike Rodeo
- Walk to School Day
- Bike to School Day

2025-2026 School Year Achievements

- Serviced 90 Schools
- Trained 33,000 students
- Organized 1 Bike Rodeo
- Worked 19 Community and School Fairs
- Organized Walk to School Day at Bluebonnet Trail ES
 - Gave swag to 13 schools
- Organized Bike to School Day at Odom ES
 - Gave swag to 22 schools
- Worked 4 bike bus trainings
- Taught safety to 220 adults in the City of Austin



Infrastructure



Background

Origin

- Created in 2016 through the passage of the 2016 Mobility Bond
- The purpose of this program is to address barriers that families in Austin face on their journey to and from school

Who We Serve

- The students and families of 143 Elementary, Middle and High Schools within the City of Austin full-purpose jurisdiction



Infrastructure

Team

- One Project Manager
- Two Project Coordinators

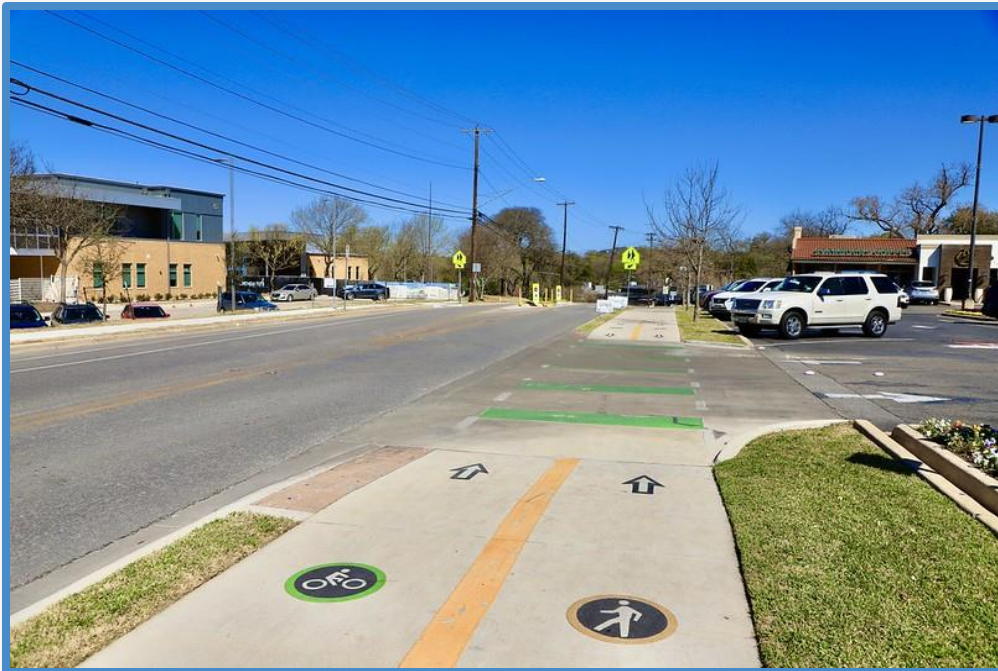


Initiatives

- IDIQ contracts through SUTD and PDD
- Design services through ATSD, TED, ESD, and consultant field engineers on a rotation list
- Site plan reviews
- AISD ILA
- GIS mapping for a public facing website
- School and City Council outreach
- Completed more than 750 projects at 150 schools

2016 Bond Funding

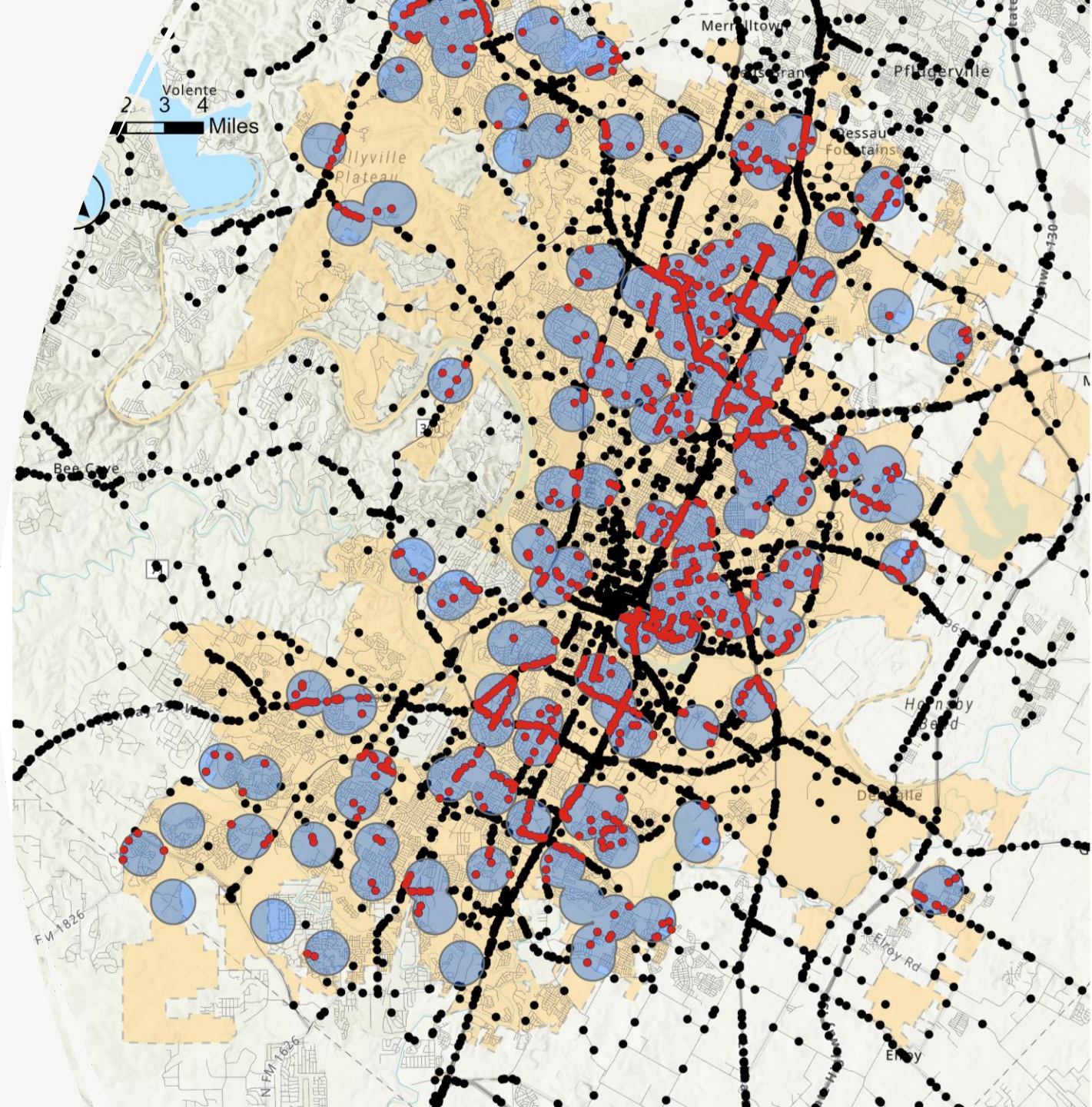
\$27,500,000 divided evenly among the ten City Council Districts to allow the City to address Safe Routes to School. The Safe Routes to School Program is a partnership with local school districts to address safety concerns of routes to school and encourage children and families to bike or walk to school. Improvements may include infrastructure options that create a safer environment such as sidewalks, traffic calming devices, protected bicycle facilities, and urban trails.



2020 Bond Funding

\$20,000,000 was allocated to address barriers identified in the SRTS Infrastructure Reports with a focus on Very High and High Benefit and/or Cost Benefit Projects. To help address equity concerns, SRTS is allocating at least \$1,000,000 of the 2020 Bond to improvements near charter schools which have historically been built in Low SES areas around Austin.

Planning

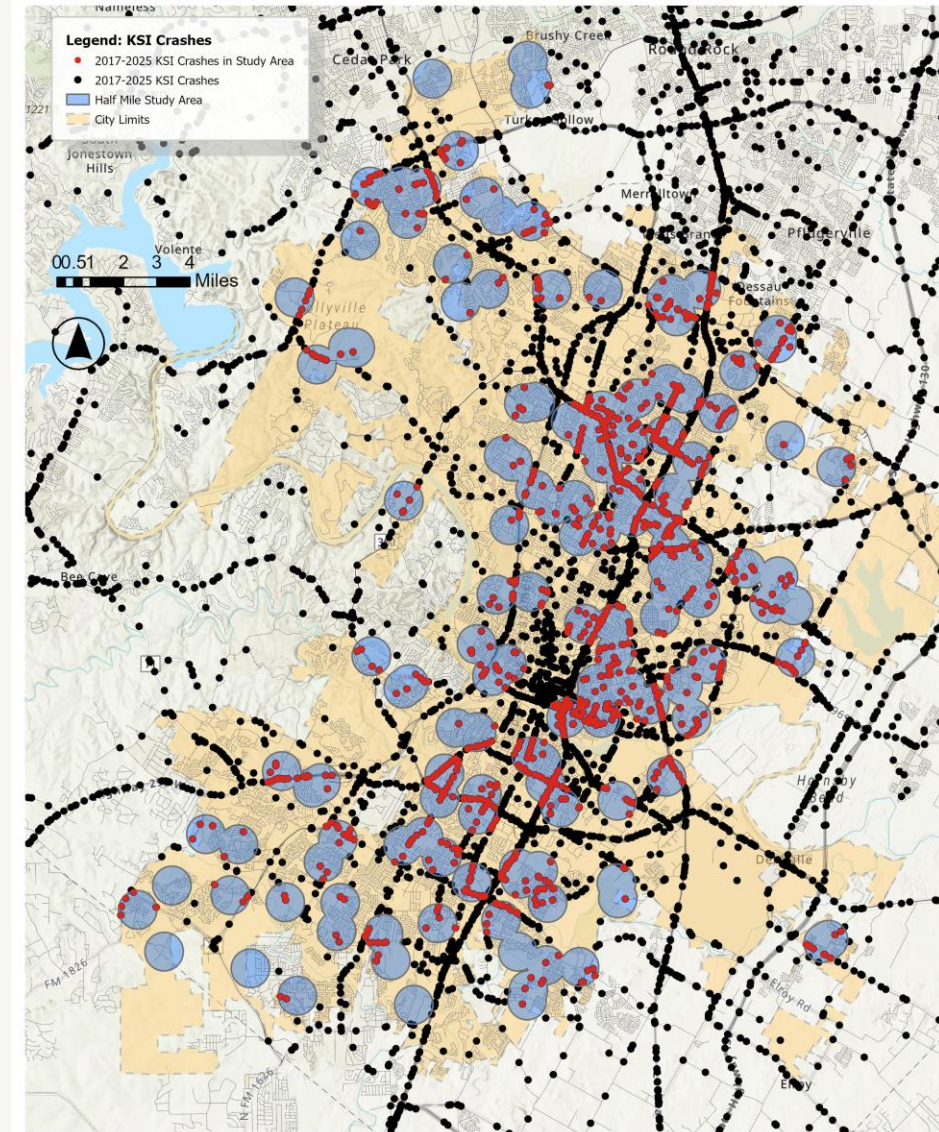


Planning

Why the SRTS Planning Process Matters

- Daily travel to school = high-frequency safety exposure
- 143 campuses = system-level impact
- School zones concentrate vulnerable users
- Planning enables **proactive safety, not reactive fixes**

City of Austin Safe Routes to Schools Plan Refresh - KSI Crashes



Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

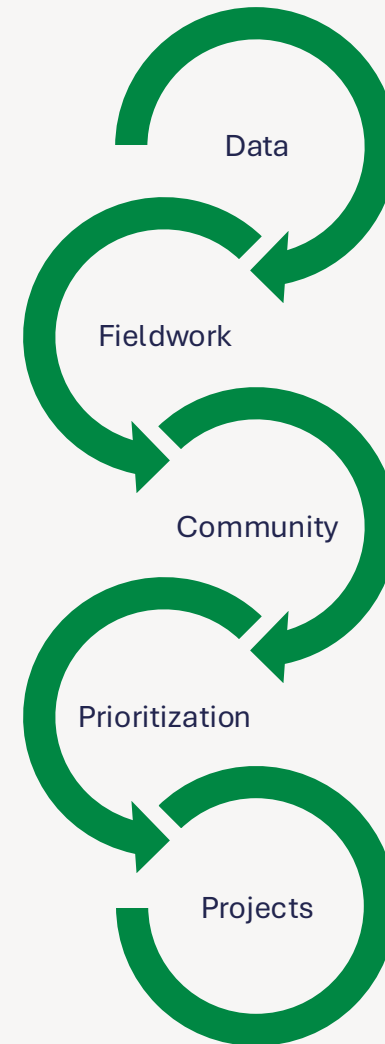
A Data-Driven, Systemic Planning Approach

We combine:

- Crash data + systemic risk factors
- Walk audits + field observations
- Community input
- Infrastructure gap analysis

Then we:

- Identify **specific safety issues**
- Apply **proven countermeasures**
- Prioritize projects using **data + equity + safety**



Key Safety Findings Near Schools

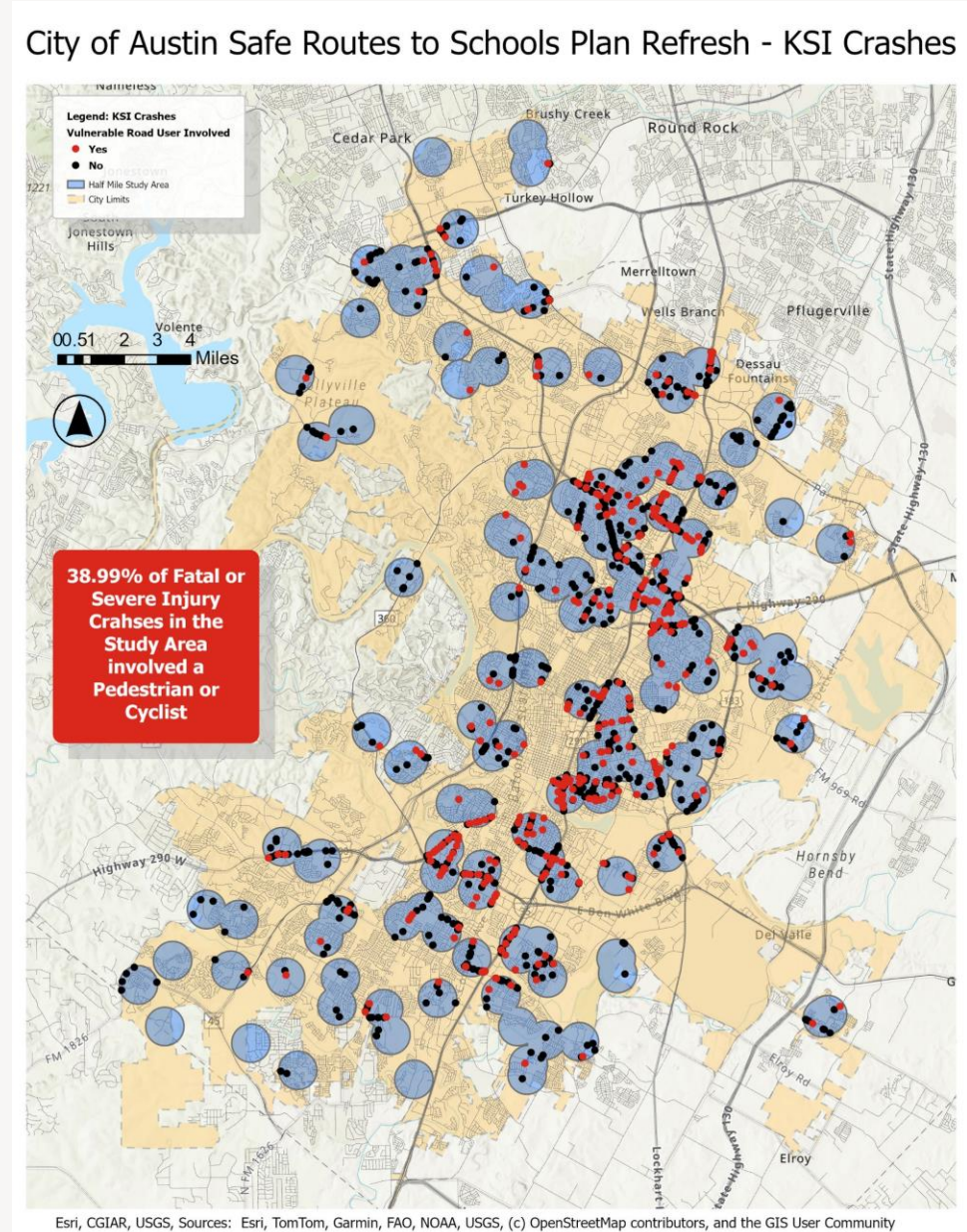
■ Top risk factors:

- Distracted driving
- Failure to yield / right-of-way
- Speed-related crashes

■ Risk concentrated in:

- Intersections
- School access points
- High-speed corridors

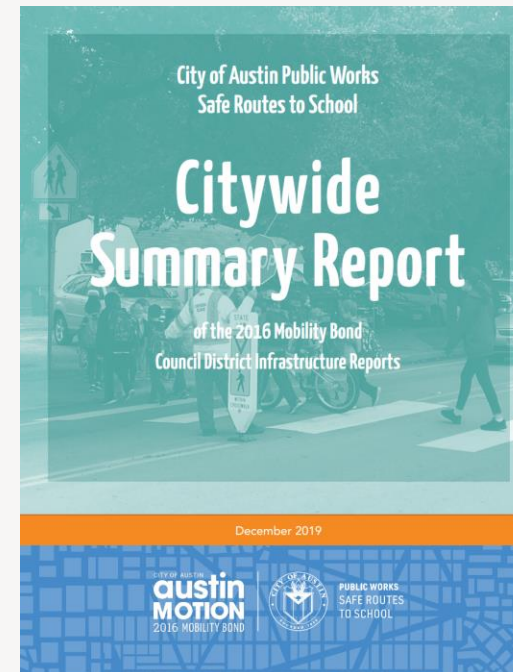
Vulnerable Road Users are at Risk!



From Planning to Implementation

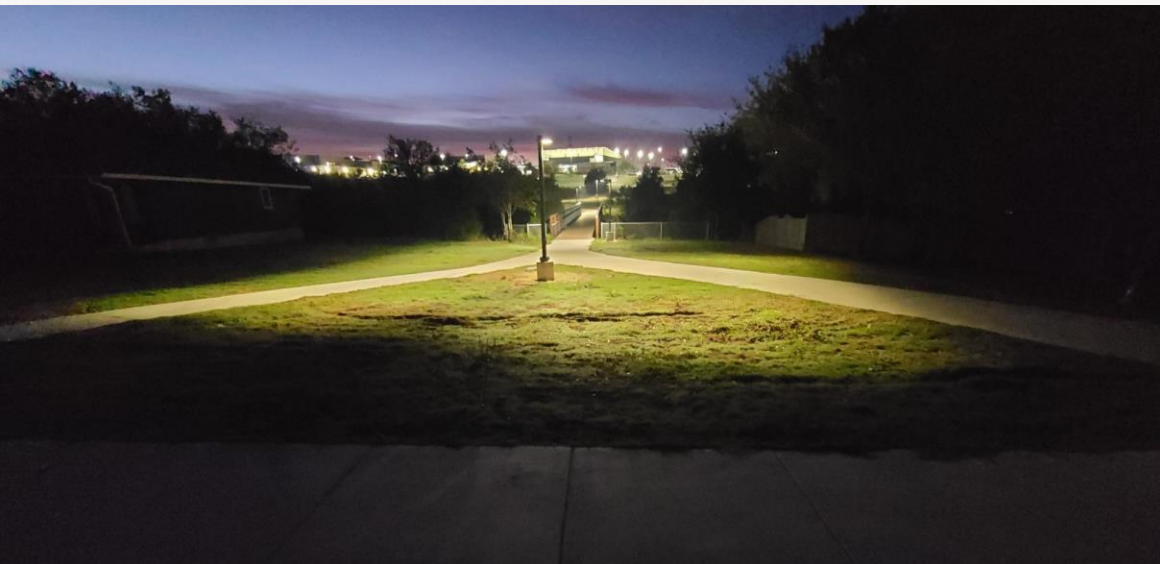
- 2019 Plan → **750+ improvements delivered**
- Implemented through:
 - Bonds
 - Vision Zero
 - Maintenance & resurfacing
- Mix of projects:
 - Sidewalks & crossings
 - Traffic calming
 - Curb ramps & visibility improvements

City of Austin Vision Zero analysis of selected implemented SRTS projects found a 27.3% reduction in crashes and more than \$46 million in estimated safety benefits.”





Project Highlights (Overton ES) – Colony Loop District Park Trail



Project Highlights (Wooldridge ES)

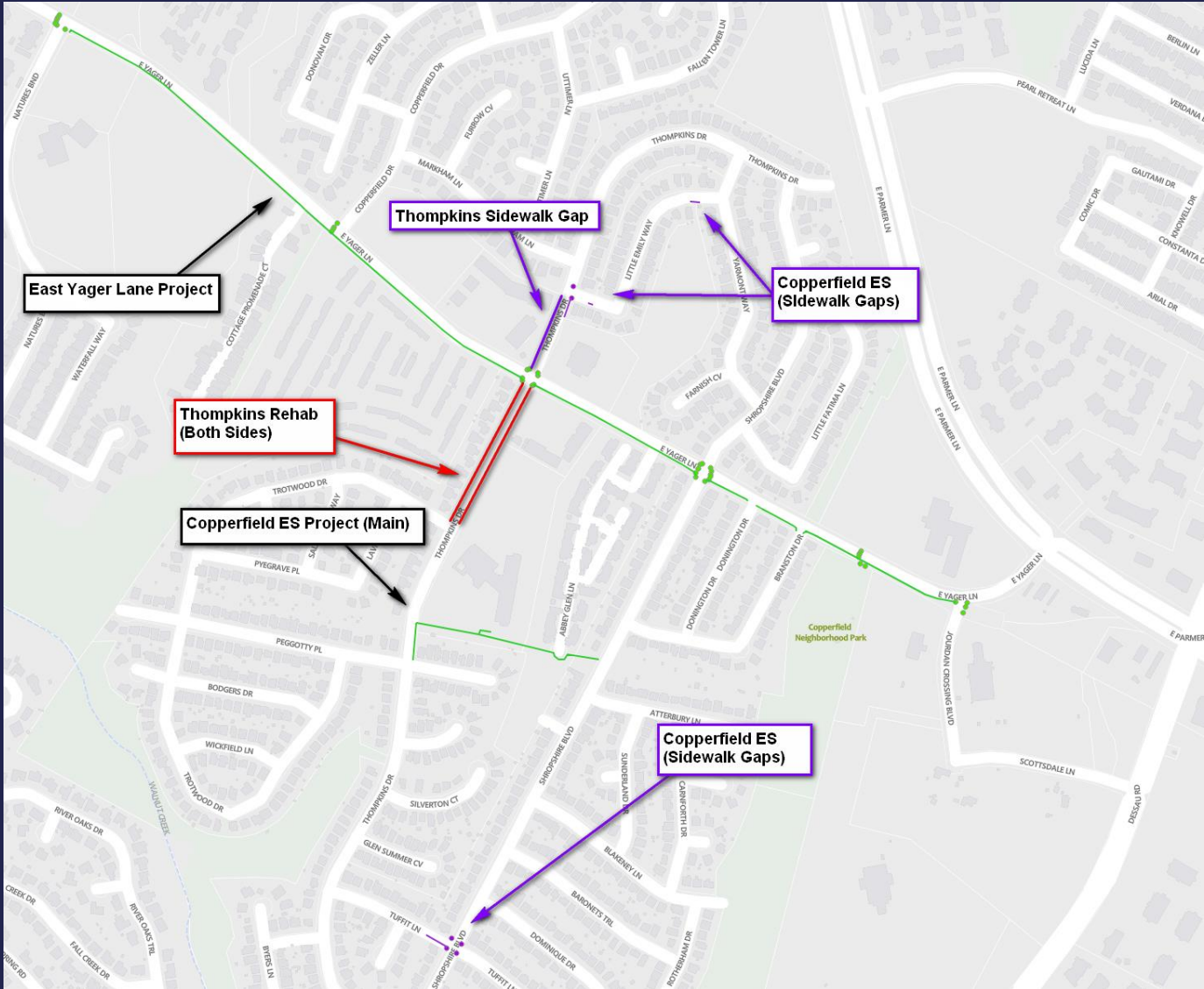


Wooldridge ES – Payton Gin Rd/Ohlen Rd

- Protected Intersection
- Replaced slip lane with rain garden
- Connected sidewalks
- Protected bike lanes
- Shorter, more visible pedestrian crossings



Project Highlights (Copperfield ES)



Copperfield ES – E Yager Ln/Thompkins Dr



Before



After

Copperfield ES Connector Trail

- 3 concrete pedestrian islands:
 - 2 at Thompkins Drive
 - 1 at Shropshire Lane
- New sidewalks and curb ramps



- 12-15 foot-wide concrete trail
- 0.19 miles long

Questions?

Leticia Richardson

Crossing Guard Manager
City of Austin Safe Routes to School
Leticia.Richardson@AustinTexas.gov



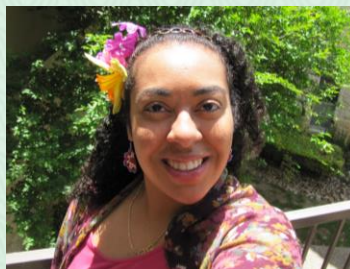
Rhonda Bolick

Education and Engagement Manager
City of Austin Safe Routes to School
Rhonda.Bolick@AustinTexas.gov



Coleen Gentles

Infrastructure Project Manager
City of Austin Safe Routes to School
Coleen.Gentles@AustinTexas.gov



**Ben Magallon, AICP, TSSP-
Rail/Bus**

Senior Planner
Toole Design Group
BMagallon@tooledesign.com

