

Safe Routes to School Program

Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School Travel Plan

359 Thirteenth Avenue Newark, NJ 07103



Prepared By:

Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corporation

d/b/a Meadowlink

144 Park Place East

Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075

(201) 939-4242

www.ezride.org

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NEW JERSEY
Safe Routes to School



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

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Executive Summary

A Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Travel Plan is a resource to encourage and increase the number of students walking or bicycling to school. It provides directions for schools, students, families and the city to build a safer walking and biking environment for residents.

School Travel Plans are site specific and describe the needs of each particular school being studied. The plan includes observations, ideas and an action plan to address issues and problem areas. The Plan covers five aspects of the Safe Routes to School program – Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Engineering.

The School Travel Plan outlines the timeframe and funding priorities to support a coordinated schedule of streetscape improvements. In fact, the New Jersey Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure funding program requires applicants to have an approved School Travel Plan in order to apply for a grant.

1. Goals

The goals of the Thirteenth Avenue School Travel Plan are:

- a. Determine and label the key travel routes used by students
- b. Identify any issues that impact safety
- c. Provide a list of suggestions to improve the travel environment around the school
- d. Categorize the suggestions in terms of cost and time needed to make repair
- e. Detect ways to reduce traffic congestion and car emissions around the school
- f. Implement solutions to encourage more students to walk and bike to school

2. Task Force

This School Travel Plan is the product of a robust and productive partnership. The Thirteenth Avenue School SRTS Task Force came together out of a shared community interest in improving the lives of students and residents. The involvement of local stakeholders is an important part of ensuring the sustainability of the SRTS initiative and the enactment of the Action Plan.

3. Community Barriers to Health

According to a 2010 survey conducted by the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (CSHP), many children in the Newark school district do not meet federal standards for healthy eating and physical activity. Parents of Newark children, age three to eighteen, were surveyed to identify their top concerns. The top three concerns identified by parents include:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| a. Criminal activity | 49 percent |
| b. High volume of traffic | 44 percent |
| c. Unpleasant neighborhoods | 30 percent |

4. School Travel Data

In January 2015, Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School teachers conducted a School Travel Tally to determine how students travel to and from school.

Despite parental concerns regarding criminal activity, traffic and unpleasant neighborhoods, 44 percent of students walk to school, 19 percent of students are driven to school, 2-3 percent carpool, 30 percent use the school bus, 4 percent take public transit, and another 1 percent of students ride bicycles to school.

5. Barriers and Opportunities Identified for Safer Walking & Biking

The Safe Routes to School Taskforce and Community Partners conducted a detailed walkability assessment of the road conditions along the main routes used by the students to walk to school in December 2013. The major intersections near Thirteenth Avenue /Dr. MLK Jr. School include:

1. Twelfth Street and South Orange Avenue
2. Ninth Street and South Orange Avenue

Key opportunities for street improvement around Thirteenth School include: repairing uneven and cracked sidewalks and curbs, adding trash receptacles, repainting crosswalk striping, removing threatening graffiti, and adding safety features like road signs and bicycle lanes.

6. Action Plan

The Safe Routes to School program categorizes the Action Plan into the “Five E’s:” Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation and Engineering. This is a useful tool because it helps the school prioritize next steps. In a particular community, some of the E’s may be more urgently needed than others, so the school can execute the recommendations in any order they choose. This School Travel Plan recommends a number of improvements that can be made to encourage safe walking and biking. The action plan can be used to support SRTS and other Federal or State grant applications to fund municipal roadway improvements.

Key Actions/Recommendations in Action Plan include:

- Repair damaged sidewalks on Eleventh Avenue, South Twelfth Street, Ninth Street, and 19th Avenue towards Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School.
- School should hold annual safety presentations for students on walking and biking
- Post speed limit signs within the school zone
- Equip school zone with flashing beacons and paint school zone on key roads near school
- Install high visibility crosswalks and restripe faded crosswalks as indicated in Action Plan
- Encourage the city to take action on the numerous abandoned properties
- Add striped crosswalks to the intersection of South Orange Avenue and Eighth Street near the apartments as many children cross these roads.

1. Walking and Cycling to Health

1.1 The Challenge

Over the past few decades, a number of societal and environmental changes have limited children's access to safe places where they can walk, bike and play. For example, increased traffic, neighborhoods that lack sidewalks and urban sprawl have contributed to a sharp decline in the number of students who walk or bike to school. Nationally, while 42 percent of children walked or biked to school in 1969, only 13 percent of children did so in 2001. Additionally, the popularity of television and video games as a means to entertain children has contributed to a more sedentary lifestyle. As a result, children and adolescents are less physically active than they were several generations ago.

The decrease in walking and biking to school and less physical forms of play has resulted in an alarming increase in childhood obesity. During the past four decades, the obesity rate for children ages 6 to 11 has more than quadrupled (from 4.2 to 17 percent), and the obesity rate for adolescents ages 12 to 19 has more than tripled (from 4.6 to 17.6 percent).

Developing policies and practices to address these environmental and social barriers to daily physical activity are critical to reducing and preventing obesity among children. Supporting "active transport" (or walking and bicycling) to school presents an excellent opportunity to increase daily physical activity among youth.¹

1.2. The Program

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal program that encourages, teaches and enables children to safely bicycle and walk to school. The program aims to help children be more physically active with the intent to reduce chronic disease and prevent and reduce obesity. SRTS focuses on increasing the number of children walking and bicycling to school by building and repairing infrastructure such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes. The program also encourages changes in travel behavior, supports increased enforcement of traffic laws around schools, and educates communities on the benefits and safety aspects of active transport. This report summarizes research on active transport to school, physical activity levels and health outcomes. It also explores the factors that influence walking and biking to school, including the impact of SRTS programs.

The SRTS Program is a collaborative effort of multiple stakeholders that include community members, elected officials, city planners, and police departments. SRTS brings a community closer together by implementing programs such as walking school buses, walkability assessments, bicycle rodeos and pedestrian safety presentations. The benefits of SRTS extend far beyond the schools into the community as a whole.

¹ Walking and Biking to School, Physical Activities and Health Outcomes, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

In addition to keeping residents physically active and healthy, community spaces that promote walking can draw people together safely and provide more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to stay socially connected and engaged. Local areas with good pedestrian networks can also have substantial economic and environmental benefits to a local area.

Towns and cities that develop recreational programming that encourages the use of pedestrian networks, infrastructure, trails, or walkable facilities can help revitalize a downtown, increase private investment, increase property values, promote tourism, and support the development of a good business climate. A growing body of research connects higher property values and economically sound communities to better walkability and closer proximity among certain neighborhood destinations, including houses, parks, schools, businesses, services, and social venues. Main streets can benefit economically from good sidewalks and the ability to easily and safely peruse shops, restaurants, and local services.

A SRTS Walkability Assessment and School Travel Plan “maps out” specific ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel to increase the number of students who walk and bike to school and to improve safety. A School Travel Plan is a report about the Walkability Assessment and identifies the following:

- Where students currently walk and bike?
- Where students would walk and bike if they could?
- What changes need to be made so that students can and will walk and bike to school?

The School Travel Plan identifies short term solutions for immediate action and implementation as well as long term solutions that may require planning and additional funds. Benefits of developing a School Travel Plan include:

- Creating partnerships between the school and surrounding community
- Generating ideas and actions so walking and bicycling is safer
- Building community excitement and support
- Making an application for a SRTS grant more competitive by demonstrating a connection between goals, actions and targets.

1.3. The Team

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) funds and administers the SRTS program in New Jersey, and the Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC) at Rutgers’ University provides technical and administrative support.

The actual implementation of the SRTS program at Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School was undertaken by three organizations –Meadowlink/EZ Ride, Urban League of Essex County, and Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC).

Meadowlink/EZ Ride

In New Jersey, Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) have taken the lead in coordinating the implementation of the SRTS programs. TMAs are non-profit organizations whose mission is to implement transportation programs and services like carpools, vanpools, shuttles, biking and walking that reduce congestion and improve air quality. Meadowlink/EZ Ride is one of eight Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) in New Jersey and primarily serves Bergen, Essex, Monmouth, Passaic and Union counties.

Urban League of Essex County

The Urban League of Essex County's mission is to serve and assist and enable disadvantaged urban residents in the achievement of social and economic self-sufficiency. Founded in 1917, Urban League of Essex County is a non-profit organization which ensures that children grow to be self-reliant through the provision of youth and community development programs for residents of Essex County, New Jersey. Urban League services the community with special attention to four key areas: Educational Programs, Employment Opportunities, Community Development and Economic Development.

Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC)

Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit transportation policy advocacy organization working for a more balanced and equitable transportation system in New Jersey, downstate New York and Connecticut. In the 20 plus years since their founding, the Campaign has enjoyed a strong record of accomplishment. Among their notable victories are encouraging smart growth approaches at state departments of transportation, and calling for millions of dollars of investment in public transportation, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-oriented development initiatives. Tri-State provided legal advocacy to promote the SRTS program at the Thirteenth Avenue School.

A key element of the SRTS program is to engage community groups and local stakeholders to support and sustain the SRTS program after the travel plan is completed. Their role is to implement the School Travel Plan within the community. A Thirteenth School Travel Plan Task Force was established and a series of meetings was held to collect information and build support for the program.

A list of the members of the Task Force and their roles are included in the table below.

Thirteenth Avenue School Travel Plan Task Force

Organization	Role/Responsibility	Contact
Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK, Jr. School	Program Activity and Implementation	Simone Rose <i>Principal</i> Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School 359 13th Avenue Newark, NJ 07103 973-733-7045 srose@nps.k12.nj.us
SRTS Champion	Program Activity and Implementation	Angela Davis Thirteenth Avenue School 359 Thirteenth Avenue Newark, NJ 07103 973-733-7045 adavis@nps.k12.nj.us
Urban League of Essex County	Community Resource, Safety Education, SRTS Program Resource	Rahman D. Karriem Chief Operating Officer Urban League of Essex County 508 Central Avenue Newark, NJ 07107 973-624-9535 x104 rkariem@ulec.org
Newark City	Newark Police Department, Enforcement, School Crossing Guard Unit	Officer Benito Torres Metro Division, School Crossing Guard Unit 36 Park Place Newark, NJ 07102 973-733-7909 benitot@ci.newark.nj.us
Newark City	Engineering Project Implementation	Jack M. Nata, <i>Sr. Administrative Analyst</i> Department of Engineering Division of Traffic and Signals 255 Central Avenue Newark, NJ 07103 973-733-6183 nataj@ci.newark.nj.us
Tri-State Transportation Campaign	Advocacy, Policy Change, Community Resource	Janna Chernetz, Esq. <i>NJ Advocate</i> Tri-State Transportation Campaign

		350 West 31 st Street #802 New York, NY 10001 212-268-7474 Janna@tstc.org
Meadowlink - Transportation Management Association	SRTS Program Assistance, Community Resource, Safety Education	Meeta Patel* <i>Safe Routes to School Coordinator</i> Meadowlink 144 Park Place East Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075 201-939-4242 mpatel@ezride.org *Current Contact is Lisa Lee. llee@ezride.org
Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers The State University of New Jersey	Web- based resources, Technical Assistance, SRTS Recognition Program, Helpdesk assistance, SRTS Tools, Tips and Training	Leigh Ann Von Hagen, AICP/PP <i>Senior Research Specialist</i> Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy Rutgers, The State University of NJ 33 Livingston Avenue New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901 848-932-2854 lavh@ejb.rutgers.edu
NJ DOT	Grant Funding, State SRTS Resource. SRTS Best Practices	Elise Bremer-Nei, AICP/PP <i>State Safe Routes to School Program Coordinator</i> NJ Department of Transportation Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs P.O. Box 600 Trenton, NJ 08625-0600 609-530-2765 elise.bremer-nei@dot.nj.gov

2. District & School Profile

A school profile for Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School was developed using data from the Newark School District website. Additional information was collected from city data, parent surveys, interviews and on-site visits.

The Newark School District has been in existence since 1676. It is one of the largest school systems in New Jersey with 66 schools, 5,595 employees, and a student population of 35,043. Student demographics are shown in Table 1 below. The different ethnicities of students provide a diverse educational experience for pre-kindergarten to secondary school students as well as a challenge for its teaching staff. The district continues to revise services to meet the changing language needs of students in each school.

Table 1. Newark Public Schools – Student Demographics

Ethnicity	
African-American	22,048
Hispanic	14,036
Caucasian	2,955
Asian	340
Native American	52
Pacific Islander	8
Gender	
Male	20,243
Female	19,196
Grade Level	
Primary (Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 4)	16,130
Middle School (Grade 5 - 8)	10,345
High School (Grade 9 - 12)	9,546
Special Needs Students	3,419

Academic Performance

Academically, Newark's public schools are among the lowest-performing in the state, but it is encouraging to note that many efforts are currently being made to improve the schools and community. In 1995, the state government took over management of the city's schools with the intention to improve the schools and provide a better education for the District's students.

The district is classified by the NJ Department of Education as District Factor Group "A," the lowest of eight groupings. A District Factor Group (DFG) is an indicator of the socioeconomic status of citizens in school districts of New Jersey. DFGs were first developed by the New Jersey Department of Education in 1975 for the purpose of comparing student performance on statewide assessments across demographically similar school districts. The Newark Public

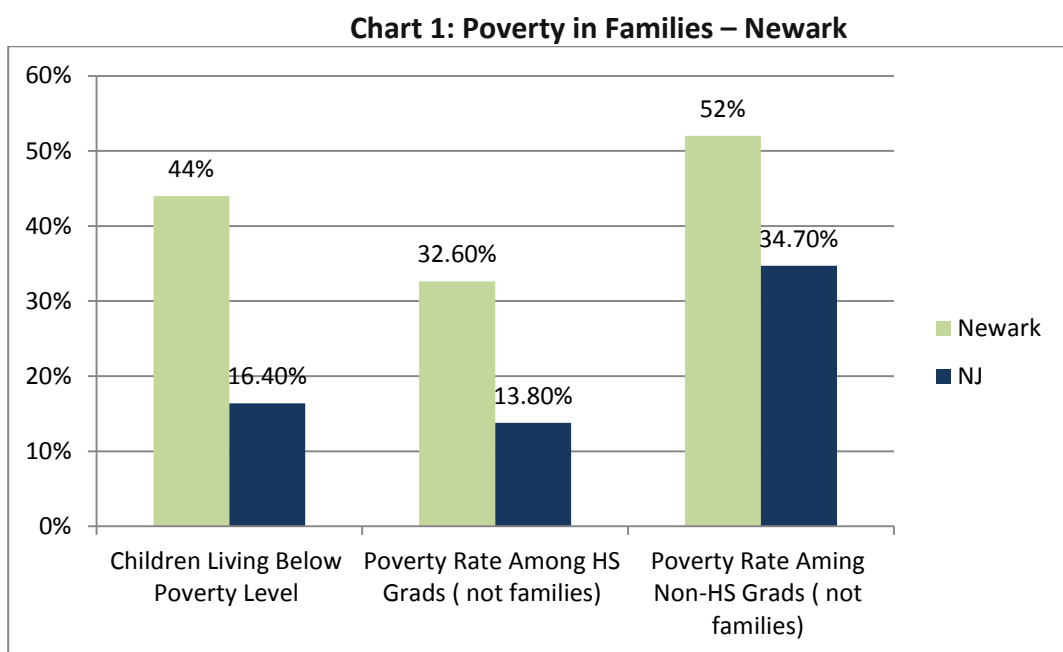
Schools have been designated as a “disadvantaged urban school system” by the State of New Jersey. This rating is based on neighborhood criteria such as poverty rate, incidence of crime and violence, and limited municipal resources due to low tax revenues. Crime and poverty are a major problem in Newark. NJDOT has directed that SRTS programs in disadvantaged communities should be given high priority.

Crime

Based on 2013 data prepared by Neighborhood Scout, which is based on FBI crime statistics, the national crime index in Newark is 9 out of a possible score of 100. This means Newark is only safer than 9 percent of all other US cities or it’s safer to live in 91 percent of other US cities. The annual neighborhood crime rate looks at the total number of property and violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery and assault) committed per 1000 residents. Newark had the highest neighborhood crime rate in New Jersey in 2013 with 46.9 incidents per 1000 residents. Another way to think about that is that a person’s chance of becoming a crime victim in Newark is 1 in 77; whereas a person’s chance of becoming a crime victim in the state of New Jersey is 1 in 347. Community safety has been mentioned by parents as a key issue to improve.

Poverty

In 2012-2013, Newark received federal funds to support the operation of its Title I Program. Title I funding is allocated to schools where the percentage of children from low-income families is 35 percent or higher. Newark’s poverty rate is also one of the highest in the state. Chart 1 shows that 44 percent of children living in Newark between 2000-2013 were in families that were living below the poverty level.

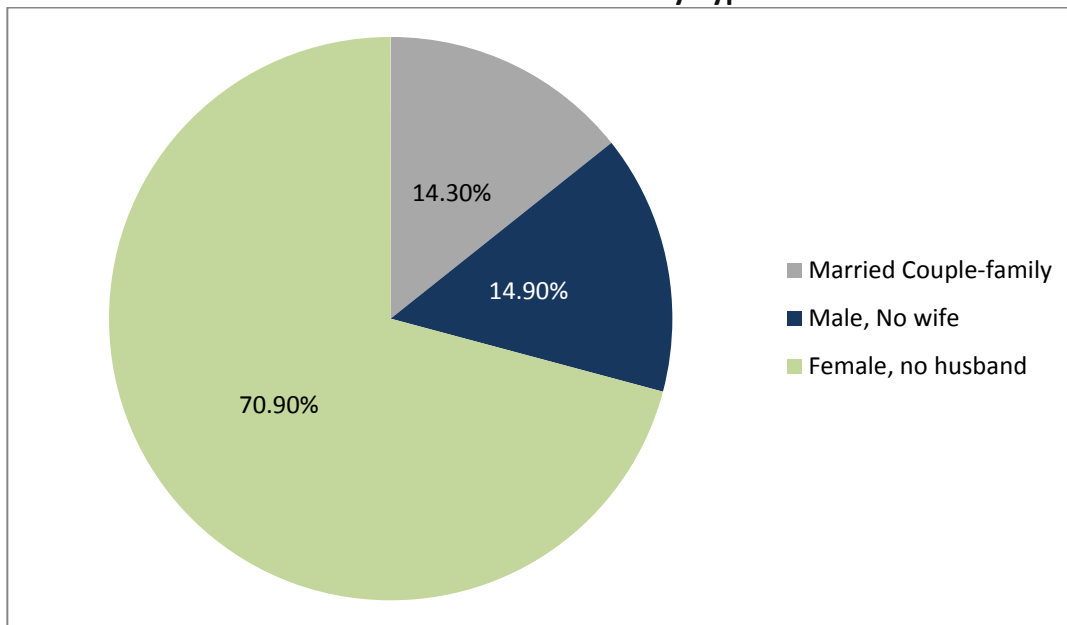


Source:

City-Data.com, 2000-2013

An annual report done by Legal Services defines poverty in New Jersey as a family of three making less than \$37,060. Chart 2 shows that 71 percent of poor families in Newark are headed by single females. It should be noted that only about 14 percent of lower income families in Newark are headed by married couples. The New Jersey unemployment rate of 14.2 percent is nearly double that of the state's 8.4 percent.

Chart 2: Lower Income Families by Type - Newark



Source: City-Data.com, 2000-2013

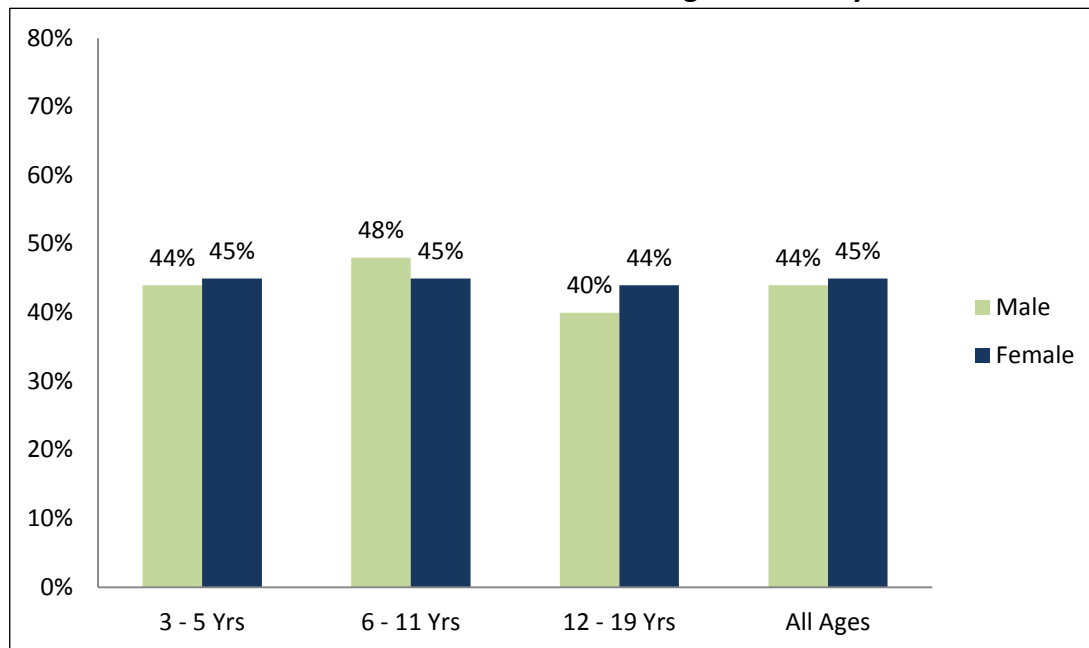
2.1. Newark Health Profile – Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (CSHP)

In 2010, the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (CSHP) conducted a survey of Newark parents of children ages three to 18. The results of that health survey form the basis for this section of the report.

Obesity

The Rutgers CSHP survey confirms that Newark public school children in all age categories are overweight or obese. Chart 3 shows that forty-eight percent of males and 45 percent of females six to eleven years old are overweight or obese compared to a national average of thirty-six percent.

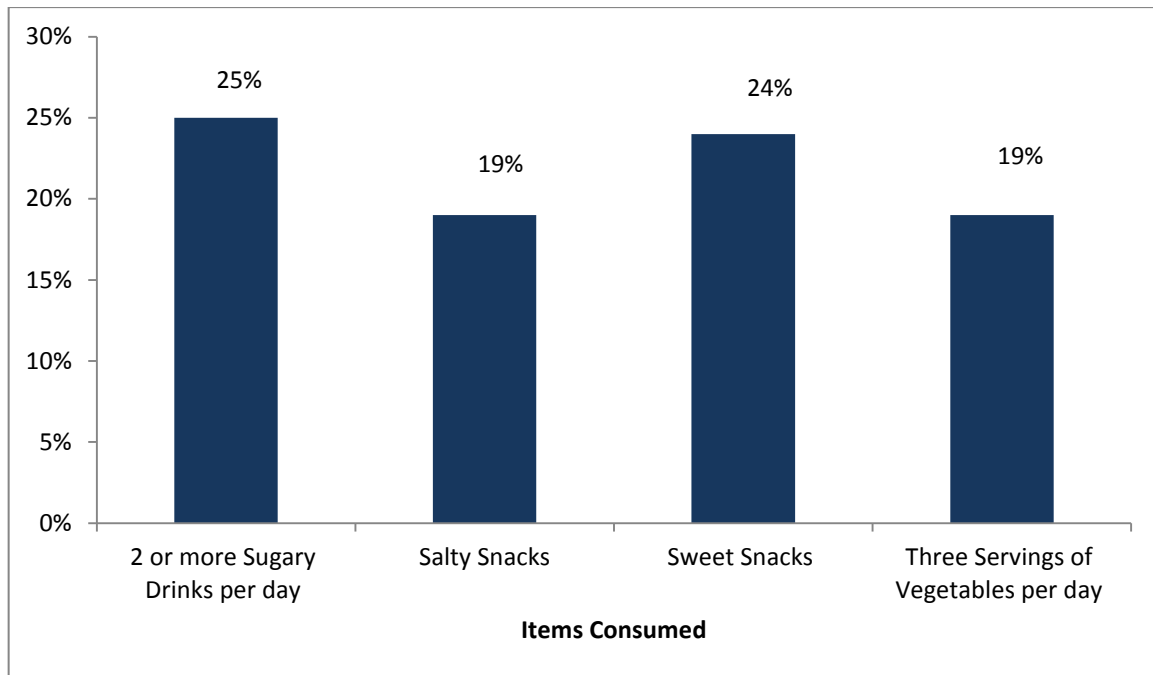
Chart 3: Prevalence of Childhood Overweight & Obesity – Newark



Diet

More than 25 percent of adolescents in Newark do not eat breakfast on a regular basis, and 81 percent of Newark children do not eat three servings of vegetables per day as recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Healthy People 2010 Guidelines. Chart 4 shows that daily consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, sweet snacks and salty snacks is high among children in Newark. 25 percent of children drink 2 or more sugary beverages per day, 24 percent of children consume sweet snacks, and 19 percent of children eat salty snacks.

Chart 4: Daily Consumption by Newark Children



Media Viewing Habits

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children spend a maximum of two hours per day on entertainment media like television, computers, and video games. However, the survey revealed that 29 percent of Newark children, age 6-11, spend more than two hours per weekday on these sedentary activities.

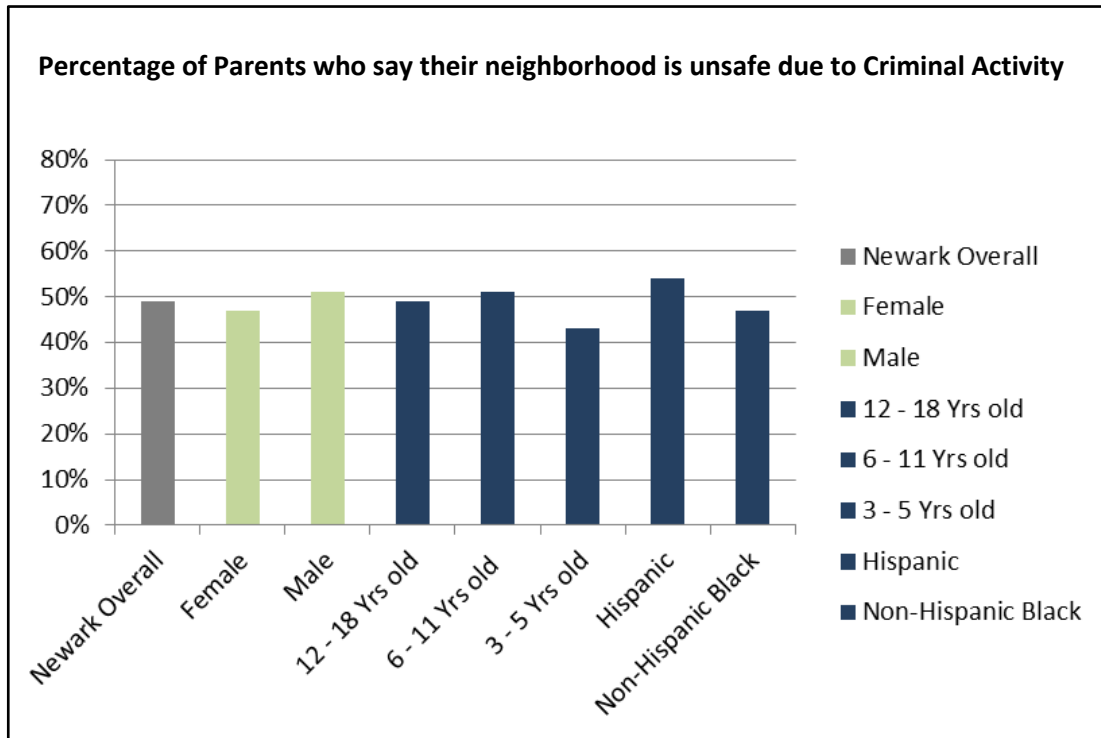
Exercise

The HHS 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults get at least thirty minutes of moderate to vigorous activity daily and that children get at least sixty minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily. In Newark, 72 percent of children, age 6-11, do not meet this recommendation. In addition, 43 percent of children in that age range never walk, bike, or skateboard to school.

Safety

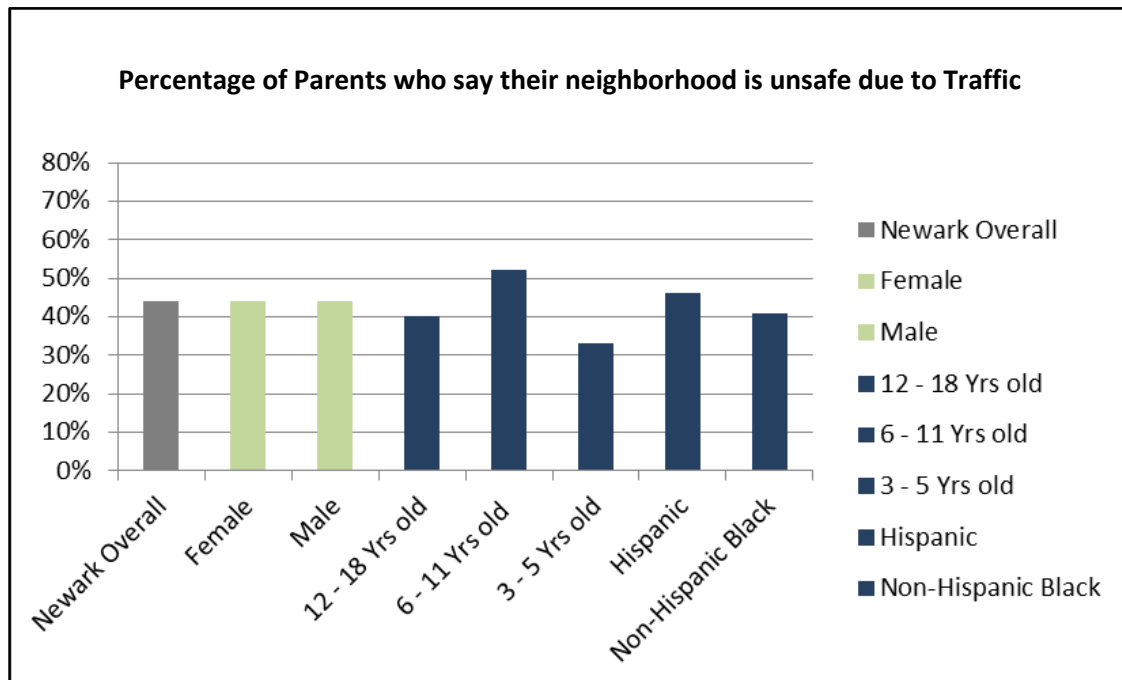
In Chart 5, half of the respondents (49 percent) surveyed believe that their neighborhoods are somewhat unsafe or very unsafe due to criminal activity.

Chart 5: Criminal Activity as Factor in Neighborhood Safety



In Chart 6, almost half (44 percent) of the respondents said the neighborhood is unsafe due to the amount of traffic. Additionally, about thirty percent of the respondents reported that their neighborhoods are somewhat or very unpleasant for walking, running, biking, or playing.

Chart 6: Traffic as Factor in Neighborhood Safety



2.2 Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School

Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School offers a Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth Grade curriculum designed to meet all mandates of the Newark Public School's Educational Plan and the State of New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards.

The mission of Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School is to provide all students with a strong academic foundation that will prepare them for success in high school, college, and beyond. Thirteenth Avenue School strives to foster a welcoming school community where students, parents, and staff are safe, supported, and encouraged to realize their highest potential. The school's core values are: Be Responsible! Be Respectful! Be Productive! Be Courageous! DREAM BIG!

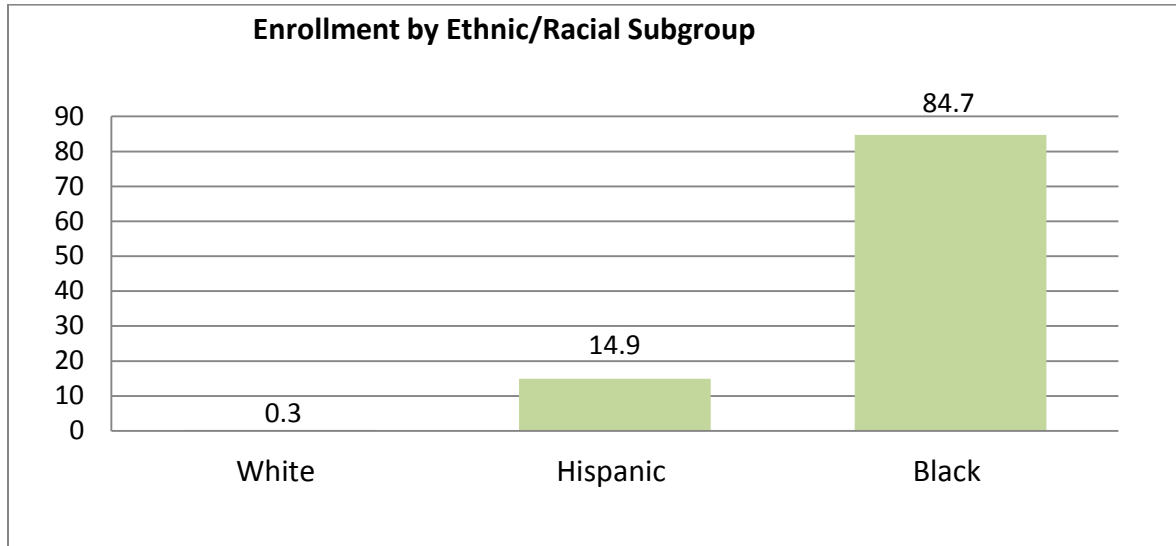
Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School is a place where students are eager to attend and receive a quality education, teachers are supported and provided with effective professional development, and parents are excited about the high standard of education and strong community connection. The community and school are all stakeholders in establishing students as productive citizens and our goal is to ensure high levels of academic excellence are fostered. The school prepares each student for academic, social, and personal success by providing an academically challenging and meaningful educational experience. Students are offered academic intervention services, such as a Saturday NJASK Prep Academy. In addition, the school has partnered with Rutgers University and Montclair State University to offer assistance and training to teachers to create an effective learning environment.

Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School is located in the Fairmount Neighborhood in Newark's West Ward. Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School is a neighborhood school and students generally walk to and from school. The Fairmount Neighborhood includes many buildings which were erected prior to 1960. Among the city's neighborhoods, Fairmount has the highest density of vacant and abandoned properties.

There is constant traffic for the students, staff administrators, families, business owners, and community members who commute by car and foot. Residents have cited over-development, vehicle congestion, ground contamination, air pollution, air traffic noise, a lack of open space, and inadequate schools as factors that erode the quality of life in Newark.

Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School serves approximately 500 students in Pre-Kindergarten to Grade Eight. As chart 7 shows, about 15 percent of the students enrolled are Hispanic or Latino, 85 percent are Black or African America, and less than a half percent of enrolled students are White.

Chart 7: Thirteenth Avenue School Enrollment by Student Ethnicity



The number of students has steadily increased over the years from 445 in 2011 to 587 in 2013. As shown in Table 2 below, English is the predominant language spoken at home by 96.2 percent of the students at home. A smaller percentage of the students speak other languages at home such as Spanish, Creole, Pidgin testifying to the ethnic diversity of the student population.

Table 2. Student Language Diversity (2011-12)

Language Diversity	
Percent of students who speak the following languages at home	
English	96.2%
Spanish	3.6%
Creoles and Pidgins, English based	0.2%

On October 28, 2013, a joint meeting was held with all the Newark SRTS partners that included staff from NJDOT, Urban League of Essex County, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Ironbound Community Corporation, La Casa De Don Pedro, and Meadowlink. The meeting was held at the NJTPA in Newark to provide an overview of the program, identify stakeholders, and establish a preliminary schedule to launch the program at seven different schools in Newark.

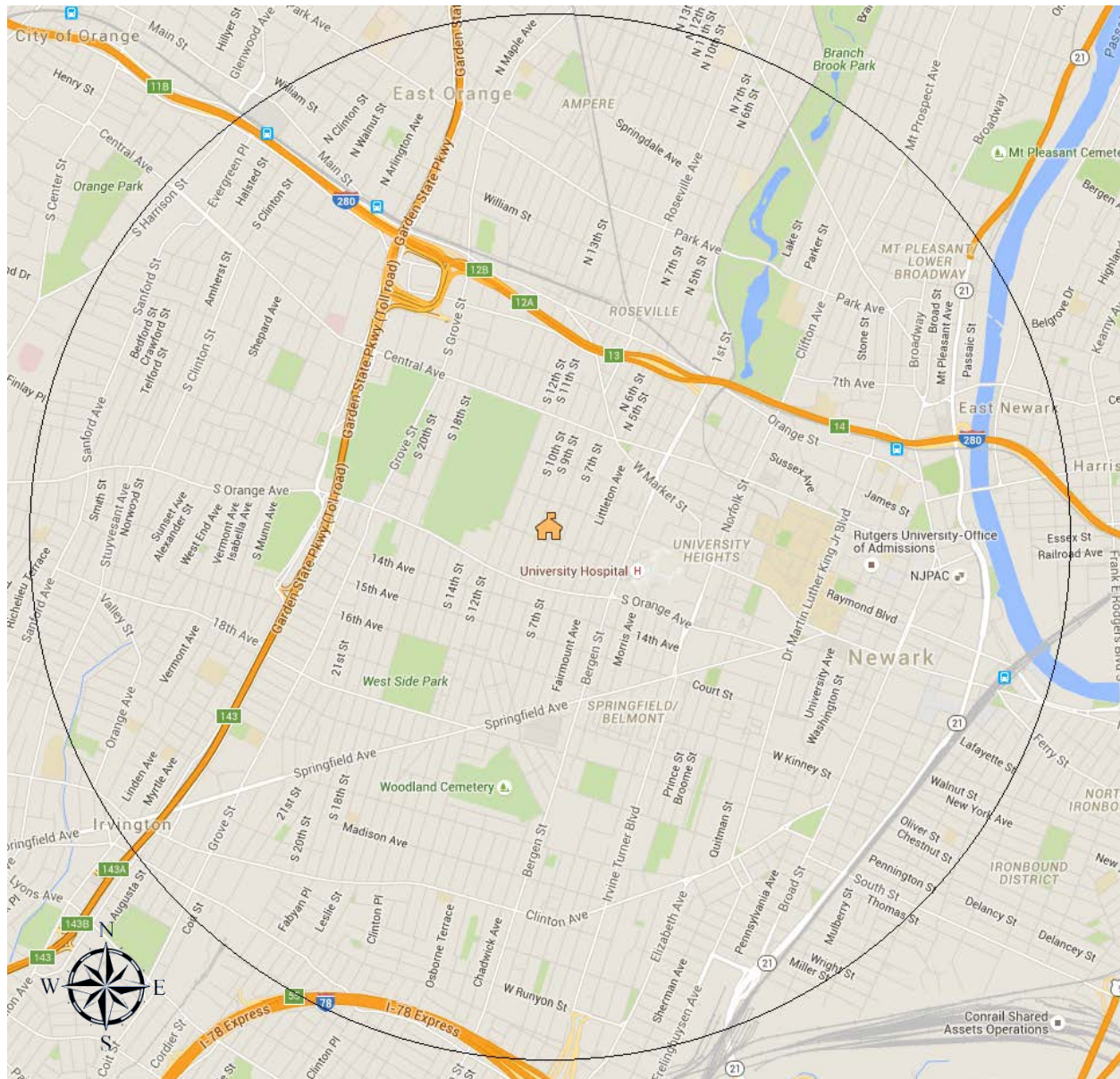
A second meeting was held on November 21, 2013 with key stakeholders that included VTC, TSTC, Ironbound Community Corporation, La Casa De Don Pedro, and Meadowlink. The local non-profit organizations briefed the stakeholders about the events being organized at the schools, walkability audits, stakeholder meetings and their efforts to gather data for the travel plans.

On November 7, 2014, Meadowlink hosted a bike rodeo with help from the Newark police department, La Casa De Don Pedro, Major Taylor Bicycling Club, New Jersey Ambassadors in Motion, and Grace Spencer, Assemblywoman for the 29th District. The Newark Bike Exchange donated 10 bikes for the event. Unfortunately, attendance was limited and only a few students attended the event.

3. Journey to School

In the 1960s, about 50 percent of children in the United States walked or bicycled to school. Over the last few decades, concerns about vehicle traffic, safety for the children, and longer commutes have forced more and more parents to drive their children to school. This results in more traffic on the road and less children who walk to school. Today, on average only about 15 percent of children walk or bike to school. Map 1 provides a two mile area of the residential area surrounding Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School.

Map 1: Two Mile Area Surrounding Thirteenth Avenue School



Thirteenth Avenue School

3.1. Current Student Travel Environment

School Hours

The school day for students starts at 8:25 am and ends at 3:40 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesdays, students are dismissed at 2:55pm. Students have breakfast in their first class. Students can attend free extended learning programs after school, which end at 6pm. There are no afterschool activities on Friday, and grades 6, 7 and 8 do not have any afterschool programs on Wednesdays. There are no late busses provided after these programs.

Drop-off/Pickup Procedure

Busses drop off and pick up at the side entrance on Ninth Street. Families who use personal vehicles drop off students on the opposite side of the school on Eighth Street.

Crossing Guards

There are two crossing guards assigned to the corners in front of Thirteenth Avenue School. One is stationed at the corner of Eighth Street and Thirteenth Avenue. The other is stationed at the corner of Ninth Street and Thirteenth Avenue.

Student Travel Mode

In January 2015, the teachers at Thirteenth Avenue School conducted a Travel Tally to document how the children in their classes get to and from school. Tallies were taken by teachers three times during one week. A total of 1793 trips were documented and the data was analyzed by the NJ Safe Routes to School Resource Center at the Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University.

As shown in Table 3, the analysis found that about 43 to 45 percent of the children walk and 4 percent take public transit. The study shows 19 percent of the trips were in personal cars. School bus service accounted for 28 percent of the trips to school, and 32 percent of trips home from school. As for bicycles, 1 percent of students reported riding bikes to school.

Table 3. Current Commute Mode

Mode	Arrival	Dismissal
Walk	45 percent	43 percent
School Bus	28 percent	32 percent
Driven in personal car	19 percent	19 percent
Public Transit	4 percent	4 percent
Carpool	3 percent	2 percent
Bike	0.9 percent	1 percent



3.2 Pedestrian Safety

Meadowlink conducted an analysis of the pedestrian-related accidents within a one-mile radius of the school over a 10-year period from 2003 to 2014 based on police incident reports. The reported incidents were plotted on Map 2.

Map 2: Pedestrian Crashes within One Mile of Thirteenth Avenue School, 2003-14

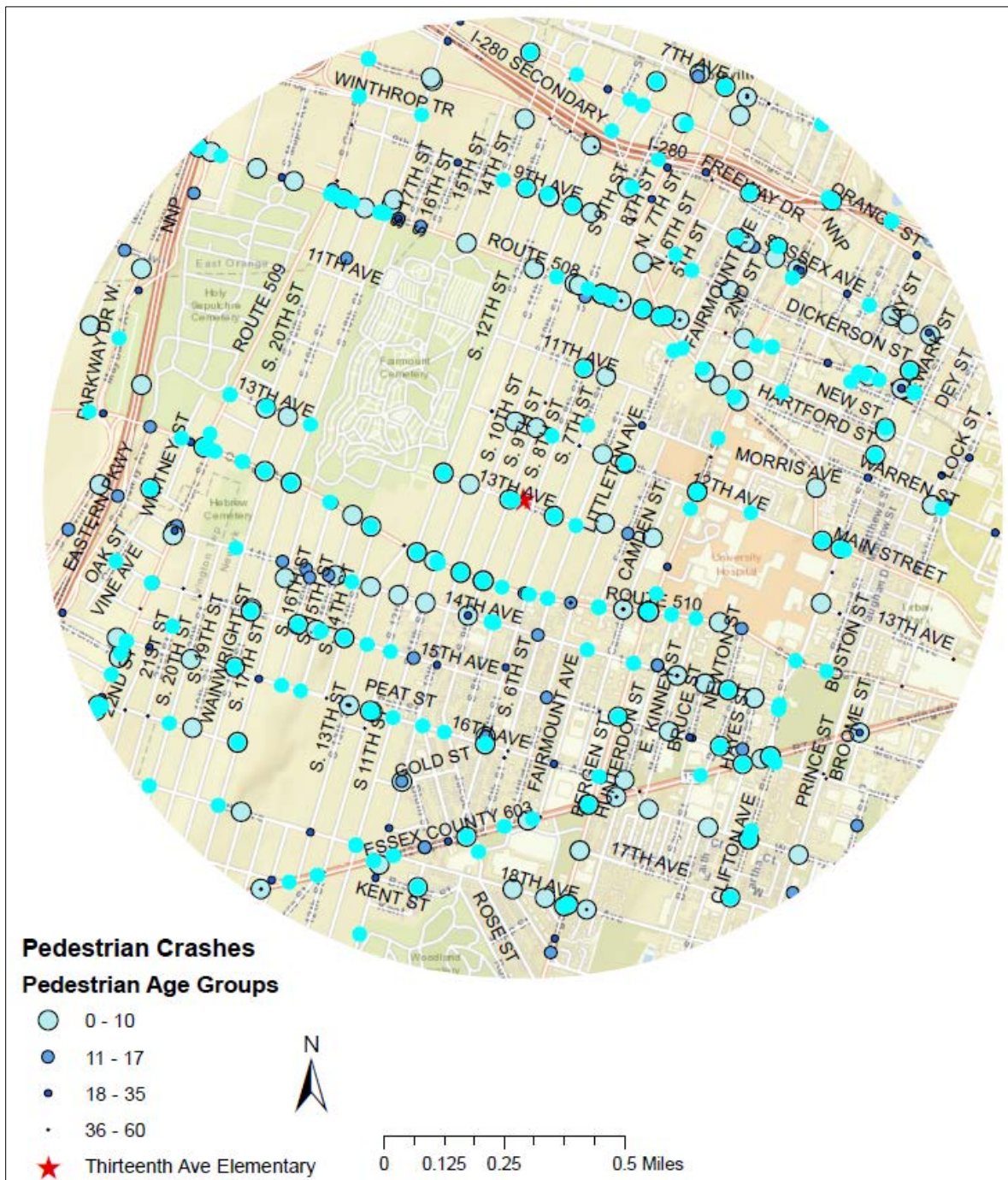


Table 4. Pedestrian Crashes by Age, In the City of Newark (2003-2014)

AGE	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTAL	PERCENT
Ages 0-10	67	70	64	39	29	51	64	52	30	43	33	38	580	11%
Ages 10-17	69	59	72	43	42	77	64	67	56	53	41	52	695	13%
Ages 18-35	145	122	133	77	62	136	104	128	125	157	145	132	1466	29%
Ages 36-60	158	158	141	123	77	178	126	156	164	164	185	172	1802	35%
Ages 60+	43	38	35	33	14	48	37	68	42	53	65	42	518	10%
Total	482	447	445	315	224	490	395	471	417	470	469	436	5061	

For the city of Newark, there were 5,061 pedestrian crashes between the years 2003-14. On average there was one pedestrian crash per day per year except in 2006-07. While the majority of the crashes (64 percent) involved pedestrians aged 18-60, about 24 percent (1275) of the total incidents involved children in the 0-17 age group.

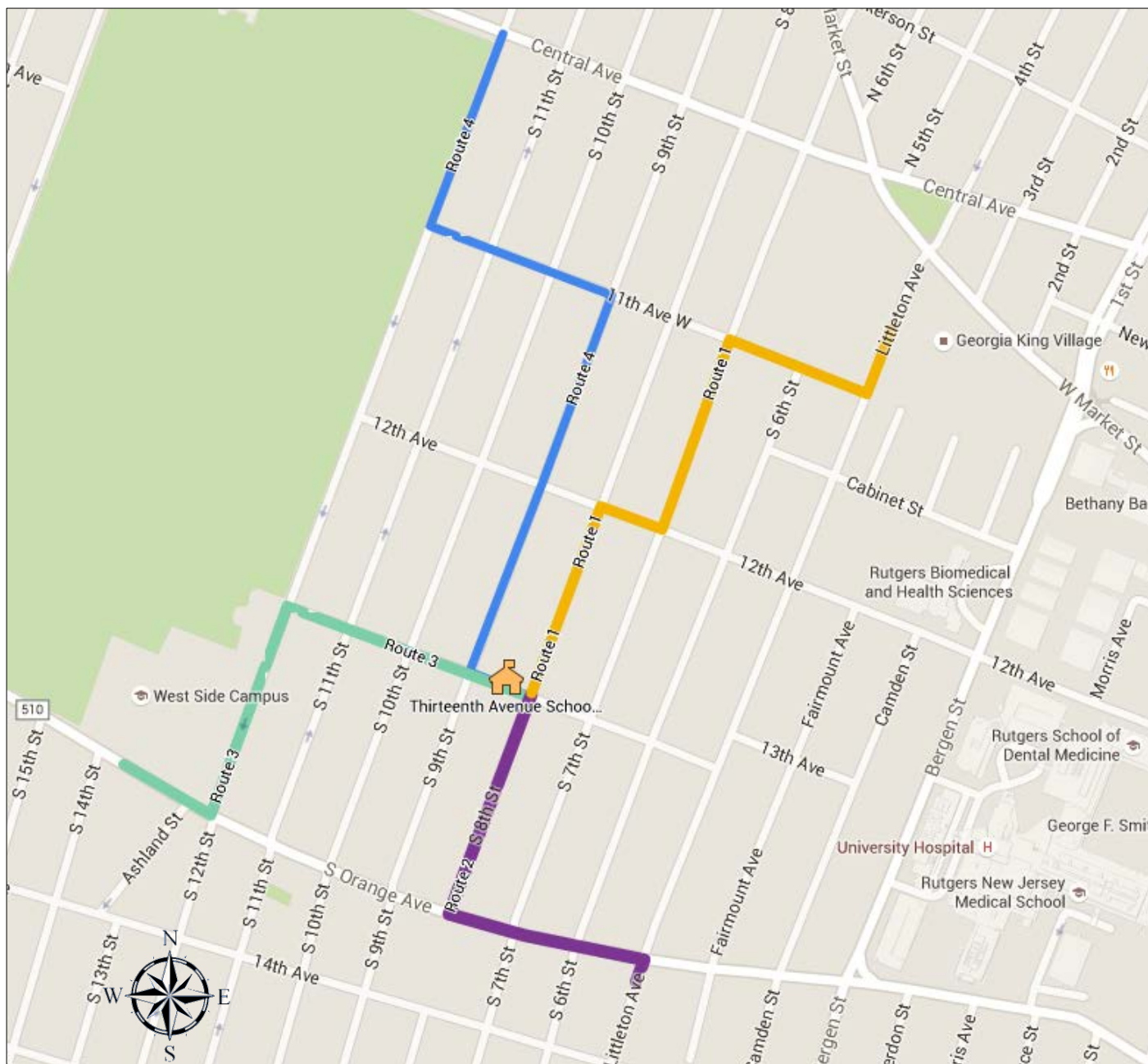
3.3 Walkability Assessment

The SRTS Task Force conducted a walkability assessment of the major routes used by students to get to Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School. Community members, parents and students informed the SRTS Task Force of major walking routes used by students to get to and from school. School children and residents of all ages and abilities walk in and through the neighborhood.

A Walkability Assessment evaluates the sidewalks, roads, crosswalks, lighting, signs, signals, and conditions of the homes, buildings and environment along the walking route. A walkability assessment identifies road improvements that can be made and notes what is currently done well. The SRTS Taskforce took photos of areas on each route. Comments and recommendations are listed with each photo and are summarized in the Action Plan at the end.

Map 3, on the following page, shows all four of the walking routes which were assessed.

Map 3: Assessed Walking Routes



Thirteenth Avenue School



Route 1



Route 2

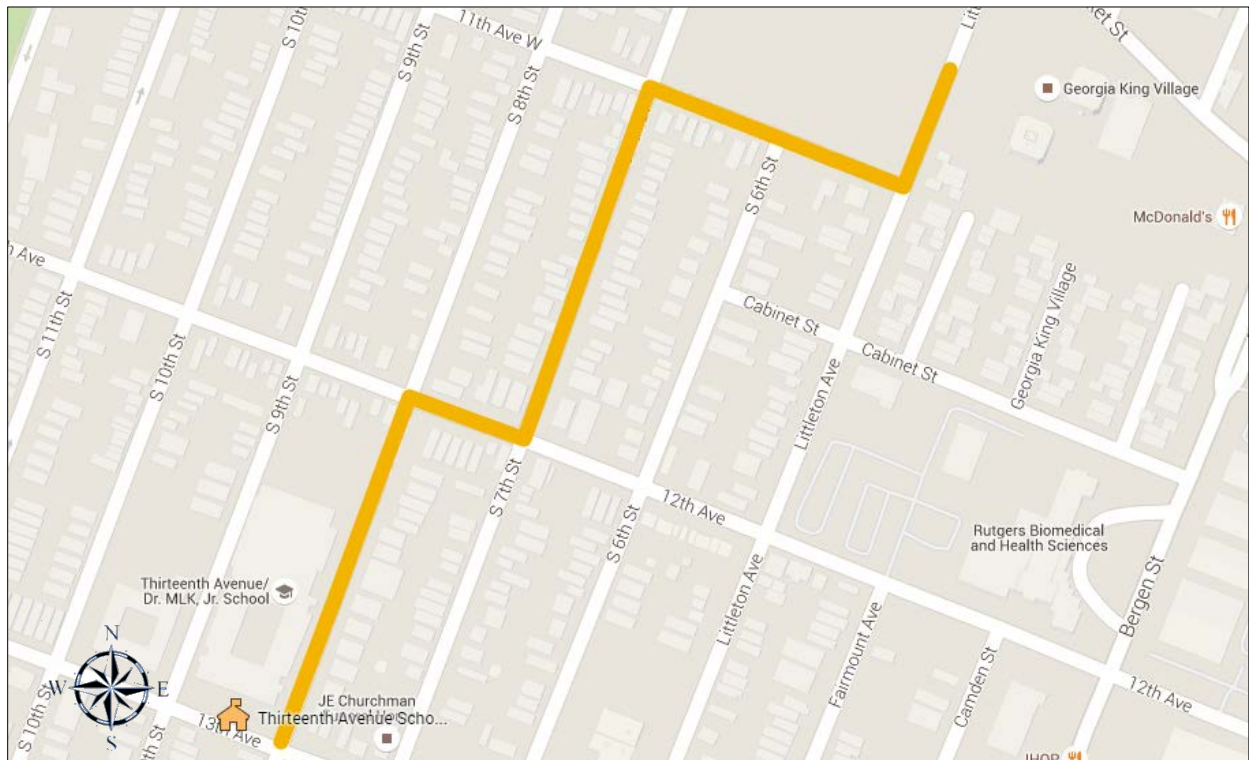


Route 3



Route 4

Map 4: Walking Route 1



Thirteenth Avenue School



Route 1

Intersection of Littleton Avenue and Eleventh Avenue

Photo 1: Streetscape at Intersection of Littleton Avenue and Eleventh Avenue



Observations

1. Curb Ramps are not ADA compliant
2. Crosswalk striping is not highly visible
3. Yellow road centerline has faded
4. The speed of motor vehicles is a concern for pedestrians
5. Parking spots are painted in the intersection

Intersection of Eleventh Avenue and Seventh Street

Photo 2: Intersection of Eleventh Avenue and Seventh Street



Observations

1. Crosswalks are beginning to fade
2. Litter is a problem on Eleventh Avenue
3. There are abandoned properties on both sides of Seventh Street

Intersection of Twelfth Avenue and Seventh Street

Photo 3: Intersection of Twelfth Avenue and Seventh Street



Observations

1. Sidewalk conditions are generally poor
2. Concrete sections of the sidewalks are deteriorated and in some instances, they are missing
3. There are abandoned properties on both sides of Seventh Street
4. This intersection is striped well for pedestrians and motorists
5. Truncated domes are in place to accommodate persons with disabilities

Intersection of Twelfth Avenue and Eighth Street

Photo 4: Intersection of Twelfth Avenue and Eighth Street



Observations

1. There is an abandoned lot at the South East corner of the intersection
2. The crosswalk is well striped for greater visibility with brick patterned cement
3. Poor/no pedestrian lighting

Streetscape along Eighth Street

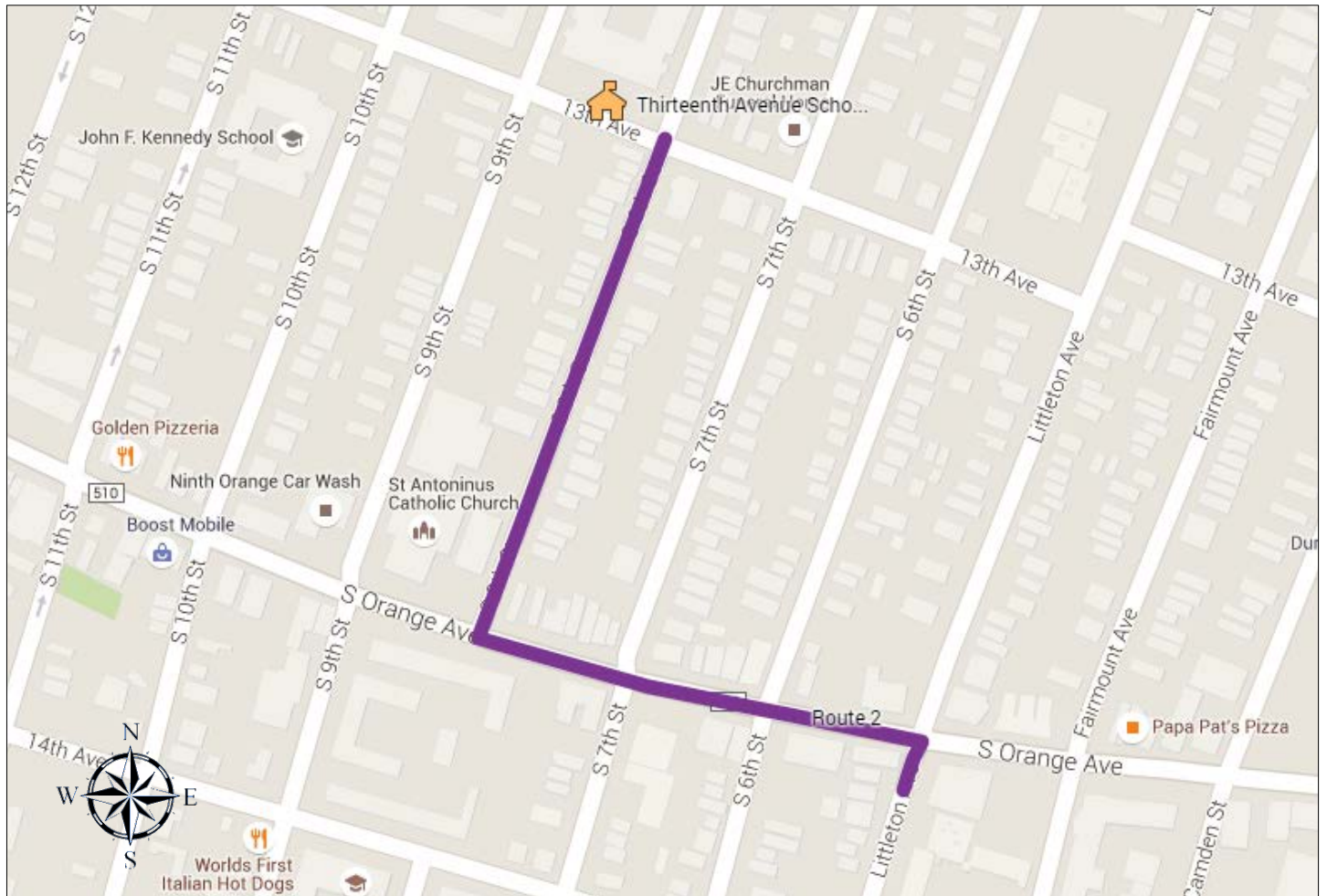
Photo 5: Streetscape Looking South on Eighth Street



Observations

1. The sidewalk along South Eighth Street is in fair condition
2. Sidewalk is uneven near the intersection of Eighth Street and Twelfth Avenue
3. Gates to private driveways swing open towards the sidewalk

Map 5: Walking Route 2



Thirteenth Avenue School



Route 2

South Orange Avenue

Photo 6: Sidewalk on South Orange Avenue



Observations

1. Sidewalks in front of abandoned properties or empty lots are generally in poor condition
2. Sidewalks are littered
3. Sidewalks are not clear of snow
4. Residents' trash blocks the passage of travelling students

South Orange Avenue

Photo 7: South Orange Avenue Eastbound



Observations

1. The width of the road is good and can accommodate bicycle lanes
2. ADA compliance along South Orange Avenue is inconsistent and should be standardized
3. Many portions of sidewalk are in poor condition and litter is a consistent issue
4. Parking rules are not consistently posted
5. Vehicles park illegally, close to intersections, which prevents drivers from seeing pedestrians and oncoming traffic

Intersection of South Orange Avenue and Eighth Street

Photo 8: intersection of South Orange Avenue and Eighth Street



Observations

1. There is a school crossing sign, although, crosswalks are absent in the intersection
2. Many children cross the street from the apartments
3. There are no ADA features to help students cross South Orange Avenue
4. Pedestrian signals and lighting can also be considered along with ADA compliance

Eighth Street Northbound towards Thirteenth Avenue Elementary

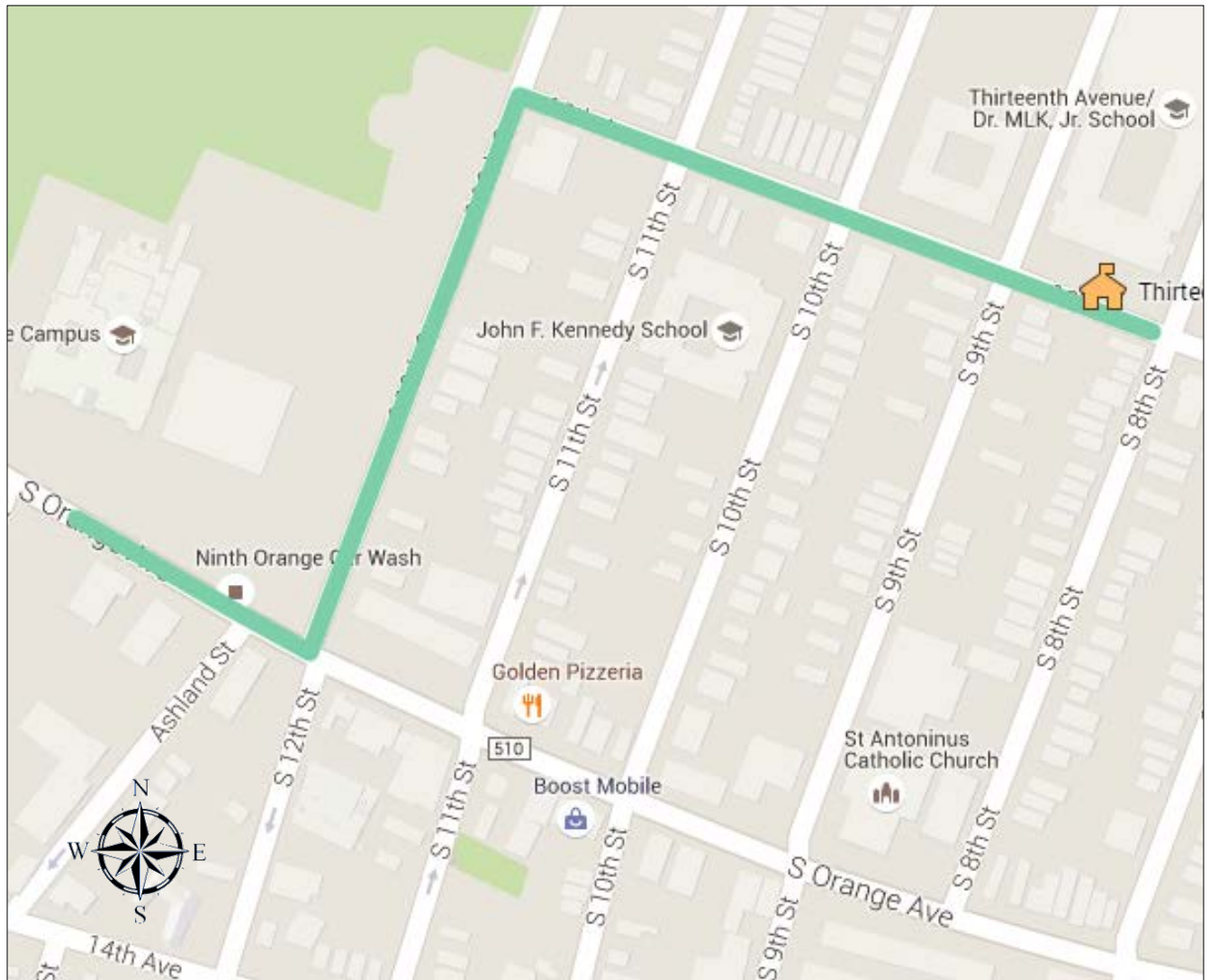
Photo 9: Eighth Street Northbound towards Thirteenth Avenue Elementary



Observations

1. There are several abandoned lots in this section.
2. Homeowners can be reminded to maintain property clean up and closing of garage gates so as to not block the sidewalk.
3. Overall, sidewalks are in good/fair condition.

Map 6: Walking Route 3



Thirteenth Avenue School



Route 3

Intersection of South Orange Avenue and Twelfth Street

Photo 10: Intersection of South Orange Avenue and Twelfth Street



Observations

1. Crosswalk is faded
2. High visibility crosswalks are recommended
3. Traffic calming measures are recommended to slow speeding vehicles
4. Poor/no pedestrian lighting

Twelfth Street towards Thirteenth Avenue

Photo 11: Twelfth Street towards Thirteenth Avenue



Observations

1. Many of the houses along this route are abandoned with boarded windows
2. Students do not feel safe on this route, because of the abandoned properties and the general lack of surveillance from cars and passersby
3. Due to security concerns, South Twelfth Street is not recommended for students walking to Thirteenth Avenue Elementary
4. Students should use either Ninth Street or Eighth Street to walk to Thirteenth Avenue School

Thirteenth Avenue towards Thirteenth Avenue Elementary

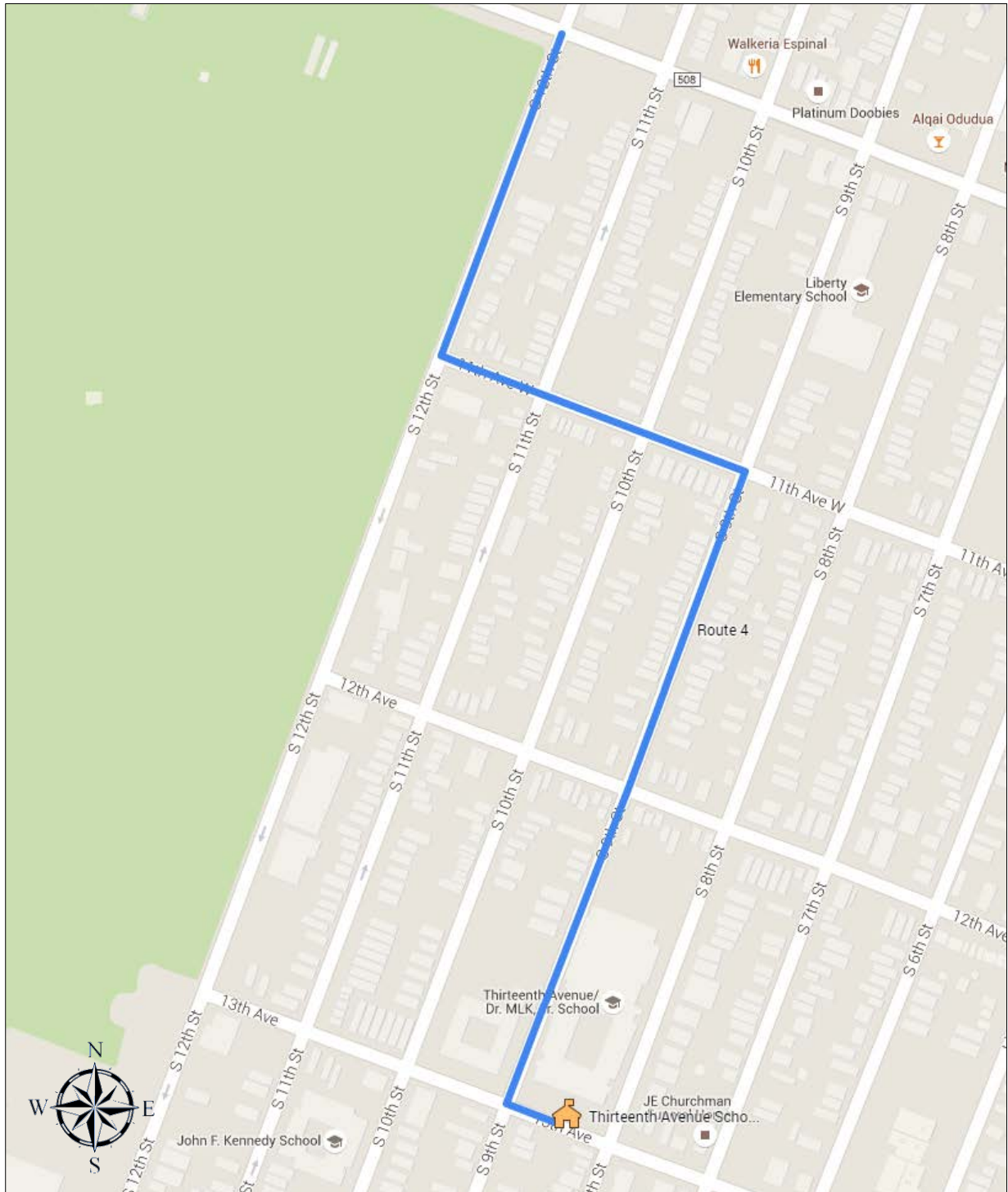
Photo 12: Thirteenth Avenue towards Thirteenth Avenue Elementary



Observations

1. Intersections along this route include curb extensions and high visibility striping
2. Recent updates to the intersection meet ADA Compliance
3. Markings on road that indicate road can be shared with cyclists and cars could be effective

Map 7: Walking Route 4



Thirteenth Avenue School



Route 4

South Twelfth Street Southbound to Eleventh Avenue

Photo 13: South Twelfth Street Southbound



Observations

1. Fences left open, obstructing sidewalk
2. Sidewalks are in fair to poor condition along this street
3. Residents need to keep sidewalks clear of snow and ice
4. Sidewalks adjacent to vacant properties are not maintained

South Twelfth Street Southbound toward Eleventh Avenue

Photo 14: South Twelfth Street to Eleventh Avenue



Observations

1. Width of the vehicle lane encourages speeding
2. Adding bicycle lanes would narrow the traveling lane and calm traffic
3. Poor pedestrian lighting
4. Sidewalks are broken, cracked and inconsistent along this road
5. Abandoned properties promote unsafe conditions
6. Garbage/litter along sidewalk

Intersection of Twelfth Street and Eleventh Avenue

Photo 15: Intersection of Twelfth Street and Eleventh Avenue



Observations

1. Street crossings over Twelfth Street are far apart
2. High visibility striping recommended
3. Lack of ADA compliant curb ramps, need truncated domes
4. Sidewalk is uneven
5. Sidewalk is inconsistent

Eleventh Avenue to South Ninth Street

Photo 16: Eleventh Avenue to South Ninth Street



Observations

1. Abandoned houses are present but seem to be properly enclosed
2. Loitering in front of the liquor store during school hours
3. Sidewalks are broken or cracked
4. Sidewalks need to be repaired

Ninth Street towards Thirteenth Avenue Elementary

Photo 17: Ninth Street towards Thirteenth Avenue Elementary



Observations

1. Sidewalks are cracked
2. Sidewalks are broken and in need of major repair
3. Sidewalks are littered
4. Abandoned houses are present on both sides of street
5. Garbage piled on sidewalks in front of abandoned houses

4. Action Plan & Recommendations

The Safe Routes to School Action Plan is organized into the “Five E’s”: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering and Evaluation. Additionally, each element of the Action Plan considers two parameters – time and cost as shown below. Together, they comprise a set of directions to help the community prioritize their action steps to increase safety for students. The tables below identify preliminary recommendations specific to the Hawkins Street School and its immediate area. To realize the full benefit of the SRTS program, it is suggested that this School Travel Plan be used to apply for SRTS grant funds to fully implement all the action steps.

Timeframe Definition	Cost Definition
Short-term = less than 3 months	Low = Less than \$2,000
Mid-term = between 3 to 6 months	Medium = between \$2,000 and \$10,000
Long-term = longer than 6 months	High = more than \$10,000

1. **Education:** Programs to educate students, parents and the public about safe walking and biking

Education Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
Invite NJ Transit, Meadowlink and Newark PD to provide SAFETY Presentations	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, Meadowlink	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Reinforce bus procedures via Robo Call twice a year annually	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Create and update Family Handbook that defines arrival and dismissal procedures with map and text that defines drop-off/pick-up areas, the rules and procedures for driving along local streets within school campus and school driveway	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, School Liaison, Urban League of Essex County	Long-term	Low
Notify parents/guardians and school staff by publishing information/updates in the Parent/Family Handbook, School Newsletters and on the school website	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, School Liaison, Urban League of Essex County	Long-term	Low
Invite Meadowlink to help with bicycle and pedestrian safety education with assemblies or weekend Bike Rodeos	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, Meadowlink	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low

Integrate walking and safety education into classroom curriculum	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, Meadowlink	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Leverage Social Media to spread awareness of school zone and enforcement activities	School Action Team, PTA	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low

2. Encouragement: Programs to encourage or promote walking and biking

Encouragement Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
Hold a student poster contest on Walking and Biking to school	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, Urban League of Essex County, Meadowlink	Short-term	Low
Circulate Time Radius Map and Travel Plan Report via 13 th Avenue School website	VTC, Meadowlink, Thirteenth Avenue Elementary	Short-term	Low
Host Bike/Walk to School Days throughout the school year	School Action Team, PTA, School Liaison, Urban League of Essex County, Meadowlink	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Participate in International Walk to School Day in October and National Bike to School Day in May, as well as NJ Walk and Bike to School Day in May	School Action Team, PTA, Meadowlink, Urban League of Essex County	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Utilize the school website to advance Safe Routes to School safety messages at least 1 week in advance	Urban League of Essex County, School Tech Coordinator	Mid-term, Long-term	Low

3. Enforcement: Activities to improve safety and security for those walking and biking to school

Enforcement Actions on	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
Conduct bicycle registration and helmet giveaways at Back to School night	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Investigate training Walking School Bus volunteers to do crossing guard training	School Liaison, Newark PD	Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Conduct speed studies along South Orange Avenue and Twelfth Street	Newark PD	Short-term, Long-term	Medium
Ask police to set up electric signs that post drivers speeds and remind people to not speed as its school zone – do this 2x a year	Newark PD, School Liason	Short-term, Long-term	Low

4. **Engineering:** Infrastructure upgrades that improve walking and biking environment

Engineering Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
Install sturdy state of the art bike racks and skateboard racks near school entrance	Newark Engineering, Newark PD, 13 th Avenue School	Mid-term, Long-term	Medium
Post “School Zone” signs and paint “school zone” on roadways surrounding Thirteenth Avenue Elementary	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Paint High Visibility Crosswalks on major intersections surrounding school. For example, Twelfth St. and South Orange Ave., South Orange Ave. and 8 th Ave.	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Medium
Investigate, Install & Enforce “No Parking” signs	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Medium
Implement traffic calming measures at intersection of Twelfth Street and South Orange Avenue	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Medium, High
Post signs and paint area on street to define Bus and Car drop off zones	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Medium
Investigate and ensure ADA compliancy of crosswalks	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Medium
Investigate traffic speeds around the school and post speed limit signs	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Medium
Investigate Pedestrian Lighting on routes	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Long-term	High
Investigate installation of in roadway light fixtures around crosswalks	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	High
Develop curb extensions, separation strip and/or buffers to protect pedestrians from traffic	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	High
Install painted bike lanes or protected bike lanes that are separated from roadway on most travelled bike routes	Newark Engineering, Newark PD	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	High

5.Evaluation: Efforts to monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of SRTS goals

Evaluation Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
Continue to conduct student travel tallies to measure how effective the SRTS program has been in increasing the number of students walking, biking or carpooling	Thirteenth Avenue Elementary, Urban League of Essex County, Meadowlink,	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low
Improve communications between school officials and families establishing a convenient mechanism to share information and get feedback	School Action Team, PTA, School Tech Coordinator	Short-term, Mid-term, Long-term	Low

Conclusion

Community priorities around the Thirteenth Avenue School are safety for students, reducing the speed of traffic in the school zone, and improving sidewalks and roads. Repairing damaged sidewalks and striping crosswalks on Eleventh Avenue, South Twelfth Street, South Orange Avenue, Eighth Street, Ninth Street, and 19th Avenue towards Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. School are crucial. The school community's desire to collaborate to help students at various schools is admirable. As a Promise Neighborhood, Newark's Fairmount district has many activists working to improve aspects such as safety, housing, education, transportation, healthcare and the economy for the residents.

Meadowlink is proud to work with the community to improve safety and bring SRTS programs to the schools. Meadowlink has provided bike rodeos and pedestrian safety programs and this is one of six School Travel Plans that have been prepared in Newark. New efforts have begun with several charter and parochial schools. It is hoped this report will be used to apply for SRTS infrastructure grants to make the sidewalks and streets safer for students to walk and bike to the Thirteenth Avenue/Dr. MLK Jr. school.

Appendix A

Abandoned Properties Tool Kit

The National Vacant Properties Campaign (NVPC) defines vacant properties as residential, commercial, and industrial buildings and vacant lots that exhibit one or both of the following traits:

- The site poses a threat to public safety (meeting the definition of a public nuisance), or
- The owners or managers neglect the fundamental duties of property ownership, for example:
 - failure to pay taxes or utility bills
 - default on mortgages
 - carry liens against the property

Abandoned and foreclosed properties generate a host of interrelated problems. Higher rates of crimes occurring in these areas are common, utilizing municipal resources. These homes become crime magnets, resulting in illegal use by prostitutes, drug dealers, squatters, and property criminals. These homes become a fire hazard, with arson and accidental fires causing harm to surrounding properties. Some homes become dumping grounds which strain municipalities and their services. This results in lower standards throughout the community/neighborhood, and lost confidence in future. It takes years for a neighborhood to “come back” as abandoned property deescalates a community.

Communities can take action against vacant properties

The following Internet links provide information and tools that a community can use to deal with vacant properties that are a public nuisance

Resources:

Creating an Abandoned Property List (Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey

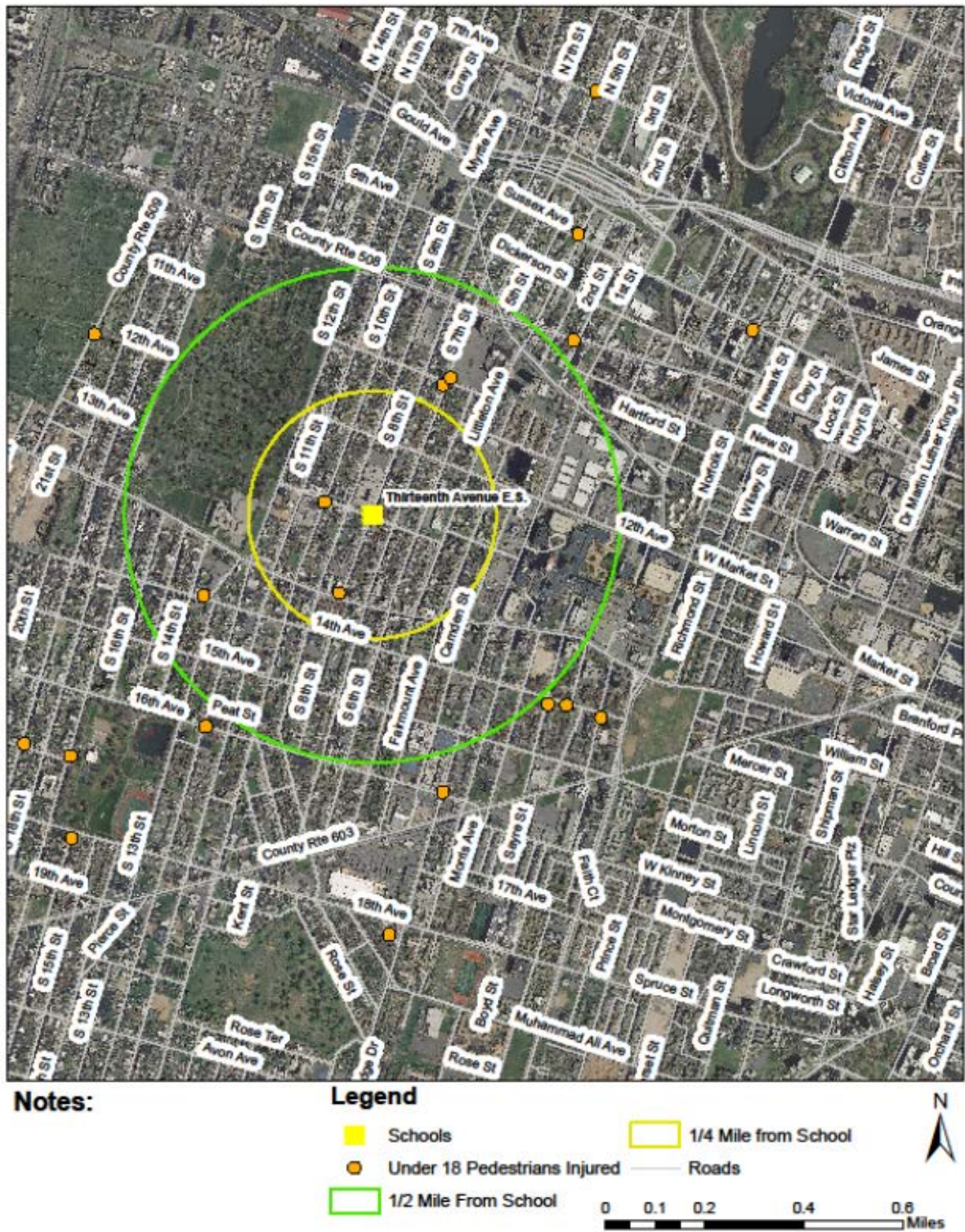
http://www.hcdnnj.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=19:site-content&id=605:abandoned-property-list

Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Checklist: This checklist should be used as a tool to educate participating jurisdictions about the documents they must receive from a nonprofit before it may be certified as a CHDO

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/training/web/chdo/characteristics/chdocheck.pdf>

Appendix B

Crash Map



Appendix C

Crime Statistics



Luis A. Quintana
Mayor

CITY OF NEWARK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Week Ending: February 2, 2014



Samuel A. DeMaio
Police Director

COM-STAT

3RD

CRIME COMPLAINTS

	Week to Date			28 Day Period			Year to Date		
	2014	2013	% Chg	2014	2013	% Chg	2014	2013	% Chg
Murder	1	0	#DIV/0!	1	1	0%	1	1	0%
Rape	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	0	#DIV/0!
Robbery	5	13	-62%	20	50	-60%	20	60	-67%
Agg. Assault	5	0	#DIV/0!	16	4	300%	20	10	100%
Burglary	2	6	-67%	20	18	11%	27	22	23%
Theft	16	28	-43%	66	103	-36%	71	114	-38%
Auto Theft	12	16	-25%	42	53	-21%	52	64	-19%
Totals	41	63	-35%	165	229	-28%	191	271	-30%

Crime statistics reflect New Jersey Penal Law definitions and differ from the crime categories to the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reporting System. All figures are subject to further analysis and revision.

Prepared by: NPD Comstat Unit

COM-STAT