

**Safe Routes to School Plan FY2010**  
**Blackshear Trail Elementary School – Crisp County, Georgia**

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## **Publication and Publicity**

### **Disclaimer**

*The contents of this publication reflect the views of the author(s), who is (are) responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented here. The opinions, findings, and conclusions in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of those of the Department of Transportation, State of Georgia or Federal Highway Administration. This publication does not constitute a standard, specification or regulation.*

## **Section 1. - Safe Routes to School Team and Community Involvement**

### **Introduction**

Blackshear Trail Elementary School is committed to ensuring that all of its students can utilize a physically active transportation method, such as walking and bicycling, for a safe and enjoyable trip to school. This Safe Routes to School Plan aims to address the issues that impede active transportation and seeks to strategically solve these problems by implementing a Safe Routes to School program.

Our community is motivated to pursue Safe Routes to School because:

- 🚲 We value student physical activity and health.
- 🚲 We wish to improve unsafe or insufficient walkways, bikeways, and crossings.
- 🚲 We are committed to reducing speeding and reckless driving near school.
- 🚲 Our students are threatened by illegal behaviors near school.

### **The Safe Routes to School Committee**

Our Safe Routes to School Team believes that having an active participation from diverse members in the community will allow us to develop a more successful Safe Routes to School Plan. Our team is comprised of a variety of stakeholders and community leaders, each lending their own unique perspective and expertise in order to make walking and bicycling to school more safe, accessible, and fun for students at Blackshear Trail Elementary School.

Our Safe Routes to School Team is composed of the following:

**Julio Portillo**

River Valley Regional Commission Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner  
*Safe Routes to School Project Coordinator*

**Freddie Gilliam**

*Blackshear Trail Elementary, School Principal*

**Lisa Bryant**

*Blackshear Trail Elementary School, Assistant Principal*

**Nykia Burkes**

*Safe Routes to School Resource Center – South Georgia Representative*

The participation of each of the stakeholders in this committee has been of great importance in the development of the Safe Routes to School Plan. Each of the members of this committee developed and administered student surveys, walk-ability and bike-ability assessments, observed and documented pedestrian and traffic behavior during school rush hours, and developed the goals, objectives, and recommendations to the plan.

## **School Description**

### **About Blackshear Trail Elementary School**

The faculty and staff at Blackshear Trail Elementary School sincerely believe that children are unique individuals and should be provided with sequential, purposeful school programs through love, understanding, and respect. They believe all children should be given challenging school experiences that can be utilized in each aspect of their daily lives. Learning must not be limited to basic skills, but should encompass wide and diverse areas of knowledge. Positive and meaningful opportunities for academic, physical, emotional, moral, social, and aesthetic growth are paramount objectives in the total school program. They believe in being fair, but firm, and we have high expectations of all students.

Based on this philosophy, the faculty has set the following priorities for this school year at Blackshear Trail Elementary School. We propose:

- I. To provide a learning environment this stimulates and motivates each student to reach his/her potential.
- II. To promote and foster a positive rapport between the school, the home, and the community.
- III. To improve standardized test scores at each grade level by five percent or more.
- IV. To improve the appearance of the playground and school campus.
- V. To continue to gain knowledge and proficiency in the use of technology.

The Crisp County School District is a public school district in Crisp County, Georgia based in Cordele, Georgia. It serves the communities of Arabi and Cordele, Georgia.

Its schools include: A. S. Clark Elementary School, Blackshear Trail Elementary School, J. S. Pate Elementary School, Southwestern Elementary School, Crisp County Middle School, and Crisp County High School.

The student population at Blackshear Trail Elementary is composed of the following demographic data:

<b>Female Students</b>	223
<b>Male Student</b>	119
<b>Asian</b>	1
<b>Hispanic</b>	23
<b>African-American</b>	250
<b>White</b>	136
<b>Multi-racial</b>	11

Blackshear Trail Elementary School’s Mission Statement:

*“To provide a quality education that promotes maximum individual achievement and social responsibility at levels and improves the quality of life for the citizens of Crisp County.”*

## **Community Profile**

Cordele, also known as The Watermelon Capital of the World, is a city in Crisp County, Georgia. The population was 11,608 at the 2000 census. Cordele is located along Interstate 75, 140 miles south of Atlanta and 100 miles north of the Florida state line. Crisp County was created in 1905 from territory formerly belonging to Dooly County. It was named for Charles Frederick Crisp, a jurist, and Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives between 1891 and 1893. Cordele, the county seat, was a "child of the railroad" having built up at a junction of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroads. It was named for the daughter of the railroad's president.

Crisp County became the first county in the nation to own and operate its own electrical power plant. It was started in 1930, with Lake Blackshear on the Flint River providing its power source. The county is the gateway to the Presidential Pathways Travel Region with many attractions within easy driving distance of Cordele. The Little White House, Plains (home of Jimmy Carter), Westville, the Little Grand Canyon, and Andersonville Confederate Prison Site are a few of the historic attractions in this area. Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park, an 8,700-acre park on the banks of Lake Blackshear, was established as a permanent memorial to the U. S. Veterans who served, fought, and died for freedom.

## **Section 2. - Evaluation of existing conditions**

### **Mapping – School Boundary**

Blackshear Trail Elementary is one of four Elementary Schools in Crisp County that provides its educational services to all residents within the school boundary limits at a no-cost tuition assistance program. However, the school also welcomes students from the surrounding areas within the county, providing services for students from within Crisp County and Cordele. *(See attached School Boundary Map)*

### **Bicycling and Walking Assessments**

In order to create an efficient and effective Safe Routes to School Plan for Blackshear Trail Elementary School, we must first evaluate the current conditions and feasibility for the children to either walk and/or ride their bicycles to school. These assessments took place within a 0.5-1.5 mile radius from the school campus towards the most highly populated areas where Blackshear Trail Elementary School children live. A completed walk-ability and bike-ability assessments form was completed as provided by the National Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center and Georgia Department of Transportation. The results from the observations and survey are as follows:

1. Need for a School Zone Speed Limit.
2. Need for additional sidewalks in the surrounding roads to the school campus.
3. Need for traffic calming signs.
4. No painted crossing lines for students or pedestrians.
5. No bicycle racks for the school.
6. Handicap accessibility on sidewalks.

## Walk-ability and Bike-ability Assessment Photos



These pictures demonstrate the old and crooked School Zone Speed Limit signs without flashing lights and poor visibility. School Zone and Children Walking signs are in bad condition around the school campus area.

Insufficient signage alerting motorists of pedestrians within the school campus, as well as poorly painted crossing sign on the road.



This picture demonstrates the poor visibility and quality of the painted crossing signs for pedestrians to cross.



From the motorists perspective this is the only visible sign warning them of the presence of children. This photo shows the need for adequate signage both on the road and along the side of the road.



These photos demonstrate the current conditions of the sidewalks surrounding the school campus. Although some sidewalks are present, the conditions are inadequate in some sections; some have cracks and overgrown vegetation and almost all of them do not provide proper handicap access. As the pictures demonstrate, sidewalks do not have handicap accessible ramps, signs and proper pedestrian crossing signs.



### Section 3. - Data Collection and Analysis

The process of collecting Safe Routes to School data for Blackshear Trail Elementary School was done through observations, interviews, walk-ability and bike-ability assessments, as well as a parent and student survey. A total of 422 children were surveyed (see survey in Appendix 4). Traffic counts, average speed of vehicles, and crash data were provided by City of Cordele Police Department.

#### **Projected Enrollment - Student Characteristics**

At the start of 2009-2010, the student population for the school was approximately 417 students. There are currently 422 students enrolled at Blackshear Trail Elementary School from grades Pre-K to fifth. According to Mrs. Freddie Gilliam, School Principal, they are expecting a minor increase in their student population from 422 to 460. According to Mrs. Gilliam, their number of Kindergarten students has significantly increased from prior years.

#### **Student Survey Analysis**

The following table illustrates the number of children which were surveyed and their preferred and current method of transportation to and from the school campus:

<b>School Bus</b>	<b>Driven by parents</b>	<b>Carpool</b>	<b>Walk to school</b>	<b>Ride their bicycles to school</b>
165 (47.4%)	159 (45.7%)	36 (10.3%)	38 (11%)	0 (0%)

These results clearly demonstrate the low number of children who are cycling to and from school. However, despite the low number of children cycling, our research reflects that both distance traveled and age affects the parents' and childrens' decision to walk to

school; therefore, children can travel as far as 2 miles from the school. More than 10% of the student population walks to school.

<b>Distance that you live from school (Miles)</b>				
<b>¼ or less</b>	<b>¼ - ½</b>	<b>1.6-2.0 miles</b>	<b>½ - 1</b>	<b>1-2 (2+)</b>
15	33	40	90	49

### **Parent Survey Results**

Blackshear Trail Elementary School parents received a Safe Routes to School survey directly from the school and with the help of the South Georgia Safe Routes to School Resource Center. All parents of students received a survey and were asked to answer all questions and then return the survey as promptly as possible. Parent surveys will be re-administered and evaluated in August, 2010.

<b>Method of Arrival to school</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
Walk	
Family Vehicle	
Carpool	
School Bus	
Other	
<b>Method of Departure from school</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
Walk	
Family Vehicle	
Carpool	
School Bus	

Other	
<b>Do you feel that the school provides a safe place to store bikes?</b>	
Yes	
No	

<b>Do you have concerns about traffic safety along the routes to school?</b>	
Yes	
No	

<b>If you drive your child, why do you make that choice?</b>	
Safety	
Convenience	
Drop off on way to work	
Too far to walk	
Sidewalks (lack of/incomplete)	
High speed vehicles	
Child is too young	
Bad Weather	
Child would not obey safety rules	
Backpacks are too heavy	
Carrying projects or musical instruments	
Tardiness	

Safe place to cross the street	
Scary people	
Lack of safe place to store bikes	
No biking or walking route maps	
Paths are incomplete/not wide enough	
Unfriendly Dogs	
Other	

<b>Would you allow your child to walk or bike if:</b>	
Accompanied by children?	
Accompanied by other parents?	
Route maps were provided?	
Crossing guards were more effective?	
Safety training for students?	
Improved sidewalks and bike paths?	
Cars slowed down?	
Secure bike storage was available?	
Paths were separate from traffic?	
Other	

## Transportation Data



### Traffic Counts

Traffic counts for Blackshear Trail Elementary School were provided by the Georgia Department of Transportation. Traffic counts are as follows\*:<sup>1</sup>

Road Name	AADT – Average Daily Traffic
Blackshear Rd	720
SR41	7450
N 3 <sup>rd</sup> St	760
Pecan St	4150
6 <sup>th</sup> Ave E	95
N 5 <sup>th</sup> St	4990
9 <sup>th</sup> Ave E	2200

<sup>1</sup> Only some roads within the school campus

### Average Speed of Vehicles

The average speed of vehicles for a 1 mile radius from Blackshear Trail Elementary School was provided by the City of Cordele Police Department. According to their records, the average speed of vehicles is as follows:

Road	Posted Speed Limit
Blackshear Rd (between 2 <sup>nd</sup> St. N and Pecan St N)	25 mph school zone from from approximately 100 feet northeast of 4 <sup>th</sup> Ave E to 275 feet northeast of N Hickory St.; according to GDOT RC Web Information, the 35 mph zone should begin at or just northeast of N Hickory St, however, there isn't a 35 mph sign posted. The only 35 mph sign posted is located along Blackshear Rd and just northeast of intersection with Pecan St.
SR41 (Between E Oak Ave & 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave E)	From 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave E to 84 feet south of 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave W/CS 636/CS 641 (at MP 13.25), the posted speed limit is 35 mph; then changes to 45 mph at MP 13.25 and remains posted at 45 mph until 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave/CS 611 (at MP 13.31). Please be advised that SR 41 doesn't intersect with E Oak Ave.
N 3 <sup>rd</sup> St (Between E Oak Ave & 6 <sup>th</sup> Ave E)	35 mph
Pecan St (Between 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave E & Blackshear Rd)	From 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave E to 384 feet north of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave E (at MP 3.57), the posted speed limit is 35 mph, then increases to 45 mph until Blackshear Rd.
6 <sup>th</sup> Ave E (Between SR41 & Pecan St)	35 mph
N 5 <sup>th</sup> St (Between 8 <sup>th</sup> Ave E & E Oak Ave)	35 mph
9 <sup>th</sup> Ave E (Between 4 <sup>th</sup> St N & 2 <sup>nd</sup> St N)	Not currently posted, however, this segment of roadway is assigned at 30 mph, as per GDOT RC Web Information

### Crash Data

The following table reflects the number of crashes within the 2 mile radius from the school campus:

	2000	2000-2006
Number	732	5706
Rate	146.3	164.1

## Observing Blackshear Trail Elementary Student Pedestrian Behavior

*Disclaimer: These photos were taken outside of Blackshear Trail Elementary School with authorization and supervision of the School Principal Mrs. Freddie Gilliam*



These photos illustrate children's behavior as they arrive and depart from school. An important and positive aspect to notice is that children are always under adult supervision within the school campus both during their arrival and during their departure from school. Planning staff was able to confirm that children who are walking tend to do so in groups. Walking in groups allows children to watch out for each other and it increases their levels of safety. Also, children who walk made proper use of sidewalks. However, crossing the main road has become slightly risky for them, especially due to the lack of adequate crossing facilities provided for them within the roads leading to the school campus.



#### **Section 4. - Policies / Plans**

Despite an expected increase in the student population, Blackshear Trail Elementary School will not be changing their school boundary area for 2010-2011. The school's boundaries will continue to serve students who reside North of State Highway 280. (*See attached map with student addresses*).

Blackshear Trail Elementary School does not prohibit walking and/or biking to the school campus, however, our research shows that the school has not yet implemented a health and fitness policy in its student handbook, or to the student body. Since the school is located in the center of a highly residential area, the number of students walking to school is relatively large (38 students on average). However, there is also a large number of students (165 students on average) that travel to and from school in the school bus; because of this, Blackshear Trail Elementary has a School Bus Policy in place for students and parents to follow. Such policy states measures that ensure both the children's and motorists' safety while on the road.

Despite the fact that Blackshear Trail Elementary embraces physical activity for its students, they do not possess a wellness policy; hence there is no reference to any Safe Routes to School policy in place yet. But due to their recent involvement in the Safe Routes to School program, the school has decided to begin drafting a Health, Fitness, and Wellness Policy.

## **Section 5. - Goals and Objectives**

After carefully reviewing traffic data, student and parent survey results, walk-ability and bike-ability assessments, school policies, and overall student's means of transportation, our Safe Routes to School team was able to determine a set of goals from which to guide the development and implementation of our program.

- 1. Goal:** To increase the number of children riding their bicycles to and from school.

**Objective:** Increase the number of student bicycle riders by 10% over the next 2010-2011 academic year.
- 2. Goal:** To develop and implement a Health, Fitness, and Wellness Policy which addresses the Safe Routes to School Program.

**Objective:** Develop the Health, Fitness, and Wellness policy within a 6 month period of approving the Safe Routes to School Plan and implement this policy within the remaining 6 months of the 2010-2011 academic year.
- 3. Goal:** To continue to participate and include the National Walk and Bike to School Day on the school's Wellness policy.

**Objective:** Participate in the National Walk and Bike to School Day on the first Wednesday of October, 2010.
- 4. Goal:** To develop and conduct a "Safe Walking and Safe Bicycling" class for all kids attending elementary school.

**Objective:** Develop an adequate class syllabus (program) by September 2010 to be used during the 2010-2011 academic year.

**5. Goal:** To increase the number of bicycle racks at Clay County Elementary & Middle School.

**Objective:** Increase the number of bicycle racks from 1 to 4 by Spring 2011.

**6. Goal:** To build community awareness and participation in the Safe Routes to School Program.

**Objective:** Increase the number of parents and community members who walk and bicycle with their children from 20 to 35 by the end of the 2010-2011 academic year.

## Section 6. - Action Steps and Implementation Strategy

This section is based on using the data analysis, survey results, and community input in order to address the Five E's (**E**ngineering, **E**valuation, **E**ducation, **E**ncouragement, and **E**nforcement).

### Non-infrastructure

#### Education

*“Everyone Should Know How to Be Safe”*

The education section of this plan consists of the development and implementation of educational programs that teach safety skills to pedestrians, motorists, and cyclists. Through these educational programs, we intend to increase awareness on the benefits of being physically active (walking and cycling) as well as raising awareness on issues which are related to school safety.

<b>Activity</b>	Bicycle Safety Training
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Develop a bicycle safety training session which students can attend quarterly throughout the academic year. This training can also be available for parents who wish to engage in such activities and be taught during extra-curricular school hours. Research demonstrates that elementary school level is the best time to begin this process of early education.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, and teachers.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Pedestrian Safety Training
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010 – May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Teach students basic pedestrian rules and how to safely use the roads as means of transportation. Sessions will be held quarterly.
<b>Who</b>	Physical Education teachers, students, and parents.
<b>Status</b>	Training to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Awareness Programs and Campaigns
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Involve children in the development of flyers, posters, banners, etc. in order to raise bicycle/pedestrian safety awareness throughout the school, as well as encouraging other children to participate in cycling/walking to school.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, and teachers.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Parental Safety Education Program
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Educate parents on bicycle/pedestrian safety in order for them to educate their children as well; therefore, increasing the number of educated walkers and riders.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, and teachers.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Personal Safety Program
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Develop a personal safety program which allows children to identify bullies and potential predators while on the street. This program is very important in order to provide a safe walking and cycling environment for children.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, teachers, and law enforcement.
<b>Status</b>	Continue to exercise and enhance a “No Bullying” policy within the school and therefore, provide for a fun and safe environment for children to walk/bike to school.

<b>Activity</b>	“Making Math Fun” Education using cycling elements
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Develop an additional element to the current Mathematics curriculum in which teachers can educate children using elements from a bicycle, for example. Geometry and standard measurements can be taught through this approach.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, and teachers.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

## **Encouragement**

### *“Being Fun and Creative”*

The encouragement section of this plan will address the ways in which children, parents, teachers, and community members can become involved in developing and maintaining a Safe Routes to School Program active throughout the school year. These encouragement programs will consist of providing fun and educational activities that motivate and facilitate walking and bicycling to and from school. The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing support during these promotional activities, providing fluorescent vests and personnel to attend as many activities as possible. It is important to not only develop student enthusiasm for these activities, but also to encourage parents and teachers to participate in as many Safe Routes activities as possible.

The following is a list of planned activities to support Encouragement efforts for the Safe Routes to School plan:

<b>Activity</b>	Park and Walk
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Encourage those children who live outside the 1 mile radius of the school to walk to school through a method known as “Park and Walk”. Through this method, parents can drive their children to a designated parking place usually within 1 mile or ½ a mile so that children can walk or bike to school from this point.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, and teachers.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Activity Day “Giveaways”
<b>Timeline</b>	During the days of a bicycle/pedestrian activity
<b>Task</b>	During the days in which a bicycle/pedestrian activity will take place, giveaways will play an important role for increasing awareness as well as promoting the current and future bicycle/pedestrian activities. Such giveaways include, but are not limited to t-shirts, bumper stickers, hats, reflective gear, etc.
<b>Who</b>	Students, teachers, school staff, parents.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Seasonal Rides
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Seasonal Rides consists of organizing bicycle rides or walks that celebrate the seasons. For example, “Welcome Spring Ride”, “Celebrate the Autumn Ride”, etc. These rides/walks can be organized once every season or during a festive holiday, for example, “Turkey Ride”, “The Santa Ride”, etc.
<b>Who</b>	Students, teachers, school staff, parents.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	Walk and Ride Bus
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	Walking and Riding buses consists of organizing a group of students that meet at the same time and place and walk or ride to school together. Walking and Riding buses should include adult supervision and include active parents who wish to engage in such activities. Walking and Riding buses can also be organized according to neighborhoods where a significant number of residents attend Blackshear Trail Elementary School and wish to get organized to walk and bike to school together.
<b>Who</b>	Students and parents.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

## **Enforcement**

### *“Following the Safety Rules”*

This section focuses on the legal aspects of enforcing traffic laws. Developing an adequate enforcement strategy will provide the basis for educating motorists as well as cyclists and pedestrians; however, there is a greater focus on motorist education and safety. Earlier in this plan, crash data, as well as traffic counts and average speed were provided. This information demonstrates an average speed of 32.14 MPH on a 2 mile radius from Blackshear Trail Elementary School. According to officials at the City of Cordele and Crisp County, this average speed provides for a safe walking and cycling environment, for it is only 7 miles over the School Zone speed limit. Education and Encouragement efforts deal mainly with training and educating children, parents, and teachers; little is done to educate motorists, however.

An Enforcement strategy will require active participation from local law enforcement officials as well as parents, teachers, and even the students themselves. Developing and establishing Safe Routes to School policies and procedures for drivers will be the initial part of this enforcement strategy. These policies will be created in conjunction with law enforcement officials, local traffic engineers, and Blackshear Trail Elementary School Staff. Following the development of such policies and procedures, enforcement efforts can then begin.

The following are law enforcement strategies which will allow us to educate motorists within the surrounding 2 miles radius of Blackshear Trail Elementary School:

<b>Activity</b>	Hire a part-time crossing guard for the school.
<b>Timeline</b>	Ongoing
<b>Task</b>	To hire a part-time crossing guard to aid students who walk and cycle to school in providing safety means of crossing the main intersections by the school campus.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, teachers, crossing guards.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

<b>Activity</b>	“Pace Your Car Program”
<b>Timeline</b>	September 2010-May 2011
<b>Task</b>	This program will consist of pacing the speed of motor-vehicles on the surrounding roads of Blackshear Trail Elementary School. We intend to approach this task in a creative manner, using colorful and attractive signs in both English and Spanish, and use specific dates to promote the program.
<b>Who</b>	Students, parents, teachers, traffic engineers, law enforcement.
<b>Status</b>	Program to be developed and implemented.

## Evaluation

### *“Identifying and Addressing the Problem”*

Evaluating both the development and progress of our Safe Routes to School Plan will allow us to monitor the effectiveness of our program. Maintaining a close monitoring of our program provides us with the advantage of detecting mistakes at an early stage, hence being able to develop an appropriate solution to the problem. Recognizing mistakes and taking prompt action to solve them ensures the steadiness and consistency of our program during its implementation stages.

The following table illustrates three key elements (Objective, Data Collection/Methodology, and Timeline) which will be monitored in order to ensure the accomplishment of our stated objectives:

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Data collection / Methodology</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Increase the number of student bicycle riders by 10% over the next academic year (2010-2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ⓝ Developing cycling awareness campaigns (including giveaways)</li> <li>Ⓝ Parent and teacher initiative to support program and get children involved.</li> </ul>	Begin: September 2010 End: May 2011
Develop the Wellness Policy within a 6 month period of approving the Safe Routes to School plan and implement this policy within the remaining 6 months of the academic year 2010-2011. This will be an ongoing effort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ⓝ Georgia Department of Health plays a key role in developing the policies.</li> <li>Ⓝ Must be approved by the Crisp County Board of Education and Blackshear Trail Elementary School.</li> <li>Ⓝ Should address Safe Routes to School as a means of physical activity.</li> </ul>	Begin: September 2010 End: May 2011

Objective	Data Collection / Methodology	Timeline
Continue to participate in the National Walk and Bike to School Day on October 7, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☾ Develop student-designed campaigns</li> <li>☾ Involve parent, teachers, and community members</li> </ul>	October 7, 2010
Develop an adequate class syllabus for “Safe Walking and Safe Bicycling” class by September 2010 to be used during the 2010-2011 academic year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☾ Using a previous model, develop a Safe Walking syllabus for teachers.</li> <li>☾ Using a previous model, develop a Safe Bicycling syllabus for teachers.</li> <li>☾ This class can be taught as part of the P.E curriculum or as an extracurricular activity.</li> </ul>	Begin: September 2010 End: May 2011
Increase the number of bicycle racks from 1 to 4 by May 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☾ Request and/or generate funds to purchase bicycle racks.</li> <li>☾ Should be supported by school officials and will promote bicycle riding to the students.</li> </ul>	Deadline: May 2011
Increase the number of parents and community members who walk and bicycle with their children by the end of the academic year 2010-2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☾ Developing walking and cycling campaigns.</li> <li>☾ Developing awareness posters and banners.</li> <li>☾ Promoting the program to parents and the community through students and teachers.</li> <li>☾ School should encourage health benefits to both students and parents.</li> </ul>	Begin: September 2010 End: May 2011

## **Infrastructure**

### **Engineering**

#### *“Designing Improvements”*

This section consists of determining if new road designs and operational techniques are needed in order to reduce traffic volumes, to decrease speed, and to improve bicycle/pedestrian safety. During the scope of performing the walk-ability and bike-ability assessments, we were able to determine areas where engineering would be needed in order to increase bicycle and pedestrian safety. Our findings are as follows:

#### **Problems:**

- 1. School Zone Speed Limit Signs and Sidewalk Improvements:** There are currently only 2 School Zone Speed Limit signs posted within the school campus and its main roads. These signs do not possess flashing yellow lights and are not very visible due to wear on the actual sign. Sidewalk improvements are crucial in order to maintain the integrity of the sidewalks currently in place. Such improvement areas handicap accessibility, cracks on sidewalk, overgrown vegetation and proper sidewalk signage.
- 2. Traffic Calming Signs:** Although there are 2 School Zone Speed Limit signs, these do not have flashing yellow warning lights and have massive wear on their color, thus making it difficult to see. Despite these signs, vehicles tend to travel at higher speed due to the isolation of the road, therefore, speed bumps, speed ramps or rumble strips are needed to alert motorists of the presence of children and the school.

- 3. Painted Crossing Lines:** Currently there are some painted crossing signs along the road at major intersection within the school campus. However, these signs are inadequate and not visible. The current painted signs consist of two parallel lines; there are no perpendicular lines or reflective colors to properly indicate the presence of children and other pedestrians crossing the road.
- 4. Bicycle Racks for the School:** There are currently no bicycle racks at Blackshear. This is a deterring factor in encouraging children to ride their bikes to school.
- 5. Handicap Access:** Although the school and most of its surrounding sidewalks do provide handicap accessibility, many of these ramps are deteriorated and would make it very difficult to be handicap accessible. Also, there is no ramp to remove oneself from the sidewalk and into the road where sidewalks have been cut-off. In addition, there is no ramp to get back in the sidewalk where it reconnects. It is crucial to provide continuous and consistent handicap accessibility for any sidewalks, and especially those surrounding residential and school areas.

Our final evaluation of the physical conditions of the roads and sidewalks verify the need for engineering activities to take place in order to address the above mentioned issues. Our evaluations and research demonstrates that 38 students at Blackshear Trail Elementary School are walking through these roads, which currently do not provide the necessary safety means for children to walk safely to and from school. However, if we intend to increase the number of children walking and cycling to school, we must provide

an adequate and safe infrastructure to these children. The need for improvements is necessary, and funding for such activities will not only alleviate the poor conditions of these roads, but will also provide safer means for children to walk and bike to school. Doing this will help us to accomplish our main goal of increasing the number of cyclists and pedestrians, as well as providing a safe route to and from school for these children.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

**2 mile radius map from Clay County Elementary & Middle School and  
School district boundary**

## **Appendix 2**

### **Population density map**

### Appendix 3

#### Walk-about Checklist – Roadways

**Appendix 4**

**Sample Student Survey**

**Sample Parent Survey**