

Safe Routes to School Assessment

Alexandria City High School *Final*

Prepared For











Overview

NOTE: The final report and recommendations have been modified by the City of Alexandria to align with project goals and to focus on high-impact projects.

Funded in part by the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The TLC program supports local jurisdictions in promoting mixed-use, walkable communities and a variety of transportation alternatives.

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King Street Campus



Methodology

Data, Mapping and Setting the Context

 Data was assembled to create maps and graphic data summaries for each school to provide context for the walk audits and establish walk audit parameters.

Community Engagement

 A community feedback form was created and shared online to provide an opportunity for parents, administrators, staff, students and community members to provide input. Outreach materials were developed by NeoNiche Strategies and distributed/posted in schools and in community spaces.

School Walk Audits

 Arrival or dismissal operations were observed at each school and the walk audit teams assessed the behavior of students, parents and commuters. Additionally, Toole staff collected field data in the walk areas of the schools to examine existing conditions to include the condition of sidewalks, crosswalks, signs and other roadway elements.

Recommendations

 Field data, observations and feedback form results were used to identify issues and corresponding recommendations.

Walk Audit Reports

School details, observations, field data, feedback form results and recommendations were finalized in a report.



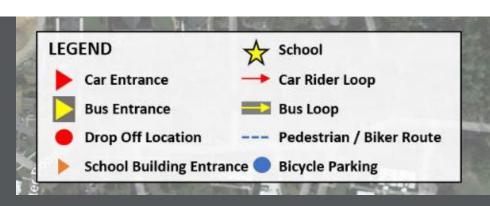
School Site – King Street

- Alexandria City High School is located at 3330 King Street, serving grades 9-12 and operating from 8:30am - 3:15pm.
- The school is located near a residential (multi-family and single-family housing), commercial, and recreational area. It is bounded by King Street to the northeast, Chinquapin Drive to the east, Bishop Lane to the south, and Woods Place to the west.
- King Street is a principal arterial with a posted speed limit of 25 mph and 15-mph school zone speed limit.
- For the 2022-2023 school year, there were more than 3,550 students enrolled at ACHS King Street. The school reports that 1,650 students take the school bus, 480 ride in cars, approx. 430 walk, less than 1% of students bike, and approximately 800 get to school by city bus or other form of transportation.

School Access- King Street

Alexandria City High School -Minnie Howard Campus

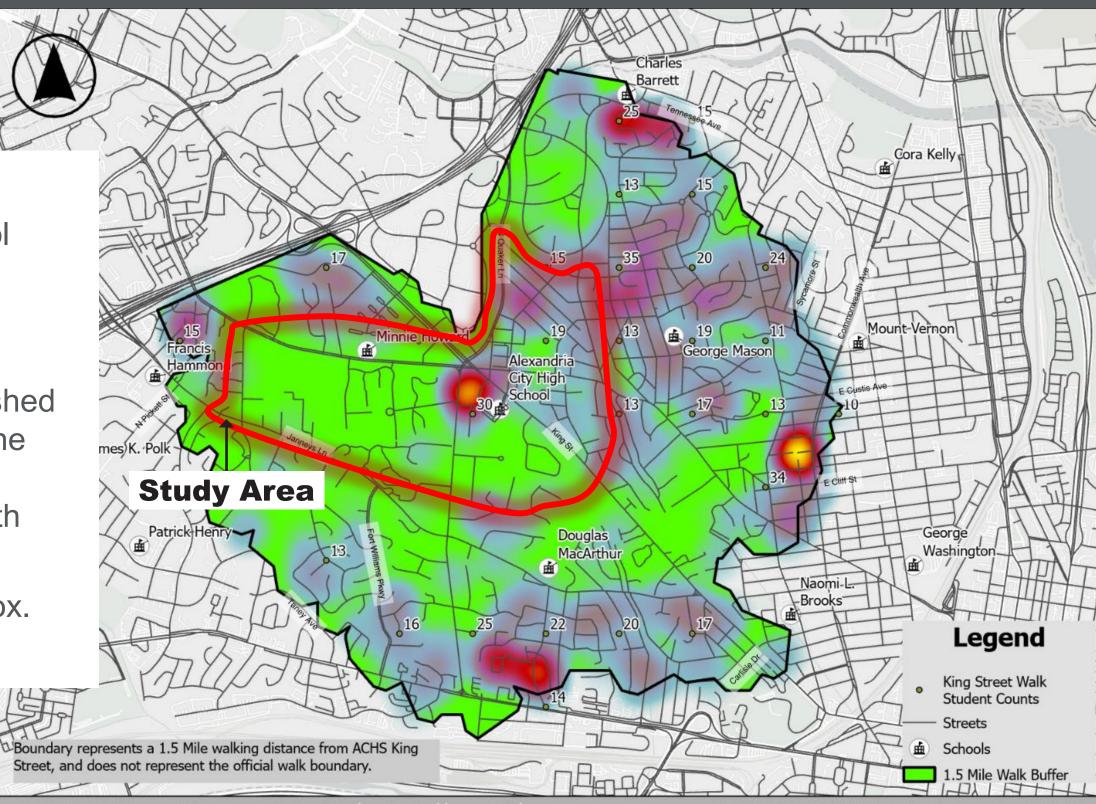
- Pedestrians access the school by crossing King Street, walking across Chinquapin Field.
 - Students leave the school at the back door by the athletic office.
 - Some students walk from ACHS Minnie Howard campus to take classes at the King Street campus.
- Bicyclists access the school from Chinquapin Drive
- Vehicles pick up students on Chinquapin Drive.
- Buses pick up students in the bus plaza. Many students take the 31 and 36 DASH bus.
- Parent/Guardians were observed parking on King Street in the buffered bike lane while waiting for students.



Alexandria City High School King Street Campus

Walk Zone – King Street

- The Walker Cluster map shows the existing school walk zone, as well as clusters of student addresses.
- The walk zone is established by ACPS by evaluating the walking distance to the school in combination with available infrastructure.
- The red line shows approx. study area.



ACHS King Street 1.5 Mile Walker Clusters

eri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, DCGIS, Fairfax County, VA, VGIN, Esri, HER Barmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, U Census Bureau, USD

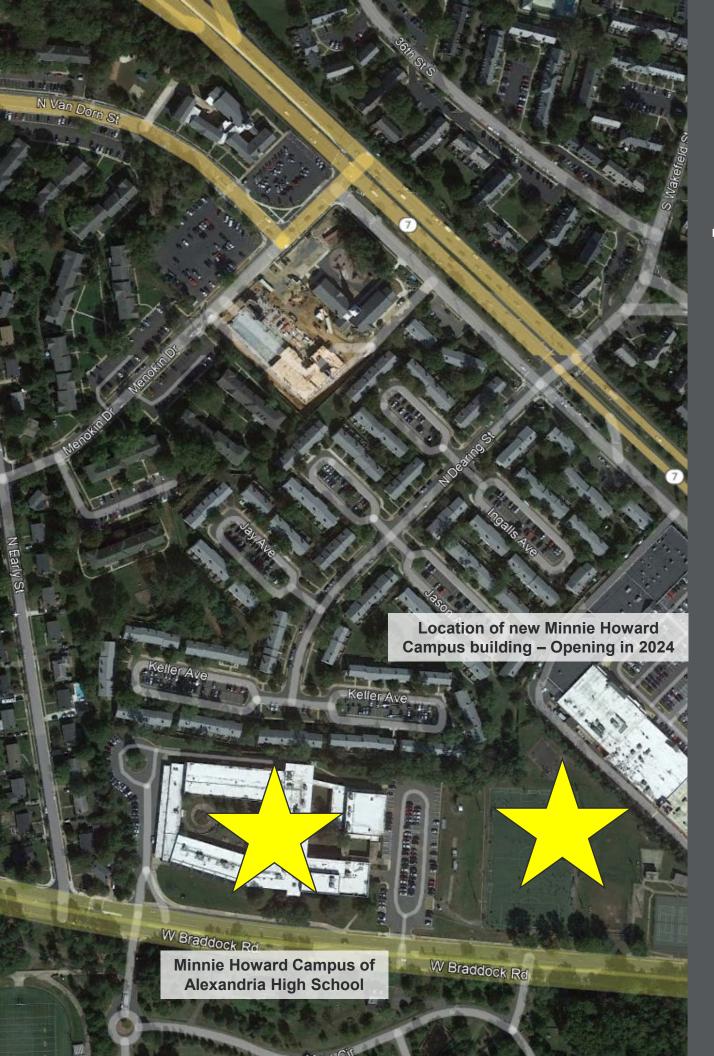
Map Source: ACPS, Office of Capital Programs, Planning and Design SY2022-2023

Walk Audit Participants – King Street

- PTSA Amanda Kelley
- ACPS John Contreras
- ACPS Sophie Huemer
- ACPS Mechale' Johnson
- Toole Design Christina Fink
- Toole Design Ayden Cohen
- COA Alex Carroll
- COA Bryan Hayes
- Advocate Asa Orrin-Brown
- Michael Burch

Minnie Howard Campus

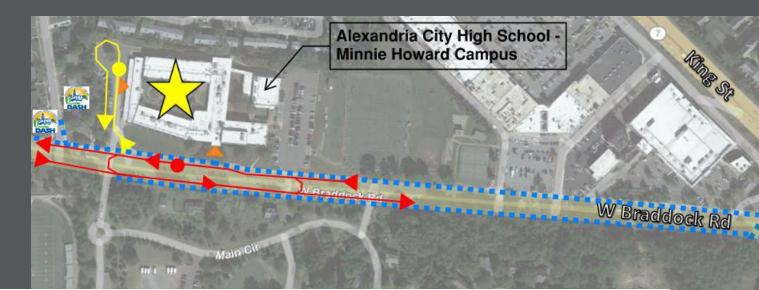




School Site – Minnie Howard

- Minnie Howard Campus of Alexandria City High School is located at 3801 W Braddock Rd., serving grade 9, and operating from 8:25 am – 3:15 pm.
- It is located near a residential (multi-family and single-family housing) and commercial area and bounded by W Braddock Rd to the south, N Early St to the west, Keller Ave to the north, and a shopping center to the east.
- W Braddock Rd is a minor arterial with a posted speed limit of 25 mph/15 mph school speed limit.
- An expansion of the campus is being constructed currently, set to open for the 2024-2025 school year.
- For the 2022-2023 school year, there were more than 940 students enrolled at Minnie Howard. The school reports that 760 students take the school bus, 65 ride in cars, approximately 60 walk or bike, and approximately 50 ride the city bus.

School Access – Minnie Howard



- Pedestrians enter the school at the entrance on W Braddock Road.
 - When the campus expansion is complete, foot traffic between King Street and Minnie Howard may increase.
- **Vehicles** drop off in the recessed lane on W Braddock Road.
- Buses drop off in the upper parking lot.
- **DASH bus**: drops off on N Early Street.
 - Some students were being dropped off as late as 8:40 AM.
 - There are shuttle buses between campuses.

Alexandria City High School **King Street Campus**

LEGEND

Car Entrance

Bus Entrance Drop Off Location

DASH Bus Stop

School

School Building Entrance Bicycle Parking

Car Rider Loop

--- Pedestrian / Biker Route

NOTE: these patterns will change once the construction is completed.

Minnie Howard Expansion

- Construction of the Minnie Howard campus expansion began in April 2022 and is slated for completion in time for the 2024-2045 school year.
- The existing conditions of the construction site and slated arrival/dismissal procedure changes impacted the walk audit team's ability to make recommendations for this campus.
- With this expansion, the Minnie Howard campus will now serve all student grades 9-12, not just those in grade 9.
 - This will lead to a high increase in foot traffic between the two schools as students will regularly be going back and forth between campuses for their different classes.



Site plan for the expanded campus

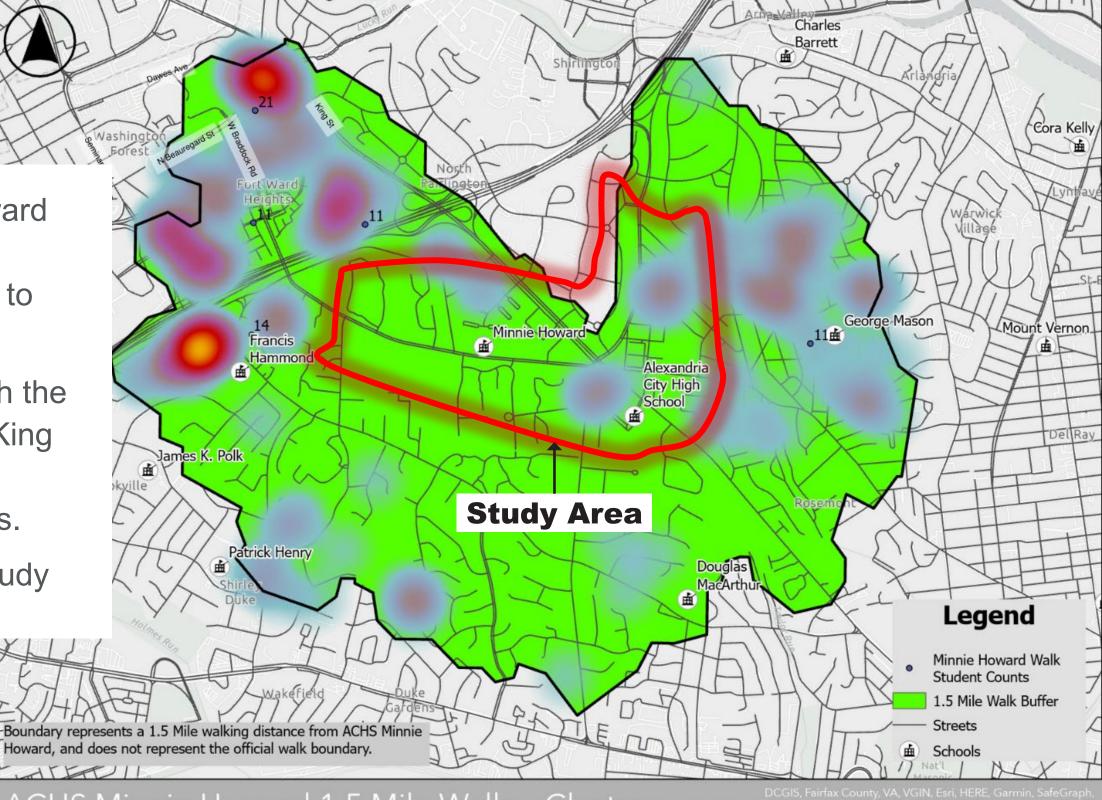


Construction status as of January 2023

Minnie Howard Walk Zone

 Walk zone for Minnie Howard campus is similar to King Street, but weighted more to the west.

- There is some overlap with the George Washington MS, King Street HS, and Francis Hammond MS Walk Zones.
- Red line shows approx. study area.



ACHS Minnie Howard 1.5 Mile Walker Clusters

Map Source: ACPS, Office of Capital Programs, Planning and Design
SY2022-2023

Walk Audit Participants – Minnie Howard

- ACPS Alexander Duncan
- ACPS Lance Harrell
- ACPS John Contreras
- ACPS Sophie Huemer
- PTSA Amanda Kelley
- Toole Design Christina Fink
- Toole Design Ayden Cohen

- COA Alex Carroll
- COA Bryan Hayes
- Advocate Nicole Radshaw
- Pierre Hill
- Robert M. Bowes

Observations and Crash Data

Cyclist leaving King Street campus



Parent picking up student along King Street

Dismissal Observations – King Street

- Observation period: Wednesday March 29, 2023, 2:45pm – 4:00pm.
- Parents/guardians picking up students on King Street park in the right turn lane and buffered bike lane.
- At Chinquapin Drive and King Street, drivers pull onto crosswalk and make right turns on red (Right Turns on Red are legal).
- Students cross King Street both at crosswalks and mid-block, where there are no crosswalks, to access bus stops when there is stand-still traffic.
- Many parents park along the buffered bike lane on King Street, forcing bicyclists into traffic, and create gridlock, blocking the intersection and crosswalks.

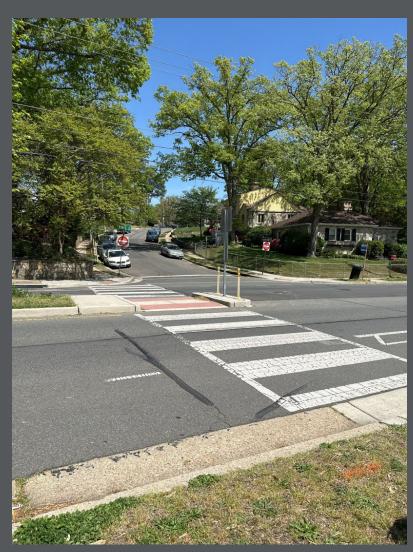
King Street Campus and Vicinity



Intersection of Dogwood Drive and Kenwood Avenue. This is a 4-way stop controlled intersection, with marked crosswalks and detectable warning surfaces on 2/4 curb ramps.



Kenwood Avenue, heading towards King Street. This is a signed bike route, with a narrow sidewalk that has a minimal buffer.



Quincy Street and King Street. There is a signed and marked crossing.

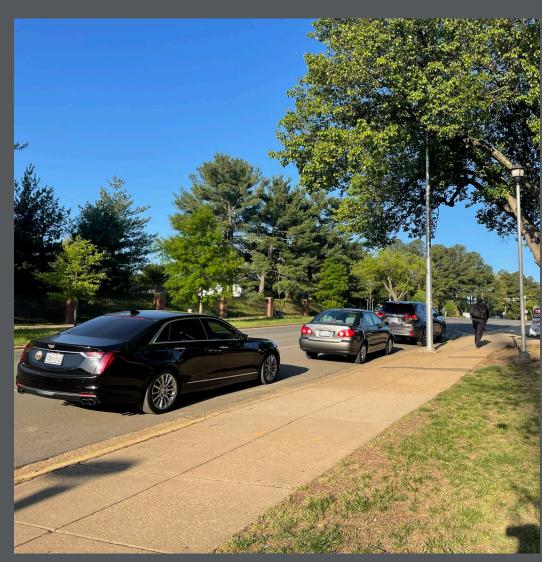


Parent pulling to curb to drop student off; Students walking to school

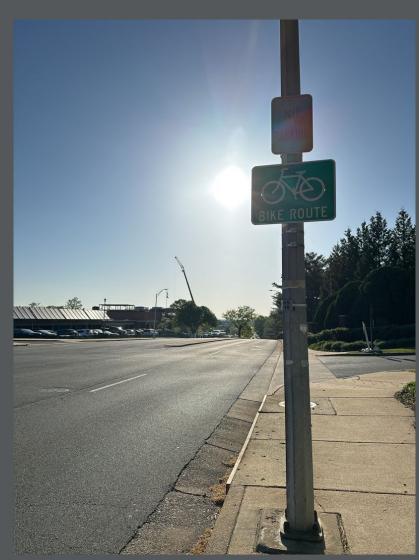
Arrival Observations – Minnie Howard

- Observations period: Wednesday April 19, 2023,
 7:30am 9:00am.
- A School Resource Officer (SRO) stops traffic on W Braddock Road to allow buses to turn left out of the school bus drop-off loop.
- Drivers heading east on W Braddock Road were observed making U-turns at the lower parking lot to drop students off.
- Drivers heading west on W Braddock Road were observed making U-turns at N Early Street after dropping off their student.

Minnie Howard Campus and Vicinity



There is a pick-up/drop-off area for arrival and dismissal on the north side of W Braddock Road.



W Braddock Road is a signed bike route. Multiple cyclists were seen during arrival, often forced close to the edge of the sidewalk.

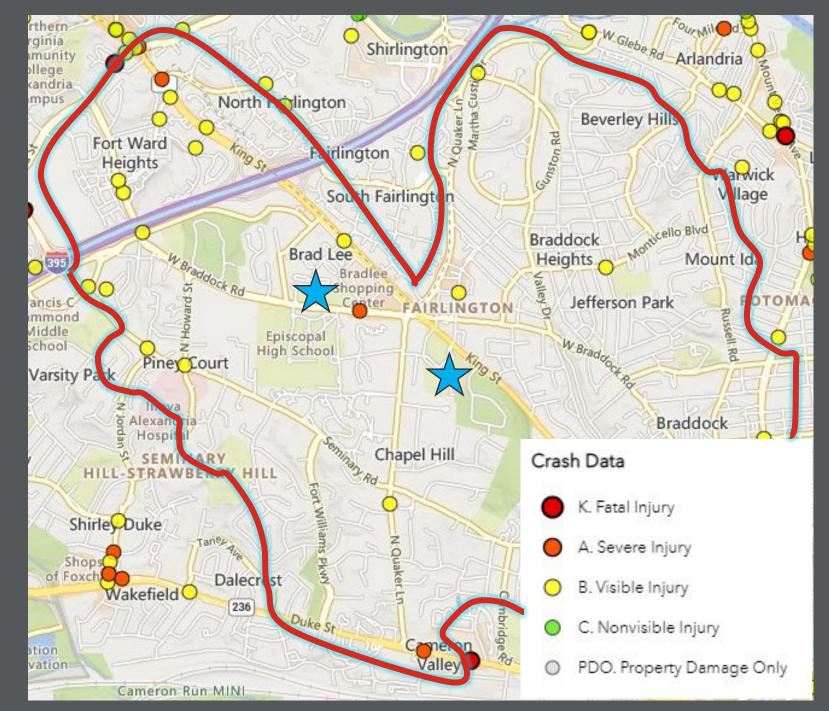


Intersection of Braddock Road and Early Street, where the existing Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon is located near Minnie Howard campus. The DASH bus stop is located on Early Street.

King Street and Minnie Howard

Crash Data

- Crash Data was gathered for the school walk area for the years 2018-2022.
- Within the walk zone, there were 215 crashes.
 Of these crashes, 4 involved a pedestrian, 2 involved a bicyclists.
 - Pedestrian crash on W Braddock Road near the unsignalized entrance to Bradlee Shopping Center. An eastbound motorist hit a pedestrian that, according to the report, was not crossing at an intersection.
 - 1 serious injury crash involving an 18 year old, 1 visible injury crash involving a 15 year old on W Braddock Road outside Minnie Howard (pedestrian).
 - Injury pedestrian crash at Kenwood Avenue & Crestwood Drive involved 7 year old.
 - Marlee Way & King Street 17 year old pedestrian injury.



Pedestrian-Involved Crashes 2018-2022 Source: VDOT – Red line shows approx. walk zone

CRASHES WITHIN WALK ZONE	Total Crashes	Injury	Fatality
All Modes	215	61	0
Pedestrian-involved	4	4	0
Bicyclist-involved	2	2	0

General Observations

- Quaker Lane / King Street / Braddock Road intersection
 - Drivers turn right on red.
 - There are no leading pedestrian intervals at this intersection.
 - Pedestrian phase for crossing Quaker Lane is "too short".
- N Early Street and W Braddock Road
 - Drivers were observed driving through the crosswalk while the HAWK signal was activated and pedestrians were crossing.
- Drivers appeared to be speeding on W Braddock Road during the observation period while school speed limit signs were active.
- The trees and hedges at the Sunoco gas station on W Braddock Road obstruct drivers' sight line.



Students on the corner of King Street/Quaker
Lane/Braddock Road intersection during dismissal for
Alexandria City HS



Old school zone speed limit sign on King Street, west of Alexandria City HS

Community Feedback Form Results

King Street and Minnie Howard

Participants

- Community feedback was solicited through an online community feedback form. For Alexandria City High School King Street Campus, there were 369 participants. For the Minnie Howard Campus there were 93 participants.
- Table 2 summarizes the mode participants typically use and their ideal mode to get to school.

Table 1. Summary of Form Participants

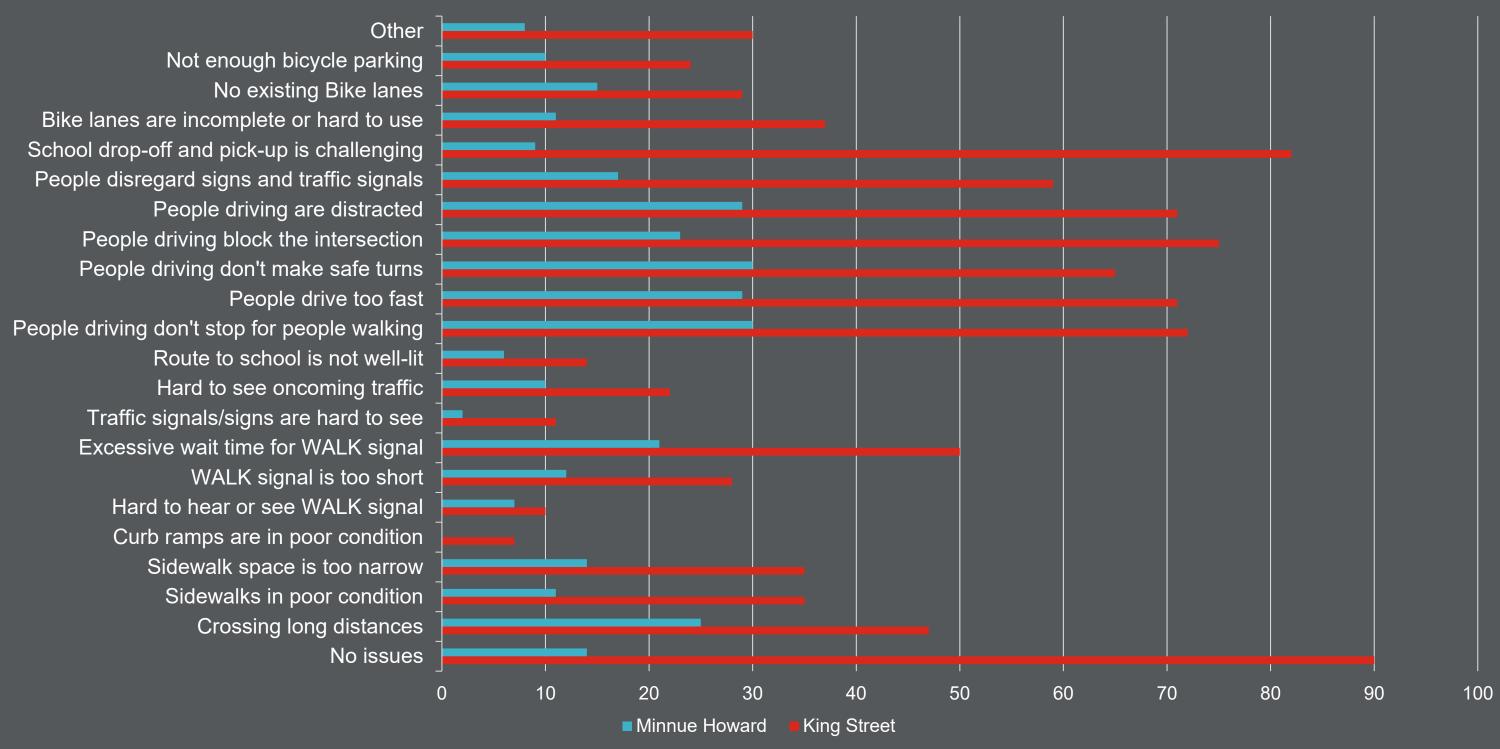
Community Feedback Form Participants	King Street (KS)	Minnie Howard (MH)
Total number of responses	369	93
Student Responses	313	62
Parent, Grandparent, or		
Guardian Responses	38	24
Teacher, Admin, School Staff	9	6
Alexandria resident interested in		
the project	14	7
Other	3	1

Table 2. How Respondents Are Getting to School

Mode Options	Typica	l Mode	Ideal Mode		
wode Options	KS	MH	KS	MH	
Walk	62	13	45	12	
Bike	14	5	14	6	
Drive	124	35	0	0	
Carpool	29	5	0	0	
School Bus	166	46	120	38	
Public Transit	98	10	48	6	
Other	10	4	3	2	

Results





Community Feedback Form – Free Response

- Community feedback form participants provided free responses to the following free response questions. Responses are summarized in the table.
 - What would it take for you to walk or bike to school more often than you do now?
 - Please provide more detail about the issues you experience getting to school.

King St/Quaker/Braddock intersection - Most commented-on intersection. Requires multiple pedestrian crossings, crosswalks are not clearly delineated, "feels unsafe", challenging intersection for drivers and pedestrians.

Kenwood Ave/Braddock Rd intersection - Drivers regularly run red lights. No protected left turn phase for Braddock WB drivers heading to ACHS; drivers speed through turns to hit small gaps in traffic and sometimes don't see pedestrians.

Kenwood Ave/King St intersection - Busy intersection during start and end of school.

Intersections of concern

Crossing King St near the school - Pedestrian crossing phase takes a long time.

Crossing Braddock at Crest Rd and Scroggins Rd - Drivers do not stop for pedestrians even when lights are flashing. Drivers speed through turns to hit small gaps in traffic.

Quaker Ln/Janneys Ln intersection - Unsafe for pedestrians.

Janneys Ln - Speeding is an issue. Has been improved with stop signs, but still an issue.

Crestwood Dr/Valley Dr - New crosswalk was installed, but there is still a high rate of drivers who do not yield to pedestrians.

Bradlee intersection - Pedestrians not crossing in crosswalks. (Exact location is unclear from form responses, but it is mentioned multiple times.)

Community Feedback Form – Free Response

	Not enough bike racks at school.
	Students want bikes but don't own them.
	Desire for more connected and protected bike lanes that accommodate less confident cyclists.
Diko	Braddock Rd - Bike lanes blocked by delivery vehicles, trash bins, turning drivers, vehicles dropping off students at
Bike	Blessed Sacrament School. Protected bike lanes desired.
Infrastructure	King St - Bike lanes are blocked by cars dropping students off. Car doors opening into bike lane.
	Kenwood Ave - Wide road without protected bike lanes.
	Quaker Ln - Desire for bike lanes that accommodate less confident cyclists.
	Desire for a bike share station near school.
	In front of Lexus dealership and Oakland Baptist Church - Utility pole obstructing sidewalk, narrow sidewalk, no buffer.
	Kenwood Ave - High pedestrian volumes, narrow sidewalks, dim lighting.
	Path through Forrest Park near Chinquapin - Route for students but "feels unsafe". MacArthur construction prevents
Pedestrian	access to path.
Infrastructure	King St - No sidewalks on bridges.
	N Howard St - wide street with narrow sidewalks
	Desire for a safe walking environment/route between King St and MH campus. Many students walk between the two
	campuses for extra-curricular activities.
	94 bus is the preferred bus, but students take the 91 because the 94 gets too crowded.
Transit	New staggered dismissal at ACHS means students who take Dash bus miss the 3:15 bus and have to wait a long time
	for the next bus.
Safety	Cars do not yield for pedestrians.
Concorne	Speeding is common.
	W Braddock Rd near MH campus - speeding cars (40-50 mph)

Community Feedback Form – Free Response

	King St - Parents let kids out of the car while they are in traffic, meaning they open the car doors into the bike lane.
Drop-off / Pick-up	Drop offs on King St and main driveway shouldn't be allowed.
(King Street)	Afternoon pickup - Parents wait on the curb in front of the school blocking traffic.
	Queuing during pick up and drop off creates traffic. Some drivers turnaround in the drop-off/pick up area instead of going around.
Drop-off / Pick-up (Minnie Howard)	Parents drop off students on Braddock Rd blocking traffic
Operations /	Walking/biking is a challenge because student backpacks are big and heavy. Teachers have binder requirements that increases the bulk in their backpacks. Large hill near school.
General	School buses are sometimes late.
	Students sometimes wait in bad weather (shelters at school bus stops)

Walk Audit Recommendations

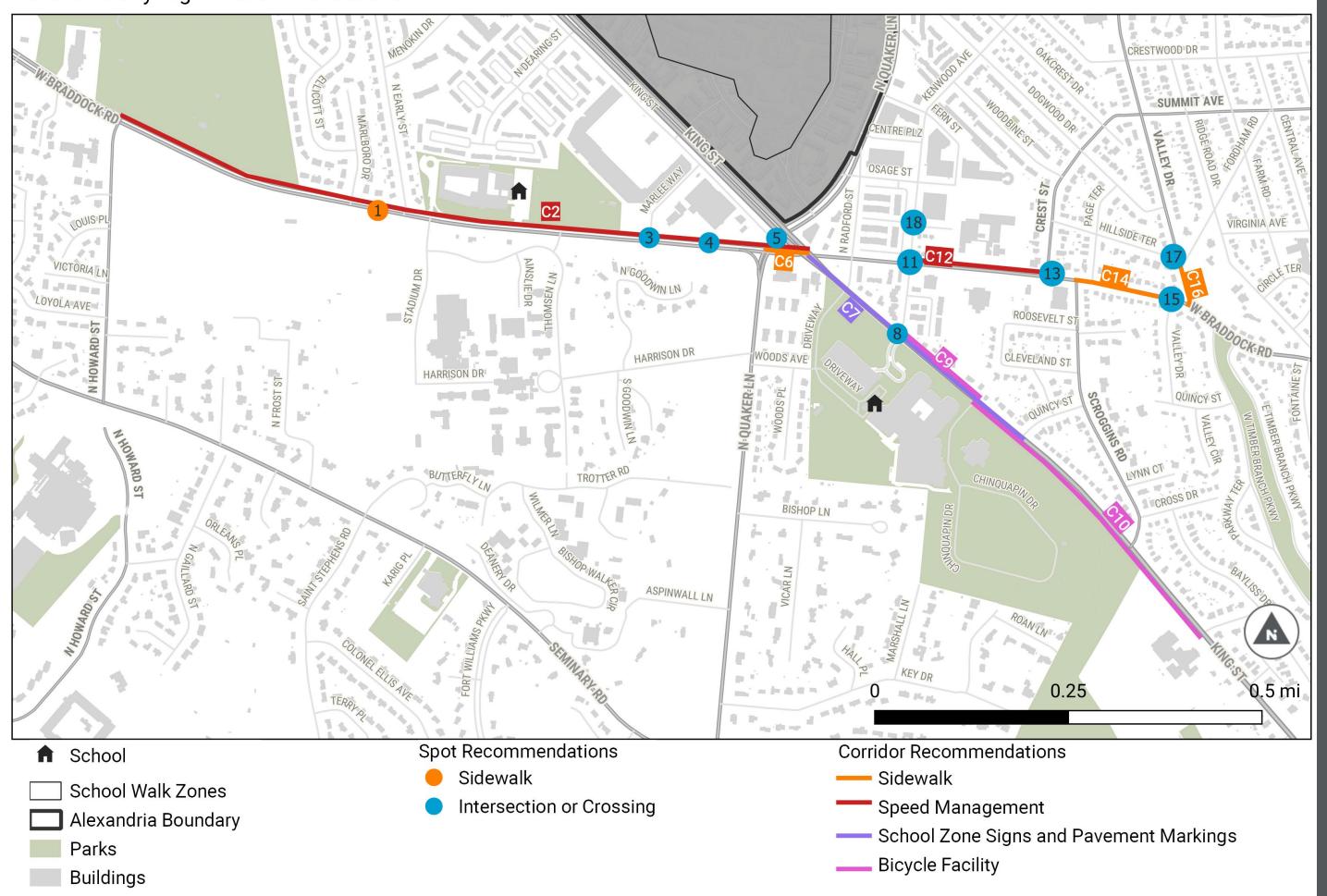
Recommendations Approach

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure recommendations aim to improve safety and accessibility for students to walk and bicycle to school. This may include reducing vehicle speeds, addressing conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and drivers, and providing fully accessible sidewalks and crossings near schools.

The following map and tables summarize infrastructure recommendations within and outside of the current school walk zone as relevant. Key student walking or bicycling routes were identified based on information received from school administration, parent surveys, and school observations.

Note that other projects or planning/feasibility studies may be planned or ongoing within the study area. The City of Alexandria will confirm the approach to implementing recommendations from this SRTS Study to ensure they align with other projects as necessary.

Alexandria City High - Recommendations



Recommendations Overview

The following pages provide tables of the recommendations for each location. Below is a description of the column within the tables.

- Map ID Label number on the map. Points with multiple recommendations will have a suffix of a, b, etc. Corridor recommendations are identified with the prefix of "C" (e.g. C2).
- Location, Recommendation Type Location of recommendation and the type of the recommendation. The extents of corridor recommendations are defined in parenthesis.
- Issue Description of the issue at the identified location.
- Recommendation Description of the proposed recommendation.
- Complexity Scale of complexity for recommendation implementation. The ranking considers costs, timeframe, and overall difficulty from one to five, with one being the least complex and five being the most complex.
- Responsibility Responsible party for implementation.

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
1	Alexandria City High (King St)	General	Students express concern about insecure bike storage.	Provide secure long-term bike parking on campus.		ACPS
2	Alexandria City High (Minnie Howard)	W Braddock Rd (N Howard St to King St), Speed Management	Observed motor vehicle speeds appear to exceed speed limit. Bicyclists observed on street, but no bikeway present.	Explore options to reduce vehicle speeds, such as dedicated bicycle facilities.		City
3 a	Alexandria City High (Minnie Howard)	W Braddock Rd & Marlee Wy	Drivers observed not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalk.	Install Leading Pedestrian Interval for pedestrians crossing W Braddock Rd. No Turn on Red sign for drivers turning right from Marlee Way to W Braddock Rd.		City
3b	Alexandria City High (Minnie Howard)	W Braddock Rd & Marlee Wy	Drivers observed not yielding to pedestrians in crosswalk.	Explore median refuge and/or centerline hardening.		City
4	Alexandria City High (Minnie Howard)	W Braddock Rd & Safeway Entrance	Students observed crossing midblock on W Braddock Rd west of King St/N Quaker Ln/W Braddock Rd intersection.	Consider crosswalk across W Braddock Rd at Safeway driveway (HAWK or RRFB depending on cross- section).		City

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
5 a	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St/N Quaker Ln/W Braddock Rd, Intersection or Crossing	Western crossing of W Braddock Rd at N Quaker Ln has inadequate crossing time for pedestrians. Students often get tired of waiting for the signal to change and cross against the signal.	Re-time signal to provide more frequent crossing opportunities for pedestrians. Ensure pedestrian phase is available during parallel vehicle phase.		City
5b	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St/N Quaker Ln/W Braddock Rd, Intersection or Crossing	Southern crossing of King St at W Braddock Rd and eastern crossing of W Braddock Rd at King St do not have marked crossings. Intersection is generally uncomfortable for people walking and biking.	Conduct study to evaluate intersection for short- and long-term safety and access improvements.	•••••	City
5c	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St/N Quaker Ln/W Braddock Rd, Intersection or Crossing	Southern crossing of N Quaker Ln at W Braddock Rd requires pedestrians to press the push button for the walk signal. Students cross regularly during arrival/dismissal.	OHITING ALTIVAL/OISTNISSAL HOURS		City

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
5d	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St/N Quaker Ln/W Braddock Rd, Intersection or Crossing	Many corners have insufficient waiting space, particularly the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of N Quaker Ln/W Braddock Rd. These corners become crowded with students waiting and often spilling into the street.	Explore short-term opportunities to create more waiting space for pedestrians on corners.		City
6	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St (W Braddock Rd to Quincy St), School Zone Signs and Pavement Markings	Eastbound on King St near Baptist church has old 25 MPH school zone sign.	Remove old sign and replace with 15 MPH sign.		City
7 a	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St & Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	General concerns regarding motorist yielding at the intersection.	Install Leading Pedestrian Interval.		City
7 b	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St & Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	Westbound bus stop is located approx. 100 feet east of the intersection, and students cross midblock to the bus stop. Westbound stop also has limited space for students waiting.	Explore shifting westbound bus stop to be closer to, and ideally, at the intersection; widen sidewalk where feasible to provide additional waiting space.		City

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
7 c	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St & Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	Groups of students wait for bus at eastbound bus stop in front of school that does not have a shelter.	Provide bus shelter for eastbound bus stop in front of school.		City
7d	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St & Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	Drivers making southbound left were observed not stopping for pedestrians.	Install treatments on eastern King St crossing to increase pedestrian visibility and slow left turns.		City
8	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St (Kenwood Ave to Chinquapin Dr), Bicycle facility	Eastbound curbside travel lane has parents illegally parked to pick-up students, which leads to congestion and gridlock in the King St/Kenwood Ave intersection as two lanes must merge into one receiving lane midintersection.	Explore converting eastbound curbside travel lane to a separated bike lane to encourage parents to use formal pick-up on-campus.		City
9	Alexandria City High (King St)	King St (Chinquapin Dr to Tuckahoe Ln), Bicycle facility	Existing buffered bike lane does not have any vertical separation.	Add some vertical element (flex post, tire stops, etc.) to existing bike lane; also recommend enhancing bus stops with green paint.		City

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
10 a	Alexandria City High (King St)	W Braddock and Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	Ramps on northeast, northwest, and southwest may not have sufficient level landing area.	Explore installing curb extensions to create more space for pedestrians.		City
10b	Alexandria City High (King St)	W Braddock Rd and Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	Southbound bike lane is dropped north of intersection.	Evaluate potential to extend bike lane through intersection.		City
10 c	Alexandria City High (King St)	W Braddock Rd and Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	On all approaches, motorists turn right on red, interfering with students trying to cross.	Evaluate installing an all-day No Turn on Red restriction or a dynamic NTOR restriction based on school hours.		City
10d	Alexandria City High (King St)	W Braddock Rd and Kenwood Ave, Intersection or Crossing	Students observed crossing when "DON'T WALK" is displayed.	Make pedestrian phase automatic (i.e. pedestrian recall) during arrival and dismissal and provide Leading Pedestrian Interval.		City
11	Alexandria City High (King St)	W Braddock Rd (Kenwood Ave to Crest St), Speed Management	Segment of W Braddock Rd is relatively wide and encourages speeding.	Explore options to address wider roadway and speeding.		City

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
12	Alexandria City High (King St)	Valley Dr & W Braddock Rd, Intersection or Crossing	Western crossing has curb extension on one side and a high-visibility crosswalk marking, but there are no other crosswalk enhancements. Crossing is on a hill and there are concerns about motorists speeds, especially in the downhill direction.	Evaluate for RRFB.		City
13	Alexandria City High (King St)	Valley Dr (Fordham Rd to W Braddock Rd), Sidewalk	West side has no sidewalk.	Install new sidewalk. Note that there are existing utility poles that may complicate this effort.		City
14	Alexandria City High (King St)	Valley Dr & Fordham Rd/Hillside Terr, Intersection or Crossing	Eastern and western crossings of Fordham Rd lack compliant curb ramps (northeast and southeast corners), crosswalk markings, and stop bars. There is no crossing of Valley Dr at this intersection	Reconstruct curb ramps; install standard (transverse) crosswalk; and install stop bar. Install curb ramps and high-visibility crosswalk for crossing of Valley Dr between Hillside Terr and Fordham Rd.		City
15 a	Alexandria City High (King St)	Kenwood Ave & Peach St, Intersection or Crossing	Ramps (all corners) lack detectable warning surface.	Add detectable warning surfaces.		City

Map ID	Location School	Location, Recommendation Type	Issue	Recommendation	Complexity	Responsibility
15b	1	Kenwood Ave & Peach St, Intersection or Crossing	Eastern crossing missing crosswalk markings and stop bar.	Install new standard (transverse) crosswalk; mark new stop bar.		City

Notes

All images by Toole Design unless noted otherwise.

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