

S U C C E S S

STORIES

Newark, New Jersey

City of Newark Implements a Successful School Zone Safety Program

The City of Newark Engineering Department's Division of Traffic and Signals kicked off its School Zone Safety Program in 2000, with the goal of improving pedestrian safety around schools and their surrounding neighborhoods. The program consisted of four physical improvement elements – signs, pavement markings, flashing signals and imprinted crosswalks – along with a complementary pedestrian safety program. By combining these several components, the Division implemented a successful School Zone Safety Program.

The push for these improvements began in 1997 after a child pedestrian was hit and killed by a car at a school crossing. The City of Newark immediately undertook a citywide inspection to address pedestrian safety around its schools. What they discovered was an urgent need for installation and/or upgrading of school signs and pavement markings. The Newark Sign Unit sought to explore new technologies, such as school flashers, as a means to remedy speeding and other pedestrian safety problems. After several years, the School Zone Safety Program continues to gain momentum.

Key Facts

- A child pedestrian was hit and killed by a car near a school in 1997, solidifying the City of Newark's interest in Safe Routes to Schools.
- The School Zone Safety Program utilized several different funding sources.
- The School Zone Safety Program has been implemented at 125 sites on or around:
 - Public Schools
 - Private Schools
 - Charter Schools
 - Day Care Centers

Innovative Ideas

- Municipal Engineering Departments can play a great role in SRTS programming.
- Several different sources can be used to fund pieces of a comprehensive program.
- The current School Zone Safety Program involves all intersections:
 - Where a crossing guard is posted
 - That are designated as school crossings

SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY PROGRAM – PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Signs: After completing a survey of all schools in January 2000, the Division of Traffic and Signals prepared a program to replace existing school signs with new reflective fluorescent yellow-green signs. Crash data and traffic studies were used to determine the order in which schools would be addressed. Upon completion of the program in 2004, about 2,000 signs were installed. The program was partially funded through a grant from the NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety.



Pavement Markings: The Newark Division of Traffic and Signals conducts yearly re-stripping of crosswalks, stop bars, lane lines and centerlines throughout the City.

As part of the School Zone Safety Program, rumble strips and "Slow School Zone" legends were also installed at all City schools during this process. The effort, which was completed in 2005, was partially funded through the annual resurfacing program (NJDOT).

Flashing Signals: In an effort to improve the safety and security of Newark's children who walk or bicycle to and from school and to encourage motorists to be more aware of pedestrians in school zones,

the Division of Traffic and Signals has installed 66 flashing signals on school zone signs. This effort was partially funded with NJDOT grants.



Imprinted Crosswalks: As a means to enhance the safety and security of pedestrians and encourage safer driving by motorists, the City of Newark currently operates a comprehensive program to improve existing crosswalks by imprinting them with high-visibility, raised-brick patterns. School crosswalks receive top priority. This effort is partially funded through various NJDOT grants.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY PROGRAM

As a complement to the School Zone Safety Program, the City of Newark's Pedestrian Safety Program consists of installing pedestrian crossing signs where pedestrian and motor vehicle collisions often occur. The objective of this project is to simplify street crossing for both pedestrians and drivers by clearly identifying pedestrian crosswalks with highly reflective, fluorescent yellow-green pedestrian signs. In 2000, the Division of Traffic and Signals completed a survey of all intersections with a high volume of collisions and prepared a program to install pedestrian signs at these intersections. The program was funded through two grants from the NJ Division of

Highway Traffic Safety. Upon completion, 600 signs will have been installed at 160 intersections.

Both the School Zone and Pedestrian Safety programs continue to work toward improving traffic and personal safety for children who

wish to walk and bike to school. The Division of Traffic and Signals has also begun working with the Newark Police Department to ensure that drivers are in compliance with the speed limits in and around our schools. The programs have received much praise from schools representatives and local residents.



For more information:

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Resources:

The NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety can be found online at www.state.nj.us/lps/hts

The City of Newark Engineering Department can be found online at www.ci.newark.nj.us/Departments/engineering.html

City of Newark, Essex County

Population (2000)	.....	273,546
Area	.....	23.8 square miles
Density	.....	11,493 people/sq. mile
School Aged Children	.....	59,000
Number of Schools	.....	125 (approximate)

