



# VALLEY FALLS, KANSAS

## Safe Streets for All Action Plan

2024



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# INTRODUCTION

## Community Profile

Valley Falls is a charming small community located in northeastern Kansas, in Jefferson County. Nestled along the banks of the Delaware River, the town is approximately 30 miles northwest of the state's capital, Topeka, and about 50 miles from Kansas City. This strategic location places Valley Falls within reach of larger urban areas while maintaining its rural charm. Approximately 36% of the city's workforce commutes into town to work from neighboring small towns, and 58% commute outside of Valley Falls, largely to Topeka, KS (21%).

As of the latest American Community Survey (2022) Valley Falls has a population of 1,192 which is about a four percent increase over the past decade. The median age in the community is 47.2 years old, which is significantly older than the county (43.5) and the state of Kansas (36.0). Residents over 65 make up almost 26% of the population. However, Valley Falls also has a healthy mix of young families attending the Valey Fall School district. Children under 18 make up nearly 20% of the population. These two demographics highlight the significant vulnerable populations in Valley Falls.



## Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Program Overview:

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law established the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program with \$5 billion in appropriated funds over five years (2022 – 2026). The program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. The program supports the development of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (Action Plan) which is the foundation of the SS4A program.

## **Comprehensive Safety Action Plan**

The purpose of this plan is to reduce or eliminate serious-injury and fatal crashes affecting all roadway users. Action Plans are meant to identify the most significant roadway safety concerns in a community and outline solutions. Communities must have an Action Plan in order to apply for implementation grants to carry out the identified strategies or countermeasures.

The program offers two types of grants after an Action Plan has been completed:

- Planning and Demonstration Activities
- Implementation

*More information on each can be found through the U.S. Department of Transportation's website:*

<https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>

The SS4A program is guided by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy and their Vision Zero goal using a Safe Systems Approach.

### **Safe Systems Approach**

The Safe Systems Approach is a holistic and comprehensive approach that provides a guiding framework to make places safer by focusing on human mistakes and human vulnerability with many redundancies in place for added protection. Safety programs are focused on infrastructure, human behavior, responsible oversight of the vehicle and transportation industry, and emergency response.

### **Principles of a Safe Systems Approach:**

#### **1. Death and Serious Injuries are Unacceptable**

At its core, the Safe Systems Approach prioritizes the elimination of crashed that result in death or serious injury.

#### **2. Humans Make Mistakes**

Transportation systems can be designed and operated to accommodate certain types and levels of the inevitable human mistakes. This principle understands humans are not perfect and are bound to make mistakes



sometimes and the design of our roadways should do everything possible to mitigate them to prevent deadly crashes.

### 3. Humans are Vulnerable

Understanding the physical vulnerabilities of humans is critical to designing a transportation system that is human-centric to prevent death or serious injuries.

### 4. Responsibility is Shared

Designing a safe system requires collaboration and commitment from all stakeholders including government officials, industry, advocacy, researchers and the general public.

### 5. Safety is Proactive

Rather than waiting to react to crashes, proactive measures should be taken to identify and address potential or likely safety issues ahead of time.

### 6. Redundancy is Crucial

To minimize risk, it's important to reinforce safety components. This provides back-up if one part fails.

Implementation of the National Roadway Safety Strategy is arranged around five complementary objectives: Safer People, Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Speeds, and Post-Crash Care.

## LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

As part of the requirements for an Action Plan, the City must make a commitment to either a Vision Zero goal or an ambitious percentage reduction of roadway fatalities and serious injuries.



Vision Zero is a global initiative aimed at eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe injuries while promoting safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for everyone. It emphasizes that traffic deaths and injuries are preventable and focuses on designing safer road systems, implementing effective policies, and encouraging community involvement to achieve zero traffic-related fatalities. It can also yield a more livable, sustainable, and equitable community through thoughtful and human-centric design.

## **Local Context and Need for Vision Zero in the Community**

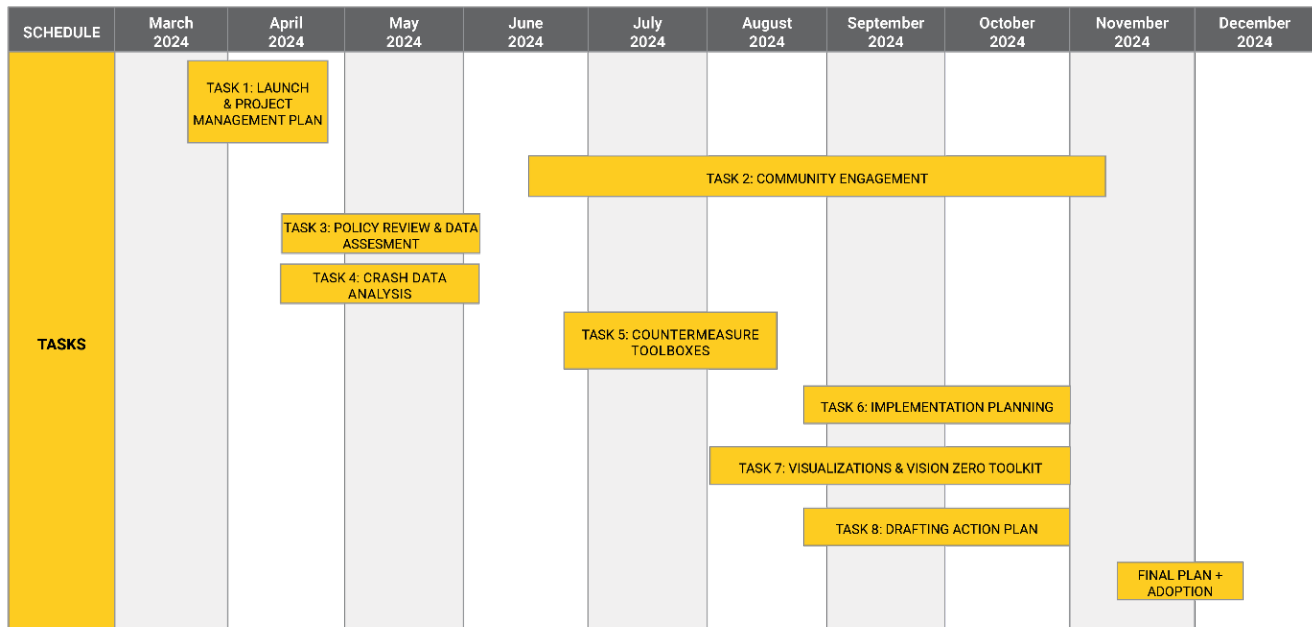
In our Kansas community, like many others across the nation, the road system has traditionally prioritized vehicular speed and throughput over safety, particularly for non-motorized users. This approach has led to a road environment that can be hostile and dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and others.

Valley Falls luckily has not experienced severe crashes in recent years, though in the spirit of the Safe Systems Approach, proactive measures can be taken to ensure this positive trend continues and Valley Falls remains successful at Vision Zero.

## **PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW**

The project began with initial data and policy research to understand existing conditions and best practices. The project was announced to the public in June and meetings with the Steering Committee commenced along with a community survey. Countermeasure development continued throughout the process considering survey results and input from the Steering Committee and City staff. Finally, the draft recommendations were presented to the public and Steering Committee in October. After addressing feedback from the public, the final plan was presented to the City for official approval in December.

## Valley Falls, KS | Safe Streets for All Action Plan | PROCESS DIAGRAM



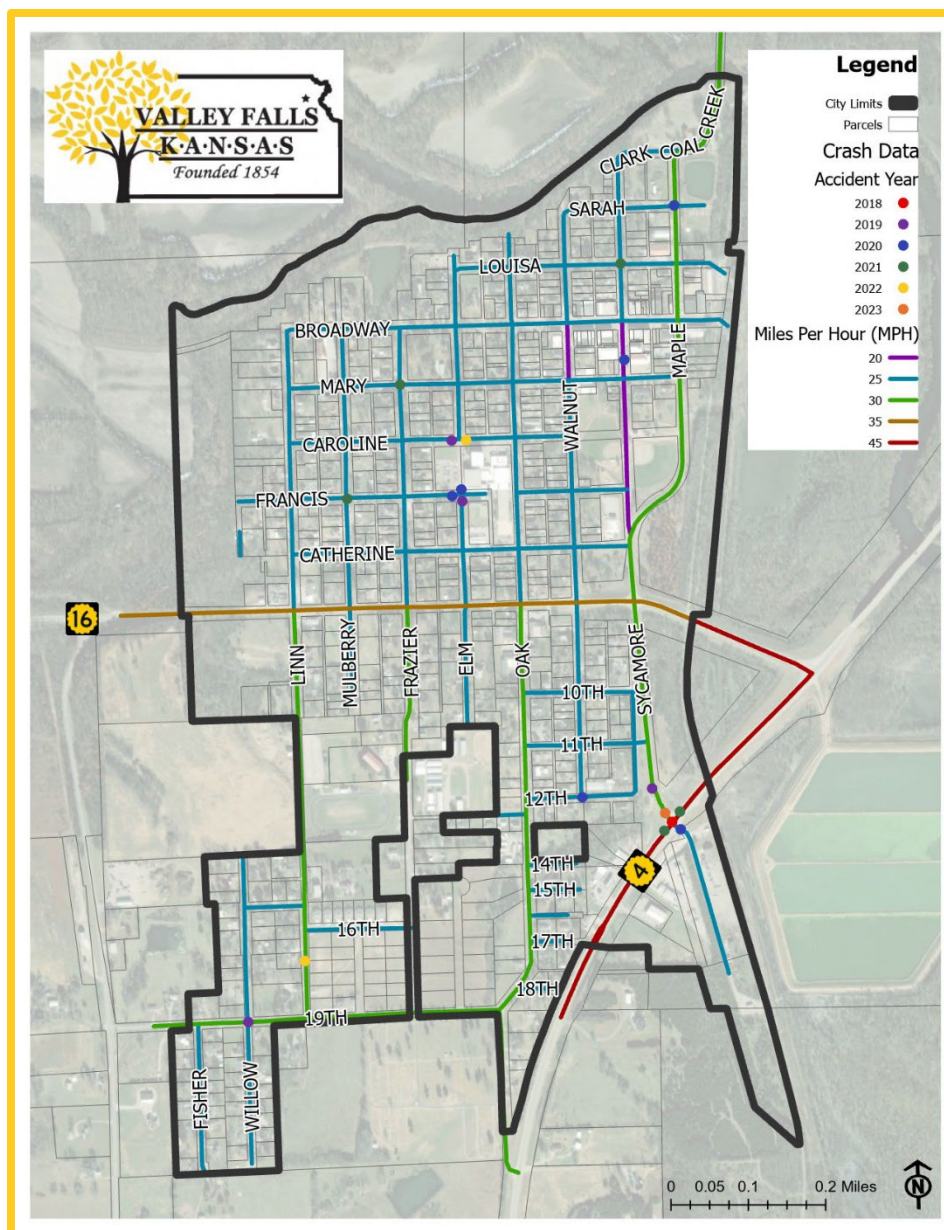
## CRASH DATA ANALYSIS (2018-2023)

The analysis of crash data in Valley Falls, Kansas, from 2018 to 2023 reveals relatively few traffic incidents none of which resulted in death and only one involving a pedestrian. The data helps to identify patterns and contributing factors of accidents to create targeted measures to enhance road safety and reduce the frequency and severity of crashes.

### Overview of Crash Data

The dataset comprises detailed records of nineteen traffic accidents, including the year, type of collision, location description, time of the incident, weather conditions, light conditions, speed limits, involvement of cyclists or pedestrians, contributing circumstances, and specific accident addresses. This comprehensive data allows for a thorough analysis of trends and risk factors associated with traffic incidents in Valley Falls. The full dataset and methodology can be found in the appendix of this plan.





## Key Findings

### Types of Collisions:

The most common type of collision involved other motor vehicles, frequently at angles or side impacts. This indicates intersections as high-risk areas. Collisions with parked motor vehicles were also noted, suggesting issues with roadside parking or driver attentiveness.

### Location of Accidents:

Many accidents occurred at intersections (e.g., K004 HWY and Sycamore St, K016 HWY and Elm St). Intersections are critical points where traffic control measures



should be strengthened. Non-intersection roadways and roadside areas without shoulders are also featured in accident reports, highlighting the need for improved road infrastructure and clear markings.

**Timing and Conditions:**

Accidents occurred at various times of the day, with daylight conditions being the most common. However, incidents during dawn and under streetlights were also significant, indicating a need for better visibility measures. Weather conditions were predominantly clear, with no adverse conditions reported, suggesting that most accidents were likely due to human error or road conditions rather than weather-related factors.

**Speed Limits:**

Speed limits at accident sites varied, with some incidents occurring in higher speed zones (e.g., 45 mph). Speed management, including appropriate signage and enforcement, is crucial to reducing crash severity.

**Contributing Circumstances:**

Common contributing factors included disregarded signs/signals/markings (e.g., running a red light or stop sign) and right-of-way violations (e.g., failure to yield when merging onto a highway). These issues point to the need for better driver education and traffic law enforcement. Vehicle conditions, such as power train failures, were also noted, underscoring the importance of vehicle maintenance and safety checks.

## STATE OF PRACTICE POLICY REVIEW

An extensive review of current city and local policy and plans along with best practices identified at the federal, state, and regional level was conducted to identify opportunities to improve how to prioritize and enhance safety.

### City of Valley Falls Policy Summary

Valley Falls has had no prior major planning efforts in recent times. A review of current city code highlights the following measures:

- Presence of a school zone marked by flashing yellow beacons between the east edge of Walnut Street and the west edge of Elm Street on Phoebe/9th Street/Kansas Highway 16.
- Targeted enforcement near schools during peak times.
- Designated truck routes along KS Highway 4 and 16, Maple St. from Broadway to KS Highway 16, and Broadway St. from Maple St. to Broadway St.
- Parking restrictions.
- Sidewalk repair and standards guidelines.

## **Best Practices Literature and Policy Review**

The policy review below encompasses a summary of best practices as identified by regional and national entities that should be considered and evaluated for need and feasibility of implementation. Best practices were reviewed across the 4-E's of traffic safety: Engineering, Equity, Enforcement, and Education.

### ***Engineering***

1. ***Road Diet Implementation*** ([Federal Highway Administration](#))
  - Evaluate corridors for road diets and other safety calming measures such as pedestrian crossing islands.
2. ***Improved Crosswalks*** ([Federal highway Administration](#))
  - Improve visibility of crosswalks to improve safety while crossing.
3. ***Traffic Calming Measures*** ([Federal Highway Administration](#))
  - Reduce driving speeds to reduce the potential collision likelihood and severity of impact.
  - Review high crash areas against current CIP projects.
  - Develop lists of priority locations for future CIPs.
  - Initiate roadway configuration reviews with engineering support.
  - Install rumble strips leading up to intersections with far sight distances to alert drivers of upcoming stop.

4. **Enhanced Street Lighting** ([Federal Highway Administration](#))

- Increase visibility at intersections to reduce accidents due to poor lighting.

5. **Upgraded Traffic Signals** ([KDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#))

- Utilize the Traffic Engineering Assistance Program.

**Equity**

1. **Community Engagement Programs** ([Mid America Regional Council Transportation Safety Plan](#))

- Create targeted outreach for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, and young and older adult motorists.
- Consider adopting executive policies to demonstrate support of best practices (Distracted driving ordinance, Vision Zero Policy).

2. **Accessibility Audits** ([AARP](#))

- Regularly audit public spaces and transportation infrastructure for accessibility to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Develop and implement a safety corridor program.

3. **Equitable Enforcement Policies** ([Smart Growth America](#))

- Utilize Complete Streets Guidelines to work towards friendly streets for all users including pedestrians and cyclists.

4. **Safe Routes to School** ([Safe Routes](#)) ([Safe Across](#))

- Prioritize sidewalk connections near schools and key points of interest in town.
- Launch a SafeAcross program to enhance pedestrian safety.

5. **Improve Access for Alternative Modes of Transportation** ([AARP](#)) ([Federal Highway Administration](#))

- Encourage the use of ride share programs, shuttle services, or carpooling.
- Improve bikes routes in the city to encourage the use of bicycles.

## ***Enforcement***

1. ***Speed Enforcement*** ([Federal Highway Administration](#))
  - Increase enforcement of traffic laws as well as improve speed limit sign visibility.
2. ***DUI Checkpoints*** ([National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#))
  - Consider implementing publicized Sobriety Checkpoints.
3. ***Distracted Driving Laws*** ([National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#)) ([KDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#))
  - Increased enforcement of traffic laws.
  - Strategic enforcement at intersections with safety issues.
4. ***Commercial Vehicle Compliance*** ([Federal Highway Administration](#))
  - Enforce the use of and improve truck routes in cities to allow for better traffic flow.
5. ***Community Policing Initiatives*** ([Community Oriented Policing Services - Department of Justice](#))
  - Increase local police engagement to allow for education on traffic law and regulations.

## ***Education***

1. ***Road Safety Campaigns*** ([KDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#))
  - Promote seatbelt usage through reminder signage.
  - Improve public awareness for non-motorized road users through educational campaigns and/or signage.
  - Develop educational material for new intersection or transportation infrastructure.

2. ***Driver Education Programs*** ([KDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#))

- Create and deliver education campaigns that target factors in roadway departure crashes.

3. ***School-Based Traffic Safety Programs*** ([MARC](#)) ([KDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#))

- Partner with the high school to educate students about driving safety through the SAFE (Seatbelts Are For Everyone) program.
- Encourage the high school to conduct a road safety and/or seatbelt survey of students.
- Improve data collection and analysis by conducting traffic counts of motorized and non-motorized traffic data.

4. ***Community Workshops*** ([KDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#))

- Host community workshops to educate the community on safe driving policies or discuss priorities and solutions to challenges.
- Implement Local Traffic Safety Coalitions where community members familiar with local roads and neighborhoods can help resolve local issues.

5. ***Partner with KDOT for Program Implementation*** ([KDOT IKE program](#))

- Investigate programs such as Access Management, Drive to Zero, High-Risk Rural Roads, etc. for partnering opportunities with KDOT.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with the community was paramount in determining the countermeasures of this plan and their prioritization. Community engagement took place in the form of website and social media updates, a Steering Committee, Community Survey, and Community Open House. Below is a summary of community engagement.

2024 ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE										
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Website Updates										
Steering Committee Meetings										
Community Survey & Walk Audit										
Public Meetings										

### Steering Committee

A steering committee was formed at the onset of the project. The committee included a diverse group of members representing the chamber, the school, council, and residents at-large. The committee met formally twice and attended the Community Open House to review the draft plan. The committee played an integral role in the project team's understanding of the existing conditions through SWOT discussions, shaping the community survey, prioritizing countermeasures, identifying the Emphasis Areas, and ideation of projects.





A stand-out role the Steering Committee played was conducting a Walk Audit. This initiative assessed the walkability and safety of the transportation network in the three Emphasis Areas: Fraizer St, Broadway St, and surrounding the school. A full summary and documentation of the audits can be found in the appendix of this plan. The findings of the audit enhanced the existing data collected with true current conditions on the ground level. The audits also yielded a new perspective of the community for the committee members and spurred project recommendations.

### **Community Survey**

A community survey was available and promoted for two months to gain public input on challenges, priorities, and preference for potential countermeasures. The survey was promoted through:

- City Facebook posts
- City website
- Local Newspaper
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday's Broadway Lights event
- Existing contact lists including the Chamber, Rotary club and Centenarian club.
- Flyer distribution
- Word of mouth and assistance from the Steering Committee

Optional demographic questions were included to help track participation compared to the community make-up while not deterring anyone from completing the survey. Paper copies of the survey were made available for those with technology barriers.

A full survey report can be found in the appendix of this plan. Key takeaways include:

- 64 total respondents.
- A strong community consensus for the importance of creating safer streets in Valley Falls. *90% of respondents believe it's important – very important.*
- A clear desire for improved sidewalk infrastructure and network. *The top two safety concerns were condition of sidewalks and lack of sidewalks. The number 1 solution to improve safety was to add or improve pedestrian infrastructure.*
- Priority for improving the pedestrian infrastructure around parks. *52% said they would like to be able to walk to parks but currently it's a challenge.*
- Some speeding concerns along Linn and near the school. *Speeding was the 3<sup>rd</sup> top traffic safety concern.*
- Significant visibility challenges were noted at Fraizer and K-16 (Phoebe St.). *A concentration of points were added to the map at the intersection noting both pedestrian crossing and vehicle visibility challenges due to the hill.*
- Residents' top 3 values for the brick streets are charm and character, safety, and durability.



## Community Open House

The community at large was invited to an open house to review the draft countermeasures and projects. The meeting was advertised through similar channels as the survey. A brief overview presentation provided attendees with background information, survey results, and a high-level overview of the plan. Attendees then explored the drafted countermeasures and projects providing feedback and prioritization for projects. The open house format allowed attendees more flexibility to come and go at their convenience.



## COUNTERMEASURE TOOLBOX

The following table identifies recommended countermeasures based on best practices and community input organized by the 4 E's of traffic safety.

### Equity

Countermeasure	Priority	Timeframe
<b>A)</b> Conduct Accessibility Audits of public spaces and transportation infrastructure to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	High Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>B)</b> Develop and implement plans that ensure children from all neighborhoods have safe and accessible routes to school.	High Priority	Short-term (1-5 years)
<b>C)</b> Consider incorporating equity scoring based on more detailed demographic analysis and community input for targeted improvements such as in areas of lower income or where children and/or elderly populations are higher.	Low Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>D)</b> Improve access for all members of the community to key destinations, trails, and neighborhoods along a safe, connected, and well-maintained transportation network.	High Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>E)</b> Pursue grant opportunities for capital improvements including Safe Routes to School, Safe Streets for All Implementation, KDOT's Cost Share program, the Traffic Engineering Assistance Program, and the Build Kansas Matching Fund.	High Priority	Medium-term (5 - 10 years)

#### Rationale:

Most countermeasures in this equity category were deemed high priority by the steering committee. The highest priority was to increase safety around the school. Many students walk to and from school as well as to after-school sporting events. The limited or worn pedestrian infrastructure is a top priority to improve with some quicker fixes identified in the recommended projects for the School Emphasis Area.



## Engineering

Countermeasure	Priority	Timeframe
<b>F)</b> Develop a Community Walkability Plan to fill sidewalk gaps and provide safer crossings, curb ramps and other improvements.	High Priority	Short-term (1-5 years)
<b>G)</b> Regularly track and analyze crash data to ensure the continued success of meeting Vision Zero and to develop a traffic safety performance measurement program.	Low Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>H)</b> Incorporate where applicable measures from the FHWA's EDC5-Reducing Rural Roadway Departure initiative such as improved curve delineation, friction treatments in curves, rumble strips or barriers to reduce crash severity.	Low Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>I)</b> Establish a brick streets policy for mobility safety and infrastructure management.	High Priority	Long-term (10+ years)

### Rationale:

Walkability and the pedestrian infrastructure was identified as the top challenge from the onset of this plan and confirmed through the community survey and Walk Audits. Because of this, a priority next step for the community is to develop a Walkability Plan to focus on upgrading the pedestrian network more specifically. Valley Falls also has charming brick streets on Broadway St. downtown and Fraizer St. While the streets provide unique character and charm, the need for a brick streets policy was identified to ensure safety and good infrastructure management.

## Education

Countermeasure	Priority	Timeframe
<b>J)</b> Initiate community conversations to enforce and strengthen property owner sidewalk maintenance in the community.	Low Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>K)</b> Partner with the Valley Falls schools to participate in annual safety restraint enforcement campaigns.	Low Priority	Short-term (1-5 years)

### Rationale:

Education countermeasures were identified as lower priority by the steering committee. The community currently enjoys minimal traffic incidents. Building ownership of sidewalk maintenance will take time, and as the community witnesses improvements from the city, may grow.

## Enforcement

Countermeasure	Priority	Timeframe
<b>L)</b> Strengthen development requirements to require sidewalk connections and enhance the safety of intersections if applicable.	High Priority	Long-term (10+ years)
<b>M)</b> Promote strategic police enforcement in corridors and intersections with safety issues; including conducting speed studies where applicable.	High Priority	Short-term (1-5 years)

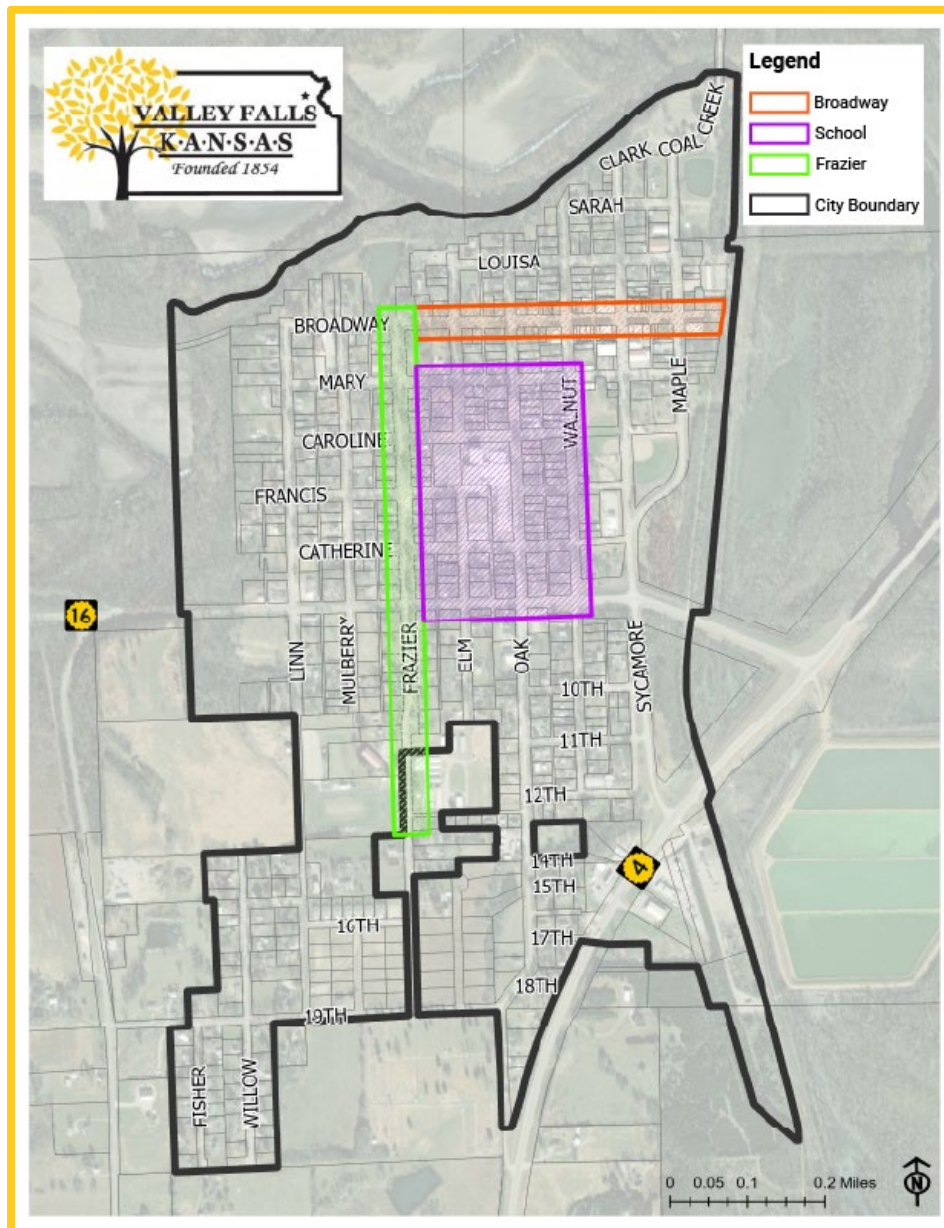
### Rationale:

Valley Falls currently implements targeted enforcement in certain areas such as the school at peak times, which is recommended to continue. Strengthening development requirements was identified as an excellent way to reduce burden for a small local government.



## Recommended Safety Projects

As a part of the planning process, key areas of focus, referred to as Emphasis Areas, were identified. These are areas of primary concern due to safety impact, infrastructure condition, and level of use. The areas are Frazier St., Broadway St., and around the school. Specific infrastructure projects for the Emphasis Areas are below with priority based on community feedback from the steering committee and open house.



## Broadway

<i>Location:</i>	East side of Walnut Street: 5th Street to Broadway (connects with the School Area)
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install approximately 100 ft. of new sidewalk with applicable ADA ramps.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	A, D, F
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$2,000
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)
<i>Location:</i>	Broadway Street in downtown Valley Falls
<i>Project Description:</i>	Remove approximately 700 ft of brick sidewalk and install new concrete sidewalk with applicable ADA ramps.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	A, D, F, I
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$36,800
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)
<i>Location:</i>	Walnut Street to Maple Street and 3rd Street to 5th Street.
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install new crosswalks and applicable ADA ramps on all on all intersections.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	A, D, F
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$8,800
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)
<i>Location:</i>	Broadway from Elm to Walnut
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install approximately 700 ft of new sidewalks with applicable ADA ramps along Broadway to connect City Park to Downtown.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	D, F
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$25,000
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Long-term (10+ years)

## School

<i>Location:</i>	7 <sup>th</sup> Street and Oak Street
<i>Project Description:</i>	New school crosswalk with applicable signage.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	B
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$600
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)
<i>Location:</i>	Midblock on Oak Street between 7 <sup>th</sup> Street and 8 <sup>th</sup> Street.
<i>Project Description:</i>	Remove mid-block crosswalk
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	B
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$300
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Long-term (10+ years)
<i>Location:</i>	8 <sup>th</sup> Street and Oak Street
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install new school crosswalks, applicable ADA ramps, and signage on all four legs of the intersection
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	B
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$9,800
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)
<i>Location:</i>	8 <sup>th</sup> Street and Elm Street
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install missing school crosswalk, applicable ADA ramps, and signage; and install missing sidewalk links (approximately 400 ft) on both the east and west sides.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	A, B, E
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$16,400
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Long-term (10+ years)

<i>Location:</i>	Caroline from Oak and Walnut
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install approximately 400 ft of new sidewalks with applicable ADA ramps on north and south sides to increase safety from school to ball fields.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	B, D, K
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$15,000
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Long-term (10+ years)
<i>Location:</i>	Sycamore Street adjacent to the ball fields
<i>Project Description:</i>	New crosswalk and signage between ball fields
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	D
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$600
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Long-term (10+ years)

### **Fraizer**

<i>Location:</i>	City Park
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install approximately 700 ft of new sidewalks on north and south side; remove approximately 350 ft of brick sidewalk on east side on Frazier and replace with new concrete sidewalk; install crosswalk and applicable ADA ramps on all four perimeter intersections.
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	A, D, I
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$25,500
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)

## Other

<i>Location:</i>	Highway K-16 and Oak Street
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install pedestrian crosswalk
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	D
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$500
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Short-term (1-5 years)
<i>Location:</i>	Sycamore and Mary (5 <sup>th</sup> Street) Crosswalk
<i>Project Description:</i>	Install pedestrian crosswalk
<i>Applicable Countermeasure(s):</i>	D
<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	\$500
<i>Timeframe:</i>	Long-term (10+ years)

## FUNDING & RESOURCES

Funding can be sought to implement the following aspects of this Action Plan:

1. **Infrastructure Improvements:** Expenses related to roadway materials or traffic calming, and pedestrian infrastructure like sidewalks and crosswalks.
2. **Enforcement and Policy Changes:** Costs for implementing speed limit changes and targeted law enforcement.
3. **Education and Awareness Campaigns:** Community outreach, school programs, and production of educational materials.
4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Funds for data collection, analysis, and reporting to assess progress.

### Potential Funding Sources and Partnerships

#### 1. Federal and State Grants

- **Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program:** Administered by the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), the TA Program funds projects that enhance non-motorized transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.
- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):** Grants for road safety and traffic enforcement programs.
- **Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program:** This program provides resources and funding to encourage and enable students in grades K–12 to walk, bike, or roll to school safely.

#### 2. Local Government Funds

- **General Funds:** Allocation from the city or county budget for public safety and infrastructure.



- **Special Road and Street Fund:** Leveraging state-provided funds designated for local road improvements.

### 3. **Public-Private Partnerships**

- **Collaborations with Local Businesses:** Engage local businesses to sponsor specific projects or educational campaigns.
- **Community Foundations:** Partner with local foundations that focus on public health and safety for funding and support.

### 4. **Crowdfunding and Community Contributions**

- **Online Fundraising:** Utilize platforms like GoFundMe or Kickstarter for specific community-backed projects.
- **Local Fundraisers:** Organize community events to raise awareness and funds.

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

## Methods for Tracking Progress

### 1. Data Collection and Analysis

- Regularly collect and analyze traffic incident data to assess changes in safety conditions. Consider conducting additional walk audits to monitor progress and assess new priority areas.
- Coordinate with law enforcement, healthcare facilities, and emergency services for comprehensive data on traffic incidents and outcomes.
- Use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to monitor the effectiveness of infrastructure improvements. See provided recreation methodology in appendix.

### 2. Community Feedback Systems

- Implement and maintain feedback channels (such as surveys, public meetings, and comment forums) for community input on the plan's impact.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

### 1. Reduction in Traffic Fatalities and Serious Injuries

- Monitor year-over-year changes in the number of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from traffic incidents to ensure the community maintains Vision Zero.

### 2. Infrastructure Improvement Implementation

- Track the completion and effectiveness of new traffic safety infrastructure projects.

### 3. Public Engagement and Education

- Evaluate the reach and impact of public awareness campaigns through participation rates and feedback.

## Schedule for Regular Reporting and Plan Updates

### 1. Quarterly Reports

- Provide updates on ongoing actions, KPI progress, and immediate challenges or changes in strategy.

### 2. Annual Comprehensive Review

- Conduct a thorough annual review to assess yearly progress, reevaluate goals, and make adjustments to strategies as necessary.

### 3. Five-Year Strategic Review

- Every five years, undertake a comprehensive strategic review to assess long-term progress, evolving community needs, and changes in priorities.

### 4. Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement

- Regularly engage with stakeholders including businesses, the school, community organizations, and residents to gather input and share progress.



# VALLEY FALLS, KANSAS

Appendix

2024





# Valley Falls, KS Safe Streets for All

## Crash Data Analysis for Valley Falls, Kansas (2018-2023)

### Introduction

The analysis of crash data in Valley Falls, Kansas, from 2018 to 2023 reveals critical insights into traffic incidents, helping to inform strategies for the Safe Streets for All Action Plan. By understanding the patterns and contributing factors of these accidents, we can implement targeted measures to enhance road safety and reduce the frequency and severity of crashes.

### Overview of Crash Data

The dataset comprises detailed records of nineteen traffic accidents, including the year, type of collision, location description, time of the incident, weather conditions, light conditions, speed limits, involvement of cyclists or pedestrians, contributing circumstances, and specific accident addresses. This comprehensive data allows for a thorough analysis of trends and risk factors associated with traffic incidents in Valley Falls.

## Key Findings

### Types of Collisions:

The most common type of collision involved other motor vehicles, frequently at angles or side impacts. This indicates intersections as high-risk areas. Collisions with parked motor vehicles were also noted, suggesting issues with roadside parking or driver attentiveness.

### Location of Accidents:

Many accidents occurred at intersections (e.g., K004 HWY and Sycamore St, K016 HWY and Elm St). Intersections are critical points where traffic control measures should be strengthened. Non-intersection roadways and roadside areas without shoulders are also featured in accident reports, highlighting the need for improved road infrastructure and clear markings.

### Timing and Conditions:

Accidents occurred at various times of the day, with daylight conditions being the most common. However, incidents during dawn and under streetlights were also significant, indicating a need for better visibility measures. Weather conditions were predominantly clear, with no adverse conditions reported, suggesting that most accidents were likely due to human error or road conditions rather than weather-related factors.

**Speed Limits:**

Speed limits at accident sites varied, with some incidents occurring in higher speed zones (e.g., 45 mph). Speed management, including appropriate signage and enforcement, is crucial to reducing crash severity.

**Contributing Circumstances:**

Common contributing factors included disregarded signs/signals/markings (e.g., running a red light or stop sign) and right-of-way violations (e.g., failure to yield when merging onto a highway). These issues point to the need for better driver education and traffic law enforcement. Vehicle conditions, such as power train failures, were also noted, underscoring the importance of vehicle maintenance and safety checks.



# Valley Falls, KS Safe Streets for All

## Summary of Valley Falls, KS Walk Audit

The Valley Falls Walk Audit aimed to assess the walkability, pedestrian safety, and infrastructure in key areas of the town to guide future improvements. The audit focused on identifying potential enhancements for safety, accessibility, and comfort for all users, including children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. Below is a breakdown of the findings from three specific walk audit areas: Broadway Street, Fraizer Street, and the School Zone.

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### Broadway Street Walk Audit

- **Overall Condition:** The Broadway Street corridor exhibits significant wear and tear on both the road and sidewalks, with portions of the sidewalk being in particularly poor condition. Many intersections lack marked crosswalks and ADA-compliant ramps, and pedestrian safety features like crossing signals are largely absent.
- **Intersections:** Intersections like Broadway and Maple Street or Broadway and Walnut Street lack clear crosswalks, making pedestrian navigation unsafe. While stop signs are generally visible, the lack of ADA-compliant infrastructure presents challenges.
- **Sidewalks:** Many sidewalks are composed of brick and concrete but are misaligned, cracked, and interrupted by driveways or alleys, further decreasing walkability. The poor condition of the sidewalks, especially the mixed materials and vertical misalignments, presents safety hazards for pedestrians.

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### Fraizer Street Walk Audit

- **Overall Condition:** Fraizer Street experiences lighter traffic, and the road is in fair condition, with some signs of wear and tear. However, pedestrian infrastructure is still lacking in marked crosswalks and ADA-compliant ramps.
- **Intersections:** Similar to Broadway, the intersections along Fraizer Street, such as Fraizer and Mary Streets, also lack marked crosswalks and pedestrian signals, but stop signs are visible and reflective. The road condition is fair, with minor cracks and unevenness.

- **Sidewalks:** Some sections of sidewalks along Fraizer Street are in better condition than Broadway, with fewer interruptions, although some overgrowth and missing segments exist in specific areas, leading to inconsistent walkability. Cars parking on sidewalks are a noted issue, further obstructing pedestrian movement.

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### School Zone Walk Audit

- **Overall Condition:** The area around the school faces more significant challenges due to the high pedestrian traffic during school hours and a lack of adequate pedestrian infrastructure. Many roads, including Mary Street, are severely cracked, potholed, and poorly marked, contributing to hazardous conditions.
- **Intersections:** Key intersections in the school zone, such as Elm and Caroline Streets, experience heavy traffic during school hours, yet they lack ADA ramps, pedestrian crossing signs, or push-button crossings. Stop signs are visible, but the absence of crosswalk markings adds to the risks.
- **Sidewalks:** Sidewalks in the school zone are in very poor condition, often misaligned and heavily overgrown. Segments of the sidewalk are missing in many places, making it challenging for pedestrians, especially students, to navigate the area safely. The lack of continuous and safe sidewalks is a critical issue.

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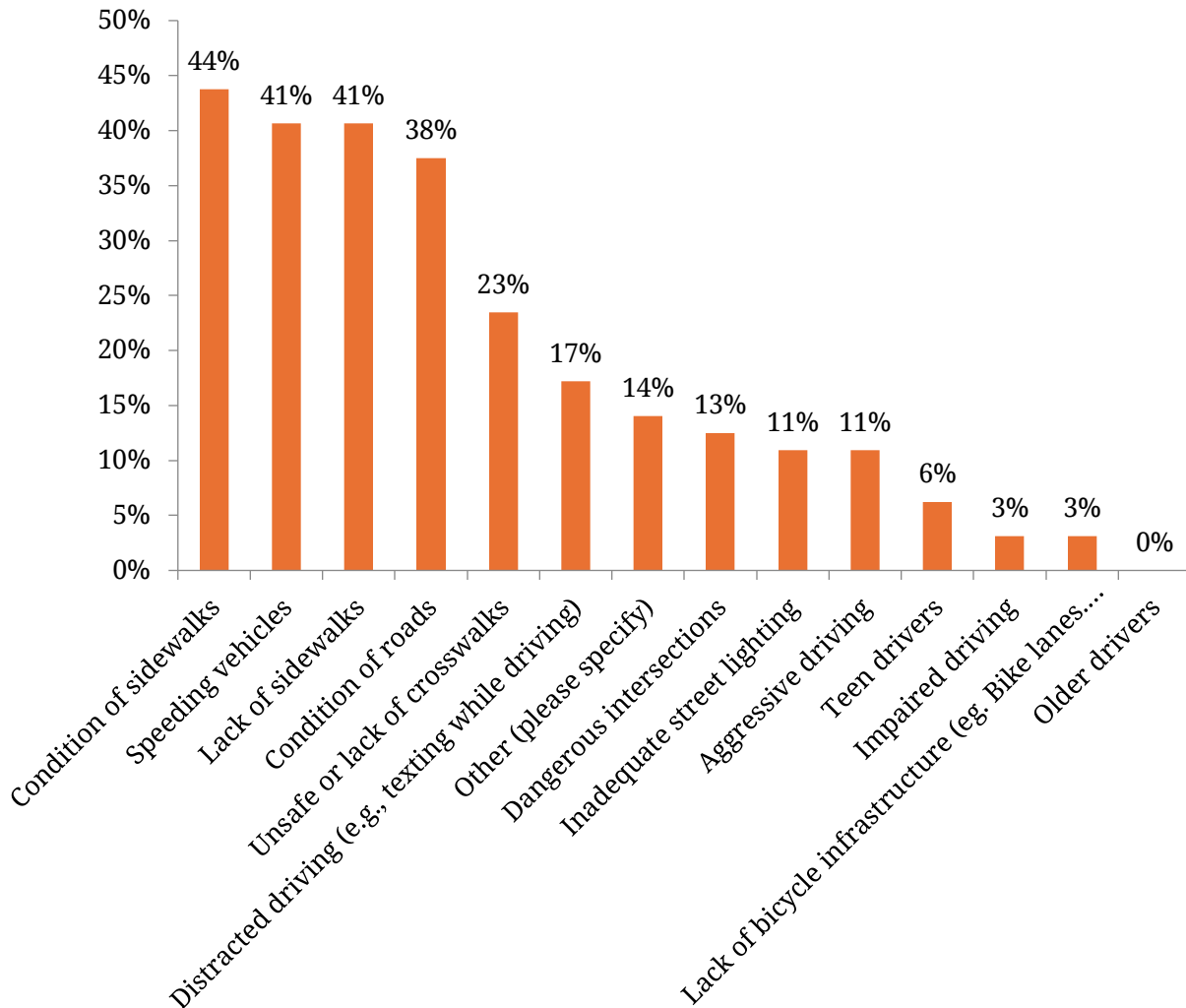
### Conclusion:

Each walk audit area in Valley Falls demonstrates significant deficiencies in pedestrian infrastructure. The lack of marked crosswalks, ADA compliance, and continuous sidewalks are key issues across Broadway, Fraizer, and the school zone, with the school zone being particularly concerning due to heavy pedestrian traffic during school hours. These findings suggest an urgent need for improvements to ensure pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout the town.

# Valley Falls, KS Safe Streets for All

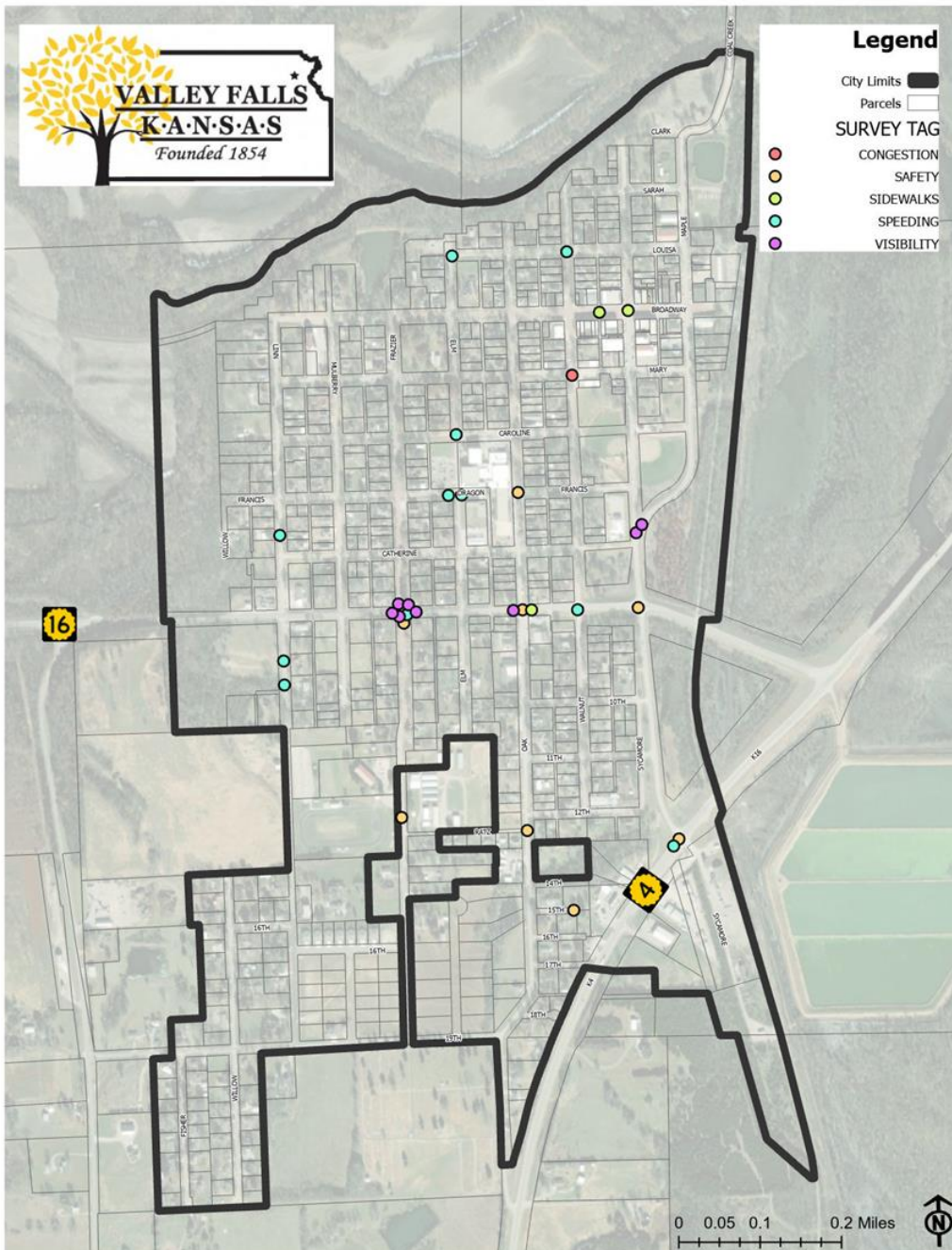
## Community Survey Results

**Q1. What are your top traffic safety concerns in Valley Falls? (Select up to 3)**



*Other responses: even younger drivers with farmers permits, narrow streets allowing parking on both sides, golf carts and children, ATV and off road vehicles, sidewalk cracks in front of the store front, too many police, crossing 16 Highway*

**Q2. Do you have a specific area of traffic safety concern in Valley Falls? If so, click the location on the map below**



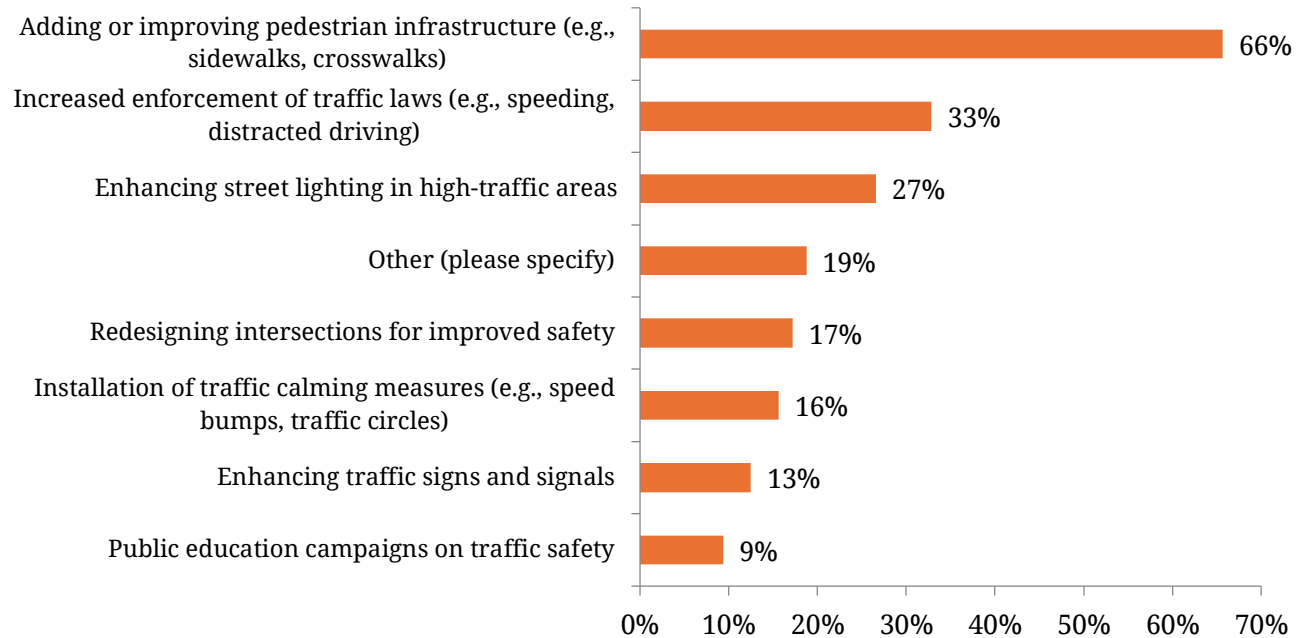
#### **Q4. Please briefly explain your concern**

- hard to see vehicles coming from south
- I just get nervous at blinker light hill because of the incline and the speed of K16 drivers, but it doesn't seem to be a problem for others. I just avoid it and go to a different intersection.
- Crosswalk missing at highway, very dangerous for students.
- Cars come up over the hill too quickly....watch for pedestrians.
- We live on the outskirts of the town so we get a lot of traffic. People are always speeding by and we have several home with young children. I am afraid one day someone is going to get hurt.
- You can't see vehicles coming up over the hill there from the west. It's terrible dangerous and it needs to either have the hill cut down or an actual traffic light. Not just the blinking light that people coming from the west pay no attention to.
- high school kid speeding out of the parking lot and onto Elm St
- No crosswalk. Speeding drivers. Drivers won't stop for kids trying to cross
- This is a dangerous intersection with speeding vehicles coming from both direction on 16 highway. Also, the north Frazier corner needs some road work. The asphalt is crumbling.
- Vehicles at Scott's often create traffic hazards where traffic cannot get through. Had to back up on at the stop sign so car could get through
- Frazier street is in bad shape
- I see lots of kids crossing this intersection. I know the school's track team and football teams cross here everyday when they walk from the school to the track and football field. Vehicles coming from the west to the top of this hill cannot see the kids walking across the highway.
- Since the school track was rubberized, there is no safe place for kids to ride their bikes and parents with stroller to walk.
- Kids speeding out of school parking lot and going wrong way down elm everyday to school parking lot
- some people yield, but a lot of people don't, and trees are in the way of view
- Sycamore and Broadway sidewalk is in horrible condition
- The traffic codes for this intersection are often not followed correctly; especially in regards to yields, stopping and speed.
- Stop sign isn't used and speeding
- I'd like to see sidewalks on Frazier. It's next to the school, park, and football field.
- At blinker light hard to know whether traffic is coming over hill on K16
- the hill is scary when you're pulling out
- speeding vehicles on the curve. No safe place to walk
- Wherever my truck is
- I think there should be a turn lane in the middle of K4 Hwy to people turning left onto Sycamore Street

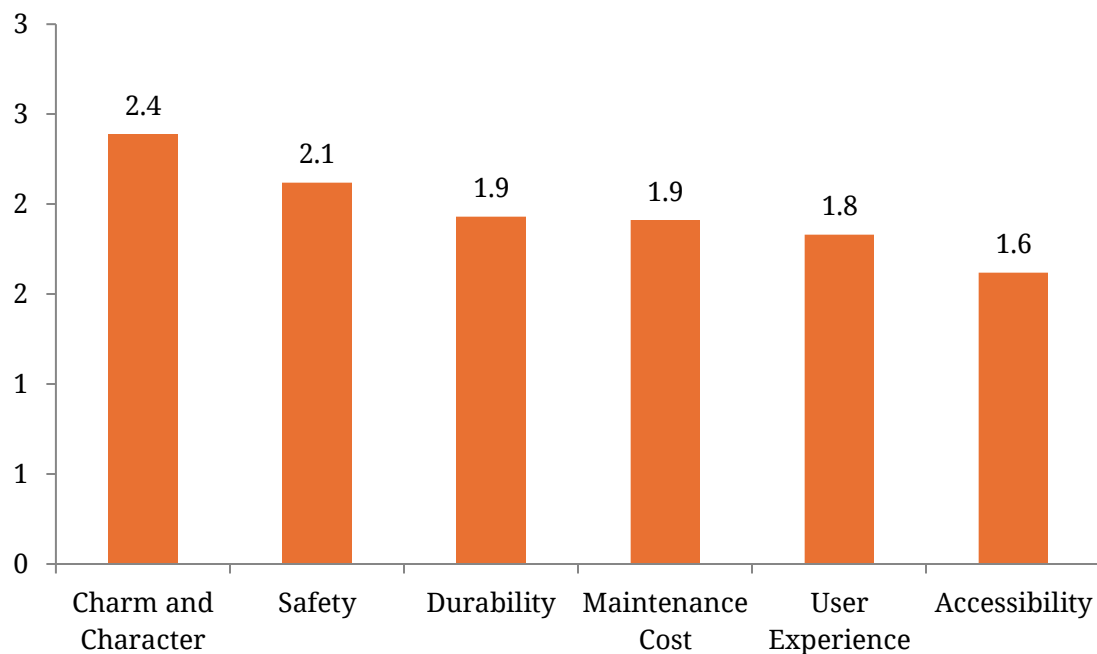
- I believe we should have better crosswalk markings and safety measures for kids crossing the highway to go to school
- Linn street is a raceway
- Not having a safe way for lawn mowers, golf carts and small side by sides a safe way to get from the end of 15th St to the Casey's General store for elderly or disabled persons
- Traffic on Linn Street seems to be moving quite fast
- Crosswalk at oak and k16
- I have a problem with the area around the school and on the highway before and after school
- Speeding vehicles on Linn st from broadway to 16hwy. There should be a stop sign at at least one of the intersections on Linn.
- Speeding along with cars coming on/off highway from both sides of the road.
- Blind spot coming over the hill. Kids use this intersection to cross the highway coming from the track field.
- Most of the vehicles passing this intersection aren't going anywhere NEAR 35 MPH.
- The roads are horrible. The trash trucks destroy the pavement at most places they pick up cans. Road repairs are filled with gravel.
- High school students leaving school and not looking for younger kids. They see how fast they can drive out of the parking lot.
- Off road vehicles crossing highway with disregard of driving laws
- All Street curbs and drains need cleaned and maintained. Bricks need repaired, potholes need repaired, sidewalks need redone especially downtown
- Crossing the highway on foot or vehicle is dangerous. Kids cross there for track & football
- Blind Hill / Intersection.
- The road is awful here. There are many parts of town where the roads are bad, but this part of Oak is terrible.



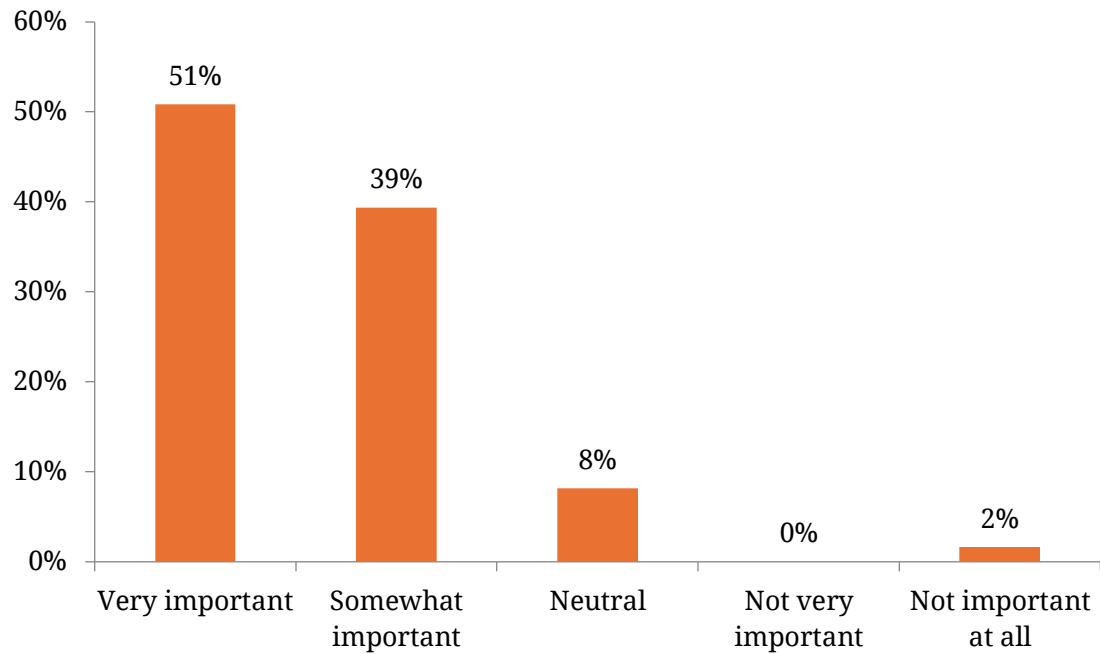
#### Q4. Which types of solutions do you believe would be most effective in improving traffic safety in Valley Falls? (Select up to 3)



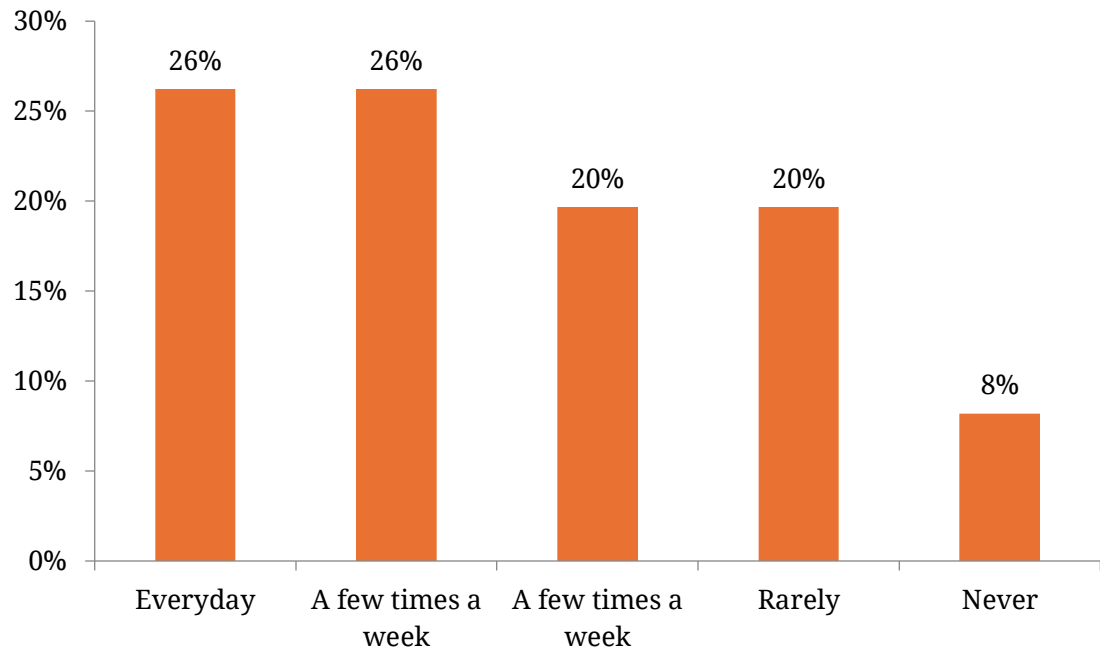
#### Q5. Ranked values of brick streets (weighted score)



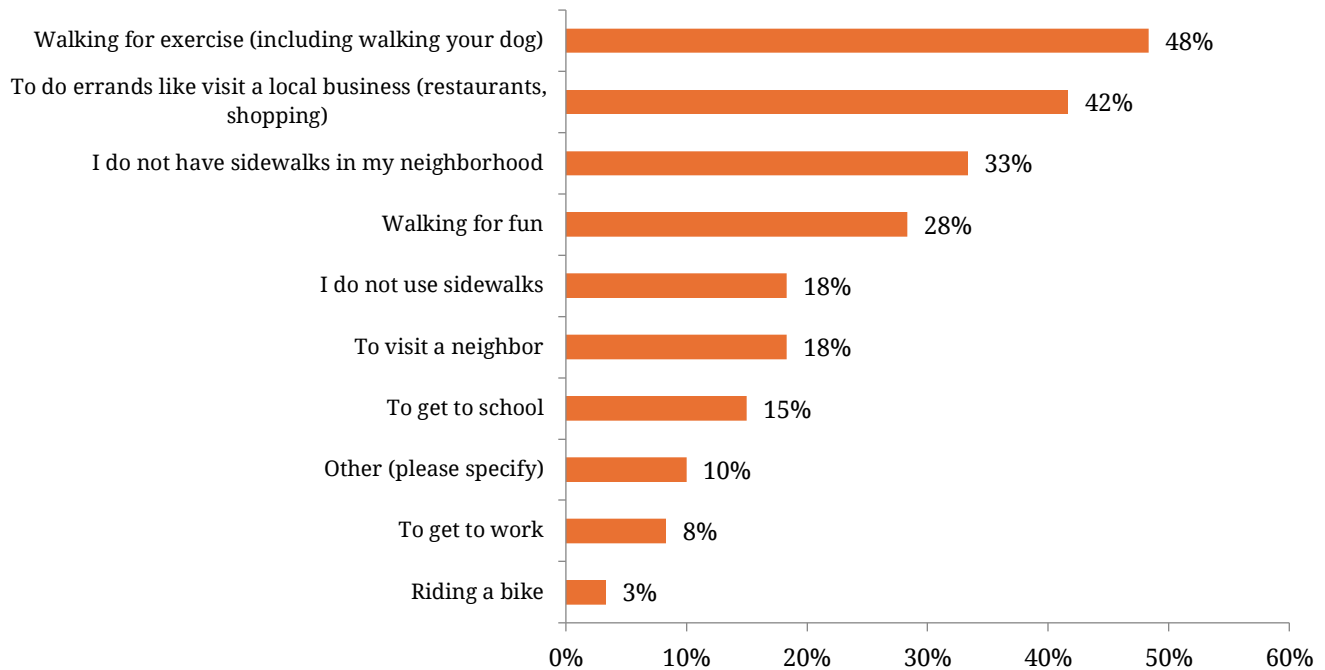
**Q6. How important is it for Valley Falls to prioritize creating safer streets for pedestrians?**



**Q7. How often do you walk in Valley Falls?**

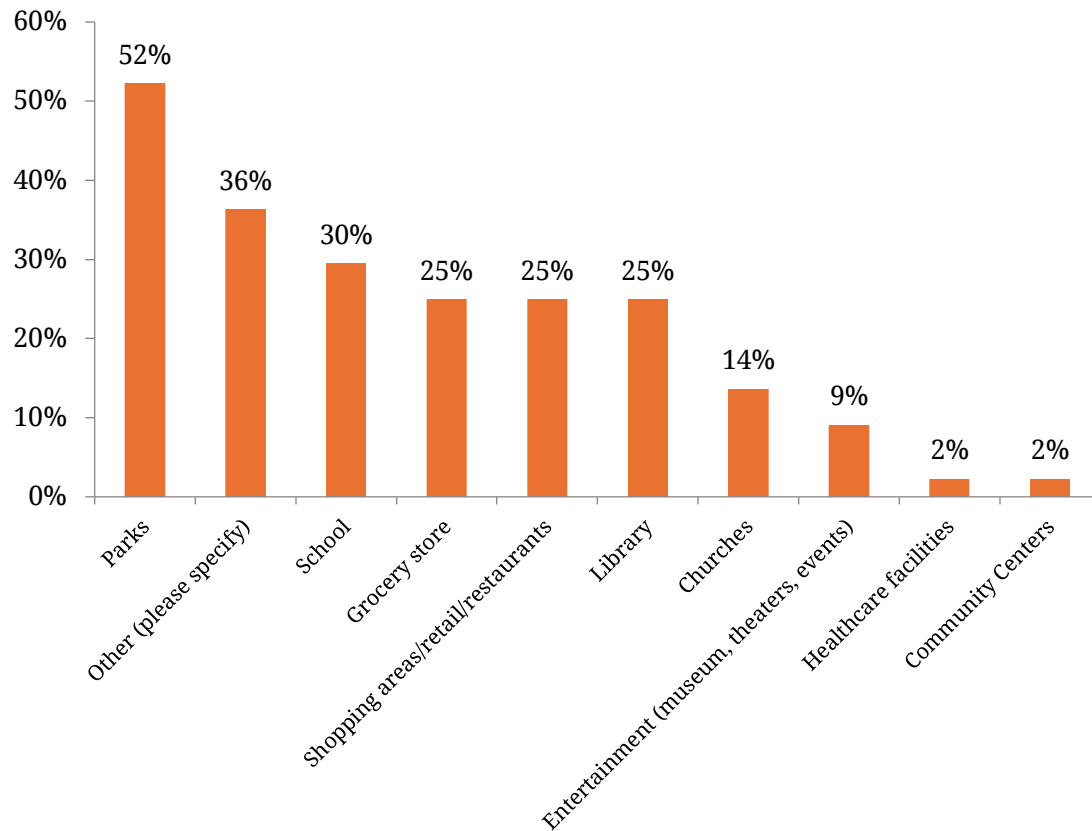


### Q8. How do you currently use sidewalks? Check all that apply



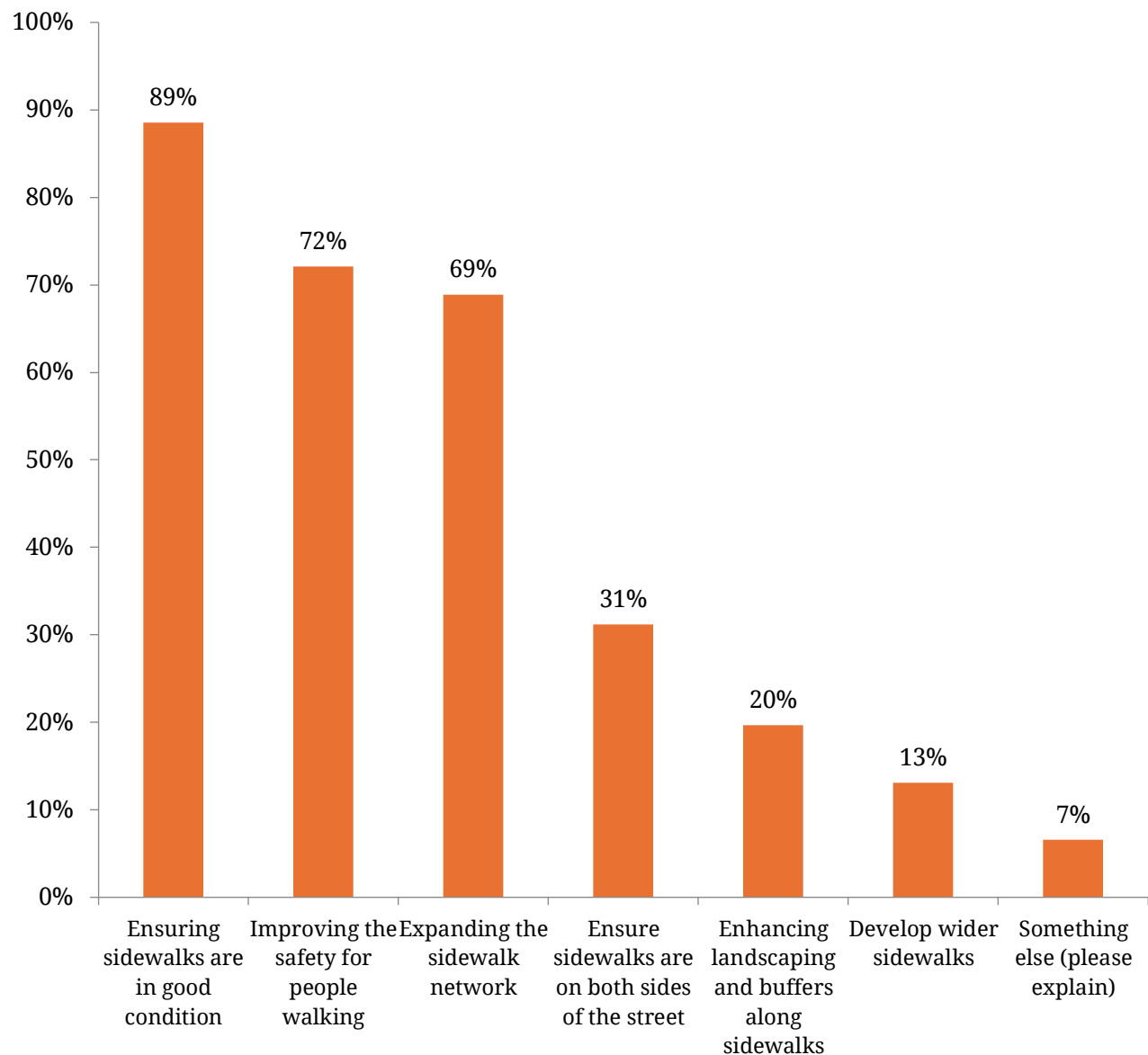
*Other responses included: sidewalks are hard to use because they're inconsistent, not maintained, difficult for strollers and wheelchairs causing the need to walk in the road.*

**Q9. Where would you like to be able to walk to, but it is currently a challenge?**  
**Check all that apply**



*Other answers included: ballfields, football field, the south side of town, down to the river, leading to Doodlebug Trail, around town in general, residential areas, walk in the street when needed but would prefer sidewalks, near K4 or K16.*

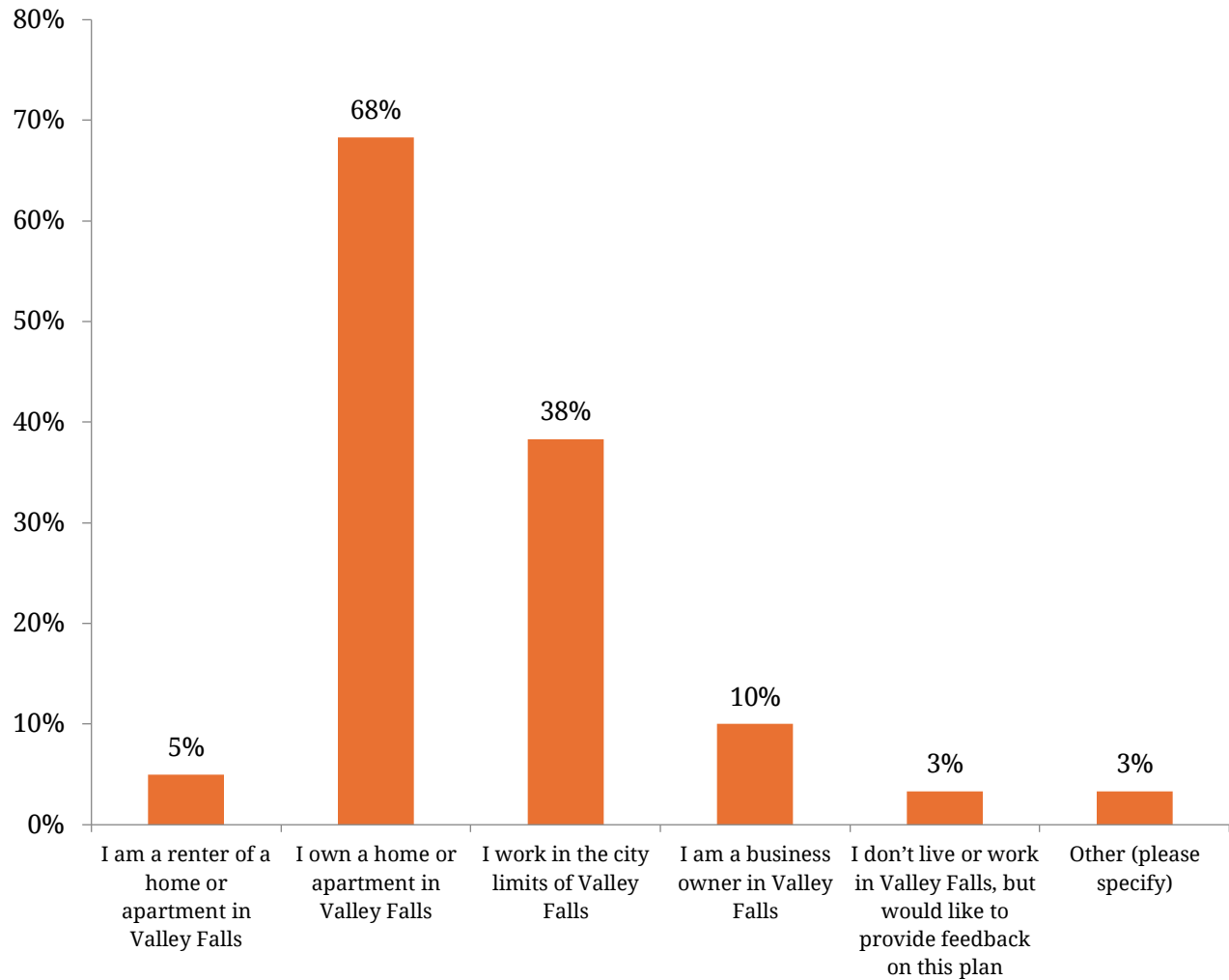
### Q10. What are your top 3 priorities for sidewalks in Valley Falls?



*Other responses included: along sycamore between K4 and K16 and vehicle convenience to pass by pedestrians that have a dedicated space rather than the street.*

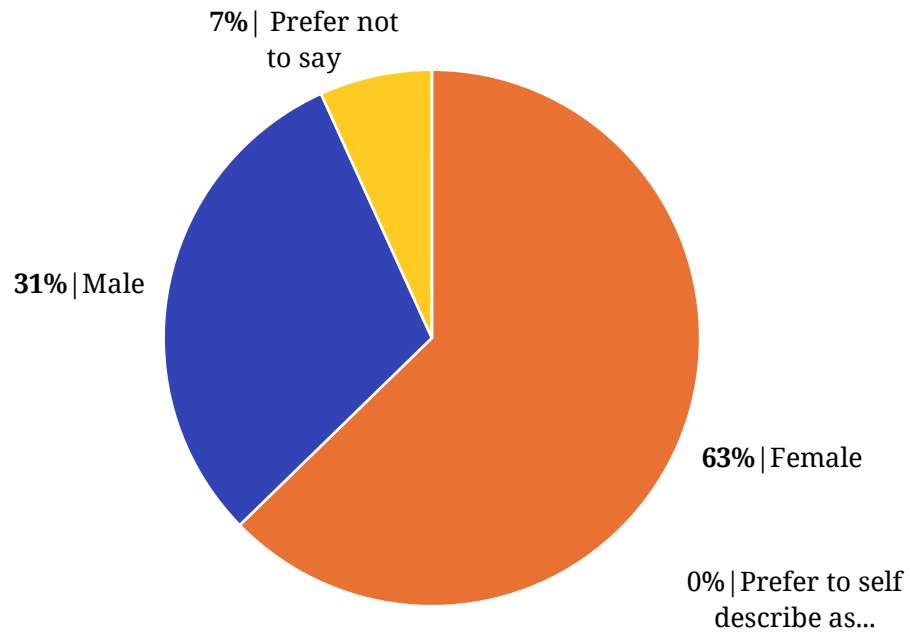
## Demographics

**Q11. Tell us from which of the following perspectives you are providing input (select all that apply):**

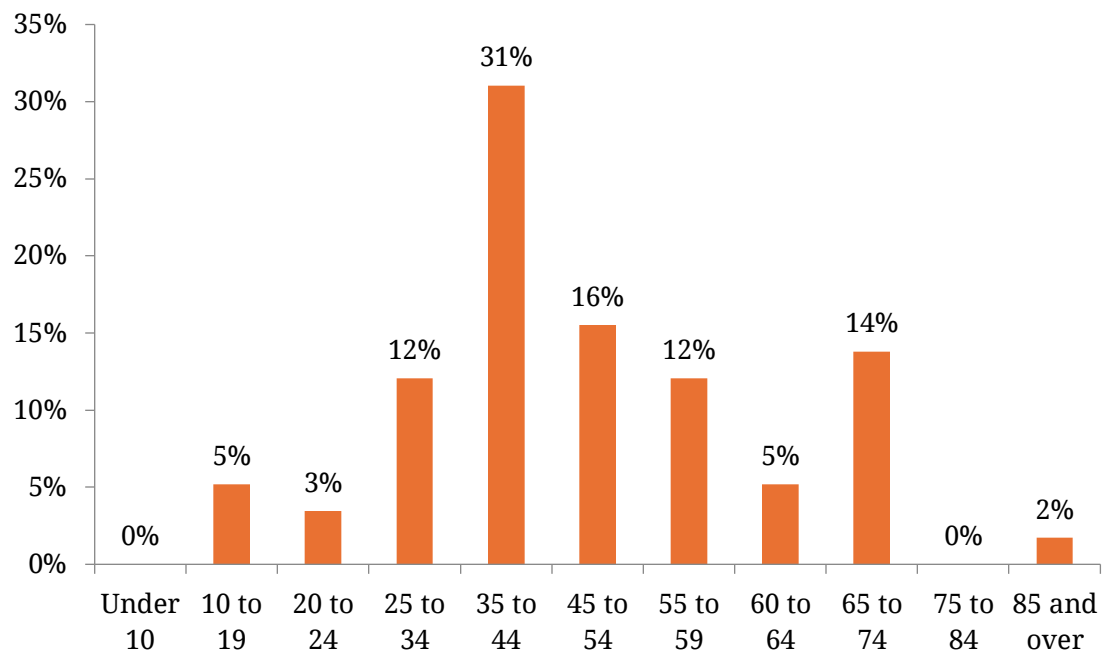


*Other responses include: Living with parents who own a home in Valley Falls, do business in Valley Falls*

### Q12. Do you identify as . . .

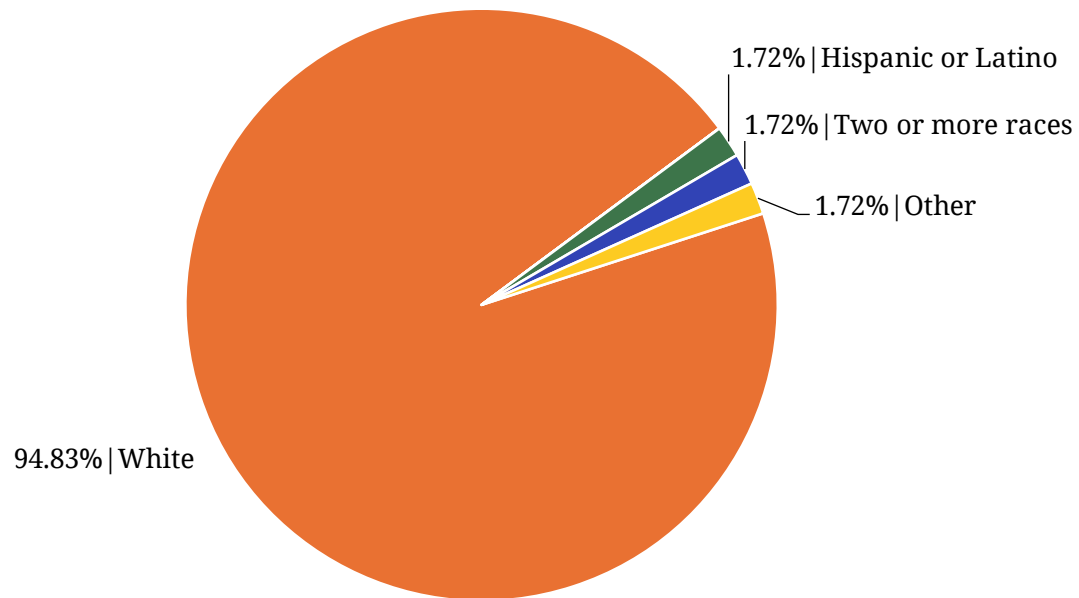


### Q13. What is your age?





**Q14. What is your ethnicity?**



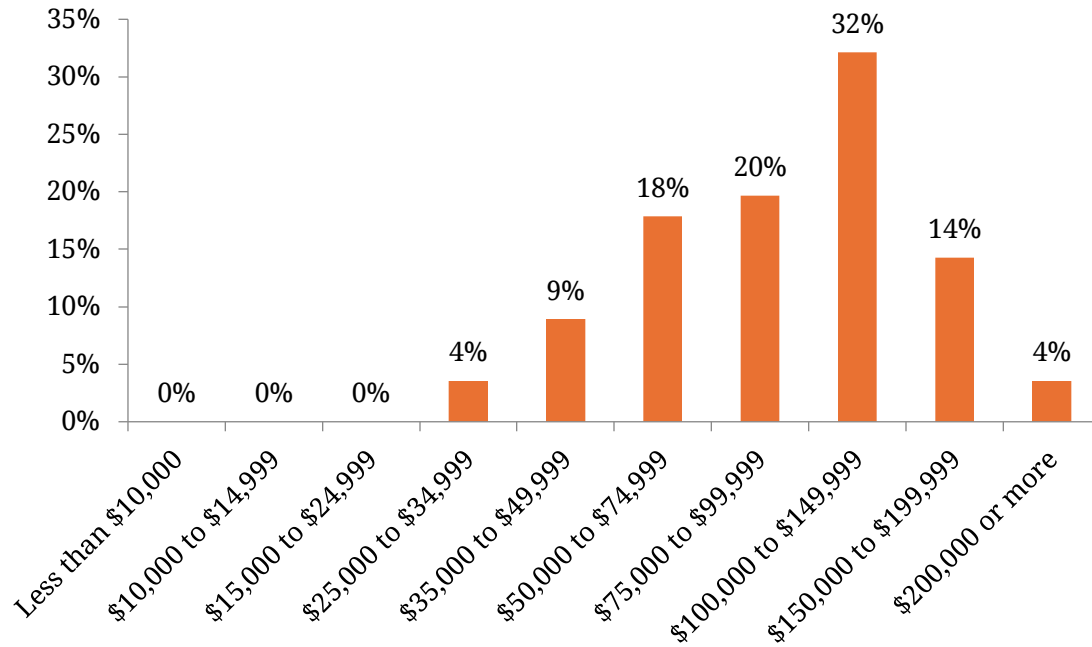
0% Black or African American

0% American Indian or Alaskan Native

0% Asian

0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

**Q15. What is your total household income (before taxes)**



# Valley Falls, KS Safe Streets for All

## Methodology to Recreate Annual Crash Distribution Using Available Data

To recreate the annual distribution of crashes for Valley Falls, Kansas, follow these steps. This methodology leverages resources efficiently and utilizes available tools such as GIS software for analysis.

### Step 1: Obtain Crash Data

- State of Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT): Request historical crash data from KDOT. This data typically includes details on the date, type, location, and contributing factors of each crash.
- Ensure you get data in a format that can be imported into GIS software, such as CSV or Excel files.

### Step 2: Prepare the Data for Import

- Clean the data by checking for and correcting any missing or erroneous values.
- Standardize date formats and ensure all relevant columns (e.g., accident date, type, location) are correctly formatted.

### Step 3: Import Data into GIS Software

- Use GIS software (e.g., QGIS, ArcGIS) to import the cleaned crash data.
- Create a point layer for the crash locations using latitude and longitude coordinates or address geocoding.

### Step 4: Add Year Attribute

- Extract the year from the accident date and add it as an attribute in the GIS layer.

### Step 5: Aggregate Data by Year

- Use GIS tools to group the crash data by year, counting the number of crashes each year.

### Step 6: Calculate Annual Distribution

- Calculate the percentage distribution of crashes for each year within the GIS software.

### **Step 7: Create Visualizations**

- Use GIS to create maps and charts that display the annual distribution of crashes. Examples include:
  - Heat Maps: Show crash density over time to identify high-risk areas.
  - Bar Charts: Display the number of crashes per year.
  - Pie Charts: Break down crashes by type, location, or contributing factors for specific years.

### **Step 8: Identify Trends and Patterns**

- Analyze the annual data to identify any trends or patterns, such as increases or decreases in crashes over time.

### **Step 9: Compile Findings**

- Compile the findings from the annual analysis into a report, highlighting key trends, patterns, and areas of concern.

### **Step 10: Recommendations**

- Based on the analysis, provide recommendations for improving road safety. This could include targeted interventions for high-risk areas, traffic calming measures, improved signage, and public awareness campaigns.

### **Step 11: Implementation Plan**

- Develop an implementation plan that outlines the steps and resources needed to put the recommendations into action. This may include working with local government, community organizations, and law enforcement.

By following this methodology, Valley Falls can efficiently recreate and analyze the annual distribution of crashes, even with limited resources. This approach leverages available data from KDOT and the powerful analytical capabilities of GIS software to inform and implement effective road safety strategies.