

# Salem: Local Safety Action Plan



The City of Salem developed this Local Safety Action Plan to address roadway safety concerns and reduce fatal and serious injury crashes for all users as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. As a member of the SECOG Regional Safety Action Plan, this local plan builds on regional analysis while focusing on Salem-specific needs and priorities. The Local Plan connects regional strategies to targeted community actions to improve safety and advance the goal of eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

### Transportation System & Context

Salem is a small community that serves as a local center for surrounding rural areas and is home to a K-12 school near Main Street and Essex Avenue. Essex Avenue and North Dakota Street are the primary locations of congestion before and after school, with buses picking up and dropping off south of the school along Essex. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) are installed on Nebraska Street at Norton, Washington, and Essex, and the City is considering relocating RRFBs from a decommissioned school to North Dakota and Essex to better match current school traffic patterns. Key streets such as Hill Street, Nebraska Street, Richard Street, and Highway 38 carry school traffic, local trips, and heavy vehicles serving industries in the southern portion of town.

Salem's land use pattern is predominantly residential, with major activity areas including the school, sports complex, golf course, ball fields, and industrial areas. Speeding concerns have been observed on Hill Street after school events, and Minnesota Avenue and Hill Street are additional corridors of concern for speeding and crossings. Many intersections in town are uncontrolled with no stop or yield signs, and visibility issues have been reported at Vermont Avenue and Hill Street. Parking around the sports complex on Richard Street creates congestion and safety challenges, especially where 252nd Street—a higher-speed roadway—transitions into Richard Street and drivers do not always slow down sufficiently when entering town. The intersection of Highway 38 and Nebraska Street is a two-way stop that has experienced high-injury crashes, and people have been observed walking along the south side of Highway 38 in this area, where crossing Nebraska Street is considered unsafe. Additional concerns include lighting deficiencies around town, conflicts on Douglas Street between industrial traffic and cross-country events near the golf course, and safety at the Brown and Washington curve by the ball fields. The City is also exploring policies and treatments to safely accommodate e-bikes and scooters.

### Vehicles Available

| Vehicles Available    | VO Total 2014 | VO Total 2024 | Percent Change |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Total Households      | 603           | 518           | -14.10%        |
| No Vehicle Available  | 16            | 14            | -12.50%        |
| 1 Vehicle Available   | 153           | 122           | -20.26%        |
| 2 Vehicles Available  | 238           | 187           | -21.43%        |
| 3 Vehicles Available  | 142           | 141           | -0.70%         |
| 4+ Vehicles Household | 54            | 54            | 0%             |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Population Growth & Characteristics

| Category            | 2014  | 2024  | Percent Change |
|---------------------|-------|-------|----------------|
| Population          | 1,377 | 1,216 | -11.69%        |
| Under 18 (Youth)    | 335   | 336   | 0.30%          |
| 18 to 64            | 729   | 599   | -17.83%        |
| 65 + (Older Adults) | 313   | 281   | -10.22%        |
| Total Households    | 603   | 518   | -14.10%        |
| Owner Occupied      | 464   | 352   | -24.14%        |
| Renter Occupied     | 139   | 166   | 19.42%         |

### Regional Safety Action Plan Vision and Goals

**Vision:** *The SECOG region will collaboratively pursue a future where no one is killed or seriously injured on our transportation system, using thoughtful, locally guided planning to create safer, more connected communities.*

**Regional Goal:** To help communities involved in this plan improve transportation safety, SECOG will provide shared performance standards, data tools, and coordination support that enable member jurisdictions to set and track their own safety goals.

### Public Engagement

The engagement process for the SECOG Regional Safety Action Plan included stakeholder interviews, a community survey, an in-person open house meeting, and the use of online engagement tools to gather location-specific comments on transportation safety concerns. The variety of community engagement methods were developed to ensure broad and accessible participation across the region. Stakeholder interviews were conducted with representatives from the City of Salem, law enforcement, the local school district, and other community partners. Conversations and public input centered around school access and congestion at Main and Essex and North Dakota and Essex, the use and placement of RRFBs on Nebraska Street, and speeding concerns on Hill Street and Minnesota Street. Residents and stakeholders highlighted uncontrolled intersections, visibility issues at Vermont Avenue and Hill Street, safety risks at the Highway 38 and Nebraska intersection and along nearby roadside walking areas, and parking and speed transition issues near Richard Street and 252nd Street. Additional feedback focused on conflicts on Douglas Street during cross-country events, heavy truck movements on Nebraska Street, Highway 38, and Richard Street, general lighting needs, and the importance of reviewing the Brown and Washington curve by the ball fields and developing policies and infrastructure that safely accommodate e-bikes, scooters, and other emerging modes.

Salem participated in the SECOG Regional Safety Action Planning process in 2026 to identify regional transportation safety priorities. As a part of that process, community engagement and data analysis identified the top safety concerns locally within Salem.

In Salem, severe crashes, including head-on collisions, highlight the risks associated with higher-speed rural travel and limited separation between opposing traffic.

Across SECOG, engagement feedback has emphasized managing speeds and improving walking and biking connections. In Salem, crash patterns point toward roadway design and operational strategies that address rural safety risks.

Figure 1. Types of crashes

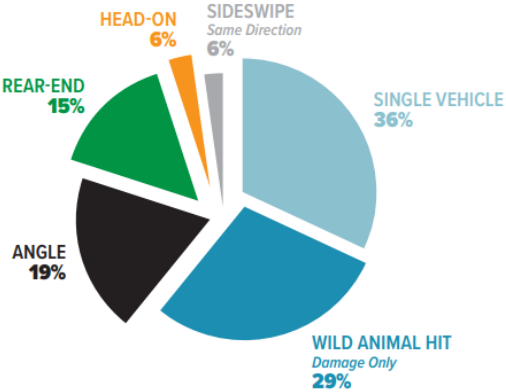


Figure 2. Crashes per year



### Crash Analysis

There were **65** total crashes from 2021-2025

**2 fatal or severe crashes** (3.1%) — lower than regional average (3.8%)

**35% on 55+ mph roads**; 34% on 65+ mph

**35% in dark conditions** — similar to region (36.5%)

**No crashes** involving people walking or biking

### Engagement Takeaways

Community concerns include:

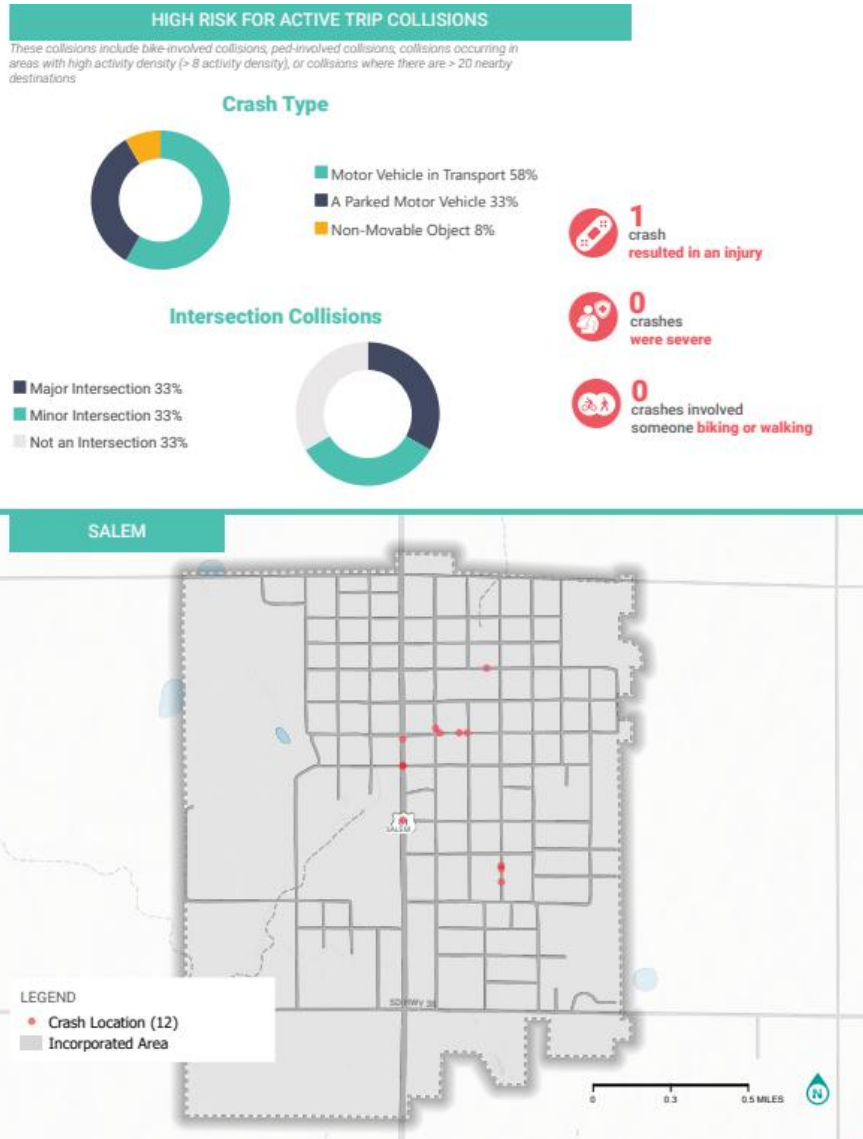
- + US81/SD 38 intersection safety
- + Lighting and speeding issues
- + Intersection stop compliance
- + Sports complex and school traffic/pedestrian safety

# Prioritized Project Recommendations

See the SS4A Regional Safety Action Plan project website for more information at [www.secog.org](http://www.secog.org)



## Crash Analysis



## Recommendations

### Priority #1: SD 38 and US 81

#### Crash Trends

- 8 crashes
- 6 angle crashes at SD 38 and US 81
  - Failure to yield at stop sign
- 2 rear-end crashes

#### Countermeasure Options

- Low-cost stop control measures
- Flashing stop sign
- Intersection conflict warning system
- 4-way Stop
  - Must add turn lanes to prevent back-ups

### Priority #2: McCook Central School Crossing Visibility and Safety Improvements

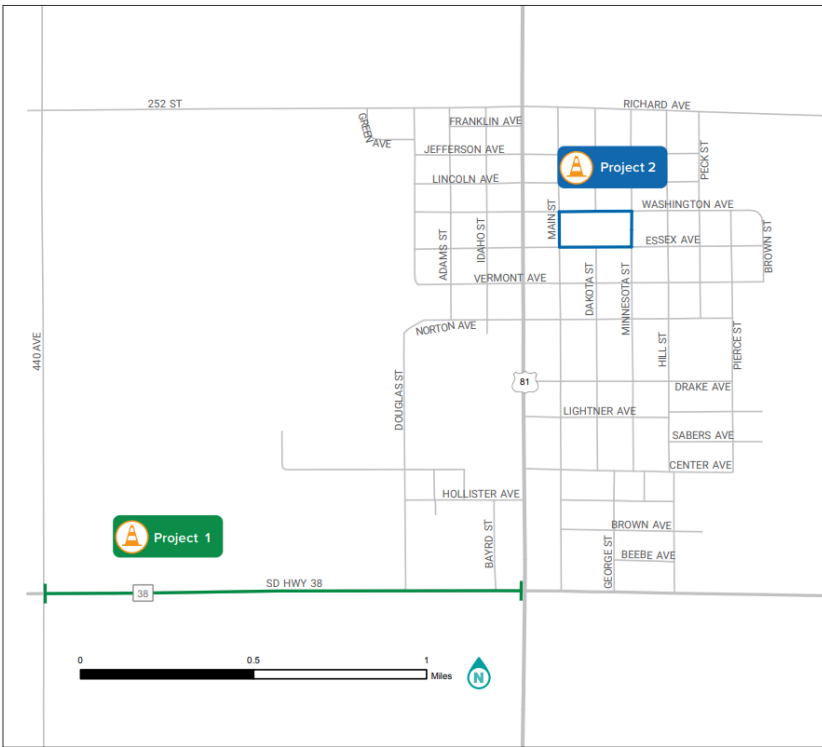
#### Countermeasure Options

- Improve the north side of school
- High-Visibility Crosswalks (thermoplastic tape)
- In-Street Signage
- RRFB Ped Signals

#### Additional Local Projects

- Richard Avenue (252nd Street)
  - Speed Feedback Sign
  - Sidewalks/Trail
  - Appropriate Speed Limit Transition
- City-wide review of Street Sign Control Consistency and Lighting
  - Focus on Hill Street First – most comments
  - Yield vs Stop vs Uncontrolled Intersection – set policy and major street and stop control plan
  - Incorporate Stop Control Enhancements
  - Lighting improvements around school and Highways 38 and 81 leading into Salem
- Nebraska Street
  - Enhance Ped Crossing Visibility
- Douglas Street
  - Improved pedestrian signage and lighting
- City Hall/Sports Complex Pedestrian Improvements
  - Focus on sidewalk retrofits to the complex to the south and west (toward school)
  - Peck Street, Jefferson Avenue, Lincoln and Washington Avenue

## Priority Projects



- SD Hwy 38 and US Hwy 81 Safety Improvements
- McCook Central School Street Crossing Safety Improvements



# Project #1 - SD 38 and US 81 - SDDOT



## Crash Trends

- 8 crashes
- 6 angle crashes at SD 38 and US 81
  - Failure to yield at stop sign
- 2 rear-end crashes

## Countermeasure Options

- Low-cost stop control measures
- Flashing stop sign
- Intersection conflict warning system
- 4-way Stop
  - Must add turn lanes to prevent back-ups

## SD 38 mainline west of 81

- Center line rumble
- Shoulder widening – 2 feet to 4 or 5 feet



# McCook Central School Crossing Visibility and Safety Improvements



- Especially improve the north side of school
- High-Visibility Crosswalks (thermoplastic tape)
- In-Street Signing
- RRFB Ped Signals





- **Richard Avenue (252<sup>nd</sup> Street)**
  - Speed Feedback Sign
  - Sidewalks/Trail
  - Appropriate Speed Limit Transition
- **City-wide review of Street Sign Control Consistency and Lighting**
  - Focus on Hill Street First – most comments
  - Yield vs Stop vs Uncontrolled Intersection – set policy and major street and stop control plan
  - Incorporate Stop Control Enhancements
  - Lighting improvements around school and Highways 38 and 81 leading into Salem
- **Douglas Street**
  - Improved pedestrian signage and lighting
- **Nebraska Street**
  - Enhance Ped Crossing Visibility
- **City Hall/Sports Complex Pedestrian Improvements**
  - Focus on sidewalk retrofits to the complex to the south and west (toward school)
  - Peck Street, Jefferson Avenue, Lincoln and Washington Avenue