

## FAIRVIEW PARK

# Plans continue for safe student routes to school

By **BRIAN GEORGE**

The school board discussed updating its 10-year-old Safe Routes to School Plan at the Dec. 20 meeting.

Julie Walcoff, the Senior Planner at Toole Design, gave a 30-minute PowerPoint presentation and used blueprints to explain what areas along school routes need to be improved.

The plan is designed to make walking and bicycling to school a more appealing way of

transportation and encourage a healthier lifestyle from an early age.

“Right now, we are working with the city of Fairview Park, the school district and the Ohio Department of Education to identify areas that still need development,” Otter said in an interview last week. “With the plan focusing a lot on the middle schools and high schools, there will be sidewalks, signage and possible crosswalks added. Thankfully,

**Turn to Safe on Page 3**

## Safe **continued from Page 1**

ODOT covers the costs of these projects.”

Otter did not have a firm price of what the improvements would cost ODOT.

Fairview Park received funds from the Ohio Department of Transportation to update the safety plan in November.

“The Safe Routes to School program utilizes the five E’s: Education, Encouragement, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation,” Otter said during the presentation.

Fairview Park City Schools Superintendent Keith Ahearn said in an interview last week that the plan works to enable students to have safe walking and biking accessibility.

“Our top priority is making sure that we have school safety,” he said. “That includes making sure that it is safe for students to get to school. It is important to look at the infrastructure of

the city as a means to make sure that there are safe ways to get to school and that every student has access to it.”

The city and school district created the plan in 2013 to provide students safe and accessible routes to schools while reducing traffic and air pollution. It is meant to be a sustained effort around schools and conduct projects and activities.

Another meeting will be held on Jan. 20 to determine the plans and what recommendations can be accomplished. The plans are expected to be completed by the end of February.

Mary Kay Costello, the city’s Public Service & Development Director, said that teachers have gathered surveys and tallies from students about safe school routes.

“Being able to partner with them has been a great asset,” she said.

Contact this reporter at [bglove@westlifeneews.com](mailto:bglove@westlifeneews.com) or 440-871-5797