



**Dr. Elizabeth Nelson**  
Principal  
Williams Middle School

**Nicole A. Paris-Kro,**  
Assistant Principal/Special Ed Supervisor  
Williams Middle School

Dear Select Board,

We are 8th-grade students at Williams Middle School, doing an Action Civics project. Our goal is to identify an issue in our community and take steps to improve it. Our group identified sidewalks as a major problem to fix in Longmeadow.

Broken sidewalks are a severe hazard all across Longmeadow. These broken sidewalks are even more of a problem on main roads because of high pedestrian traffic. Cracked and broken sidewalks can cause injuries from tripping and more. These broken sidewalks may also lead people to walk or bike on the road, which is even more dangerous. The most problematic spots were by homes and a part of many student routes to school. We found many cracks, uneven sidewalks, and potholes that significantly affect people's day-to-day lives. In addition to danger, these damaged sidewalks negatively affect the quality of life in Longmeadow. Many kids need to bike or walk to school as there are very few bus services in Longmeadow. These hazardous sidewalks make walking and biking very problematic.

We went on a field trip from Grassy Gutter to the corner of Bliss and Laurel to research some of the sidewalks near our school. We used the Safe Routes to Parks Walk Audit Toolkit to rate the quality of different sections of the sidewalk. In the end, we found multiple broken areas. We jotted down these sections:

- Cracked sidewalks by the fire hydrant and tree between Grassy Gutter and Blokland
- Mildly cracked sidewalks in front of 435 Bliss
- Mildly cracked sidewalks in front of 407 Bliss
- Cracked sidewalks in front of 393 Bliss
- Cracked sidewalks in front of 385 Bliss
- Mildly cracked sidewalks in front of 369 Bliss
- Cracked sidewalks in front of 349 Bliss
- Cracked sidewalks in front of and across the street from 299 Bliss
- Cracked sidewalks in front of 253 Bliss
- Cracked sidewalks across from 319-329 Bliss (Bliss Park side)
- Cracked sidewalks across from 364 Bliss

Improving sidewalks will improve our town, from decreased injury rates to more kids willing to ride or walk.

Sincerely,  
Teia, Mackenzie, Graham, Addy, and Grace