



Macon-Bibb County Reduces Crash Risk at Two School Crossings



Preparing delineators for installation. Source: Charise Stephens



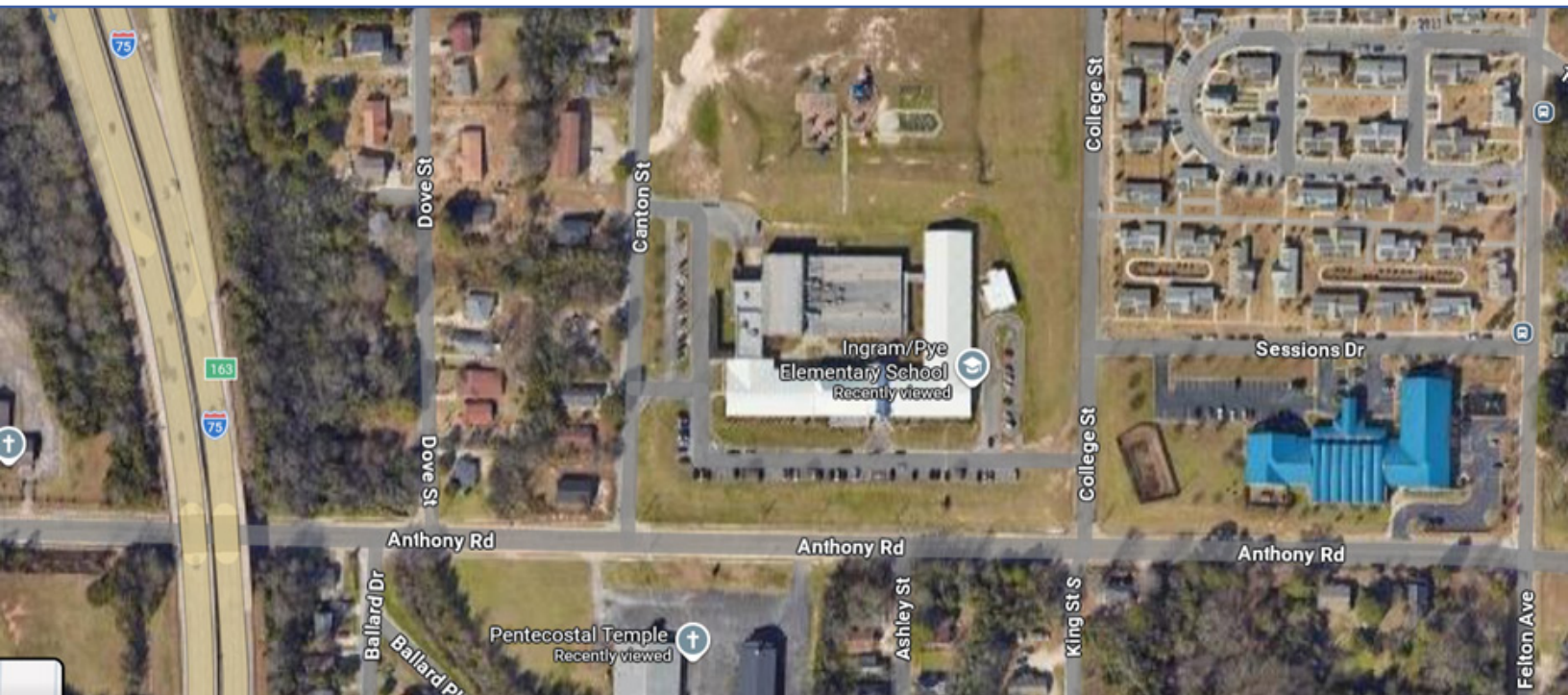
Anthony Road, Macon, GA. Source: Macon-Bibb County

A commitment to community and sound traffic engineering came together to improve school route safety for people walking, biking, and driving near Ingram-Pye Elementary School in Macon-Bibb County, Georgia. The school, situated just off a four-lane, major thoroughfare, serves approximately 450 pre-K to grade 5 students and their families who need to get to school safely every day. A quick-build project at two key crossing locations aimed to simplify the crossing, improve visibility, and slow traffic speeds. The project was supported by a National Center for Safe Routes to School quick-build mini-grant to Macon-Bibb County, made possible by General Motors (GM).

A process informed by community and data

Walking and biking safety is particularly important around Ingram-Pye Elementary School, where more than one-half of residents live below the poverty line; the median household income is \$13,824. The area is dense with young people, with more than one third of the population between 10 and 19 years of age and plans for school consolidation that will likely result in more families traveling to the school.

The school sits next to Anthony Road, a four-lane road with an annual average daily traffic count of 2,000 vehicles for the segment in front of the school. Drivers access the school on Canton Street and exit on College Street. Students walk from both sides of the school, including from a housing authority property on the Canton Street side of the school. To avoid traffic directly around the school, some families drop students off at a church, a route which then requires students to cross Anthony Road.



Aerial view of Ingram-Pye Elementary and surrounding streets. Source: Google Maps.

The Macon-Bibb County engineering team, including Weston Stroud, Traffic Safety Manager, has been using a risk-based approach to select projects. This involves identifying locations that pose the greatest risk for traffic crashes, not just relying on crash history. The team used geospatial artificial intelligence software to analyze vehicle counts and speed, land use patterns, and a collision index. The index gives a predictive metric ranging from 0 (no risk) to 1 (highest risk) based on historic and current crash data.

Before intervention, collision risk was classified as high:

- Canton Street & Anthony Road: 0.64
- College Street & Anthony Road: 0.77

Other considerations pointed towards the importance of improving safety at these intersections. U Create Macon, led by founder Charise Stephens, is a community-based organization that centers youth-led change and programming to promote biking towards the broader goal of supporting safety, health, and active lifestyles. Safety improvements in the area would magnify the opportunities for active travel that U Create Macon wanted to encourage.

Using infrastructure to improve safety

The quick-build project focused on transforming Anthony Road by slowing speeds, simplifying the crossings, and engaging young people and other community partners. Strategies included:

- **Lane reduction:** Reduced from four lanes to two, thereby simplifying crossings and encouraging slower speeds.
- **High-visibility crosswalks and reflectors:** Enhanced pedestrian visibility, especially at night.
- **Signage and gradual lane shift:** Signage in advance of the lane reduction in combination with a 20-foot taper gave drivers sufficient time to move into one lane.
- **Crosswalk painting:** Coordinated by U Create Macon, young people painted the crosswalks on National Bike & Roll to School Day.



Crosswalk painting day. Source: Macon-Bibb County.

Reducing lanes addressed a critical safety issue: multiple-threat crashes, where one lane stops but another does not. “Now you don’t have elementary students who are having to travel across four lanes of traffic; you’ve reduced it down to two,” said Stroud. The reduction to two lanes also made it easier for the posted crossing guard to identify a gap in traffic for crossing students.

Project installation was purposely phased. The first phase was the crosswalk painting day, and next was installation of the lane reduction, reflecting the community-owned nature of the project and giving road users a chance to start seeing changes.

A culture of collaboration

The success of the quick-build project near Ingram Pye Elementary School was rooted in strong collaboration between Macon-Bibb County and other government and non-government agencies, particularly U Create Macon. These partnerships ensured that the project was not only technically sound but also reflected community interests and the broader goals to promote biking.

Collaboration is not new to Macon-Bibb County, which convenes partners every month through the

Pedestrian Safety Review Board to provide ongoing issue identification and problem solving. Each member brought unique roles to the project:

- **U Create Macon:** Coordinated student volunteers and emphasized to students and the public the safety and community benefits of students' efforts.
- **Bibb County School District:** Helped communicate changes to parents, provided input on the project plan, and adapted pick-up/drop-off patterns. The school superintendent showed support for students and the project team by visiting during the crosswalk painting day. Engaging the school district early in the process was a critical factor in the project's success.
- **County communications team:** Helped frame messaging about the traffic changes in the context of bigger goals for safety.
- **Bibb County Sheriff's Office:** Assisted with traffic control during installation.



Preparing delineators for installation. Source: Macon-Bibb County.



Student being interviewed by local media during crosswalk painting day. Source: Macon-Bibb County.

Meaningful safety improvements

U Create Macon senior student leader Dashun Rucker explained why he wanted to be involved: “I already like to paint because I’m an artist [and] I saw this as another opportunity to do something different, and then knowing it was going to benefit the school and is going to make the community look better, too.”

Stephens said that the crosswalk painting “was an exemplary act of community service by the kids, demonstrating their commitment to safety and making a positive impact in their neighborhood.”¹

Data measures revealed impressive crash risk reductions after the project:

Location	Before the project	After the project
Canton Street & Anthony Road	.64	.48
College Street & Anthony Road	.77	.52

Before/after risk metrics at project crossings. 0 (no risk) to 1 (highest risk).

The project team noted that the post-installation measures were taken when school was out of session, but traffic volumes remained the same. “Those wins indicate to us that the approach was correct and that we were able to make substantial change with a little bit of funding,” said Stroud. “Changing driver behavior has been the biggest difference. Having something in the road that can physically cause people to slow down has been huge.”

Thanks in part to the momentum created by the quick-build project, the county is now advancing its longstanding goal to install sidewalks along a side street that will connect the Macon Housing Authority properties to Anthony Road and the county recreation center. U Create Macon continues with its plans to provide more on-bike training and skill development to encourage young people to ride.

Key takeaways

- **Partnerships matter:** Collaboration between government, schools, nonprofits, and law enforcement was critical for success.
- **Communication:** Building buy-in among the public and key leaders is critical to the success of the project. Preparing families and drivers for traffic flow changes and the safety reasons are particularly important: “People can forget the bigger picture and focus on the immediate displeasure or discomfort with change,” said Stroud. “Keeping the focus on the human aspect of the work that we do helps always ground the conversation.”
- **Infrastructure saves lives:** Simple, low-cost changes—lane reductions, crosswalks, signage—can dramatically improve safety.
- **Data drives decisions:** Using predictive analytics ensures interventions target high-risk areas and deliver measurable results.
- **Community trust:** Quick-build projects demonstrate commitment, show responsiveness to community concerns, and lay the groundwork for larger investments. These are all particularly important outcomes in traditionally disinvested parts of communities.

As Stroud summarized, “Sometimes the work that we do—painting a crosswalk and putting out bollards—is not groundbreaking by any means, but it means something to a lot of people.”

Acknowledgments

Thank you to Weston Stroud, Traffic Safety Manager for Macon-Bibb County; Charise Stephens, Founder of U Create Macon; and Dashun Rucker, student leader with U Create Macon, for sharing their experiences and perspectives that informed this summary. Microsoft Copilot Chat at UNC was used to generate an initial draft.² The content was verified, revised, and augmented by the authors.

References

1. Macon-Bibb County. (2025). Macon-Bibb, U Create Macon install traffic calming measures on Anthony Road. <https://www.maconbibb.us/macon-bibb-u-create-macon-install-traffic-calming-measures-on-anthony-road/>
2. Microsoft. (2025). Copilot Chat (with Data Protection). [Large language model]. <https://m365.cloud.microsoft/chat/?auth=2>



Made possible by:



Suggested Citation:

Pullen-Seufert, N. & Figueroa, S. (2026). *Macon-Bibb County Reduces Crash Risk at Two School Crossings*. National Center for Safe Routes to School.