



# Strategic Plan 2011-2015

[www.saferoutespartnership.org](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org)



**SAFE ROUTES  
to School**  
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Elementary School



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# Background on the Safe Routes to School National Partnership

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership is a fast-growing network of more than 500 organizations, government agencies, schools and professional groups. Our mission is to advocate for safe walking and bicycling to and from schools, and in daily life, to improve the health and well-being of America's children and to foster the creation of livable, sustainable communities.

The National Partnership is governed by a Steering Committee comprised of 21 organizations and agencies that have been developing Safe Routes to School programs and initiatives at local, state and national levels. Bikes Belong Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, serves as the host agency for the National Partnership. [For more information, visit www.saferoutespartnership.org.](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org)

## Mission Statement:

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership advocates for safe walking and bicycling to and from schools, and in daily life, to improve the health and well-being of America's children and to foster the creation of livable, sustainable communities.

## Vision Statement:

Safe Routes to School is a catalyst for the creation of safe, healthy and livable communities—urban, suburban and rural—throughout the United States. Schools are sited near the children they serve and are safe for children to walk and bicycle. Parents, school districts, local governments, police and community partners work together to ensure the safety of children on the trip to and from school. Children of all abilities, income levels and cultures have traffic safety skills and regularly choose to walk and bicycle. These shifts result in communities with less traffic congestion and air pollution as well as more physically active children and families.

## Steering Committee Member Organizations

- » Active Living by Design
- » Active Transportation Alliance
- » Alliance for Biking and Walking\*
- » America Walks
- » American Association of School Administrators\*
- » American Heart Association
- » Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
- » Bicycle Alliance of Washington
- » Bikes Belong Coalition
- » City of Decatur, Georgia
- » East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- » Institute of Transportation Engineers
- » Kaiser Permanente\*
- » League of American Bicyclists
- » Marin County Bicycle Coalition\*
- » Michigan Fitness Foundation
- » National Association of Regional Councils
- » Pennsylvania Department of Health/Safe States Alliance
- » Portland Safe Routes to School
- » Tennessee Obesity Task Force/YMCA
- » WalkBoston\*

## Staff Members

- » Deb Hubsmith, Director
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- » Robert Ping, State Network Director
- » Beth Richards, Development Director
- » David Cowan, Program Manager
- » Brooke Driesse, Communications Manager
- » Jessica Meaney, California Policy Manager
- » Rory Neuner, State Network Manager
- » Stephanie Smith, State Network Manager
- » Kathy Cooke, State Network Associate
- » Kelechi Uzochukwu, Administrative Associate
- » Kristin Gavin, Research Fellow

\* Strategic Plan Committee members

# Foreword

In 1969, the average child in the United States walked or bicycled to and from school and spent many afternoons exploring the neighborhood and getting physical activity. Today, only 13 percent of students in the United States walk or bicycle to schools and have limited ability to safely access other destinations such as libraries, parks and after-school programs. At the same time, school buses are being eliminated due to budget cuts, parents driving children to schools can comprise 20 to 30 percent of traffic congestion and childhood obesity has quadrupled for children aged 6-11 over the past 40 years.

Many factors have influenced the decline in children walking and bicycling to school and in daily life. Communities are increasingly designed for the accommodation of motorized vehicles, often lacking a comprehensive approach to providing safe and separate infrastructure such as sidewalks, pathways, bike lanes and crosswalks. Schools are more frequently located on the outskirts of communities instead of the heart of the neighborhood, and there are concerns about traffic and personal safety.

Recognizing the long-term health and traffic consequences of the decline in walking and bicycling to school, Congress created the federal Safe Routes to School program in 2005 as part of the SAFETEA-LU transportation bill. Since then, \$800 million has been allocated for State Departments of Transportation to award Safe Routes to School grants to communities and schools. These funds support improved transportation infrastructure and safety education, traffic enforcement and promotional events for safe bicycling and walking. Currently, there are Safe Routes to School programs operating in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, with each State Department of Transportation maintaining a Safe Routes to School Coordinator to manage the program. Demand for the program is very high, exceeding the resources available. In those communities receiving funding, we are seeing that the program is effective at improving the built environment and at raising the level of awareness among the public and policy makers for the need for transportation infrastructure that promotes mobility, accessibility and equity.

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership (the National Partnership) was three years in the making before it was officially launched in 2005, right before Congress announced the funding in the federal transportation bill. The National Partnership is hosted by the non-profit Bikes Belong Foundation and is comprised of more than 500 partner organizations, agencies, professional groups and schools that have signed a consensus statement and memorandum of understanding agreeing to support the Safe Routes to School movement.

## Contact information

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The National Partnership is the advocacy organization that works to advance legislation, policies, best practices, research, resources and awareness to support Safe Routes to School programs and policies throughout the United States. We work closely with the Federal Highway Administration (which administers the program), State Departments of Transportation and the National Center for Safe Routes to School, a federal contractor that provides technical assistance and collects data for the program. The National Partnership serves as a catalyst to leverage funding and policies that result in healthy, sustainable communities that serve children and families nationwide.

### **Over the past five years, we have had many successes with advancing Safe Routes to School, including:**

- » The creation of the federal Safe Routes to School program, dedicating \$800 million to initiatives around the country, and advocating for new legislation that would further increase funding for the program;
- » Safe Routes to School state networks in 20 states that are advancing policy changes such as school siting that promotes community-centered schools, complete streets and curriculum that supports physical activity;
- » A compilation of evidence-based research studies on the effectiveness of Safe Routes to School;
- » A detailed website with specifics on how to access funds in all 50 states and how to advance policy priorities and leverage additional funds to improve infrastructure at state and local levels;
- » The creation of numerous resources to help policy makers and practitioners, including a report on how Safe Routes to School can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, an educator's guide, policy reports and the compilation of numerous promising practices; and
- » Resources for advancing Safe Routes to School in low-income communities.

It is exciting to see the increased interest throughout the United States in designing communities that facilitate opportunities for healthy physical activity, which will in turn reduce pollution while increasing safety, livability and sustainability. There is much attention in the media related to the childhood obesity epidemic, climate change, the need to reduce oil consumption and a desire to advance sustainability. All of these issues and goals are supported and advanced by Safe Routes to School. And, the National Partnership can help policy makers better understand smart growth, social equity needs and the impact of the built environment on human health, the environment and quality of life.

It is with great enthusiasm that we present our 2011-2015 Strategic Plan as an ambitious framework to advance the Safe Routes to School national movement and to foster the emergence of a greater level of citizen, parent and student involvement in transportation policy reform.

Sincerely,

Deb Hubsmith, Director  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership

# Executive Summary

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership (the National Partnership) is a network of more than 500 partners and is the advocacy organization which leads the Safe Routes to School national movement. Initially, our role was focused on ensuring strong implementation of the federal Safe Routes to School program by the states. Over the past five years, we have branched out to focus on federal legislation, state policy, distillation of research and the dissemination of best practices. The common purpose for every initiative we have undertaken is that it advances Safe Routes to School and the goal of creating healthy communities.

However, the movement for Safe Routes to School is much bigger than any one organization: it includes everyone who is working toward making communities, streets and schools safer for everyday bicycling and walking – students, parents, educators, engineers, elected and government officials, police officers, environmentalists, health professionals, smart growth advocates and more. The National Partnership provides leadership and brings together these diverse constituencies to make the movement more cohesive, effective and collaborative.

Safe Routes to School impacts many large-scale issues, such as reducing social and economic disparities, decreasing pollution, improving safety, increasing physical

activity and improving the design of communities to support health, active transportation and sustainability. Safe Routes to School can be a catalyst for policy makers to understand smart growth, livability, equity and sustainability, since everyone can relate to kids and the innate desire for it to be safe for children to be able to walk and bicycle to school.

Before developing our five-year Strategic Plan for the years 2011 through 2015, the National Partnership surveyed our partners, held focus groups and conducted interviews with key stakeholders to find out: 1) what people felt was needed to advance the Safe Routes to School national movement, and 2) what should be the role of the National Partnership as the movement's advocate.

The Strategic Plan for the National Partnership was crafted after careful analysis of our unique niche in supporting and leading the overall movement. Our 2011-2015 Strategic Plan prioritizes five strategic focus areas, which are briefly summarized to the left and detailed on pages 11-21.

Goals and indicators are provided for each of the five strategic focus areas. We believe that progress in each of these areas will collectively lead to an overall increase in walking and bicycling to school by 50% by 2015, a stabilization in distance to school and improved safety for children. We look forward to working with numerous partners to advance these ambitious goals.



## Five Strategic Focus Areas

### 1. Opening Minds through Research and Communications:

To further advance Safe Routes to School funding, policies and outcomes, we plan to elevate the role of research within the field and conduct a strong media campaign on the benefits of the movement. This will help open people's minds about the advantages of walking and bicycling, make Safe Routes to School a household name and demonstrate the impact of the program.

### 2. Changing Policies and Infrastructure:

The key to getting more children safely walking and bicycling lies in creating improvements to the built environment that foster equitable community-centered schools, complete streets and safe access to schools. To achieve this, we will work with our partners to advocate for improved policies and more funds for pathways, sidewalks, bike lanes and street crossings at the federal, state and local levels.

### 3. Building Capacity for Leadership:

We intend to activate thousands more knowledgeable policy makers, professionals, parents and student champions for Safe Routes to School to work at every level of government and within schools. These champions will be most effective when equipped with tools for navigating government processes and advocating for Safe Routes to School policies and funding.

### 4. Advancing Social Equity:

Many low income communities—whether urban or rural—lack the resources to apply for Safe Routes to School grants to make improvements. Yet children in these communities are more likely to walk to school and often face greater traffic and personal safety challenges on the trip to school. We plan to increase outreach, provide resources and work with government agencies and organizations at all levels to develop more policies, trainings and funding to ensure that Safe Routes to School reaches those most in need.

### 5. Assuring Sustainability:

The long-term viability of Safe Routes to School is dependent on the movement's ability to leverage additional funds, ensure collaboration among leaders in the field and integrate Safe Routes to School within the plans and goals of a wide range of partners and government agencies. In addition, it is important that the National Partnership has the funding, capacity and infrastructure in place to respond to the growing demand for Safe Routes to School.



# Accountability

The following sections establish five strategic focus areas that will take the Safe Routes to School movement and the National Partnership to the next level. Each section includes an ambitious long-term goal with measurable objectives during the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan timeframe plus a series of tactics that we plan to carry out to meet those objectives.

## Measuring Progress on Objectives

It is important to consistently measure our progress and stay accountable to the vision outlined in this Strategic Plan. While there are a total of 17 measurable objectives in all five strategic focus areas (which are captured in one table on pages 21-22), they fall into five categories of information we will track over the next five years, including:

- » **Partners:** To determine the breadth of the movement, we will track the overall number of our partners, as well as the types of partners. We will also develop a system to capture the level of engagement of partners in advancing Safe Routes to School.
- » **Individuals:** To assess the public's awareness and involvement with Safe Routes to School, we will develop a system to track individuals' familiarity with Safe Routes to School and their level of engagement in advancing Safe Routes to School.
- » **Funding:** To assess government funding leveraged for Safe Routes to School infrastructure and programs, we will collect the annual funding levels for federal, state and local contributions, each state's obligation rates for federal funds and track the National Partnership's annual budget.
- » **Policies:** To ascertain the changes in key state policies affecting the ability of children to safely walk and bicycle to schools, we will track the size, reach and achievements of the state network project. We will specifically inventory state policies on low-income communities and community-centered schools.
- » **Research:** To capture progress in filling any gaps in the research base for Safe Routes to School, we will track progress on setting and implementing national standard evaluation measures and the publication of studies that include evidence-based outcomes.





## Measuring the Impact on Cross-Cutting Goals

Our overall goal is to make it safer for more children to walk and bicycle to school and in everyday life. The collective result of the specific tactics and measurable objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan will advance us towards that mission. There are three key cross-cutting goals that will demonstrate we are making progress:

- » **Increasing rates of walking and bicycling to school:** The rates of walking and bicycling to school for children in grades K-8 declined from 48% in 1969 to 13% in 2009. The rates mostly held steady from 2001 to 2009, showing a reversal of the decline and an opportunity to increase walking and bicycling. The rates of walking and bicycling to school are measured by the National Household Travel Survey (NHTS), which is conducted every five to seven years. We anticipate that the next NHTS will be conducted around the years 2015-2017. Our goal is that this NHTS show a 50% increase in walking and bicycling for children in grades K-8, which would mean approximately 20% of children walking and bicycling to school throughout the United States.
- » **Decreasing distance to school:** Distance to school has been increasing over the years as schools are consolidated and are built on the outskirts of communities. In 1969, 41% of children lived within one mile of school; in 2009 that declined to only 31%. This data is also measured by NHTS. Because schools are built to last for decades, it will take time to make significant progress on distance to school. As measured by NHTS, it is our goal that the percentage of children living within a mile of school will stabilize at 31% by 2015, as the trend of siting schools far from neighborhoods starts to reverse.
- » **Improving safety for young pedestrians and bicyclists:** A major barrier to increasing walking and bicycling in general is the traffic-related risks to pedestrians and bicyclists. We must improve safety for children. Unfortunately, determining a benchmark and goal for safety is nearly impossible given the limitations and inconsistencies of the data that is currently collected by federal and state governments on bicycle and pedestrian crashes and injuries. We will work with leading researchers during this Strategic Plan to identify an appropriate benchmark and means of collecting the data to measure progress on safety. This will also require working with state and local law enforcement agencies to develop best practices for recording bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities. In addition to actual safety incidents, another important limitation on rates of walking and bicycling to school are parent perceptions about safety. We will also work to develop a means of tracking parent perceptions of safety that affect the trip to school.



## Five Strategic Focus Areas with Goals, Objectives and Tactics

The Safe Routes to School national movement has grown quickly in the United States since the first programs began in New York, Chicago and California in 1997. A major milestone for the movement was the passage of the 2005 federal transportation bill which allocated \$800 million for Safe Routes to School from fiscal year 2005 through 2010. An additional boost came in 2010 with First Lady Michelle Obama's initiation of a Let's Move campaign to end childhood obesity. One reason for the growth of the Safe Routes to School movement is that it is a simple concept: make it safer for more children to walk and bicycle to school. Safe Routes to School can also have an impact on larger issues like physical activity, traffic congestion, social equity, greenhouse gas emissions and safety.

During the development of this Strategic Plan, we heard from hundreds of partners and individuals that Safe Routes to School is making a difference in communities across the country—but that much remains to be done. After analyzing the input and considering the unique role of the National Partnership, we selected the following five Strategic Focus Areas for action in the years 2011 through 2015. These strategies are the crucial next steps in creating a strong and mature movement that provides opportunities for children of all ages, income levels and geographies to safely walk and bicycle to and from school.



**In the pages that follow, we outline the five Strategic Focus Areas for 2011-2015, accompanied by the following information:**

- ✓ **Background:** summarizing the situation and opportunity
- ✓ **Long-Term Goal:** noting what we want to ultimately achieve beyond 2015
- ✓ **Measurable Objectives:** benchmarking specific outcomes for 2013 and 2015
- ✓ **Tactics:** detailing our proposed initiatives for achieving the goal and objectives

## STRATEGIC FOCUS #1:

# Opening Minds through Research and Communications

### Background:

In order to advance Safe Routes to School policies and the associated benefits to public health and the environment, we plan to continue to demonstrate the successes of Safe Routes to School and to grow awareness of the movement. This will require going beyond the core people and groups that already support Safe Routes to School and building new partners. We will develop a proactive and coordinated communications strategy with key messages and media strategies that will be used by the National Partnership, plus our partners at national, state and local levels. We will reach out to elected officials, researchers, parents, students and additional organizational partners as part of this strategy. And, we will provide all of these potential supporters with data and results from Safe Routes to School initiatives.

While many academic studies and evaluations of Safe Routes to School already exist, the field would greatly benefit from additional coordination among researchers across sectors. We will convene researchers to document the positive effects of walking and bicycling to school, including emerging areas like the impact on air quality, academic achievement, physical activity and behavior. Researchers, in conjunction with advocates, can also help identify gaps in knowledge about the impact of Safe Routes to School in specific contexts and populations and make recommendations for nationwide evaluation measurement techniques and future research.

The most effective communications strategies showcase compelling stories, based on sound research and results. Potential supporters, especially policy makers, are most likely to be convinced of the value of Safe Routes to School if the messaging clearly explains the benefits of Safe Routes to School for reversing childhood obesity, improving safety, promoting social equity and decreasing pollution. We will identify clear and effective stories and communications tools, and work with the media, partners and through social media to get the word out more about Safe Routes to School.

### Long-Term Goal:

Safe Routes to School will be a household name. The average person will know what Safe Routes to School is and how it benefits them, even if they don't have school-aged children.

### Measureable Objectives:

- ✓ By 2013, we will form a Research Council including the foremost Safe Routes to School researchers in the United States. The Research Council will make recommendations for needed research and, by 2015, several studies will be underway to fill identified gaps in Safe Routes to School research.
- ✓ By 2013, the National Partnership and the Research Council will work with the federal government to create evaluation standards for Safe Routes to School for use by all states and local communities.
- ✓ We will increase our number of partners from 500 in 2010 to 750 by 2013 and to 1000 by 2015.
- ✓ By 2013, we will have baseline data on the public's familiarity with Safe Routes to School. By 2015, this awareness will grow by at least 25%.



## Tactics:

**1.1 Research Council:** A key aspect of the sustainability of Safe Routes to School is its ability to demonstrate strong national results—which will drive policy, funding and practice. We must also be able to understand what works best in specific circumstances and for specific populations—and this research must be accessible to practitioners. In addition, it is important to know more about how Safe Routes to School impacts broader issues like physical activity, academic achievement, air quality, social equity and safety. We will convene researchers and advocates in the fields of Safe Routes to School, physical activity and the built environment to create greater collaboration on research and evaluation. Together, Council members will highlight the strongest case studies and findings, identify research gaps and set research goals. The Council will also strategize about how to achieve the research goals, fill gaps in the research and meet the needs of decision-makers. The National Partnership will coordinate with the Council to identify funding sources for needed research and collaborate with the federal government and the National Center for Safe Routes to School to create evaluation standards and methods for Safe Routes to School projects to set measurable performance-based outcomes.

**1.2 Awareness campaign:** First, we will work with partners to inventory existing awareness tools, compelling stories and initiatives and identify what is most effective and what needs to be supplemented. We will utilize media, marketing strategies and social media to create a stronger awareness of Safe Routes to School, its benefits and the ease with which children and families can participate. We will also develop messaging to help address parent concerns about personal safety and engage young people in shaping an effective campaign to reach their peers. The National Partnership will foster relationships with reporters and national publications to generate earned media, op-ed pieces and editorials, and will actively seek to link national and regional news stories to Safe Routes to School. In conjunction with our partners, we will create and train a network of spokespersons and produce testimonials. Through media partners, public service announcements, cross-promotion with corporations and other vehicles, we will seek to raise awareness of Safe Routes to School, engage new partner organizations and encourage more families and leaders to take action. We will also develop more marketing tools and materials, tied into the national campaign, which supporters can use and customize at the local level to advance policy goals and outcomes.

**1.3 National Partnership branding:** We will develop a distinct brand identity for the National Partnership as the advocacy leader for the movement. We will ensure that our brand is appealing to new partners in key disciplines such as environmental protection, transportation, smart growth, health and equity. This brand will be conveyed through effective messaging statements, a more interactive website and refined and expanded social media strategies. By deepening relationships with our partners, we will be able to further advance communications and branding for the National Partnership.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS #2: Changing Policies and Infrastructure



### Background:

Post-World War II, cities in the United States were designed to move the automobile more quickly and to more locations. This spawned urban sprawl and largely engineered walking and bicycling out of American life. Since 1991, Congress has recognized the benefits of bicycling and walking by including funding and programs in federal transportation bills to support active transportation. However, while walking and bicycling represent 12% of trips in the United States and nearly 14% of traffic fatalities, these modes of transportation only receive 1.2% of federal transportation funding. To create a more active America and reduce automobile dependency, we need to enhance federal, state and local funding streams for walking and bicycling and ensure that walking and bicycling facilities are routinely included in all transportation projects, while also securing policy changes that promote active, accessible and affordable transportation choices.

With leadership from the National Partnership, Safe Routes to School supporters in states and local regions are building transportation infrastructure to support walking and bicycling to schools, and making progress on policies like complete streets, community-centered schools, inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian curricula in physical education. An important component of this advocacy is the National Partnership's state network project in which organizers collaborate with state agencies, non-profits, cities and local partners to leverage funds and secure policy changes supportive of walking and bicycling to school and in everyday life. The state network project is currently active in 19 states and the District of Columbia. The National Partnership is also running a regional network project that influences three Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Over the next five years, the National Partnership will increase our advocacy at all levels of government through federal lobbying and agency outreach, an expansion of our state and regional networks, and support for local level policy change. Through these efforts, we will make progress in creating supportive policies and funding for healthy, affordable and active transportation.

### Long-Term Goal:

Every school in America has safe walking and bicycling routes and there are supportive policies for Safe Routes to School at the federal, state, local and school district levels.

### Measureable Objectives:

- ✓ By 2013, federal funding for Safe Routes to School will be at least three times more than the 2009 amount of \$183 million/year.
- ✓ By 2013, we will have a system to inventory state and local funding for Safe Routes to School, and the initial benchmark will show state and local funding is equal to at least half of the annual federal investment. By 2015, that amount of funding will have increased, to be equal to the annual level of federal spending.
- ✓ By 2013, all 20 network states will have policies in place that are more supportive of community-centered schools. By 2015, 10 additional states will have these policies in place.
- ✓ By 2013, our state network project will have full-time organizers in all 20 states and half-time organizers in 10 additional states. By 2015, the state network project will serve all 50 states, with full-time organizers in at least half the states.
- ✓ By 2011, we will have a system to define and take the baseline for how many state Departments of Transportation make Safe Routes to School an integral part of their operations. By 2013, at least 20 states will have Safe Routes to School as an integral part of DOT operations. By 2015, at least 40 states will meet that standard.

## Tactics:

**2.1 Federal lobbying:** As the advocacy leader for Safe Routes to School, we will maintain a presence in Washington, DC to lobby for strengthening and expanding the federal Safe Routes to School program through the federal transportation bill and other pieces of legislation. We will educate Members of Congress about how Safe Routes to School benefits their constituents and facilitate Congressional site visits to local Safe Routes to School programs. Grassroots advocates and partners at all levels will also be called upon to garner support from Members of Congress and to participate in lobbying days like the annual National Bike Summit. We will also actively lobby for and support legislative efforts that facilitate the creation of affordable, healthy, walkable and bikeable communities—including complete streets, bicycle/pedestrian programs and obesity prevention initiatives.

**2.2 Federal agency outreach:** We will cultivate relationships with federal agencies and seek to embed Safe Routes to School policies and concepts into wide-ranging federal programs and initiatives. Federal agencies to be targeted include the Departments of Transportation (DOT), Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, Defense, Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Corporation for National and Community Service. In the move toward performance-based outcomes for transportation investments, we will work with the US DOT and other partners to create evaluation standards that support bicycle and pedestrian safety, increased physical activity and complete streets. We will also publicize federal grant opportunities that could support local Safe Routes to School initiatives and develop resources to help local Safe Routes to School supporters develop high-quality applications.

**2.3 State and regional policy networks:** Using our existing state and regional network model, we will create policy changes that advance Safe Routes to School projects, including complete streets, new funding sources, community-centered schools, climate change reduction goals, educational curricula and more. We will seek to expand the number of states we serve from 20 to the entire country by 2015, ramp up the education of state and regional policy makers and increase the time commitment our state and regional organizers can dedicate to the networks. These organizers will develop and implement a comprehensive plan for action and strong partnerships with transportation, health, education, equity and environmental organizations, government agencies and policy makers. The organizers will also work collaboratively with state Safe Routes to School DOT coordinators to make Safe Routes to School and the creation of walkable, bikeable communities an integral part of state Department of Transportation operations, leadership and policies. The National Partnership will elevate the networks and their capacity to succeed through peer learning opportunities, technical assistance and documentation of best practices and successes.

**2.4 Local policy change:** Technical assistance resources currently available for Safe Routes to School focus primarily on the practical aspects of running a program. As the movement has matured, there is now a need for technical assistance materials and training related to advancing policy changes at city, county and school-district levels to support Safe Routes to School and active transportation. We will develop a national training on utilizing Safe Routes to School policy levers, as well as written resources, success story examples, webinars, sessions at national conferences and community leadership summits. Policy approaches that could benefit Safe Routes to School include draft language and goals for city and county comprehensive plans, model language for land use and zoning ordinances, guidance for annual budgets and for public works, community development and law enforcement work plans and policies. Detailing local policy approaches that can support Safe Routes to School, coupled with the leadership development techniques detailed in tactic 3.2, will result in more walking and bicycling to school and other destinations. Our goal is to equip local citizens, policy makers and other champions with the knowledge and aspirations to advocate for healthy policy changes through city hall, school boards and other local government forums.

**2.5 School siting:** Because distance to school is a major factor limiting growth of walking and bicycling to school, it is essential to focus specifically on the issues of school siting and land use. In addition to school location, the campus design and street design around the school must be considered when siting schools. We will work with national partners, state and regional networks and local champions to advance best practices on school siting, as well as school closures/consolidation, school choice and joint-use of school facilities. Our focus will be to create incentives and policies supportive of equitable community-centered schools. Tying school siting to climate change, school transportation expenditures and other infrastructure costs will help make the case for locating and renovating schools closer to the student population. The National Partnership will also work with the education sector, government partners at all levels, architects and the school construction industry to encourage closer collaboration between cities and schools for decisions on school siting, housing and land use. As discussed in tactic 4.4, school siting can also have racial and economic implications. We will ensure that recommendations developed from the forum on equitable community-centered schools, discussed in tactic 4.4, are included and implemented in our school siting recommendations and policies. This will help ensure we are working to reduce disparities and promote healthy schools for all students.



## STRATEGIC FOCUS #3: Building Capacity for Leadership

### Background:

Funding resources and policies that support Safe Routes to School are created by and allocated through federal, state and local funding streams and local land use planning processes. In order to make the most of these opportunities, individuals and organizations must be trained on how to work through the system to address their local needs. We will train individual and partner organization champions to develop their capacity for more leaders—including policy makers, parents and young people—and enable them to support, motivate and inspire each other. We will also develop a deeper understanding of the assets of our existing partners and create a plan for activating those partners to address our mutual goals.

It is also important to focus specifically on five key sectors that play a critical role within Safe Routes to School: transportation, education, health, environment and planning. The transportation field has a great deal of control over built environment funds that affect walking and bicycling, while the education sector has the most access to students. Many in the health and environmental sector have already engaged in Safe Routes to School, and there is potential to do even more. Planners and developers make decisions that affect community design, housing and access to schools. We plan to increase our engagement of leading individuals, policy makers and organizations in these fields and convert them into champions for Safe Routes to School. Concentrating our efforts on people, partners and key sectors will help build capacity for leadership within Safe Routes to School and the public sector so that the goal of increasing walking and bicycling to school by 50% is achieved by 2015.

### Long-Term Goal:

People and organizations that champion Safe Routes to School exist and are active at every level of government. They are engaged, effective and equipped with resources to advance policy change and built environment improvements that support Safe Routes to School.

### Measureable Objectives:

- ✓ We will track the engagement of partners in advancing policy change and raising awareness about SRTS:
  - » By 2011 – a system in place to track partner engagement with baseline numbers
  - » By 2013 – a 50% increase in “engaged partners” over the 2011 baseline
  - » By 2015 – a 100% increase in “engaged partners” over the 2011 baseline
- ✓ We will measure individual participation in training forums, website downloads of resources and action alert click-throughs:
  - » By 2011 – a system in place to measure individual engagement with baseline numbers
  - » By 2013 – a 50% increase in “engaged individuals” over the 2011 baseline
  - » By 2015 – a 100% increase in “engaged individuals” over the 2011 baseline

## Tactics:

**3.1 Partner and policy maker engagement:** The National Partnership currently has more than 500 partners including non-profits, government agencies, professional groups and schools. To advance the Safe Routes to School movement, we will expand and deepen these relationships and equip partners and policy makers to share information, activate constituents, take action and achieve successes. We will inventory the strengths and assets of our national partners, and create and carry out action plans with 20 priority organizations that will advance our mutual goals. We will also engage the bicycle and sporting goods industries in advancing Safe Routes to School efforts. Both existing partners and new partners will be provided with more concrete opportunities for how to engage in advancing the Safe Routes to School movement.

**3.2 Parent and youth empowerment:** Parents and young people are the most direct beneficiaries of Safe Routes to School and potentially the strongest advocates. We will develop resources and forums to motivate, equip and engage students and parents as leaders for Safe Routes to School programs, policies and built environment changes. This effort will include the creation of best practice guides about how parents and young people can engage with their peers, school boards and local governments, as well as online discussion forums to allow parent and student champions to connect with and inspire each other. While the federal Safe Routes to School program currently focuses on elementary and middle school, our materials will also address high school students and parents. Our goal is to convert parents and students from participants in Safe Routes to School to champions and leaders for the movement, and increase their involvement in the public process that affects community design.

**3.3 Transportation sector engagement:** Traditionally, the transportation industry has focused primarily on the movement of goods and people and has seen programs like Safe Routes to School as peripheral to their mission. It is important that the National Partnership strengthen relationships with transportation professionals and the industry to create greater buy-in for Safe Routes to School as a tool for reducing traffic congestion and improving safety. We will work to develop deeper connections with state Department of Transportation employees, including the state Safe Routes to School coordinators, and get a better understanding of the strengths, challenges and opportunities in each of the 50 states. We will also collaborate with transportation professional organizations and universities to ensure that built environment policies and engineering standards are inclusive of Safe Routes to School. Finally, we will engage school transportation officials and organizations to broaden their scope beyond school busing to also include Safe Routes to School and working collaboratively with their state and local Departments of Transportation. A particular area of coordination will be on ensuring safe alternatives for families that lose access to school buses due to school district cutbacks and changes in busing boundaries.

**3.4 Education sector engagement:** School systems and education policy makers are charged with providing all students with the opportunity to learn. More and more school systems are also taking on the role of influencing student wellness and health behaviors. We will better position Safe Routes to School as a strategy that contributes to academic achievement, student behavior and student safety as part of a comprehensive school

approach on student wellness and health. We will start to go beyond the traditional K-8 focus of Safe Routes to School to build a constituency for Safe Routes to School within high schools as well. For high school students in particular, service-learning can provide opportunities to engage students as leaders in changing transportation habits and policies. We will develop stronger relationships with the US Department of Education, state Departments of Education and education sector associations and organizations. In partnership with the education sector, particularly working with administrators, school nurses and physical education teachers, we will work to develop and include the teaching of bicycle and pedestrian safety skills within national and state curriculum standards.

**3.5 Health sector engagement:** Many organizations and foundations in the health sector have already embraced Safe Routes to School as part of comprehensive efforts to increase physical activity and improve air quality, thereby reducing obesity and asthma. While strong relationships exist with many of these national organizations, there is great potential to expand this further at state and local levels. State and local health departments, pediatricians, community health foundations and health organizations can all be champions for Safe Routes to School and for healthy community design. We will develop training materials to help health professionals understand transportation funding streams and decision-making and how they can play a role in creating healthier communities that include Safe Routes to School.

**3.6 Environmental sector engagement:** In recent years, the environmental movement in the United States has started focusing more on the impacts that transportation and land use have on climate change. Nationally, the transportation sector generates nearly 30% of greenhouse gas emissions, and studies show that it will be impossible to meet recommended greenhouse gas emission reduction targets unless national, state and local policies include a focus on reducing vehicle miles traveled. While school travel on its surface may not seem to be a solution, the trip to school can make up 20-30% of morning traffic in many communities. In addition, because of its focus on children, Safe Routes to School can train the next generation about the long-term influence of transportation decisions on people and the planet. Building on these opportunities, we will partner with environmental organizations to link Safe Routes to School programs and policies with climate change and air quality policies, training and curricula to teach students how transportation choices affect the environment and to empower them to make changes that reduce pollution.

**3.7 Planning and development sector engagement:** Planners and community development departments help create the long-term vision and comprehensive plans for a community's design, growth and development patterns. Developers impact the construction of neighborhoods, and their decisions impact mobility, equity and access to destinations including schools. Both of these audiences are integral to decisions regarding where schools are sited, the proximity of affordable housing to schools and ensuring that subdivisions and street networks are safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. We will reach out to planners and developers to familiarize them with Safe Routes to School and to encourage the inclusion of Safe Routes to School policies and principles in community plans and designs.

## STRATEGIC FOCUS #4:

# Advancing Social Equity

### Background:

All students and families throughout the United States should have the opportunity to safely engage in walking and bicycling to school and in everyday life. Children from low-income families are twice as likely to walk to school, but often face greater traffic and personal safety challenges on the trip to school. Residents in low-income urban areas are more likely to report higher numbers of busy streets, poor pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and challenges with crime and violence. And many low-income rural communities are faced with challenges such as distance to school, a lack of sidewalks and high-speed state highways bisecting communities. Childhood obesity rates are also higher among low-income children, children of color and children with disabilities. Unfortunately, many low-income communities—whether urban or rural—lack the resources and personnel at the local government or school levels to apply for and manage Safe Routes to School grants that would improve safety. These low-income communities are also disproportionately impacted by the negative health impacts from sedentary lifestyles which are often exacerbated by community and street design.

Looking at all of these challenges, it is evident that there is a real need to focus on social and health equity to ensure that low-income communities and schools are able to build healthy communities and access Safe Routes to School funds. It is also important to focus on serving children of color, recent immigrants and children with disabilities. The National Partnership has already taken a number of initial steps in this area, including advocacy for the inclusion of equity and health language in federal legislation and state policies and the compilation of promising practices. To take these efforts to the next level, we will engage social equity organizations and health organizations across the country to develop a plan of action, collaboratively advocate for policy changes, identify champions and disseminate best practices. Our leadership in this area will help ensure that the low-income children that are most in need of safe and low-cost ways of getting to school benefit from the program.

### Long-Term Goal:

The share of recipients of federal Safe Routes to School grants in low-income communities will exceed the share of low-income schools in the country. There will be systems in place to support successful implementation of the Safe Routes to School program in these communities.

### Measureable Objectives:

- ✓ By 2013, half of the states in the U.S. will have policies in place to support low-income communities and schools. By 2015, every state in the nation will have policies in place to support serving low-income communities and schools.
- ✓ In 2011, we will create a baseline for the number of our social equity partner affiliates at the state and national level. By 2013, that number will increase by 50%. By 2015, the number of social equity partners will be 100% more than in 2011.
- ✓ In 2011, we will create a baseline for both the number of rural partners and urban partner affiliates working with our organization. By 2013, both of those numbers will increase by 50%. By 2015, both of those numbers will be 100% more than in 2011.

## Tactics:

**4.1 Federal and state policy change:** Currently, few states are tracking the economic and geographic distribution of applications and awards for their Safe Routes to School programs. Without this analysis, it is impossible for states to know whether they are adequately serving low-income schools and communities in urban and rural areas. We will seek federal policy changes requiring state Departments of Transportation to perform this assessment with each application and award cycle and to ensure that they are adequately serving low-income schools. In conjunction with our state networks, we will work to ensure that all states adopt policies and practices to provide planning assistance, training, outreach and grant-writing assistance to low-income schools and communities.

**4.2 Social equity partner affiliates:** Many organizations already exist that focus on geographic, racial and economic equity, and there is an opportunity to engage more of these organizations in transportation and Safe Routes to School. As part of efforts to advance social equity within Safe Routes to School, we will reach out to national, state and local grassroots social equity organizations—including faith-based organizations—and ask them to partner with us. We will seek to engage their expertise and experience to identify needs in low-income urban and rural communities, to locate and equip grassroots champions and to disseminate policies and promising practices about implementing Safe Routes to School in low-income communities.

**4.3 Best practices and technical assistance:** In 2010, the National Partnership issued a best practices guide for implementing Safe Routes to School in low-income schools and communities. While it did include a few rural examples, it was more heavily focused on urban settings. Moving forward, we will develop a best practices guide focused

specifically on promising approaches for implementing Safe Routes to School in rural areas. We will also continue to gather success stories and promising practices in low-income communities in all geographic settings and distribute those through our networks and partners. One important component of this is sharing how to address issues of crime, violence and personal safety. We will also make sure that technical assistance resources and success stories address how to best serve children of color, recent immigrants and children with disabilities. Through partnerships with equity organizations, state Departments of Transportation and state Departments of Public Health, we will ensure that low-income communities and schools have access to technical assistance, webinars and other forums.

**4.4 Equitable community-centered schools:** As discussed in tactic 2.5, community-centered schools are an important part of Safe Routes to School, since they have shorter distances between homes and school. While there are many benefits to community-centered schools, there are also racial, economic and health concerns about this approach that must be addressed to ensure equity. In addition, many low-income communities have been facing school closures and school consolidations that can result in children attending distant schools. We will work with social and health equity partners to research the challenges, document the sensitive issues and concerns, and convene a forum to bring together stakeholders in equity, education, housing, school siting and Safe Routes to School for an honest and open discussion. The goal of the forum will be to collectively develop a plan of recommended actions for equitable community-centered schools, and to then activate national, state and local partners to share proposed solutions and work with community leaders seek policy changes.



## STRATEGIC FOCUS #5:

# Assuring Sustainability

### Background:

The first federal funding for Safe Routes to School was created in 2005 through the federal transportation bill. As of 2010, \$800 million in federal funds have been allocated to Safe Routes to School, and a new transportation bill is pending within Congress that is likely to provide continued and increased funding for an additional five years. There is significant demand for Safe Routes to School funding, with state Departments of Transportation only able to support approximately one-third of requested funds.

Given the considerable benefits to children and communities outlined throughout this Strategic Plan, we expect that the Safe Routes to School movement will continue to grow and place additional demands on the National Partnership. We must ensure that both the movement and the National Partnership are sustainable. Sustainability of the movement relies upon leadership, effective use of federal funds, productive collaboration and leveraging additional funds and partners. Sustainability of the National Partnership depends on diversified funding, knowledgeable staff, an effective steering committee, strong leaders and efficient infrastructure. This sustainability will allow the National Partnership to carefully and proactively plan for the future, direct our course of action and have the resources to react to new challenges and opportunities that arise based on politics, the media or partners.

### Long-Term Goal:

Both the National Partnership and the Safe Routes to School movement are sustainable beyond 2015 with strong leadership, effective infrastructure, measurable results and diversified, stable funding sources.

### Measureable Objectives:

- ✓ By 2013, state obligation rates for Safe Routes to School allocated funding reaches 60%. By 2015, state obligation rates for Safe Routes to School allocated funding reaches 80%.
- ✓ By 2013, the National Partnership's budget will meet the advocacy and policy needs of 35 states and our revenues will include 10% from individuals and partners. By 2015, our budget will support advocacy in all 50 states and revenue will be further diversified.
- ✓ By 2013, we will have a system to inventory state and local funding for Safe Routes to School, and the initial benchmark will show state and local funding is equal to at least half of the annual federal investment. By 2015, that amount of funding will have increased, to be equal to the annual level of federal spending.



## Tactics:

**5.1 Sustainability of the movement:** A viable movement is one with real results, strong leaders at every level, broad support, motivated volunteers and multiple diverse funding sources. To achieve these goals, we will work with local and state leaders to ensure that federal Safe Routes to School funds are spent and translate into completed, successful Safe Routes to School programs, jobs and infrastructure. We will also collaborate with the Federal Highway Administration and the National Center for Safe Routes to School to lead the movement by disseminating successes, shaping evaluation plans and holding the bi-annual national conference. A number of the tactics outlined in prior sections also ensure that more organizations and partners include Safe Routes to School in their plans and promotional efforts. Finally, through the state and local policy change tactics outlined in strategic focus area #2 and leadership development described in strategic focus area #3, more states and local communities will provide additional funding to Safe Routes to School.

**5.2 Sustainability of the National Partnership:** The National Partnership has already transitioned from a start-up organization to an established organization with a five-year strategic plan. To continue that transition and ensure sustainability, we plan to diversify our types and amounts of funding sources and further grow our budget. This will enable us to achieve the ambitious goals and objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan. We will enhance our organizational capacity to fulfill the movement's needs by diversifying our staff and steering committee and providing greater opportunities for continued learning, growth and communication. Each year, we will evaluate our progress towards meeting the long-term goals and measurable objectives established through this plan, and develop budget-constrained annual action plans. Finally, we will create scalable and efficient technology infrastructure, resources, personal development and management systems that facilitate efficiency and connectedness for our staff that are dispersed throughout the country.

# Compilation of Long-Term Goals and Measurable Objectives

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA	LONG-TERM GOAL	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES
<p><b>#1 Opening Minds through Research and Communications</b></p>	<p>Safe Routes to School will be a household name. The average person will know what Safe Routes to School is and how it benefits them, even if they don't have school-aged children.</p>	<p>By 2013, we will form a Research Council including the foremost Safe Routes to School researchers in the United States. The Research Council will make recommendations for needed research and, by 2015, several studies will be underway to fill identified gaps in Safe Routes to School research.</p> <p>By 2013, the National Partnership and the Research Council will work with the federal government to create evaluation standards for Safe Routes to School for use by all states and local communities.</p> <p>We will increase our number of partners from 500 in 2010 to 750 by 2013 and to 1000 by 2015.</p> <p>By 2013, we will have baseline data on the public's familiarity with Safe Routes to School. By 2015, this awareness will grow by at least 25%.</p>
<p><b>#2 Changing Policies and Infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Every school in America has safe walking and bicycling routes and there are supportive policies for Safe Routes to School at the federal, state, local and school district levels.</p>	<p>By 2013, federal funding for Safe Routes to School will be at least three times more than the 2009 amount of \$183 million/year.</p> <p>By 2013, we will have a system to inventory state and local funding for Safe Routes to School, and the initial benchmark will show state and local funding is equal to at least half of the annual federal investment. By 2015, that amount of funding will have increased, to be equal to the annual level of federal spending.</p> <p>By 2013, all 20 network states will have policies in place that are more supportive of community-centered schools. By 2015, 10 additional states will have these policies in place.</p> <p>By 2013, our state network project will have full-time Organizers in all 20 states and half-time Organizers in 10 additional states. By 2015, the state network project will serve all 50 states, with full-time Organizers in at least half the states.</p> <p>By 2011, we will have a system to define and take the baseline for how many state Departments of Transportation make Safe Routes to School an integral part of their operations. By 2013, at least 20 states will have Safe Routes to School as an integral part of DOT operations. By 2015, at least 40 states will meet that standard.</p>

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA	LONG-TERM GOAL	MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES
<p><b>#3 Building Capacity for Leadership</b></p>	<p>People and organizations that champion Safe Routes to School exist and are active at every level of government. They are engaged, effective and equipped with resources to advance policy change and built environment improvements that support Safe Routes to School.</p>	<p>We will track the engagement of partners in advancing policy change and raising awareness about SRTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» By 2011 – a system in place to measure partner engagement with baseline numbers</li> <li>» By 2013 – a 50% increase in “engaged partners” over the 2011 baseline</li> <li>» By 2015 – a 100% increase in “engaged partners” over the 2011 baseline</li> </ul> <p>We will measure individual participation in training forums, website downloads of resources and action alert click-throughs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» By 2011 – a system in place to measure individual engagement with baseline numbers</li> <li>» By 2013 – a 50% increase in “engaged individuals” over the 2011 baseline</li> <li>» By 2015 – a 100% increase in “engaged individuals” over the 2011 baseline</li> </ul>
<p><b>#4 Advancing Equity</b></p>	<p>The share of recipients of federal Safe Routes to School grants in low-income communities will exceed the share of low-income schools in the country. There will be systems in place to support successful implementation of the Safe Routes to School program in these communities.</p>	<p>By 2013, half of the states in the U.S. will have policies in place to support low-income communities and schools. By 2015, every state in the nation will have policies in place to support serving low-income communities and schools.</p> <p>In 2011, we will create a baseline for the number of our social equity partner affiliates at the state and national level. By 2013, that number will increase by 50%. By 2015, the number of social equity partners will be 100% more than in 2011.</p> <p>In 2011, we will create a baseline for both the number of rural partners and urban partner affiliates working with our organization. By 2013, both of those numbers will increase by 50%. By 2015, both of those numbers will be 100% more than in 2011.</p>
<p><b>#5 Assuring Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Both the National Partnership and the Safe Routes to School movement are sustainable beyond 2015 and have a diversification of stable funding sources.</p>	<p>By 2013, state obligation rates for Safe Routes to School allocated funding reaches 60%. By 2015, state obligation rates for Safe Routes to School allocated funding reaches 80%.</p> <p>By 2013, the National Partnership’s budget will meet the advocacy and policy needs of 35 states and revenues will include 10% from individuals and partners. By 2015, our budget will support advocacy in all 50 states and revenue will be further diversified.</p> <p>By 2013, we will have a system to inventory state and local funding for Safe Routes to School, and the initial benchmark will show state and local funding is equal to at least half of the annual federal investment. By 2015 that amount of funding will have increased, to be equal to the annual level of federal spending.</p>

# Fundraising for Strategic Plan Implementation

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership (the National Partnership) has grown rapidly since its founding in 2005 to meet the increasing needs for Safe Routes to School programs and policy advocacy. The collective impact of this work results in built environment improvements that support physical activity and safety for children of all ages, incomes and abilities.

The National Partnership grew from an initial budget of \$75,000 with a staff of one in 2006 to \$560,000 and four full-time staff and 15 sub-contractors in 2008 to a 2010 budget of \$1,540,000 with eight full-time staff, three part-time staff and 27 sub-contractors. Our current 2010 budget includes 1% from individuals, 8% from government contracts, 37% from corporations and 54% from foundations.

We are currently advancing transportation policy reform at national, state and local levels, sharing best practices from policy and evaluation projects, improving internal systems and processes, solidifying our brand and diversifying program offerings and funding sources. Continuing to address these strategies in 2011 will position the National Partnership to further expand and deepen our reach in the years 2012 through 2015 and beyond.

To meet the growing demands of the Safe Routes to School movement, the National Partnership will raise funds from diversified sources to enable us to achieve expansion of the state and regional networks and the other ambitious goals, objectives and tactics outlined in this Strategic Plan. Our fundraising efforts over the next five years will focus on two core strategies:

- » Diversifying funding streams to support operations and programs and enhanced organizational sustainability.
- » Integrating fundraising activities at all levels of the organization by sharing information, enhancing systems and instilling a culture of donor-centered fundraising among National Partnership staff, the steering committee and in tandem with the Bikes Belong Foundation.

The core strategies of the National Partnership's fundraising plan are inextricably linked. As we diversify our funding to include individuals and grow our community-based support, our ability to garner cause-related corporate partnerships grows. An influx of unrestricted dollars from individuals and events will strengthen our organizational capacity. This, in turn, will help us achieve broader programmatic reach and develop new areas for foundation support, as well as fee-for-service contract work.

While the immediate focus of 2011 fundraising efforts for the National Partnership is to diversify funding sources within the foundation and corporate sectors, the key to the long-term growth of the National Partnership lies in engaging individuals at the grassroots and community level and developing additional sources of generated income.

The National Partnership looks forward to working with funding partners, government agencies, non-profit organizations, parents and children throughout the United States to achieve the mission of an America where every child has the opportunity to safely walk and bicycle to school, and in daily life.





## Conclusion

Through implementation of the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, the National Partnership and its partners will take the Safe Routes to School national movement to the next level of success. This will be accomplished through the five Strategic Focus Areas in the Plan: expanding communications and research, improving the built environment and policies, building the capacity for leadership, advancing social equity and ensuring sustainability of the National Partnership and the movement.

Safe Routes to School has proven to be an effective and popular strategy for increasing physical activity among children, improving safety, reducing pollution and engaging policy makers in community design to promote smart growth and community livability. As we move into the future, Safe Routes to School will continue to be a catalyst for nurturing new policy maker and citizen champions throughout the United States. These champions will lead, along with our children, efforts to build healthy, equitable environments and transportation infrastructure systems that will optimally serve present and future generations.

### Acknowledgements

The National Partnership thanks the hundreds of people and organizations who contributed to the development of this Strategic Plan. Special thanks go out to our Strategic Plan Committee, our steering committee, our staff and our organizational development consultant, Karen Wilhelm Buckley of Communicore, for their collective guidance in our process.

We are also grateful for the support of the following funders which provided financial support to the National Partnership in 2010 and recent years: Bikes Belong Coalition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Kaiser Permanente, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and SRAM Cycling Fund.

# Appendix 1: Process for Creating the Strategic Plan

The National Partnership took nearly a year to create the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. The Plan was adopted by the organization's steering committee on November 3, 2010.

The National Partnership's director, Deb Hubsmith, and deputy director, Margo Pedroso, staffed the process for the development of this Strategic Plan. The process was guided by our Strategic Plan committee, chaired by Wendy Landman of WalkBoston, which met regularly throughout 2010 to guide the planning and content. Ongoing advice was provided by consultant, Karen Wilhelm Buckley. As part of this process, we also took the opportunity to revise our mission statement and to create a new vision statement which presents a picture of what we believe our work will create for children, families and communities nationwide.

In the spring of 2010, the National Partnership asked for input on our Strategic Plan from partner affiliates and the general public through an on-line survey. We asked about the most important issues both for the Safe Routes to School movement and the National Partnership's role in advancing the movement. More than 640 survey responses were received. During the spring, steering committee members and staff also conducted one-on-one interviews with 46 key stakeholders and hosted seven focus groups to secure input from parents, students, elected officials, funders, partners and other groups. All of this input served as the foundation for developing the five strategic focus areas, goals, objectives and tactics for the Strategic Plan.

A draft Strategic Plan was released for public comment on September 10, 2010 and comments were accepted until October 11, 2010. During this time period, the National Partnership also hosted an in-person annual meeting in Chattanooga, TN with more than 100 people. Meeting attendees learned about the Strategic Plan and provided input, reactions and suggestions. Based on all of this feedback, we made final revisions and vetted the Plan again through the Strategic Plan committee, staff and steering committee.

With this thorough process as a foundation, the National Partnership is confident that the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan represents the necessary next steps to advance the Safe Routes to School national movement and the move toward healthy, equitable communities that support active transportation by children and families. We are excited about the Strategic Plan and the opportunity to move into the implementation phase.

The National Partnership looks forward to working with all types of partners, parents and students to implement the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan and to fulfill our collective mission and vision.

## Individuals Interviewed During Development of the Strategic Plan

- » Kelly Hardy and Ken Kobetsky – American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
- » Mark Pisano – America 2050
- » Cindy Liverance – American Lung Association in Colorado
- » David “Bud” Laumer – Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
- » Claire Kenamore, MD – Billings Clinic Pediatrics
- » Arthur Wendel, MD, MPH – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- » Andy Dannenberg, MD, MPH – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- » Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Staff – Chicago Department of Transportation
- » Cheryl Charles, PhD – Children in Nature Network
- » Beth Steckler – Climate Plan
- » Elaine Berman – Colorado State Board of Education
- » Carleen Cullen and Sarah Starbird – Cool the Earth
- » Tommy Wells – District of Columbia City Council
- » Rebecca Crowe – Federal Highway Administration
- » Tracy Suber – Florida Department of Education, Office of Educational Facilities
- » Anne Fowler Wallace – Funder’s Network for Smart Growth & Livable Communities
- » Loel Solomon, PhD – Kaiser Permanente
- » Katie McBride – Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness
- » Maya Rockey Moore, PhD – Leadership for Healthy Communities
- » Preston Tyree – League of American Bicyclists
- » Transportation Staff – Mid-America Regional Council
- » Scott Little – Michigan School Business Officials
- » Dick Caster – National Association of School Resource Officers
- » Megan Wolfe – National Association of Sport and Physical Education
- » Lauren Marchetti – National Center for Safe Routes to School
- » Julie Gustafson – National Wildlife Federation
- » Rich Killingsworth – Nemours
- » Elizabeth Kolodny – Operation Respect
- » Alan Beihler – Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- » Julia Perry – Perry Communications Group
- » Debra Gray – Pioneer Elementary School
- » Mildred Thompson – PolicyLink
- » David Jayo – REI
- » Barbara Schneeman – RiverStone Health
- » Jamie Bussel – Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- » Moira Donahue – Safe Kids USA
- » Lynnette Ondeck – School Nurse Organization of Washington
- » Kristen Grimm – Spitfire Strategies
- » Casey Stanton – Transportation Equity Network
- » James Corless – Transportation for America
- » Richard Jackson, MD, MPH – University of California, Los Angeles School of Public Health
- » Noreen McDonald, PhD – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Department of City & Regional Planning
- » Stephen Berman, MD – University of Colorado Department of Pediatrics
- » Beth Osborne – US Department of Transportation
- » Rep. James L. Oberstar – US House of Representatives
- » Rep. Dave Upthegrove – Washington State House of Representatives

# Appendix 2: Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

During the data gathering phase of developing the Strategic Plan, the National Partnership sought input from a wide range of current and potential stakeholders about the Safe Routes to School movement. More than 700 individuals participated in surveys, interviews and focus groups. A portion of the responses were dedicated to identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) inherent in the Safe Routes to School movement. This SWOT analysis was extremely helpful in shaping the Strategic Plan to ensure that it capitalized on the strengths and opportunities, and was responsive to the weaknesses and threats. The graphic below captures the key responses to the SWOT analysis that informed the Strategic Plan.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solves many problems (health, environment, safety)</li> <li>Dedicated federal funding</li> <li>Changes transportation</li> <li>Focused on children</li> <li>Builds sense of community</li> <li>Diverse partners</li> <li>Nationwide scope</li> <li>Ties in with obesity and physical activity</li> <li>Tangible and easy to understand</li> <li>Credible statistics</li> <li>Comprehensive approach</li> <li>Changes social norms</li> <li>Means of understanding larger transportation choices</li> <li>Focus on policy change</li> <li>Improves safety for people of all ages</li> <li>Demonstrated need for the program</li> <li>Fun for children</li> </ul>	<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on livable communities and sustainability</li> <li>Increased attention on fitness and physical activity levels</li> <li>Climate change initiatives to reduce driving</li> <li>Growing traffic congestion</li> <li>Rising gas prices</li> <li>Concerns over traffic injuries and fatalities</li> <li>Economic crisis leading to reduced busing</li> <li>Connecting to safety, violence prevention and equity</li> <li>Linking to initiatives on healthy schools and reducing obesity</li> <li>Importance of health in all policies</li> <li>Younger generations less interested in driving</li> <li>Fostering independence and self-sufficiency in children</li> <li>Helping children with disabilities with mobility, accessibility</li> <li>Cognitive and academic benefits of physical activity</li> <li>Success stories from schools already implementing SRTS</li> <li>Getting children back outside, playing and active</li> <li>Growing number of people volunteering</li> </ul>
<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parental fears about child safety</li> <li>Car culture</li> <li>Pressures on schools and staff limit involvement</li> <li>Distance to school too great for many children</li> <li>Lack of enough funding to meet demand</li> <li>Transportation agencies prioritizing drivers</li> <li>Tension with school choice and desegregation busing increasing distance</li> <li>Low-income communities face implementation challenges</li> <li>Lack of understanding of how to implement in rural areas</li> <li>High schools not yet eligible for federal funds</li> <li>Not yet well-known among general public and decision-makers</li> <li>Siting of schools far away and closure of neighborhood schools</li> <li>Need for more research evidence</li> <li>Significant safety barriers in communities</li> <li>Regulatory burden and slow implementation</li> <li>Convenience/time saving of driving for busy parents</li> <li>Lack of coordination across school districts and cities/counties</li> <li>Depends too much on volunteers</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Built environment unsafe for bicyclists/pedestrians</li> <li>Federal, state and local government budget cuts</li> <li>Parent and media focus on child abductions</li> <li>Crime and unsafe neighborhoods</li> <li>Move toward performance-based outcomes and lack of data</li> <li>Polarization of views on bicyclists/pedestrians</li> <li>Poor driving habits of parents</li> <li>Failing and closing schools unable to participate</li> <li>Poor school siting decisions last for decades</li> <li>School consolidations from declining enrollment and fiscal distress</li> <li>Liability concerns and lack of buy-in from school administrators</li> <li>Difficulty of sustaining movement over time and as children change schools</li> <li>Parent apathy about importance of walking/bicycling to school</li> <li>School policies that discourage walking/bicycling</li> <li>Not enough money to truly make routes safe and change behaviors</li> <li>Requires so many agencies/organizations to work together</li> <li>Busy intersections, traffic injuries and deaths deter participation</li> <li>Some DOTs do not fully embrace the program</li> </ul>

# Appendix 3: National Partners of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership

The National Partnership is working to advance the Safe Routes to School movement nationwide. More than 500 groups across the country have pledged their support for the National Partnership by signing our consensus statement and memorandum of understanding. Join our growing list of supporting organizations and become a partner affiliate today at [www.saferoutespartnership.org/about/join](http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/about/join).

## National Partners

- » AARP
- » Action for Healthy Kids
- » Active Living By Design
- » Active Living Resource Center
- » Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center
- » Alliance for Biking and Walking
- » America Bikes
- » American Academy of Pediatrics
- » American Association of School Administrators
- » American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
- » American Diabetes Association
- » American Heart Association
- » American Public Health Association
- » American Society of Landscape Architects
- » American Trails
- » America Walks
- » Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals
- » Bikes Belong Coalition
- » Campaign to End Obesity
- » Center for Health and Learning
- » Center for Health Training
- » Child Safety Solutions
- » Children & Nature Network
- » Cool the Earth
- » EcoMom Alliance
- » Health Education Council
- » HealthCorps
- » Institute of Transportation Engineers
- » Kaiser Permanente
- » Keep Kids Alive Drive 25
- » KidsAndCars.org
- » League of American Bicyclists
- » Local Government Commission
- » The Mobility Education Foundation
- » National Association for Health and Fitness
- » National Association for Sport and Physical Education
- » National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
- » National Association of Regional Councils
- » National Association of School Nurses
- » National Association of State Boards of Education
- » National Center for Bicycling & Walking
- » National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity
- » National Complete Streets Coalition
- » National Education Association Health Information Network
- » National Park Service - Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance
- » National PTA
- » National Recreation and Park Association
- » National School Board Association
- » National Trust for Historic Preservation
- » National Wildlife Federation
- » Outdoor Foundation
- » Partnership For Prevention
- » Public Health Law & Policy and NPLAN
- » Pupil Transportation Safety Institute
- » Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- » Safe Kids Worldwide
- » Safe States Alliance (formerly STIPDA)
- » Smart Growth America
- » Smart Schools, Smart Growth Initiative
- » Surface Transportation Policy Partnership
- » Traffic Intersection Awareness Foundation (T.I.A. Foundation)
- » 21st Century School Fund
- » US Open Cycling Foundation
- » WE-CYCLE-USA
- » YMCA of the USA



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