

ENCOURAGEMENT

3



Goal: Encourage the Glendale community to walk or ride a bike for recreation, transportation and health.

Encouragement strategies are about having fun. They are designed to generate excitement and interest in walking and bicycling. Special events like Ciclovias, History Rides, and Bike to Work Day/Month, and ongoing activities like Bike Trains and Walking Wednesdays, all provide ways for parents and children to discover, or re-discover, that walking and bicycling are safe as well as enjoyable.

Encouragement is one of the principal strategies used to increase the number of children who walk and bicycle to school safely. Encouragement activities build interest and enthusiasm which can buoy support for changes that might require more time and resources.

In general, encouragement activities should require minimal funding and be easily organized by parents, students, teachers, or volunteers. They should focus on fun and enjoyment, and show quick success which generates enthusiasm for other strategies that may require a greater investment of time and resources.

3.1 - Policy: Establish programs and partnerships that will encourage the Glendale community to walk or ride a bike for recreation and transportation.

3.1a - Establish City-organized rides and walks, including those that may include periodic street closures.

Ciclovía

Ciclovía, a Spanish term meaning “Bike Path,” is a closed street or series of streets that are used exclusively for biking, walking, and other similar activities. Perhaps the most famous Ciclovía in the world is in Bogotá, Colombia where every Sunday and holiday from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. more than 70 miles of city streets are closed to automobiles, but open to cyclists, pedestrians, skaters, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. As many as 1.5 million residents come out to enjoy the safety, community, and exercise opportunities that a seemingly car-free city allows.



Figure 3-1. CicLAvia April, 2011

Several cities in the United States are testing the Ciclovía idea. In 2008, New York launched its “Summer Streets” program. Portland currently offers a “Sunday Parkways” program and Chicago, Baltimore and San Francisco have launched similar programs. On October 10, 2010 the City of Los Angeles held its first closed street event, called “CicLAvia” with an estimated 60,000 people riding and walking the route from East Hollywood through downtown Los Angeles to Boyle Heights. The Los Angeles CicLAvia was organized by a coalition of individuals and organizations including Bikes Belong Coalition, Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, Green L.A., the Bike Kitchen, and the Office of the Mayor of Los Angeles. During the Safe and Healthy Streets community meetings held in the Fall of 2009, the idea of a “closed street event” was heard repeatedly.

History Walk/Ride (other themed walks/rides)

Glendale’s first History Ride was held in 2009 as the result of the PLACE grant and was co-sponsored by the Community Services & Parks Department, the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, and the Glendale Historical Society. The ride was an overwhelming success with over 65 riders cruising to sites including the Grand Central Airport terminal, Brand Park, and the Alex Theater. Novice Riders feel much more secure in a large group and the widespread participation proved that there is a large audience for riding activities that are safe and fun. Building on that success, an equally successful History Walk soon followed, with a Historic Neighborhoods Ride and a Historic Parks Ride taking place in May 2010.



Figure 3–2. Glendale history ride April, 2009

Other commonly held walks and rides can be based on various themes, from costume rides where participants dress as cowboys or pirates, to rides or walks based on sampling cuisine. For example, in September 2005 Glendale played host to an LACBC Ice Cream ride in which cyclists traveled to various ice cream shops in the city and sampled the wares at each one.

Group rides are designed as family activities in which riders get to know people in their neighborhoods, benefit from some exercise, and have a great deal of fun. Group rides are often the best way to motivate people to ride a bike and they can lead to more frequent individual riding for many participants. The rides are generally held at a moderate pace through mostly flat terrain.

3.1b - Create novice mountain bike trails and a mountain bike skills park.

The hills and mountains surrounding Glendale are popular mountain biking destinations, however many of the existing trails are challenging for the novice rider. To encourage and enable mountain biking for novice riders, this plan recommends creating novice trails and a mountain bike skills park. Novice trails would feature less challenging terrain and grades that are not as steep as existing trails. A mountain bike skills park would include features such as “pump tracks” (dirt tracks that enable riders to propel themselves without pedaling) and other features that would improve the balance and bike handling skills needed for mountain biking.



Figure 3-3. The hills surrounding Glendale are popular mountain biking destinations.

A preliminary review of potential sites for a Mountain Bike Skills Park in Glendale was conducted in the fall of 2009 by Community Services & Parks Department staff, members of the Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA), and members of the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition. The construction and maintenance of novice trails and a skills park can be aided by groups such as the CORBA, the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA), and private firms that specialize in trail building and mountain bike skills parks. Mountain bike skills classes could potentially be offered through the City's Community Services & Parks Department to help Glendale residents take full advantage of these facilities.



Figure 3-4. Mountain bike skills park

3.1c - Adopt City-sponsored ongoing promotions.

Bike to Work Day/Bike to Work Month

Usually celebrated during the third week in May, Bike-to-Work Day is an annual event in the United States and Canada that promotes the bicycle as an option for commuting to work. Leading up to Bike-to-Work Day, national, regional, and local bicycle advocacy groups encourage people to try bicycle commuting as a healthy and safe alternative to driving by providing route information and tips for new bicycle commuters. On Bike-to-Work Day, these groups often organize bicycle-related events, and in some areas, "pit stops" with refreshments and giveaways along bicycle routes.



Figure 3-5. Bike Month Proclamation April, 2010

Bike-to-Work Day was originated by the League of American Bicyclists in 1956 and is a part of Bike-to-Work Week, which is in turn part of National Bike Month. For roughly the last ten years, the event has been held in Glendale and in 2009 and 2010, the City held successful Bike-to-Work day events in connection with the Safe and Healthy Streets program. In 2010 the City had five "pit stops" including one in front of City Hall. Over 50 bicycle commuters were counted on the morning of Bike to Work Day 2010 and the City Council proclaimed May to be Bicycle Month in Glendale.

Car Free Fridays

Internationally recognized, Car Free Fridays are designed to get more people on bikes and on foot while at the same time highlighting the global and personal benefits of walking, riding a bicycle, or using public transit. Choosing to commute by bicycle or on foot, even on occasion, can have immediate positive results on residents' health and finances, not to mention the environment. For example, according to a recent study in the *Journal of American Health*, countries in Europe with the highest levels of biking and walking had the lowest obesity rates. World Car Free Day is celebrated every September 22nd around the globe.



Figure 3-6. A Car Free Friday in Los Angeles

For more information go to: <http://www.worldcarfree.net/wcfd/>

Car Free Fridays in some cities, such as Long Beach, have included promotions where participants receive lunchtime discounts of up to 20% at local restaurants. Participants need only show a bike helmet, a bike lock key, or a transit ticket to take advantage of the discounts. Some cities hold Car Free Fridays once a month, others have them every Friday. In either case, the idea is to encourage residents to leave their cars at home, at least once in a while, for the greater public good.

The City can promote “Car Free Fridays” in conjunction with its Rideshare Thursday promotions as part of its Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program which is designed to promote alternatives to the single occupant vehicle in order to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality by maximizing the use of the existing transportation infrastructure

Walking Wednesdays

Similar to Car Free Fridays, Walking Wednesdays emphasize walking over motorized transportation for trips to work, to school, or for shopping – literally anywhere a resident might otherwise take a car. Walking Wednesdays also seek to promote the benefits of walking, even if it's just through the neighborhood or around the block.

It's well known that walking can help lower blood pressure, reduce risk of diabetes, manage weight, improve mood, reduce anxiety, increase energy, promote better sleep, improve self esteem, and provide an opportunity to socialize actively with neighbors, friends, and family. Walking Wednesday promotions seek to encourage this healthful activity citywide. The Safe and Healthy Streets Plan also recommends Walking Wednesdays to be promoted in the schools (see 3.1d *Walking Wednesdays*).



Figure 3-7. Walking Wednesday, R.D. White Elementary, Glendale

3.1d – Maintain and expand partnerships with all schools in Glendale to support/promote Safe Routes to School programs.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) began in Denmark during the 1970s over concern for the safety of school children walking and bicycling to school. The SRTS concept spread internationally, with programs developing in other parts of Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States. The first U.S. program was started in New York in 1997. In August of 2000, the U.S. Congress funded two pilot SRTS projects through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Within a year of the launch of these projects, many other grassroots SRTS efforts began throughout the United States.

SRTS programs use a variety of education, engineering and enforcement strategies that help make routes safer for children to walk and bicycle to school and encouragement strategies to entice more children to walk and bike. For communities concerned about traffic jams, unsafe walking conditions, physically inactive lifestyles and overall quality of life, SRTS programs can be an effective starting point for tackling these issues.



Eligible Project Components include:

- Pedestrian facilities – including new sidewalks, sidewalk widening, sidewalk gap closures, curbs, gutters, and curb ramps.
- Traffic calming – including roundabout, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crosswalks median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, and other speed reduction techniques.
- Traffic control devices – including new or upgraded traffic signals, crosswalks, pavement markings, traffic signs, traffic stripes, in-roadway crosswalk lights, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, and all other pedestrian and bicycle-related traffic control devices.
- Bicycle facilities – including new or upgraded bikeways, trails, paths, geometric improvements, shoulder widening, and bicycle parking facilities, racks and lockers.
- Public Outreach and Education/Encouragement/Enforcement – including installing bicycle racks/lockers on school grounds, preparing and distributing safety and health awareness materials, coordinating “walking school bus” efforts, developing education programs for school personnel, students, parents, and other stakeholders.

The City of Glendale Public Works Traffic & Transportation Division has designed a Safe Routes to School Plan whose purpose is to develop funding strategies for state and federal grants to improve the safety for K-12 students who walk to school. The City realizes that the successful development of the plan and its implementation is only possible through a cooperative effort between the City, the Glendale Unified School District, and other stakeholders involved in the safety of school children. Therefore, the City has invited GUSD to join them in this venture.

In 2009, the City applied for and received SRTS funding for safety-related improvements at Balboa Elementary School, Columbus Elementary School, Dunsmore Elementary School, R.D. White Elementary School, Verdugo Woodlands Elementary School, and Wilson Middle School.

In 2010, the City applied for and received SRTS funding for safety-related improvements at Glenoaks Elementary School, Edison Elementary School, Lincoln elementary School, Horace Mann Elementary School, John Marshall Elementary school, and John Muir Elementary School.

For more information on the funding received through SRTS programs, please see the Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and State Safe Routes to School (SR2S) sections in Chapter 8, Policy 8.1.

International Walk to School Day

International Walk to School Day is part of International Walk to School Month which takes place worldwide in October to raise awareness about the positive ways walking and bicycling to school can benefit children and communities. Started in 1994 with a few schools in England, last year's event involved millions of children, parents, and community leaders from more than 40 countries around the world including the United States, Mexico, South Korea, India and Great Britain.

Communities can choose to celebrate for a day, a week, once a week or the entire month as part of International Walk to School Month. In the U.S. the focus remains on Walk to School Day with support for communities that choose to celebrate using the timeframe that is right for their interests and resources. Some cities also promote Bike to School Day, sometimes held on the Friday after Bike to Work Day.

The event can be as simple as encouraging children and parents to walk to school together. Some communities choose a remote meeting place so that all families walk together parade-style. Upon arrival at the school, refreshments are sometimes provided along with a press conference or assembly, and greetings from elected officials. Such events are also an ideal time to launch a City-wide Public Service Announcement campaign focused on pedestrian safety, speeding, and distracted driving.

In 2009, the parents at R.D. White Elementary School planned and conducted an International Walk to School Day event. With support from GUSD and the City, over 600 students and their parents participated. In 2010, R.D. White parents, with additional support from GUSD and the City, increased community awareness and expanded participation to include seventeen schools



Figure 3-8. International Walk to School Day at R.D. White Elementary, October 2010

across the District making Glendale one of the leading “Walk to School Day” communities in Southern California. R.D. White once again led the way with students carrying signs including one that read “Be Cool, Walk to School”, and were handed silver stars on which they could write their names and add to a walk of fame around the campus flag pole. The front entrance of R.D. White included a red carpet and velvet ropes, further adding to the students’ star treatment.

Bike to School Day

Sometimes held in conjunction with International Walk to School Day, Bike to School Day is designed to encourage students and their families to safely try out riding to school on one day during the school year. Its goal is to raise awareness about the health and environmental benefits of bicycling to school and to encourage bicycle safety education. According to a study done in 2008 entitled *Safe Routes to School: Steps to a Greener Future*, if the number of students who walked and rode a bike to school was restored to 1969 levels, our nation would cut 3.2 billion vehicle miles, 1.5 million tons of CO₂, and 89,000 tons of pollutants annually. This would be the equivalent of keeping more the 250,000 cars off the road for a year.



Figure 3–9. Students’ bikes at R.D. White Elementary, bike to school day

For 2010 in Los Angeles County, Metro established Bike to School Day as the Friday after Bike to Work Day.

Walking School Buses

Changing the behaviors of children and parents require creative solutions that are safe and fun. In the search for ways to make walking to school safer, more fun and more convenient, communities are finding that walking school buses can make a real difference. Parents often cite safety issues as one of the primary reasons they are reluctant to allow their children to walk to school. Providing adult supervision may help reduce those worries for families who live within walking or bicycling distance to school.

A Walking School Bus is a group of children who walk to school together with one or more adults. It can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school to as structured as a route with meeting points, a timetable and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers. It is generally recommended to have one adult for every six children, but with younger children (ages 4 to 6) a ratio of one adult for every three children is recommended. With older children (ages 10 and up), the ratio may be larger.

When beginning a walking school bus, it's important to remember that the program can always grow. It often makes sense to start with a small bus and see how it works. A single neighborhood that has a group of parents and children who are interested is the best way to start. Walking School Buses are like a carpool—without the car—with the added benefits of exercise and visits with friends and neighbors.

The California State PTA encourages Walking School Buses as shown in this current attachment to their website:

http://www.capta.org/sections/communication/downloads/communicator-2009-10/10_WalkToSchool2009.pdf

Bike Trains

A variation on the walking school bus is the bicycle train, in which adults supervise children riding their bikes to school. For communities that want to encourage bicycling to school, a Bike Train offers a safe, fun way to ride as a group. Because of the equipment involved and the potential need to ride on a road, planning and conducting a Bike Train is more involved than that of a walking school bus.

Basic considerations include:

- Bike Trains are best suited for older elementary or middle school children.
- All riders must wear bicycle helmets.
- Before starting the program, children should be provided with practice and training on bicycle handling and rules of the road.
- More adult supervision is needed than for walking. One adult for every three to six children is recommended

Walking Wednesdays

Whatever name a school gives to the program, the idea is to designate one day per month or one day per week as a Walk to School Day. Many schools implement Walking Wednesdays right after International Walk to School Day in October. Families do not need to make a commitment to walk every day, just on specified walk to school days. This gives them the opportunity to slowly break the driving habit and adjust their schedules accordingly. Successful Walking Wednesday programs have led



Figure 3–10. Walking to school at R.D. White Elementary

to community-wide Walking School Buses and reduced traffic congestion around schools.

Walking Wednesday programs are currently under way at R.D. White Elementary, Verdugo Woodlands Elementary, Glenoaks Elementary, John Marshall Elementary, John C. Fremont Elementary, and John Muir Elementary. Similar programs sometimes referred to as “Fit Fridays” or “Car Free Fridays” are also in place at R.D. White, Verdugo Woodlands, Dunsmore Elementary, and Mark Keppel Elementary. Woodrow Wilson Middle School, Rosemont Middle School, Thomas Jefferson Elementary, and Dunsmore Elementary have plans to implement “Walking Wednesday” or “Car Free Friday” programs in 2011.

3.1e - Encourage citywide employee incentives for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The City of Glendale currently offers a \$30 cash incentive to employees who bike to work at least ten days each month and offers \$20 of that benefit tax free as part of the Federal Bicycle Commuter Act. The City should encourage local businesses to offer the same benefit to their employees as well as encourage them to provide their employees with bicycle parking facilities, changing rooms, and showers. The City also offers a cash incentive program for employees who walk to work and should encourage local businesses to offer the same incentive along with showers and changing facilities. More details about bicycle parking and shower/changing facilities can be found in the Engineering chapter, policies 5.2c & 5.4a.



Figure 3-11. Window display sticker promoting benefits for cyclists

