Case Study

Walkable Washington

The Walkable Washington program grew out of the Feet First Cities Program. It showcases exceptional pedestrian-oriented improvements, community groups and outreach programs; maintains a statewide network for key contacts and stakeholders including an annual symposium; and provides assistance with Safe Routes to School, walking audits and other educational activities and programs.

Safe Routes to School
White Salmon, WA

Description and purpose
Safe Routes to School started in White Salmon in August 2012 to increase school children’s physical activity and to provide a safe environment for students to walk or bike to school.

The program contains several sub-projects and events which have improved the infrastructure for walking and has gained support from the community. The Walking School Bus project has significantly improved children’s safety during their walk to school. The City also carried out different advocacy events during a month-long Walk to School Campaign, as well as distributing weekly papers, to raise people’s awareness of walking within the community.
Costs and funding
The SRTS program is funded by Washington State’s Community Transformation Grant and mini-grants from various organizations such as the Safe Kids Coalition. Approximately $20,000 of funding went towards this program.

Implementation time-frame
The program first started in August 2012 and was completed in June 2013. The City of White Salmon is now preparing to start the program again in January 2014.

Community involvement
The SRTS program was supported by numerous community partners, including local businesses, the library, the city, the county, and non-profit organizations. Many students and parents actively participated in the SRTS program. Though the Walking School Bus program has been difficult to implement due to a shortage of well-trained coordinators, the community has given positive feedback to the program.

Benefits and results
Pedestrian safety has significantly improved after building walking-friendly infrastructure. One of the advantages in implementing this program in a rural area such as White Salmon is that the tight-knit community is ready to engage in public improvement. Different projects have increased community and raised the number of parents and students willing to participate in the program.

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Resources
Partners Advance Safe Routes to Rural Schools, Partners in Action
http://depts.washington.edu/waaction/action/p2/b8.html

Photo courtesy of Klickitat County