



IMPROVING
TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVES
FOR
Youth

PUEBLO, CO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PREPARED FOR THE PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
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Problem

Pueblo County faces the challenge of a high substance abuse rate and high obesity rates among its youth population. In an effort to change these realities, Pueblo County has formed a coalition between the The Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG) Pueblo Communities That Care (CTC), an evidence based coalition housed at the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment designed to address substance use and other harmful youth outcomes by selecting and addressing critical upstream risk and protective factors within Pueblo.

The coalition recognizes the role transportation plays in the ability for youth to take part in prosocial activities and the opportunity active transportation offers to improve the physical health of its youth. Over the last couple years, data collection efforts have pointed to a set of concerns and challenges that can be addressed to improve youth transportation throughout the county. Pueblo needed help coming up with realistic, cost-effective, and youth-oriented solutions based in research and case studies from other cities facing similar challenges.

Objective

The goal of this project is to come up with a suite of case studies and solutions to improve acces to youth spaces by modes other than cars, specifically active modes. The coalitions research efforts found that route concern, safety, access to equipment, and distance were the top concerns among youth when deciding to bike, walk, board, bus, or use a vehicle to go somewhere. Based off of these concerns, the project aimed to overcome these barriers by finding ways Pueblo could improve safety near youth spaces, provide alternative modes, improve route knowledge and connections, and build capacity to continue to make improvements.

Background Research

The framework for the comprehensive recommendations was informed by the National Association of City Transportation Officials and academic research on the socioecological model of behavior. Taking into account the physical, social, intrapersonal, and regulatory environment I recommended four broad actions. The cost of solutions was kept down by focusing recommendations that utilize quick build tactics, cost-efficient materials, and case studies made possible by grant opportunities.

Methodology

In order to formulate a set of recommendations specific to Pueblo, I needed to better understand the current conditions for youth transportation in Pueblo, define what the standard for an environment where alternative transportation for youth is achievable, retrieve spatial data on Pueblo, and find relevant case studies. I also needed to identify a set of locations that were the most challenging for youth to reach by modes other than driving in Pueblo to focus the application of solutions towards.

I developed a process for evaluating these locations by reaching out to experts in the Safe Routes to School field. Kristen Haukom and Hannah Kapell from the active transportation planning design firm Alta Planning offered me advice and professional guidance on how to go about evaluating the locations and presenting recommendations. From conversations with them, my process for evaluating these locations started by making a visit in person to them and making observations on how easy it was to get around, the basic maintenance of safety and bike facilities, and my overall comfort level.

I organized my research on improving transportation alternatives for youth in Pueblo by providing case studies that varied in their approach to solving a challenge such as route knowledge, presented an example of that challenge within Pueblo, and then applied one of the case studies to that challenge. I then briefly described the key takeaways and next steps for Pueblo to take for the application.

Case Studies

- Low cost engineering solutions in Boulder, CO
- School streets in London, UK
- Slow school streets in Seattle, WA
- Bike wayfinding routes in Grand Junction, CO
- Loop system in Fruita, CO
- B-Cycle system in McAllen, TX
- B-Cycle kiosk in Columbia County, GA
- Bike libraries in Colorado Springs, CO
- Bike library in Golden, CO
- UC-Davis research on skateboarding as transportation
- Recognizing skateboarding in Victoria, BC
- Studying youth travel risks in Philadelphia, PA
- SRTS and Vision Zero integration in Los Angeles, CA
- SRTS programs in Fort Collins, CO

Recommendations

- Make safety improvements near Tinseltown Movie Theater
- Close streets around Risley Academy
- Improve wayfinding between Montbello Road and the multi-use path
- Place a bike share kiosk at a suitable distance away from South Marina (Lake Pueblo State Park)
- Allow skateboarding on sidewalks in business districts
- Create a Pueblo SRTS program and strive to reach Vision Zero Community status