

Colorado Safe Routes to School Fiscal Year 2021 Top-Scoring Non Infrastructure Grant Application

Application Overview

Applicatin Name APP-000116, Advancing a Culture of Active Transportation in Schools (ACATS)

Owner: Lisa Diaz

Type: Non Infrastructure Application

Project Summary: The ACATS pilot builds a sustainable Safe Routes to School (SRTS) network in Denver’s K-5 public schools by pairing the City and County of Denver’s active transport infrastructure priorities with safety education modules delivered by trained teacher “champions” who will shift culture within their school communities. Piloting at 3 schools over 2 program years that are scheduled to receive nearby mobility infrastructure, ACATS will transform the long-term effectiveness of Denver SRTS programs.

Colorado Department of Treansportation (CDOT) Region: R1

Regional Program Manager: Joy French, joy.french@state.co.us, 303.757.9528

Congressional District: D1

School District: Denver County 1

School District Name: Denver County 1

School Name(s): Castro Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School, Marie L. Greenwood Academy

Goal 1: Institutionalize and build a culture of active transport based on SRTS principles in Denver Public Schools.

Goal 2: Build DOTI’s capacity to deliver SRTS programming effectively.

Section 1 Problem Identification

Section 1 Question A

Previously, Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI) provided SRTS education programs to identify infrastructure needs. Long infrastructure lead times left schools frustrated, while new infrastructure was installed near schools without education support. Research shows SRTS education coupled with infrastructure improvements increases cycling and walking rates more (20%) than only education (5%). ACATS closes this gap. Denver’s Mayor aims to build 125 miles of bike lanes by 2023. Failing to pair infrastructure with education to increase utilization is a missed opportunity. Bicycle lanes provide a designated space for bicyclists, but also calm traffic to create safety for pedestrians. By piloting across 3 school contexts, ACATS builds a sustainable model for 100+ public elementary schools. Three schools—in different neighborhoods and across council districts— will have new bike lanes built in 2021 within .25 miles of the school. Equity index scores, Colorado Health Institute data (2017) and a ranking of most pedestrians hit by cars (2012-18) show the range of needs:

Castro Elementary, Westwood Elementary (53.83, 20.8%–23.8% of youth obese, 5th highest); Marie Greenwood Academy, Montbello Elementary (59.36, 19.1%–23.1% youth obese, 7th highest); Lincoln Elementary, Washington Park West Elementary (24.46, 8.7%–10% youth obese). Active transport is: convenient, affordable, benefits health, eases congestion. It is part of the community’s vision for a healthier and vibrant city.

Section 1 Extra Credit: Yes

Section 2 Project Description

Section 2 Question A

In Program Year (PY) 1, Bicycle Colorado and Walk2Connect (champion trainers) train two teachers (champions) from three partner schools (six champions total) on safety education modules. Each champion delivers the modules to 30+ students a year, serving 180 children total each year across three schools. The two modules contain a K–5 - appropriate learning video and curriculum on foundational aspects of safety (Basic Helmet Fit; Bike Check; Safe Walking, Rolling & Biking). Champions also facilitate active transport by coordinating SRTS activities throughout the year for all students. This includes two required activities (walk and bike to school days) plus two from a “bento box” style toolbox. The champion cohort has ongoing support from DOTI via an advocate. The advocate will aid implementation by: help coordinate SRTS activities; help form and facilitate parent coalitions; and provide technical support. An SRTS coordinator develops abridged travel plans with each school to further close the gap with additional infrastructure needs and provides a direct link to the full suite of DOTI active transport resources. The ACATS project manager provides overall administration, reporting and program oversight. The pilot builds baseline data to support evaluation of how integrating education modules impacts the success of active transport infrastructure in various school contexts. Ongoing evaluation is embedded in the program design, including evaluating the program to comparison schools.

Section 2 Question B: No

School Alternative Evaluation Plan: yes

Section 3 Action Plan and Evaluation

Section 3 Question A

Success: creating a culture of active transport by linking education to new infrastructure; building an engaged teacher champion cohort, supported by the advocate, who are passionate about active transport; and offering schools planning resources so they may integrate further active transport infrastructure and programming, facilitated by the SRTS coordinator. Annual evaluation will provide evidence that more students use active transport; students are excited and knowledgeable about walking and rolling; and teachers, administrators and parents are more engaged in active transport activities. Annual evaluation will include student tallies, parent surveys, supplemental survey

questions, student pre- and post-assessments, quarterly reports and program satisfaction survey. SRTS tools are embedded as a best practice for measuring participation and perception. Pre-bell observational counts will quantify school-aged children using active transportation before and after new infrastructure is installed for both partner and comparison schools. Comparison schools receive new infrastructure but no programming. By partnering with schools the year new infrastructure is put in place, ACATS has added relevance. Events and activities build off each other to create excitement and drive change. Champions can also deliver modules remotely if necessary, which could increase parent participation since active transport can be practiced safely amid the COVID-19 pandemic, per public health advice.

Section 3 Question B

DOTI has a team dedicated to non-infrastructure SRTS programs. DOTI and the SRTS team will continue managing, building and directly funding ACATS after the grant period. Currently, schools and community members are able to submit SRTS support requests through 311. DOTI developed the education modules in direct response to a growing number of requests from the community for active transport safety training for children. This development was also influenced by ongoing feedback from schools on the disconnect between new infrastructure being installed and families understanding how to utilize it. As the agency responsible for planning and building active transport infrastructure, DOTI is committed to closing this gap. The city of Denver's active mobility goals continue beyond the grant period, including increased activity transportation and the creation of beneficial and activated infrastructure. ACATS directly contributes to these goals. A successful pilot will provide clear direction to the city to pair infrastructure changes with programming. Capital Improvement Program funds will be explored as a sustainable source of ongoing funding. ACATS goes beyond informing school show to program SRTS, but it also builds capacity by partnering with the champion cohort. This capacity and access to all of the training modules will exist after the grant is completed. The pilot will provide DOTI with the baseline data and evidence to justify expanding the educational modules.

Section 3 Question C

Information sharing via the advocate and champion cohort model is key to the project's success. The advocate provides ongoing support to champions and shares best practices across schools, enabling champions to build an SRTS foundation that transcends a single class of students or teacher. For example, the cohort may form a steering committee, establish a parent-led coalition, or build a volunteer recruitment system. The advocate facilitates these efforts via a private social media page to share ideas and tactics across schools, where champions can also engage with each other. Training two champions at each school will provide internal implementation support. Events and new infrastructure will be promoted on social media using a targeted hashtag by DOTI (advocate) and individual schools (by champions). The advocate will also share the success of the project with the City Council, showcasing individual schools when possible and recruiting new schools to expand the pilot annually.

Section 3 Question D

DOTI will implement the ACATS pilot project across Denver in a tested, evidence-based and sustainable way that examines the role of equity in active transport. This will have positive impacts on the entire city as the pilot grows. Denver's government has

prioritized development of complete transport networks, including bicycle facilities. The Complete Transportation Network program increases safety for everyone, addresses congestion, strengthens neighborhoods, supports local businesses and supports equity in access. ACATS links city infrastructure improvements to school education. DOTI will be able to better understand educational needs of historically under-resourced areas through the pilot. With SRTS simultaneously embedded into school culture, the health and safety benefits of SRTS and local infrastructure projects will be further leveraged. Results may include safer students, healthier students with better focus, increased community connections and a healthier environment.

Strategy

Component: Bike to School Day

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is required for delivery by champions at each school. The advocate is available to support champions with planning and implementation. Requiring this component will ensure that use of the new infrastructure near the school is encouraged for all students and expands the influence of champions to include students who may not receive active transport directly via the modules.

Component: Walk to School Day

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is required for delivery by champions at each school. The advocate is available to support champions with planning and implementation. Requiring this component will ensure that use of the new infrastructure near the school is encouraged for all students and expands the influence of champions to include students who may not receive active transport directly via the modules.

Component: Bike and Pedestrian Safety Classes in PE Classes

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a “bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools’ needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Champions are required to facilitate a minimum of two “bento box” components each school year.

Component: Bike and Pedestrian Safety Classes in Health or Other Classes

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a “bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster

enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools' needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Champions are required to facilitate a minimum of two "bento box" components each school year.

Component: Active School Travel Safety Classes After School

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a "bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools' needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Champions are required to facilitate a minimum of two "bento box" components each school year.

Component: Walking School Bus Program

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a "bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools' needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Champions are required to facilitate a minimum of two "bento box" components each school year.

Component: Bike Train Program

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a "bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools' needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Champions are required to facilitate a minimum of two "bento box" components each school year.

Component: Weekly Walking/Bicycling Programs

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a “bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools’ needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Campions are required to facilitate a minimum of two “bento box” components each school year.

Component: Communication Awareness Campaign

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a “bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. Offering ongoing components based on each schools’ needs sustains interest and trains students on using the new infrastructure. The advocate is available to support any planning or implementation issues that each school may face, as well as to help bridge successes and lessons learned across schools. Campions are required to facilitate a minimum of two “bento box” components each school year.

Component: Bicycle Safety Field Trips

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is a “bento box style toolbox for champions to facilitate at their school. Champions and schools can adapt this component to their unique circumstances while engaging and encouraging students to participate in active transport throughout the year. This component is one option champions may use to build off the education module learning outcomes and foster enthusiasm for active transport with students. For example, in 2020, DOTI SRTS installed an outdoor hands-on bicycle skills course at Montbello Recreation Center. This unique resource will be available to the champions as a field trip destination – or other nearby active transport resources based on the school location.

Component: Parent Engagement

Rationale for this Strategy: Champions encourage parent engagement throughout required and “bento box” SRTS components (e.g. parent crossing guards for Walk to School Day). Parent engagement is also integrated into the education modules delivered by champions of students. Both modules (Basic Helmet Fit; Bike Check; Safe Walking, Rolling & Biking) include take-home activities or handouts that promote parent engagement.

Each school will form a parent coalition of up to 10 adults. Facilitated monthly meetings

will include discussion about how to encourage safer active transport for the school community. Facilitated by the coordinator, they will offer ideas for more active transport and serve as a liaison to the DOTI Planning and Engineering teams to explore additional infrastructure needs to further encourage active transport. Parent coalition members will be compensated plus provided child care and interpretation services to ensure an equitable representation of the school community can participate.

Component: SRTS Maps

Rationale for this Strategy: This component is integrated into the “Safe Walking, Rolling, and Biking” education module delivered by champions to students. This module includes an optional field trip where students create a personalized map showing their own safe route to school. This activity directly connects students to the new infrastructure near their school and encourages utilization.

Component: Other

Rationale for this Strategy: Champions can develop additional components based on their unique school, infrastructure, student interest or parent engagement level. This is an option under the “bento box” components. New components will be overseen by the advocate and the SRTS coordinator to ensure they align with SRTS principles. Since the possibilities are infinite, the coordinator will work with the school champions to develop creative components that leverage that teacher’s strengths. For example, an art teacher might want to facilitate a poster design for the students to promote active transportation. A biology teacher might want to offer a field trip to a farmer’s market or nearby garden to explore nearby amenities that enhance and encourage active transport.

Component: Other

Rationale for this Strategy: Two education modules delivered to 30+ students at each partner school are the cornerstone of the ACATS program. These are developed by DOTI and ready for deployment. “Basic Helmet Fit and Bike Check” includes a four-minute animation demonstrating bike helmet fit and the ABC Quick Check for your bike. “Safe Walking, Biking, and Rolling to School” includes a seven-minute animation, with both videos closed captioned in English and Spanish with Spanish script of animation for viewers who do not speak English and do not yet read Spanish. Both modules include a comprehensive lesson plan for the teacher champion and a handout with K – 5 level activities and summary of all information learned for parents/caregivers.

Section 4 Project Partners

SRTS Coalition or similar in Community? No

Coalition Name: Center Safe Routes to School Coalition

Project Partner: Castro Elementary School, Robert Villarreal (Principal)

Role in Development: Provide two teachers to be trained as champions, who will teach educational modules to at least 30 students each, facilitate all required SRTS components throughout the school year, facilitate at least two “bento box” SRTS components throughout the school year, collect evaluation data and participate in evaluation efforts each program year.

Project Partner: Marie L. Greenwood Academy, Blake Hammond (Principal)

Role in Development: Provide two teachers to be trained as champions, who will teach educational modules to at least 30 students each, facilitate all required SRTS components throughout the school year, facilitate at least two “bento box” SRTS components throughout the school year, collect evaluation data and participate in evaluation efforts each program year.

Project Partner: Lincoln Elementary School, Emily Clark (Principal)

Role in Development: Provide two teachers to be trained as champions, who will teach educational modules to at least 30 students each, facilitate all required SRTS components throughout the school year, facilitate at least two “bento box” SRTS components throughout the school year, collect evaluation data and participate in evaluation efforts each program year.

Section 5 Budget Proposal

Total CSRTS Project Cost: \$104,078.00

Total Project Cost \$104,078.00

Requested CSRTS (80% of Total CSRTS): \$83,262.00

Cash Match (20% Total CSRTS Project): \$20,815.00

Budget Items

BI-000937

Type: Personnel-Internal

Budget Item Description: SRTS Advocate

Budget Justification: The SRTS Advocate will be an independent contractor reporting to the DOTI Program Manager and is critical in developing parent and community support, coordinating activities for students, and communicating with school staff. (200 hours for Aug – Dec 2021 + 200 hours for Jan - May 2023 = 800 total hours x \$22 per hour)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.00

Quantity: 1

Total: \$17,600.00

BI-00938

Type: Personnel – Internal

Budget Item Description: Travel Plan Coordinator

Budget Justification: This 0.25 FTE position will be housed in DOTI under the City and County of Denver and act as the connection between the education component of this program and the infrastructure projects. This position will be responsible for creating and distributing the travel plans for each school. July 2021 – June 2023. (Total wages \$9, 970 for yr 2021 + \$16,748.90 for yr 2022 + \$9,769.90 for yr 2023 = \$33, 497.80 + 30% for standard benefits = \$47,8754)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 1

Total: \$44, 854.00

BI-000940

Type: Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Champion Trainer Consultants

Budget Justification: Two Champion Trainers are subject matter experts that will train the champions on the modules that will be taught to the students. The Trainers will prepare and conduct subject-specific training sessions for the Champions in the Fall 2021 semester. All the SME's are included under one contract through a consulting firm. This is a negotiated flat rate for all the SME training.

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 1

Total: \$3,000.00

BI-000941

Type: Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Champion Stipends, Fall 2021

Budget Justification: The Champions will receive a larger stipend the first program year due to the increased responsibilities assisting in the beta testing of the program and evaluation reporting requirements for academic year 1. (\$500 total for fall session X 6 stipends = \$3,000)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60.00

Quantity: 6

Total: \$3,000.00

BI-000942

Type: Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Champion Stipends, Spring 2022

Budget Justification: The Champions will lead the students through the training and education modules and help lead activities. The Champions will receive a larger stipend the first program year due to the increased responsibilities in assisting in the beta testing of the program and evaluation reporting requirements for academic year 1. (\$500 total for spring session X 6 stipends = \$3,000)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 6

Total: \$3,000.00

BI-000943

Type Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Champion Stipends, Fall 2022

Budget Justification: The Champions will lead the students through the training and education modules and help lead activities. The Champions will receive a reduced stipend because they will not repeat the SME training. (\$250 total for fall session X 6 stipends = \$1,500)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 6

Total: \$1,500.00

BI-000944

Type Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Champion Stipends, Spring 2023

Budget Justification: The Champions will lead the students through the training and education modules and help lead activities. The Champions will receive a reduced stipend because they will not repeat the SME training. (\$250 total for fall session X 6 stipends = \$1,500)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 6

Total: \$1,500.00

BI-000945

Type: Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Interpreter for Parent Coalition Meetings

Budget Justification: Interpretation services increase access to parent coalition meetings. This is important in ensuring equitable representation of the community and helping to encourage engagement of an active transportation culture. (3 schools X 18 meetings each X \$60 per hour)

Cash Match: (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 54

Total: \$3,240.00

BI-000946

Type: Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Child Care Providers for Parent Coalition Meetings

Budget Justification: Two child care providers will be present at each Parent Coalition Meeting to care for the children of parent participants during the meetings. A maximum of ten children will be cared for per meeting. Providing child care increase access to parent coalition meetings. This is important in ensuring equitable representation of the

community and helping to encourage engagement of an active transportation culture. (3 schools x 18 meetings each x \$20 per hour)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 216

Total: \$4,320.00

BI-000947

Type: Personal – External/Subcontractors

Budget Item Description: Digital Design Consultant

Budget Justification: Subcontractor fees paid to make modifications to improve the digital module content (videos, etc.). The content is modified based on Champion and participant feedback to ensure clear messages and effective content are included in the training modules.

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 2

Total: \$5,000.00

BI-000948

Type: Equipment and Supplies

Budget Item Description: Safety Supplies – traffic cones

Budget Justification: Traffic cones create safe areas for children to walk, bike, or roll so they are away from moving cars. (2 traffic cones per school x 3 schools)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 6

Total: \$264.00

BI-000949

Type: Equipment and Supplies

Budget Item Description: Safety Supplies – traffic cone toppers

Budget Justification: Cone toppers direct children and/or cars to keep kids safe when using active transportation. (2 cone toppers per school x 3 schools)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 6

Total: \$288.00

BI-000950

Type: Equipment and Supplies

Budget Item Description: Safety Supplies – reflective vests

Budget Justification: Each school will have three vests available to SRTS staff, Champions, and school administrators to aid in their personal safety while communicating with active transportation students and vehicle traffic. (3 reflective vests per school x 3 schools)

Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost): \$20,815.60

Quantity: 9

Total: \$324.00

BI-000951**Type:** Equipment and Supplies**Budget Item Description:** Safety Supplies – signs**Budget Justification:** Hand held signs are used by adults to communicate to vehicles and students to keep children safe while using active transportation. (2 signs per school x 3 schools)**Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost):** \$20,815.60**Quantity:** 6**Total:** \$648.00**BI-009952****Type:** Equipment and Supplies**Budget Item Description:** Bicycle**Budget Justification:** Each school will have one bike for safety demonstration purposes during SRTS programming for Bike Rodeo, program activities, and training. (1 used bike per school X 3 schools)**Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost):** \$20,815.60**Quantity:** 3**Total:** \$300.00**BI-009953****Type:** Other**Budget Item Description:** Grocery Gift Cards for Parent Coalition Participants**Budget Justification:** Gift cards will be distributed to Parent Coalition members at the end of each 90 minute monthly meeting at their child's school, which will occur only during school months between October 2021 – May 2023. The purpose is to increase equitable access to the coalition meetings, increase participation, and recognize that information from community that informs a program is consultative. (18 months x 10 participants x 3 schools = 540 gift cards x \$22.50 each on each card)**Cash Match (20% of Total Project Cost):** \$20,815.60**Quantity:** 540**Total:** \$12,150.00**Section 6 Previous CSRTS Grants****Section 6 Question 2** Yes: 2016, Non-infrastructure, \$86,000.00**Section 7 Subcontractors****Subcontractor Name** Bicycle Colorado**Previous Funded Project?** No**Subcontractor Name** Walk2Connect**Previous Funded Project?** No