

## CASE STUDY

# SANTA ANA COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR FUNDING

### Project Summary

A group of seven middle and high school students involved with Bike It! Santa Ana at KidWorks, a local non-profit that focuses on empowering and mentoring youth in disadvantaged communities, saw a need for bicycle infrastructure in their community and took the initiative to kick-start the project themselves.

The students were part of the KidWorks Youth Empowerment Network. Their campaign project was funded through a 2012 Safe Routes to School grant partnership with the Orange County Health Care Agency to focus on youth development, health promotion and environmental change. Many students had first-hand experience with the challenges presented by lack of bike infrastructure attending schools along routes with no sidewalks or bike lanes or having no family access to a car. Students also saw other members of their community struggling with these challenges.

Local youth champions, elected officials and city staff at the City of Santa Ana secured \$2.3 million of funding for a protected bike lane.

### Planning and Implementation

The youth leaders at Bike It! Santa Ana spoke with city staff to advocate for protected bike lanes. The city planners asked the students to identify three target areas for improved infrastructure. Consultants employed by city staff trained the youth to conduct walkability audits, which in turn enabled them to train other members of the community.

The youth conducted a survey of 200 bicyclists in Santa Ana, mapped bikeways and demographics using GIS, video documented the opportunities and challenges of biking and conducted community outreach to residents and businesses. They used the data to recommend three bike lanes they thought would best serve the needs of Central Santa Ana residents. With the support of elected officials, city staff then took the lead on securing funding for two of the projects and challenged the students to write the grant application for the third. Supported by the Santa Ana Active Streets (SAAS) coalition that advocates for access to safe active transportation, the youth leaders wrote a successful grant application supported by their research, documentation, community outreach and first-hand understanding of the community.

Some of the findings from youth leaders' data collection include:

- There were 12 bike collisions and 8 pedestrian collisions in the identified areas between January 2011 and March 2015

- Among the 70 largest US cities, Santa Ana has the 15th highest bicycle commute mode share at 1.8%
- 63% of Central Santa Ana students use active transportation to get to school. The students estimated that proposed improvements would push this number to 70%
- The California Office of Traffic Safety ranked Santa Ana 3rd for collisions involving pedestrians under the age of 15 and 4th for collisions involving bicyclists under the age of 15 in 2012
- 41% of adults and 35% of adolescents in Central Santa Ana are overweight (2009)

### Key Outcomes

- \$2.3 million in active transportation grant funding from California Transportation Commission in late 2015
- Funding will support the planning and implementation of protected bike lanes along a 1.7 mile stretch of Edinger Avenue, which connects eight schools
- Bike lanes will have raised medians, buffers and delineators to separate them from traffic



Youth champions explored best practices in bicycle infrastructure from other cities to inform their local project.  
 (Source: Bike It! Santa Ana Facebook Page)

## WHY IT WORKED

### EMPOWERING COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

With training and support from city staff and local organizations, youth led advocacy efforts for bike infrastructure in the community. The youth collected data and conducted community outreach to identify target areas for bike infrastructure projects and helped secure grant funding for project implementation.

## QUICK FACTS

**What:** Youth-driven data collection and community engagement to support a grant application.

**Geography:** Santa Ana, CA

**Goal:** Secure ATP grant funding for a protected bike lane.

**Leaders:** Bike It! Santa Ana, KidWorks, City of Santa Ana's Public Works Department, Santa Ana Active Streets



Santa Ana Active Streets (SAAS) Coalition supports partnerships like KidWorks Bike It! and the City of Santa Ana to promote project implementation.  
 (Source: saveourplanet.org)



Caption: Youth conducted outreach to people in their community to support the ATP grant application  
 (Source: saveourplanet.org)