

# Leadership and a Vision for Change



The City of Long Beach located in Los Angeles County calls itself “the most bicycle friendly city in America”. Bicycling has been a part of the culture of Long Beach since the 1800’s. The city was known as a beach community with an active and healthy lifestyle. Somewhere along the way this culture was lost and the city became like many others, a place dominated by vehicular traffic.

With support from the community and city leadership, Long Beach began working

to create an environment for non-motorized traffic. Part of the goal was to make Long Beach a charismatic community that draws people in and stimulates economic development.

Long Beach received a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) award to implement a program to address the 5 E’s that are the foundation of a comprehensive SRTS program: education; encouragement; enforcement; engineering; and evaluation. The award was used to help leverage \$21 million in additional funding to develop a comprehensive program. Long Beach now has over 100 miles of safe bicycle and walking infrastructure.

Long Beach’s SRTS program includes bicycle lanes, sharrows (traffic lanes shared by vehicles and bicycles), roundabouts, traffic signals, and a bicycle trail connecting three schools. At one school, a sharrow was created to get bicycles off the sidewalks, which doubled the number of students biking to school.

Safe Moves, a non-profit organization, provided the education and encouragement components of Long Beach’s SRTS program. It taught bicycle safety through indoor school assemblies, outdoor replication of city streets, parent workshops, and community events.

## **KEYS TO LONG BEACH’S SUCCESS:**

- A comprehensive program that addresses the 5 E’s of SRTS
- City leadership with the vision to make change
- Community support for change
- Leveraging funds to create a comprehensive approach
- Investing in infrastructure for non-motorized transportation