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Research Highlight

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Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training (CPBST) Program Workshop Follow-Up Survey Highlights

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The Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training Program (CPBST) is a joint project of the University of California Berkeley’s Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) and California Walks (Cal Walks). Founded in 2009, the purpose of the CPBST is to:

1. Educate local residents and safety advocates on how to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety;
2. Empower community partners to advocate for safety improvements in their neighborhoods; and
3. Strengthen collaborations with local officials and agency staff to make California neighborhoods safer and more pleasant for walking and bicycling.

SafeTREC and Cal Walks work with a Planning Committee, a group of local safety stakeholders, to convene a workshop, recruit participants, and tailor the curriculum to address the community’s needs and priorities. During the workshop, participants conduct a walking and biking assessment of priority areas in the community, learn about Safe System strategies to address walking and biking concerns, and develop an action plan with short-, mid-, and long-term recommendations.

Introduction

In Spring 2021, SafeTREC conducted a follow-up survey with planning committee members in communities who received CPBST workshops. The purpose of the survey was to identify any progress made on action plan implementation.

Method

In March 2021, SafeTREC emailed a link to an electronic survey to the primary point of contact for 60 CPBST workshop sites conducted from 2017 to 2020. The survey asked about workshop outcomes, gauged the utility and success of the workshop, assessed how workshops could be improved upon, and inquired if the community is interested in any additional technical assistance.

The survey included nine closed-ended questions, with possible responses provided, and four open-ended questions. If a respondent answered yes to the closed-ended questions, the survey would prompt an open-ended follow-up question to collect additional details on the community’s efforts.

Closed-Ended Questions

Q1. Did you attend the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety workshop in your community?

Q2. Have you planned any community outreach events since attending the workshop? (i.e. Safe Routes to School events, community meetings, presentations, etc.)

Q3. To your knowledge, have any partnerships, groups, or coalitions been formed to address the recommendations created during the workshop between community groups?

Q4. Have you conducted any walking/biking assessments since the original workshop?

Q5. Have you applied for any funding for the recommendations created in the workshop?

Q6. Would you be willing to take part in a follow-up survey including specific questions regarding the recommendations your community created (Electronic or over the phone)?

Q7. Has your community begun to plan any [of the following] infrastructure improvements? Sidewalk improvements (fixing cracks, sidewalk extensions, new sidewalks, etc), crosswalk improvements (striping, curb extensions, etc), bike lanes, bike boxes, new street or pedestrian-scale lighting, new traffic signs or signals, or other (please specify).

Q8. Are there any recommendations slated for future development?

Q9. Would you be interested in any of these additional workshops or more specific training for your community?

Open-Ended Questions

Q1. Have there been any barriers in trying to implement any of the recommendations put forward during the meeting? What are they?

Q2. Could we help you overcome some of the identified barriers? If so, what would be most helpful?

Q3. How has the pandemic affected your ability to implement the recommendations developed in the workshop?

Q4. Is there anything else you would like to share with regards to the recommendations or the workshops?

The survey asked about workshop outcomes, gauged the utility and success of the workshop, assessed how workshops could be improved upon, and inquired if the community is interested in any additional technical assistance at this time.

Highlights from the Results

There were 16 complete survey responses representing 15 CPBST workshop sites, a response rate of about 25%. All respondents served on the Planning Committee for their respective workshops.

Overall CPBST Workshop Feedback

100% of respondents said their expectations were met at the workshop.

94% attended the CPBST workshop they helped to plan.

75% are interested in conducting additional training workshops in their community.

In their open-ended answers to a question about meeting objectives, respondents were most interested in gaining a better understanding of pedestrian and bicycle safety (29%), followed by fundraising, community organizing, data collection and management, and safe routes to schools.

Since their CPBST workshops, an overwhelming majority of sites (96%) have started planning improvements in their communities, including sidewalk improvements, crosswalk improvements, bike lanes, bike boxes, new traffic signs or signals, and new street or pedestrian-scale lighting. School-related activities, implemented by 19% of sites, were also popular, including school and student-created signage, improvement projects led by students, and projects completed by school administrators.

Follow-Up Community Participation

Close to half (44%) of respondents participated in at least one follow-up meeting after the workshop, with most attending more than two follow-up meetings. Eleven respondents explained that they planned other community outreach events since the workshop, including walk assessments, bike assessments, Walk to School Days, Open Streets events, Safe Routes to School Community Workshops and Bike to School Days. Five respondents reported government-related activities, such as convening Safe Streets coalitions, adoption of a Vision Zero Action Plan, safety project workshops, the creation of a pedestrian and bike bridge over a major highway, and the installation of buffered bike lanes, crosswalk improvements and rapid flashing beacons.

69% reported that they planned a community outreach, education event, or other community programming since the CPBST workshop.

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents indicated that new partnerships were created after attending the workshop, including with Caltrans, Safe Kids, schools, city officials and others. Half (50%) of respondents have conducted a walking/biking assessment since the workshop.

Follow-Up Planning Activities

Over two thirds (69%) of respondents applied for new grants to address recommendations in the action plan report and over half (55%) were awarded funding. Respondents applied for funding from local funding opportunities and through state programs such as the Caltrans Active Transportation Program, the California Office of Traffic Safety, and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program.

Funding for grants ranged from \$50,000 to \$1.8 million. Half of respondents (50%) are at the beginning stages of planning for infrastructure changes.

For the Spring 2021 survey, respondents were asked a series of questions directly related to potential impacts to bike and pedestrian projects due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Six respondents (38%) pointed to COVID-19 as a major barrier to implementing recommendations from the workshop. COVID-19 led to a decline in staff time and capacity for bike and pedestrian improvements, online workshops not reaching the community to the same degree as in-person workshops, the inability to implement recommendations such as walking school buses, Tribal and city government services being shut down, and the cancellation of planned events.

However, many respondents were able to pivot to online events and platforms to engage their communities during the pandemic. Multiple respondents highlighted virtual meetings held by city government on Vision Zero, potential active transportation and Complete Streets projects, and safe routes to school workshops, which were successfully held during the pandemic and led to projects being kicked off and plans being adopted school- and city-wide.

Next Steps

UCB SafeTREC and California Walks are funded to conduct twelve CPBST workshops, three follow-up activities, and general technical assistance between October 2020 and September 2021. In March 2020, all CPBST activities shifted to remote work, which amplified the social inequities and digital divide prevalent in the marginalized communities where much of our CPBST effort is focused. The CPBST team continues to strive for equitable public participation in transportation safety planning, given competing priorities, bandwidth capacity, and digital limitations among participating communities. We are committed to working with the CPBST Planning Committees to identify how a CPBST workshop fits into their community's current needs and goals, and to address their ongoing pedestrian and bicycle safety needs.

Public health theory and business change management models both suggest that in order to bring about safety culture change, communities need to have the resources to achieve their safety goals. In Federal Fiscal year 2022, we are adding a focus on follow-up support to assist communities to implement their community action plans, mitigate obstacles they encounter, and achieve pedestrian and bicycle safety goals. We will continue to offer general technical assistance statewide, host CPBST workshops in new communities, and convene peer exchanges with safety stakeholders, including former CPBST partners, to share pedestrian and bicycle safety best practices and innovation.

For further information about the CPBST, or to bring activities to your California community, contact Katherine Chen at kchen@berkeley.edu.

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