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Impact of the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training: Program Insights from the 2024 Follow-Up Survey

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Berkeley SafeTREC

Impact of the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training: Program Insights from the 2024 Follow-Up Survey

Kyler Blodgett and Katherine L. Chen

Introduction

The Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Training Program (CPBST) is a collaborative effort between the Safe Transportation Research and Education Center ([SafeTREC](#)) at the University of California Berkeley and California Walks ([Cal Walks](#)) with funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety. Its main objective is to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety by educating residents and safety advocates, empowering community partners to advocate for safety improvements in their neighborhoods, and fostering collaborations with local officials and agency staff.

Since 2009, the program has conducted 126 community workshops across California. The program works with a planning committee of local stakeholders to plan a workshop tailored to the community's needs and priorities. The Planning Committee recruits participants for the workshop, and together, the planning committee and workshop participants create a customized action plan that includes a comprehensive assessment of pedestrian and bicycle conditions in areas of interest within the community and identifies short-, mid-, and long-term projects to address safety concerns discussed during the workshop.

SafeTREC conducted our annual CPBST survey in the spring of 2024 with planning committee members from communities that had hosted CPBST workshops over the past five years (2019-2023). The objective of the survey was to evaluate the progress of the action plans formulated during each workshop and to determine if the communities needed additional support from the project team.

Methodology

From late February through mid-March 2024, SafeTREC disseminated an electronic survey link to the Planning Committee members for 49 CPBST workshop sites. The survey consisted of closed-ended questions that offered a predetermined set of answer choices, and open-ended questions designed to elicit more detailed responses from participants. The survey solicited feedback on workshop outcomes, assessed the effectiveness and usefulness of the workshops, evaluated potential areas for improvement, and asked about types of additional technical assistance support the community might want. Respondents who indicated that they had never attended a CPBST workshop in their community were *not* asked any of the core questions related to workshop next steps and satisfaction but *were* asked about their interest

in support and future trainings from the project team. Nearly all questions were optional which is why many of the sample sizes for sections of this analysis are fewer than the 82 total respondents or the 51 respondents who were prompted to answer all questions.

The survey team chose to survey all Planning Committee members rather than a single representative per training, due to agency staff turnover and losing key contacts. One cost of this person-based approach is that some training sites and communities had more survey respondents than others and are overrepresented in certain parts of this analysis. We have normalized by community and site type where possible, but much of this analysis still presents data at the person-level.

The survey team made a few changes to the survey in this iteration. We removed questions about the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on training experience, since the usefulness of these results has diminished over time. We added a question around rated utility of workshops and asked respondents to elaborate on their rating. We asked respondents to rank their top two barriers to implementation and then elaborate on certain choices, to give us more insight into the historical top choices of "not enough funding" and "other competing priorities." Finally, we changed the question around how the project team could help overcome barriers from a write-in to a multi-select with a write-in option, to standardize these responses.

Figure 1. Respondents by Site Type

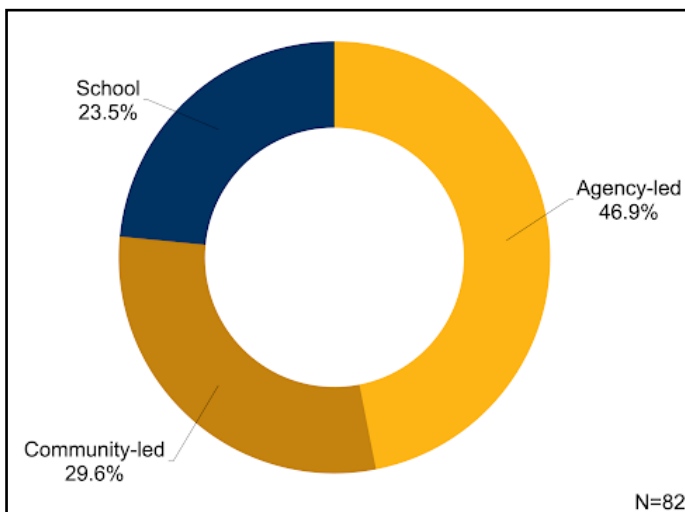


Figure 1: Site type indicates the type of organization that requested the workshop initially. This was coded by staff and refers to the training that occurred in the respondent's community. Respondents who were associated with multiple trainings (7 of 82) were tagged to their most recent training for data simplicity.

Figure 2: Roles were coded by staff to evaluate any disparities by respondent affiliation and may not reflect how a respondent would self-identify.

Survey Participants

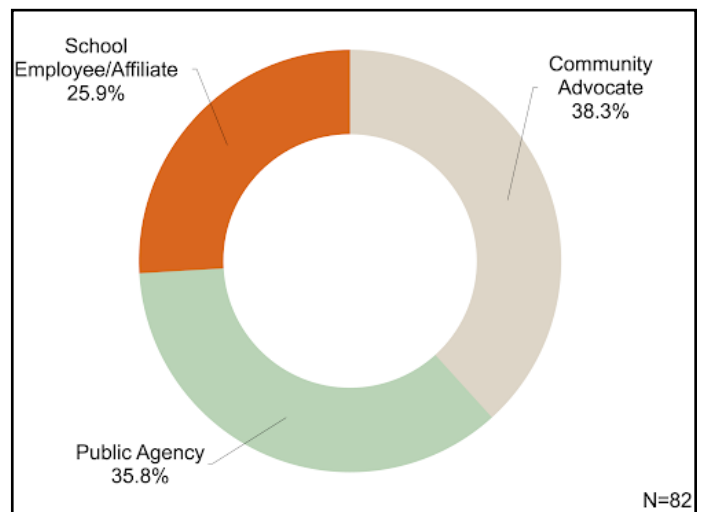
Of the 82 people who completed the required introductory questions on the survey, only 71 submitted complete survey responses. Of all respondents, about 80% have lived in their community for the past five years or more.

Nearly half of all respondents had not attended a workshop, indicating that CPBST workshops might be an entry point for community members new to this work. An additional 20% and 14% had attended two and three or more workshops, respectively. Over one third (37% or 30) of respondents attended their most recent training in 2023. The rest were split roughly evenly across years since 2019¹.

The survey team manually coded respondents by site type and role, since these markers emerged as useful ways to distinguish participants and were not asked during the survey itself. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the breakdown across site type and respondent role. Nearly identical amounts of respondents identified as community advocates or public officials / employees, with school sites and their affiliates being less common than other categories.

¹ The seven respondents who were affiliated with multiple trainings in the CPBST attendance system were associated with their most recent training.

Figure 2. Respondents by Role



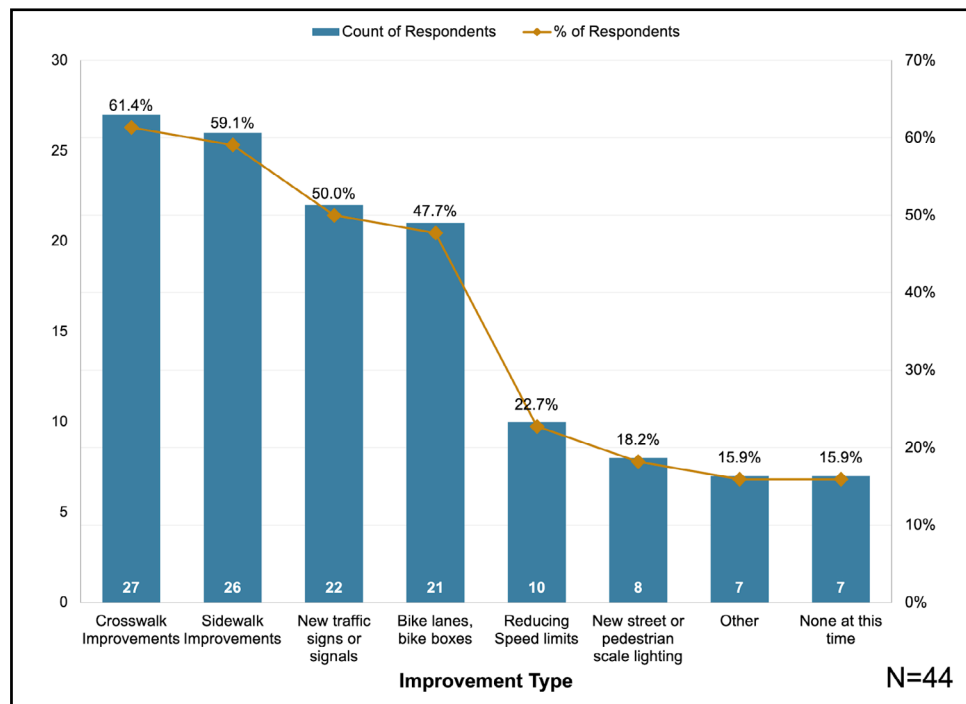
Follow-Up Activities and Workshop Value-Add

Respondents indicated high levels of activity following their workshops. Planning community outreach events (63%) and advancing recommendations slated for future development (37%) were the most common follow-up activities. Crosswalk and sidewalk improvements were the most common planned infrastructure upgrades. Interestingly, workshops initiated by community organizations rather than government bodies or schools saw the highest rates of follow-up activities.

Table 1. Post-Workshop Activities Reported by Respondents

Follow-Up Activity	% of Respondents (N=56)	Activities Reported by Respondents
Community outreach events	63%	Safe Routes to School events, bike rodeos, bike/walk audits, and increased participation at government-hosted meetings are among the most popular event types.
New coalitions or partnerships	30%	New traffic safety committees, cross-stakeholder groups with school districts, advocates, and government employees, as well as strengthened connections to existing communities generally compose the new partnerships formed. An additional 22% said that no new partnerships formed. An additional 22% said that no new partnership had formed but they were continuing to leverage existing ones.
Walking and/or biking assessments	30%	Most respondents indicated these were a direct result of the CPBST workshop.
Recommendations slated for a future development	37%	Over 50% were unsure whether any recommendations were slated for development.

Figure 3. Planned Infrastructure Improvements



Notes: Data is reported at the person level not the community level, so this survey may double-count some improvement projects.

Figure 3 shows infrastructure improvements that communities have started to plan for, by respondent count and share of total respondents. As in the 2023 survey, the most common four types of planned infrastructure improvements were related to crosswalks, sidewalks, new traffic signals, and bike lanes/boxes, in descending order. In 2024, the survey team added an option for “reducing speed limits,” which emerged as the next most common type of improvement.

Less than a fifth (19%, N = 8) of respondents indicated that their community had applied for funding related to the workshop recommendations, though over half of total respondents (54%, N = 23) were unsure. Write-in responses about funding sources reveal that applicants are awaiting the Active Transportation Program Cycle 7 grants, and are pursuing various other state and local sources. No one listed Safe Streets and Roads For All as a current or prospective source, though anecdotally some sites have applied for these funds. The fact that over four in every five respondents had either not applied for funding or weren’t sure reveals the potential for the CPBST team to fill a critical need in advertising and distilling funding opportunities for workshop partners.

Breakdown by Site Type

Respondents from community-led sites² (N = 24, 30% of total respondents) reported much higher rates of impact and follow-up activities than did those at agency-led or school sites. This was true for every impact metric *except* the implementation of temporary / quick build projects. After cross-checking responses for each indicator, it is clear that this is not solely a story of a small handful of excellent community-led sites hitting each of these indicators; there seems to be an unexplored potential related to community-initiated workshops. It may be that those initiating the workshops at community-led sites have a sustained passion for progress that transcends being paid to work in the field, have more diverse Planning Committees, or are able to be more nimble in training formats than their government and school affiliate peers.

Value of the Training

Respondents were asked to rank the role the CPBST workshop played on a scale of 1 (Not Helpful) to 10 (Extremely Helpful) in moving key infrastructure projects forward. About half, or 17 of the 37, of the respondents rated the workshop usefulness an 8 or higher. There were no notable disparities by site type or professional role.

The question prompted respondents to elaborate on their rating. This question was optional. Rationales behind high scores (7+) included the workshops’ ability to:

- Newly connect city staff and schools or advocates;
- Legitimize the work and views of advocates;
- Create a forum dedicated to traffic safety issues;
- Uplift the needs of community members, especially those who had not yet been heard; and
- Present data tools and analysis to relevant authorities.

Future CPBST workshops should aim to build on these existing strengths.

Selected Quotes:

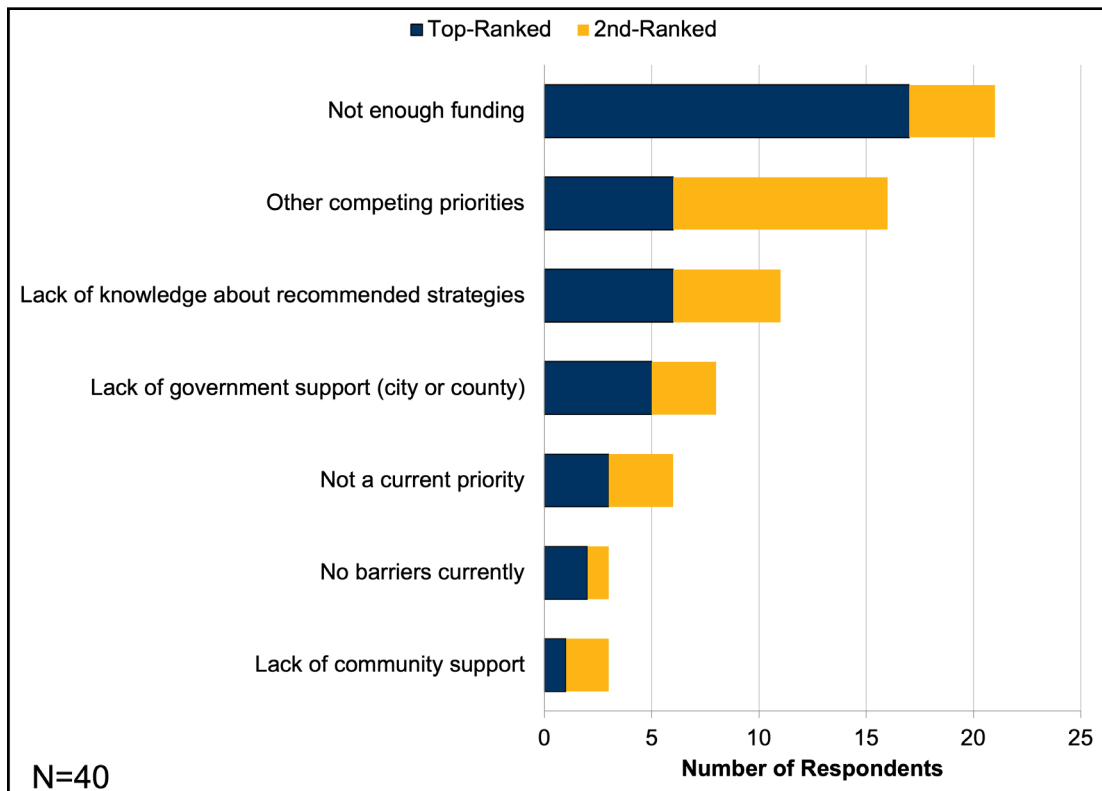
“The CPBST workshops help bring the issue of street safety to the attention of the city and the public. They helped give credibility to our group’s mission such that we have a constructive relationship now with the city.”

“Combining local leaders with the tools provided through CPBST is extremely helpful to advance community-driven projects.”

“It allowed many to learn how to connect with our local city people and police and traffic procedures. It gave the school many options on bike safety and pedestrian safety.”

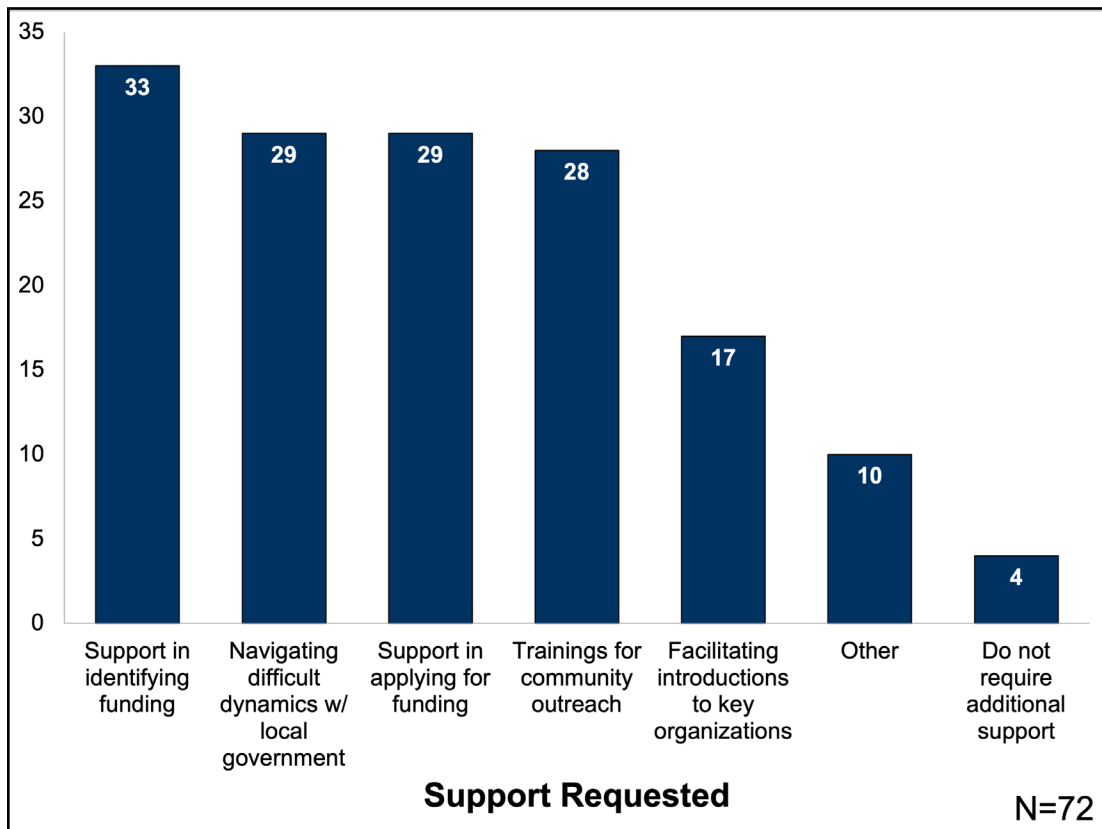
² There were 10 sites identified by staff as community-led: Arvin, Cambodia Town / Long Beach, El Cerrito, Fillmore, LASHP Chinatown, North Long Beach, Pico-Aliso / Boyle Heights, Redding and Anderson, Castro Valley (Unincorporated Alameda County), and Woodward Park / Fresno.

Figure 4. Ranked Challenges to Implementing Workshop Recommendations



The ranked format of this question was new in 2024.

Figure 5. Support Requested from Project Team



Notes: Totals are by respondent count. The question was “Which of the following ways could the project team help your community address the challenges you selected?” referred to their selections from Figure 4. This question was multi-select.

Assessing Implementation Barriers

As in the 2023 survey, funding emerged as the top barrier to implementing workshop recommendations (Figure 4). Unlike 2023, “other competing priorities” was the next highest share of top barriers and the overall highest share of second-choice barriers. When asked to detail the funding challenges, all but three respondents (N=19) said that they were currently seeking funding for both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects.

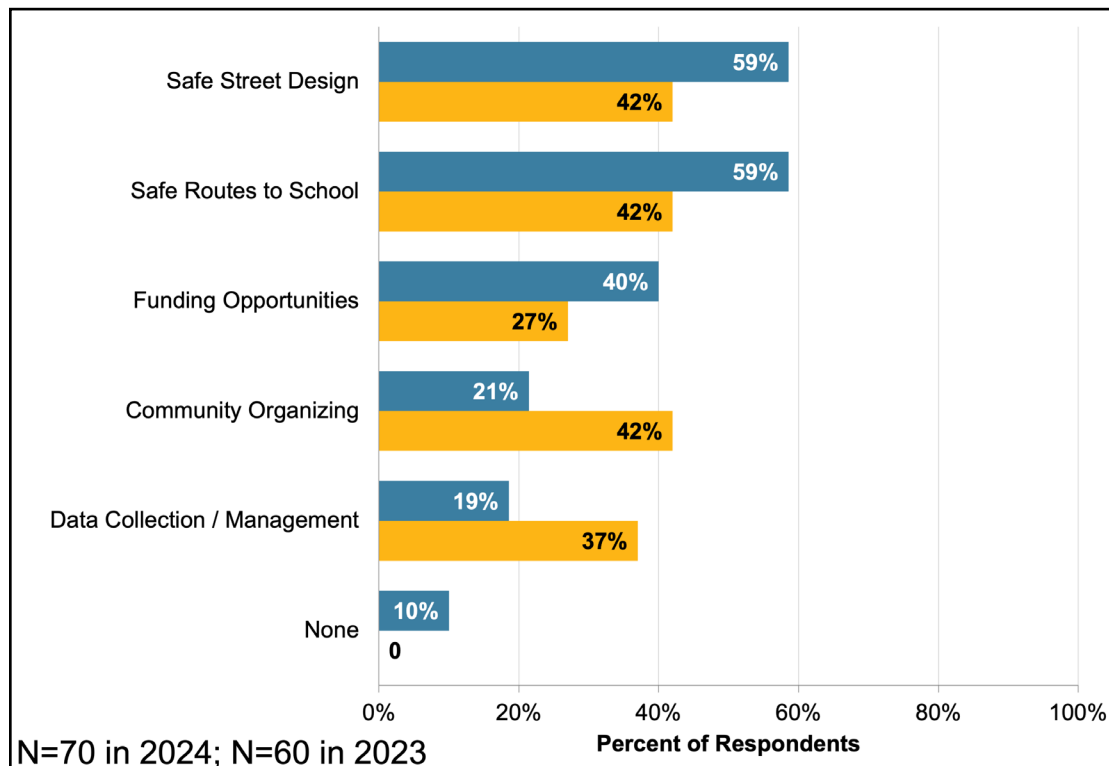
When asked to detail the “other competing priorities”, most respondents described transportation projects that were larger in scope, more focused on large-scale economic development, already in the pipeline, and generally of higher political and public visibility. Respondents listed other city priorities of homelessness, public safety, food security, and extreme weather events. Public staff time and capacity were also persistent issues.

These barriers prompt the question of where workshop participants want support from the CPBST team. Figure 5 offers insights - demand is split fairly evenly across the top four areas of (in order) identifying funding, applying for funding, navigating local government dynamics, and technical assistance for community outreach³. About 5% declined future support.

As in the 2023 survey, Safe Routes to School and Safe Street Design emerged as the top interests (Figure 6). However, this year there is much more interest in support around funding opportunities, and relatively less interest in training around community organizing and data management, compared to the 2023 results. It is unclear if this is a result of the types of sites participating in each year or reflective of a shift in priorities.

³ The “Other” write-in category mostly contained a smattering of very specific asks (interpreters, grant funding for events, helmet funding, storytelling, etc).

Figure 6. Topics of Interest for Future Workshops



Notes: Totals are by percent of respondent count. This question was multi-select.

The Path Forward

Broadly, these results offer insight into areas that the CPBST model is excelling: as a convener around local traffic safety issues, a data resource, and as a legitimizing platform for community voices in front of government bodies. Future workshop strategy may want to prioritize these areas while identifying ways to strengthen work in other areas.

Survey respondents expressed sustained and growing interest in future support around street design (59%), Safe Routes to School (59%), and identifying funding sources (40%). The CPBST team may explore these topics for future training opportunities. The funding issue seems to be a combination of lack of awareness of funding opportunities and a desire for support in applying for funding. This suggests a desire for more information sharing related to funding opportunities and guidance with proposal development and review.

Funding can make or break an active transportation project, which makes equitable funding opportunities important for communities to access. Our [Funding Opportunities webpage](#) provides the public with access to an array of funding sources at the federal, statewide, and regional level. The webpage also contains outside funding opportunities that can help communities across California fund their active transportation projects, especially those that do not meet federal, state, or regional funding requirements.

Lastly, this year's survey revealed an unexplored potential around community-led sites, as those with proportionately more follow-up activities across the board (meetings, community outreach, new partnerships, bike/walk assessments, and recommendations slated for future development) than any other site type. This topic merits further study to identify the elements making these workshops particularly successful and trying to replicate them in workshops initiated by other types of stakeholders.

The California Active Transportation Safety Information Pages (CATSIP) is a state-supported, non-commercial site dedicated to presenting the latest and most useful online resources to encourage and promote safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized road users in California. This site is administered by UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center ([SafeTREC](#)), with funding provided by a grant from the [California Office of Traffic Safety](#), through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Conclusion

The CPBST trainings continue to be a valuable resource and an avenue for introducing new stakeholders to active transportation safety planning work. Survey responses suggest a need for more practical guidance related to funding opportunities and technical assistance related to Safe System strategies. Based on these responses, the Project Team identified several potential actions to better support former CPBST communities:

- **Toolkit:** Update the [Safe System Strategies for Bicyclists and Pedestrians Toolkit](#) and identify methods to improve its usability for different target audiences.
- **Training:** Conduct follow-up training related to street design, Safe Routes to School, and funding to support communities to effectively implement walking and biking safety improvements.
- **Proposal Support:** Explore additional avenues to support individuals or groups as they develop project concepts and apply for funding.

About the Program

This research brief was developed as part of the Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program (CPBSP). The aim of the CPBSP is to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities and serious injuries in California. We partner with communities across California to discuss, plan, and implement safety improvements and projects.

The CPBSP prioritizes working in communities that are at disproportionate risk for road traffic injuries and addressing the safety needs of people who are underserved by traditional transportation resources and planning. For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/CPBSP> or email us at safetrec@berkeley.edu

About the Funder

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The Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) is a University of California, Berkeley research center affiliated with the Institute of Transportation Studies and the School of Public Health. Our mission is to inform decision-making and empower communities to improve roadway safety for all. We envision a world with zero roadway fatalities or serious injuries and a culture that prioritizes safe mobility.

Berkeley Safe Transportation Research
and Education Center

