



ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST

THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

**Walking and Biking Route Mapping at
Two Sunnyside Unified School District Elementary Schools**



**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH SERVICES**

THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

Overview

During the 2015-2016 school year, the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) contracted with the University of Arizona Nutrition Network (UANN) to conduct Active School Neighborhood Checklist (ASNC) assessments in ten Title I elementary schools in the Sunnyside Unified School District in Tucson, Arizona. The ASNC is a tool for assessing the walkability, bikeability, and safety of a school or a school site and the half-mile to two-mile radius surrounding the school, which is considered the walking/biking zone (half mile for elementary schools; one mile for middle schools; two miles for high schools). It was co-created by the ADHS and the Arizona Department of Transportation-Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program.

The ASNC contains eight sections with 57 questions. All responses were entered into an online portal which generated an overall score for each school and a score for each section. Out of an overall score of 113, schools' total scores ranged from "poor" to "moderate." Nine out of ten schools' scores were "poor" and many physical barriers to walking and biking were identified within the half-mile radius surrounding the schools. In addition, the tool highlighted sections with high scores, indicating built environment assets such as supportive policies and programs such as SRTS.

As a follow-up to the ten ASNC assessments, the UANN partnered with Living Streets Alliance (LSA), based in Tucson, to create walking and biking maps for students and their families for two of the schools. To ensure a robust dissemination plan for the maps, a wide range of criteria was considered for the schools' selection, including the following factors: past participation in SRTS activities; existing strong relationships between the UANN and the point person for school wellness activities (or an engaged School Health Advisory Committee); and a high percentage (25-50 percent or more) of students who live within one mile of the school. Secondary factors included: poor ASNC score, location in relation to an upcoming open streets route, and location in relation to an existing or planned bicycle boulevard which aims to design streets that prioritize bicycling and walking.

This report includes the walking and biking maps for the two selected schools (Los Amigos Technology Academy and Mission Manor Elementary), accompanied by an executive summary for each school, to provide more information on the school and neighborhood context.

Lessons Learned

1. While the maps may provide some new information to families who live near the two schools, the LSA staff does not anticipate that the maps alone will increase rates of active transportation without being supported with supplemental walking and biking programs at the schools. Families often choose to drive due to a variety of safety and convenience factors at play, not because they're unfamiliar with the best walking or biking routes in their neighborhoods.
2. The scope of the project did not allow for consideration of the lived experiences of families walking/biking, which means that social factors and perceptions could not contribute to identifying the routes. Future mapping efforts should include a human component to the information collection process.

THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

Lessons Learned (Continued)

3. A school is more likely to distribute and promote use of the maps when there are strong relationships and trust built over time with district parents, either through SRTS or UANN programs and activities.
4. In the future, timeline and budget can be adjusted so that mapping can be done through a more engaging process, such as activities with students, a walkabout with school staff and families, or a block party near the school where input from the school community can be gathered in a fun and interactive way.

LOS AMIGOS TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY

Context

Since 2015, Los Amigos Technology Academy has been a designated “focus school” as part of LSA’s Safe Routes to School Tucson Program. This K-6 school has an enrollment of over 700 students, and one-third of the student population lives within a half mile to one mile of the school. Because of traffic safety concerns and a lack of well-connected infrastructure, even students who live near the school are not encouraged to walk on a daily basis. In addition, typically 50 percent of students take the school bus while the other 50 percent are driven to school. This situation adds stress to district transportation, and students who take the school bus tend to arrive at school with little time on the playground or to eat breakfast.

In spring 2016, the SRTS team, along with Toole Design Group and City of Tucson Department of Transportation, conducted school travel plan workshops at Los Amigos Technology Academy in order to assess walking/biking conditions and draft infrastructure recommendations. While a school travel plan has been completed and will guide the long-term effort to secure funding for infrastructure improvements, in the short term, the school staff and walking/biking families are encouraging more families to choose active transportation through programmatic initiatives.

Existing Walking & Biking Activities

With an active School Health Advisory Committee working towards a culture of health among students, families, and teachers, Los Amigos Technology Academy has made tremendous progress in promoting biking and walking as options for their students. Every Friday, teachers and parents lead walking school bus and bicycle train routes, with meeting points located at the school bus stops. Students collect “toe tokens” for ongoing participation and the school holds raffles to incentivize parent participation.

“Walk N Roll Fridays” have been a huge success with regular participation between 100-150 students every week. SRTS Tucson continues to support these efforts with various activities including: walking school bus trainings to empower parents to lead walking routes; bike repair clinics to tune up students’ bicycles; walk-to-school events with local politicians and community stakeholders; and volunteer cleanup events along the route.

THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

Next Steps: Dissemination

Los Amigos Technology Academy was identified as a final candidate for this mapping project due to their desire to integrate information about walking and biking initiatives into parent handbooks and other orientation materials. The Walking & Biking map will be used to encourage more families to join the Walk & Roll Fridays and promote additional opportunities to walk or bike to school on other days of the week.

LOS AMIGOS WALK & ROLL ROUTES LOS AMIGOS RUTAS DE CAMINAR & RODAR

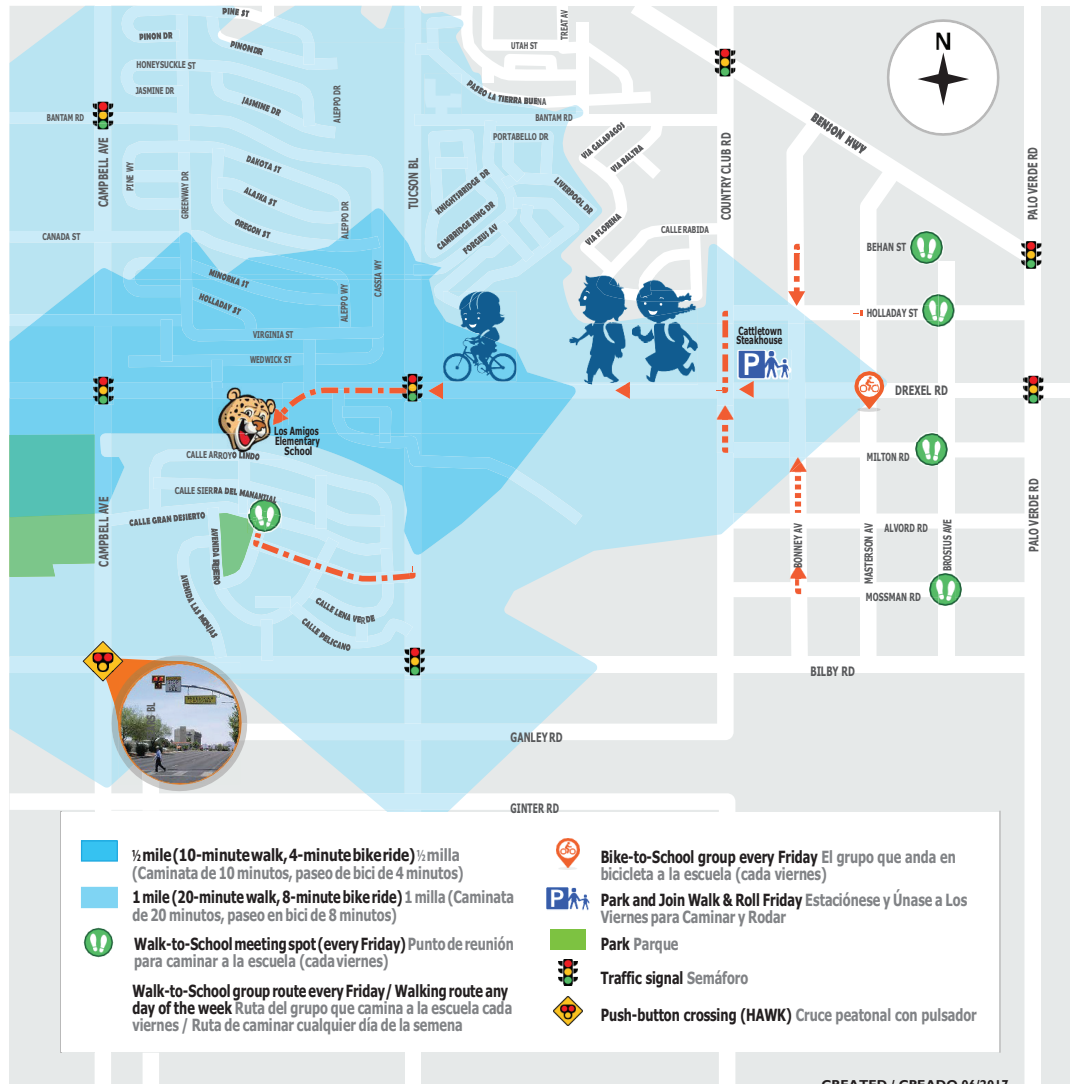


Contact Ms. Flores (the librarian) to join the walk/bike-to-school groups on Fridays: (520) 545-3200

Póngase en contacto con la Sra. Flores (la bibliotecaria) para unirse a los grupos que caminan / montan su bicicleta a la escuela cada viernes: (520) 545-3200



This map was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number, DP004793, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.



CREATED / CREADO 06/2017

THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

MISSION MANOR ELEMENTARY

Context

Although not a designated SRTS focus school, Mission Manor Elementary has participated in regional SRTS walk-/bike-to-school challenges in the past. The school has a total student population of 650, with 93 percent of students living within a half-mile to one-mile radius of the school, presenting a huge potential for walking and biking. Despite these figures, many families drop off and pick up their children by car and traffic congestion has increasingly become a problem.

As a solution, the pick-up/drop-off area was moved to a different area to try to alleviate the negative traffic impacts on the neighborhood. There are families who park their cars at Mission Manor Park just north of the school and walk with their kids to and from school. School staff would like to get more families interested in this “Park & Walk” practice to further reduce congestion in the school area.

Since Mission Manor Elementary is not a SRTS focus school, the LSA staff met with school staff and conducted a site visit to become more familiar with the area to inform the route mapping efforts. During the site visit, the LSA staff observed students’ morning arrival and spoke with all three crossing guards, several parents who were walking with their children, and a few Instructional Assistants who support arrival and dismissal.

Suggested walking and biking routes shown on the map were developed by considering the current travel patterns of students and families on foot, information obtained from parents and crossing guards during brief interviews, crossing guard locations, and the existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure such as sidewalks, crosswalks, HAWK (push-button) crossings, etc.

Many families were observed on the walking path at Mission Manor Park, which provides a pleasant way to get to school through shade and greenery. The path was also well used by recreational walkers, and of the six parents that were informally interviewed, only one expressed a safety concern related to an incident the previous week. The park also presents an opportunity for Mission Manor Elementary to promote Park & Walk to families who regularly drive to school. To generate initial interest in the Park & Walk initiative, small incentives/prizes can be offered to students who participate. Additionally, students can be enlisted to help paint the path to make it more playful and inviting.












THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

Next Steps: Dissemination and Potential Crossing Improvement

The Mission Manor Elementary Walk & Roll Route Map will be sent home with students and included in the orientation materials in the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. School administration has expressed interest in highlighting the map and encouraging walking, biking, or practicing Park & Walk at the Open House and other school events in the fall.

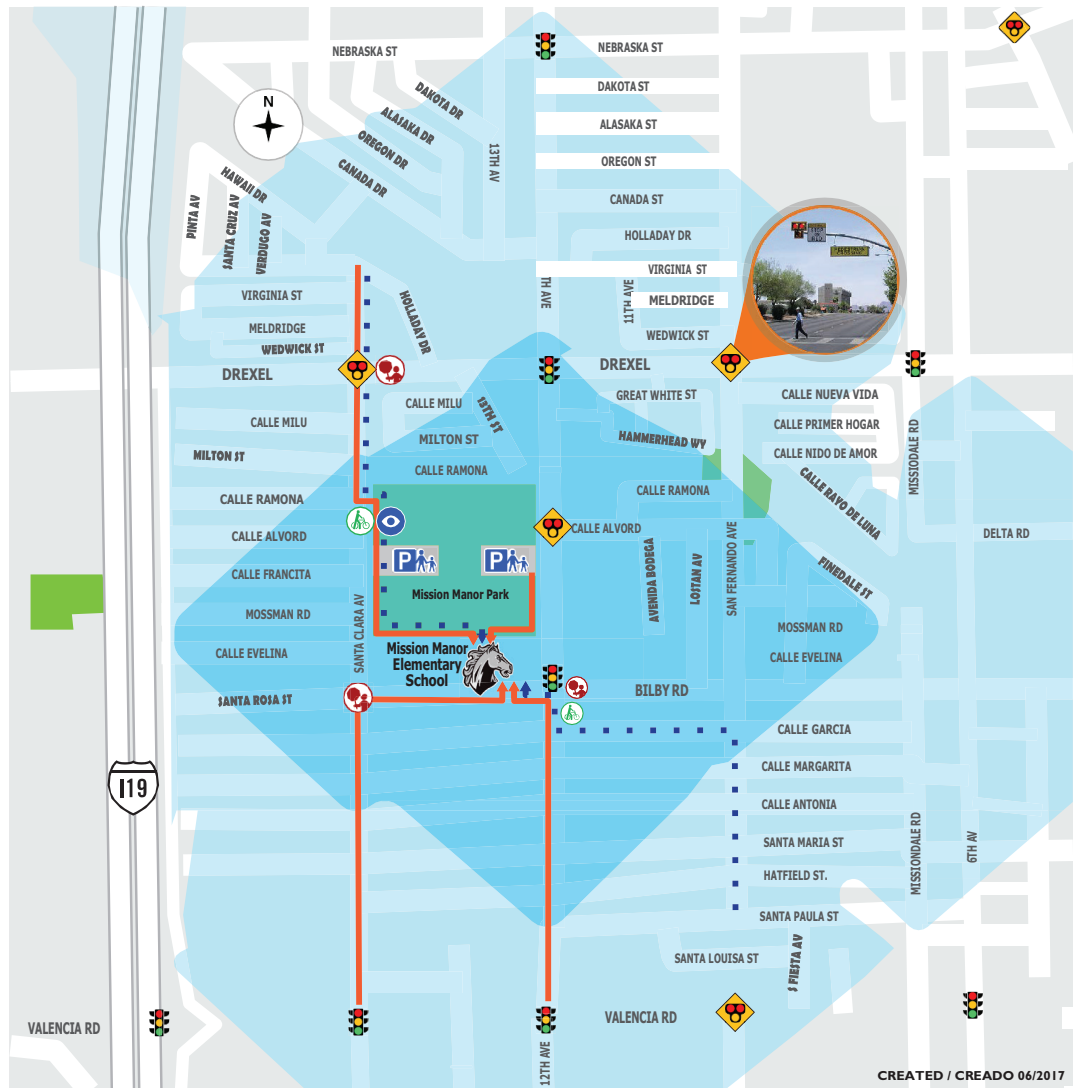
The LSA staff will contact the Tucson Department of Transportation with some improvement ideas for the marked crosswalk at Calle Ramona and Santa Clara Avenue based on the site visit observations and anecdotal information received from parents.

MISSION MANOR WALK & ROLL ROUTES MISSION MANOR RUTAS DE CAMINAR & RODAR

-  ½ mile (10-minute walk, 4-minute bike ride)
½ milla (Caminata de 10 minutos, paseo en bici de 4 minutos)
-  1 mile (20-minute walk, 8-minute bike ride)
1 milla (Caminata de 20 minutos, paseo en bici de 8 minutos)
-  **No crossing guard - Look both ways and make eye contact with drivers** No guardia de cruce peatonal - Mire para ambos lados y haga contacto visual con los conductores
-  **Crossing Guard** Guardia de cruce peatonal
-  **Park and Walk** Estaciónes y Camine
-  **Suggested walking route** Ruta sugerida para caminar
-  **Suggested biking route** Ruta sugerida para andar en bicicleta
-  **Walk your bike across crosswalks or on sidewalks along busy streets** Camine con su bicicleta a través de los cruces peatonales o en las banquetas a lo largo de las calles con mucho tránsito
-  **Push-button crossing (HAWK)** Cruce peatonal con pulsador
-  **Traffic signal** Semáforo
-  **Park** Parque



This map was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number, DP004793, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.



CREATED / CREADO 06/2017

THE ACTIVE SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD CHECKLIST PHASE II:

How can we make walking and biking work for our family? ¿Cómo podemos hacer que caminar y montar en bicicleta funcione para nuestra familia?



START A WALKING SCHOOL BUS OR A BIKE TRAIN. A Walking School Bus/Bike Train is a group of children and grown-ups who walk/bike to or from school together. Every Walking School Bus and Bike Train has at least one adult leader who walks or bikes along a specific route, picking up students along the way.

Contact Safe Routes to School Tucson for tips and resources or to request a training to become a Walking School Bus/Bike Train leader.

INICIE UN AUTOBÚS ESCOLAR A PIE O UN TREN DE BICICLETAS. Un autobús escolar a pie/un tren de bicicletas es un grupo de niños y adultos que caminan o montan en bicicleta a la escuela juntos. Cada Autobús Escolar y Tren de Bicicleta tiene por lo menos un líder que camina o monta en bicicleta por una ruta específica, recogiendo a los estudiantes por el camino.

Comuníquese con Rutas Seguras a la Escuela Tucson para obtener consejos y recursos o para solicitar un entrenamiento para ser un líder del autobús escolar a pie/ o tren de bicicletas.



WALK OR BIKE ONE DAY OF THE WEEK. Walking/biking just once a week is a great way to avoid traffic, save money, get exercise, and spend quality time with your kids. Take a look at the suggested routes on the map and schedule time for walking one morning or afternoon each week. Blue zones on the map show your distance from school and approximate time to walk or bike. Cross streets where crossing guards are located when you can and make eye contact with people driving.

CAMINE O MONTE EN BICICLETA UN DÍA DE LA SEMANA. Caminar/montar en bicicleta sólo una vez a la semana es una excelente manera de evitar el tráfico, ahorrar dinero, hacer ejercicio y pasar tiempo con sus hijos. Veal as rutas sugeridas en el mapa y planee un tiempo para caminar una mañana o tarde cada semana. Las zonas azules en el mapa muestran la distancia de la escuela y el tiempo aproximado para caminar o montar en bici. Cruce las calles donde se encuentran los guardias de cruce de peatones y mire a los conductores.



PARK & WALK. If you drive, parking away from school lets you avoid the stress of the school drop-off/pick-up area and makes it safer for kids to walk and bike. Locate the Park & Walk locations at Mission Manor Park just next to the school and enjoy a green, exhaust-free walk with your child.

ESTACIONÉSE Y CAMINE. Si maneja, estacionarse lejos de la escuela le evita el estrés de la zona para dejar/recoger de la escuela y lo hace más seguro para los niños al caminar y montar en bicicleta. Localice los lugares de Estaciónese y Camine en el parque de Mission Manor justo al lado de la escuela y disfrute de un paseo verde sin emisiones de carros con su hijo.



Contact **Safe Routes to School** (saferoutes@livingstreetsalliance.org) if you have ideas about how to encourage more kids to walk and bike to school.

Contact **Tucson Department of Transportation** for any walking/ biking safety concerns such as maintenance and traffic control issues: 520-791-3154 or <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/tdot/street->

Comuníquese con **Rutas Seguras a la Escuela** (saferoutes@livingstreetsalliance.org) si tiene ideas sobre cómo animar a más niños a caminar y montar en bicicleta a la escuela.

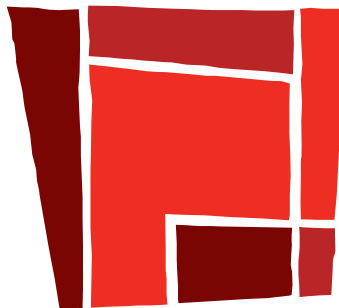
Póngase en contacto con el **Departamento de Transporte de Tucson** para cualquier problema de seguridad para caminar o andar en bicicleta, como asuntos de mantenimiento y control de tráfico: 520-791-3154 o <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/tdot/street-maintenance-improvement-request>



saferoutes@livingstreetsalliance.org
520-261-8777
saferoutestucson.org
f SRTSTucson
SRTS_Tucson
SRTSTucson

Safe Routes to School is a program of Living Streets Alliance in partnership with the City of Tucson.

Las Rutas Seguras a la Escuela es un programa de Living Streets Alliance (La Alianza de Calles Vivas) en asociación con la Ciudad de Tucson.



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

150 North 18th Avenue, Suite 310
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
602-542-1886

November 2017

Funding was provided by a grant through the Arizona Department of Health Services,
from the National Centers for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (CCDPH),
under grant number U58DP004793