



Safe Routes
PARTNERSHIP

Strategic Roadmap

Approved April 2022

Active Paths for Equity & Health



Introduction

The Safe Routes Partnership, originally the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, began as a program with leadership spearheading the early demonstration projects, advocacy, and eventual federal support for the establishment of the Safe Routes to School program in the United States.

After much success over the years in supporting the Safe Routes to School movement at the federal, state, and local levels as well as work in advancing social equity and active transportation the organization became an independent 501(c3) organization in 2013 and solidified its commitment to being the leading national nonprofit organization for Safe Routes to School deeply committed to supporting the growth of the program as well as walking and rolling in everyday life with a core focus on advancing equity. Since its founding, the Safe Routes Partnership has placed a high value on partnerships and continues to engage more than 800 partners interested in supporting their mission and working together to create healthier, thriving communities for people of all ages, races, and income levels, and abilities.

The organization has had strategic planning processes since its inception and has always been planning-oriented and mission-driven. As a standalone nonprofit the organization continued following its first Strategic Plan from 2011-to 2015 and then revised that plan in 2015 to continue through 2020. This

Strategic Roadmap represents the latest effort of the Board of Directors to guide the organization toward growth and increased influence related to its mission.

The staff and board of the Safe Routes Partnership started the strategic planning process in 2019 to revise their current strategic plan before the end of 2020 recognizing the need for the update given its expiration in 2021. The pandemic interrupted this effort and the board deferred the strategic planning process to 2020 due to the volatile and unknown environment. During this pause, the Executive Director was charged with setting up the new effort and through her research, the Real-Time Strategic Planning process was discovered. The Real-Time Strategic Planning process is based on the book “The Nonprofit Strategy Revolution: Real-Time Strategic Planning in a Rapid-Response World” by David La Piana with Melissa Mendes Campos.

Real-Time Strategic Planning offers a revised approach to developing strategies, ensuring their alignment with the identity of the nonprofit organization,

and addressing the new world we are living in that is increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA). The Real-Time strategic planning process demands a critical review of nonprofit operations, programs, finances, and leadership as well as an increased understanding of the market, competitive advantage, opportunities, and threats. It offers an active approach to strategy and leverages what works well for the nonprofit while addressing what are the greatest challenges at the forefront of the current environment in which the nonprofit exists.

The Safe Routes Partnership began the Real-Time Strategic Planning process in the Spring of 2021, and the key elements of the Strategic Roadmap were approved at the April 11, 2022 Board of Directors meeting. The staff has been charged with implementing the strategies outlined in this Strategic Roadmap which is a product of the Real-Time Strategic Planning process. The implementation began in first quarter 2022 and the work plans resulting from the strategies will be managed through the organization’s project management platform,

Asana. The Board of Directors will review progress biannually and all the strategies expressed in this document will be reviewed and updated as needed. An advantage of the Real-Time Strategic Planning process is the development of a Strategy Screen and Big Question. The Big Question is defined as an opportunity or threat to which the organization must respond that is usually beyond the scope of the organization’s current strategies, thus requiring a new strategic approach. A Strategy Screen is a set of criteria that the organization uses to choose whether or not a particular strategy is consistent with the organization’s identity. The senior staff team and Board of Directors will review any Big Questions that present themselves between the scheduled reviews of this document and will leverage the Strategy Screen to discuss and develop new strategies as needed. This will allow the Safe Routes Partnership to be nimble and use its competitive advantage toward continued action and growth.

Our Mission

The mission of the Safe Routes Partnership is to advance safe walking and bicycling to and from schools, to improve the health and well-being of kids of all races, income levels and abilities and to foster the creation of healthy communities for everyone.

Strengths and Commitments

Our assets and values drive our organizational culture and day to day external engagement.

- Firm commitment to centering people and racial equity
- Resilient organizational structure and enduring focus
- Deep policy expertise focused on systems-change
- Experienced community engagement practitioners
- Efficient and excellent implementation
- Better program design leading to improved outcomes
- Knowledgeable staff with clear focus and personal drive
- Well-developed network of relationships
- Ability to make things happen





Strategy Screen

The Safe Routes Partnership Strategy Screen is a tool to practice effective governance with real-time responsiveness by providing guidance and building alignment across strategies and with the organizational identity when organizational big questions arise. The Safe Routes Partnership has committed to annually reviewing the strategy screen below and use it as needed as a governance tool to build success in achieving our mission.

- Support our mission and be people-centered
- Allow for the high-quality implementation of programs or projects
- Enhance our competitive advantage
- Be consistent with our organizational culture of inclusivity, collaboration, learning, and innovation
- Be financially viable
- Provide opportunities to advance racial equity and/or mobility justice
- Support us in moving to the next stage of our organization's development
- Position our organization as a leader or key partner
- Aim to bridge the gap between our mission-aligned aspirations and what it means to truly disrupt inequities across systems

Big Question

To leverage the organization's competitive advantage, one question was selected to better ensure alignment across strategies towards forward progression and maximum impact of our mission.

How do we broaden our impact to advance mobility justice and increase Safe Routes to School programs and active travel to everyday destinations?





Business Model

The Safe Routes Partnership has three core areas of business:

1

Community Engagement and Outreach

We share our deep expertise and improve the quality of life for kids, parents, caregivers, and communities through programs and services at the local, regional, and national levels focused on safe, healthy, and equitable access to everyday destinations.

2

Systems Disruption and Correction

We advance policy change related to our mission seeking to right historical injustices and set in place systems that promote health and access for people of all races, income levels, and abilities.

3

Partnership and Alliances

We catalyze support for safe, active, and healthy communities by inspiring and encouraging leadership for action in local communities. We expand and foster collaboration with other organizations to achieve mutual goals and also secure long-term resources for initiatives at local, state, and national levels.

Selected Strategies

The strategies that support our work to address the big question over the next few years are organized into three areas with alignment opportunities across each area.

Organizational Strategies

- We will continue to serve people of all races, income levels, and abilities with a focus on communities made vulnerable by historic and ongoing policy and funding decisions in urban, rural, and suburban communities.
- We will continue to lead, partner, coach, and provide assistance and resources to overcome hurdles, institute programs, and create lasting systems change.
- We will continue our current business model garnering support from foundations and generating income from fee-for-service contracts to support our mission and leverage our competitive advantage.
- We will research, identify, and pilot new business models for implementation focused on increasing income and expanding our reach.
- We will intentionally connect with allies nationally to strengthen relationships and implement campaign and program efforts around anti-racist and intersectional strategies for mobility justice.
- We will actively research and proactively develop our learning and understanding to expand our mobility justice practices and resources for the field.
- We will continue our commitment to research as a foundational element of our work while always looking to identify promising practices and increase our learning in all areas of the organization management, our programs, and our day-to-day operational practices.



Operational Strategies

- Our communications efforts prioritize increasing reach and demonstrating that we lead with diversity, racial equity, inclusion, and justice.
- Our communications efforts, including public statements, set a vision for mobility justice and clearly explain our anti-racist stance and how it intersects with active transportation.
- We attract and retain a diverse workforce while supporting an inclusive work culture that ensures employees remain committed, engaged, and productive while nurturing a sense of belonging and shared goals.
- We support staff professional development in areas related to the key responsibilities of their position and we provide formal and informal resources and spaces where staff can learn more about racism, inciting action in both their organizational work and daily lives.
- We employ a planning process that ensures diverse board member recruitment and nurtures a board culture that supports board members in the fulfillment of their board duties while nurturing a sense of belonging and shared goals.
- We leverage our spending and investments to support diverse companies.

Programmatic Strategies

- We will continue to be the leading national source for the Safe Routes to School program and advocacy support with a focus on increasing programs and support at the federal, state, and local levels.
- We will continue to approach our work through a systems-change lens that works toward anti-racism and deepens the impact of mobility justice.
- Our fee-for-service and technical assistance work integrate opportunities for clients and technical assistance recipients to learn about and continue to advance anti-racist efforts.
- Our publications, guidance, tools, and other resources, model and encourage other organizations/agencies/individuals to further anti-racist efforts in their work on the ground.





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Letter from the Executive Director

This Strategic Roadmap has been a work in progress for a number of years and as we finalize this document we commit to an evolving process, unlike traditional strategic planning where we will double down on what we do well and move forward with flexibility in how we implement our strategies from year to year. In our strategic planning effort, we identified our competitive advantage as a nonprofit organization and through this final Strategic Roadmap, we are setting in place a process where our aligned operational, organizational, and program strategies will propel progress in advancing our mission. Leveraging our assets and values as an organization we aim to broaden our impact to advance mobility justice and increase Safe Routes to School programs and active travel to everyday destinations.

This new effort is no small endeavor but we know our biggest asset is our people. From our engaged, supportive, and dedicated board of directors to our bright, insightful, and committed staff we stand ready to meet the challenge. And, of course, we will not be able to move any of this forward without our stakeholders. To our donors, contributors, funders, thought partners, presenters, friends, allies, and antagonists we thank you for always being there, we look forward to working with you and we invite you to join us on this new journey.

Thank you in advance,

Cass Isidro
Executive Director

