

## Community-Based Transportation Planning Grants

### West Tulare Transportation Plan: Safe Routes to School and Non-Motorized Transit

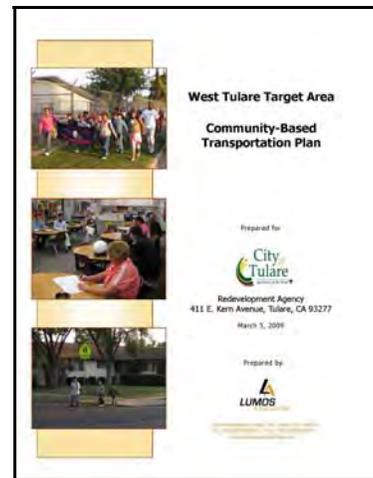
- **Grant Amount:** \$50,000
- **Grant Recipient:** City of Tulare
- **County:** Tulare

**Project Area** – The West Tulare Redevelopment Target Area is located on the west side of the City of Tulare, just west of I Street and north Bardsley Avenue. The specific area is bound by West Inyo Avenue (State Route 137) on the north, North West Street on the west, West Bardsley Avenue on the south, and South Larkin Street on the east.

**Project Focus** – The project area lacks the needed infrastructure to support safe routes to school, the use of bicycles and other healthy pedestrian and non-motorized types of transportation. In the last five years, there were ten automobile accidents in this area, of which three were pedestrian or bicycle related. No sidewalks, crosswalks or bike lanes exist in this part of the city. Two schools are located in this area, and many of the students walk to school and back home. Also, a good portion of the local businesses and services are located across a 4-lane State Route (SR 137) and residents are forced to cross SR 137 at un-marked crossings and under unsafe conditions.

**Project Goals** – This plan will formulate options for the City to implement safer non-motorized transportation options, and allow children the opportunity to walk to school via safe routes. The study will provide solutions for lack of sidewalks, inadequate crosswalks, and

lack of or unsafe bicycle lanes. In addition, one component of the study will be a marketing plan, to promote healthy living and non-motorized transit options. This plan will be used as a model for non-transit oriented transportation that can be replicated throughout the other Redevelopment Areas and the rest of the City. Through the combination of this plan, increased park space and connecting pedestrian trails, the City hopes to educate and achieve a healthier and safer environment for our children. The West Pine Avenue Community Based Transportation Plan (2009/10) is presently being conducted within the City of Tulare. The West Pine Avenue project is an outcome of the initial West Tulare Transportation Plan to replicate non-transit oriented transportation in other areas of the City of Tulare.



**Community Outreach** – Information was gathered from steering committee members which included but was not limited to representatives from the Tulare Police Department, Tulare Redevelopment Agency, City of Tulare Parks and Recreation Department, Tulare County Asthma Coalition and Caltrans. A “Walk to School Day” was

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planned where parents were encouraged to walk to school with their children, and information packets containing health, fitness and safety items were distributed. The project team also utilized a survey to obtain community feedback on the walkability of the West Tulare CBTP area. These surveys were distributed during the Walk to School Day event. It should be noted the project area is a low-income Latino neighborhood in the City of Tulare where the Hispanic population is 45.6% (statistic from the City of Tulare Chamber of Commerce).

Environmental Justice Community Involvement – English and Spanish surveys were distributed to the community during the Walk to School Day event.

Project Outcome – Based on the Walk to School Day survey and the infrastructure and traffic survey, a list of needs and goals were identified and a variety of projects and programs have been recommended. The results indicate that the community has the potential to make immediate gains in safety and accessibility through low cost improvements and programs as well as long term gains through major infrastructure improvements to attain the community goals.

### Challenges

- Survey respondents indicated that the majority of drivers drove safely and waited for students to cross the street, however, the survey shows that pedestrians observed a considerable number of drivers “speeding through intersections”

### Successes

- The City is in the process of implementing a citywide bicycle parking program. Providing secure and convenient parking may be one of the most effective ways of encouraging cycling to school.
- The survey also identified the need for implementing sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes that will be developed in phases. The major factor was the need for sidewalks and creating a primary domain for pedestrians which will serve as a protector from vehicles.