

# Lompoc Safe Routes to School

**A four year strategic plan to improve community health and promote safety for pedestrians and bicyclists sponsored by the LVCHO - Healthy Lompoc Coalition .**

## **Background and Need**

The LVCHO has been actively focused on improving the health of Lompoc children since 2006. From 2006-2011 the LVCHO-sponsored Healthy Lompoc Coalition has grown into a multi-sector collaborative. Community input and data collected from the two large community projects paved the way for the plans for the Lompoc SRTS program. In 2006-2009 the Lompoc Valley Healthy Kids Initiative project focused on childhood obesity and in 2009-2010 the Pioneering Healthier Communities project studied community environment and policy. Local assessments revealed environmental engineering factors such as complete streets and safe routes to schools could assist families be more active and maintain good physical health while at the same time improve community safety, reduce traffic and pollution, and enhance economic development.

Parent Focus Groups conducted in 2009 revealed safety issues and a lack of complete streets as barriers to physical activity and walking for Lompoc families. Most parents with children living within a quarter mile of school reported that they did not allow nor encourage their children to walk or ride a bike to school. School walkability assessments conducted in 2009 confirmed a lack of complete streets and a need for community education on pedestrian and bicycle safety. The community leaders originally committed to fighting childhood obesity and improving local environmental factors that impact health came to understand that promoting walking and bicycling for children through the Safe Routes to Program was the next step toward in providing a safe and healthy community environment for Lompoc children.

## **The Plan**

The Healthy Lompoc Coalition 4-year strategic plan is to implement the Lompoc Safe Routes to School program to promote safe routes for walking and bicycling to school. The program will include education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation activities that will take place between 2012 and 2015. Capitalizing on behavioral changes observed in school zones where infrastructure improvements have taken place [many funded with SR2S or SRTS infrastructure grants], Lompoc SRTS will promote walking and biking to school in several ways. Program activities will engage parents, students, community members, school and city personnel, community-based, business and civic organizations, local healthcare providers, elected leaders and policymakers to adopt, sponsor, participate in and sustain the Lompoc SRTS program. Each year program activities and outcomes will be evaluated using student tallies, parent surveys and community partner surveys.

**Year 1** - Kickoff community education and outreach and recruit SRTS task force members and hold Lompoc "Walk n' Roll" to School and work encouragement events as part of National Walking and Biking months.

**Year 2** - Conduct SRTS pedestrian and bicycle education and training in at least half of target schools as well as with parents and community. Hold "Walkn' Roll" to school and work encouragement/education activities and Lompoc Police Department will increase traffic enforcement in K-8 school zones.

**Year 3** - Continue and expand SRTS pedestrian and bicycling education and training to all target schools. Hold "Walk n' Roll" to school and work for the school district and community. Continue increased traffic enforcement in K-8 school zones.

**Year 4** - Ensure long term success of school and community SRTS efforts by updating strategic plan and programs in response to data from years 1, 2 and 3. Continue "Walkn' Roll" to school and work encouragement events for school and community. Continue augmented traffic enforcement in K-8 school zones.

