SAFE ROUTES FOR YOUTH

Westwood Neighborhood
Denver, CO

Westwood is a diverse, low-income neighborhood in Denver. One of the most pressing problems for this community is mobility safety, both for pedestrians and bicyclists. Westwood Unidos has as a goal to provide the youth of the neighborhood with safe access to newly improved amenities like parks. Currently, access is limited by the lack of information and knowledge about the safest routes to move around between schools and parks.

With the help from the community of Westwood, including kids and their families, the main objective of this project is to identify these safe routes and map them.

The second source of analysis focuses on data on pedestrian and bicyclists’ safety of the area. I analyzed the data through a series of maps. Maps included an evaluation of the number and place of accidents with pedestrians and bicyclists, the amount of traffic on main roads using traffic counts, streets that are adequate for bicycles, and finally, the quality of intersections.

After the analysis and community maps I analyzed the plans that affected mobility for the neighborhood. Those plans include improvements to the mobility network, I analyzed the impact of such projects on the final routes identified from the analysis. Additionally, the new results serve to identify areas that are not addressed by any of the current plans.

By combining the three data sets, I was able to create the final map that presents the safest routes from schools to parks in Westwood. I created one map per school in addition to a map for the entire neighborhood showing the safest route for the community to go between parks and schools. Finally I created a map that shows the areas that need improvements to improve safety.

The main goal of the community engagement was to gather input from the community on what streets they use to go from their houses to parks and schools around the neighborhood. I held two community meetings, one with parents and one with youth. I collected a total of 24 community maps. The community maps concentrate on the most used routes.

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