

# Safe Routes to School case study: Billings, Montana

## How SRTS started in Billings, MT

Safe Route to School (SRTS) for Billings began in 2006. The program works with schools, local organizations, and city planning staff to make their community a safer place for pedestrians. In 2011, the City of Billings put together a blueprint for developing and expanding biking infrastructure in the community. The plan proposed several projects that could be implemented to promote active transportation in the area. Currently, the City references this plan when prioritizing and implementing projects within the community.



## Recent Success

In 2023, The City of Billings received a \$3.56 Million grant from the United States Department of Transportation for a citywide SRTS upgrade. With this grant, Billings will complete 17 main SRTS projects including new bike lanes and bikeways, 8 high-visibility crosswalks, walkways, curbs, ADA ramps, pedestrian lights, traffic-calming elements, and an educational campaign. These projects were developed with input from key stakeholders, such as school staff and parents, and walk-audits. They have completed two phases so far, including:

**Phase 1:** Focused on 22 Billings elementary schools.

- School speed zones installed
- Vegetation overgrowth mitigated
- Flashing beacons
- Installed sections of missing sidewalk
- Curb extensions
- Several speed and traffic calming studies

**Phase 2:** Focused on middle schools, private schools, schools on city's boundaries.

- Walk audits at each school
- Traffic calming
- Pilot projects (temporary, low-cost installments to test project's effectiveness)
- Protected bike lanes

## Funding

Like many SRTS programs, SRTS Billings is funded through a combination of local, state, and federal sources. Private organizations as well as federal grant money represent a large portion of SRTS funding. Funding often varies depending on priorities of stakeholders and projects being implemented. Funding is also obtained through cooperation with partner organizations collaborating on a project, such as a school district or non-profit organization.

## Billings, MT at a glance:

- Population: 191,435 (2023)
- Billings, like Bozeman, is experiencing a steady population growth
- Billings is the largest metropolitan area in Montana

# Safe Routes to School case study: Spokane, Washington

## How SRTS started in Spokane, WA

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) in Spokane, WA began in 2015 as a way to encourage more students to walk and bike to school. The city developed partnerships with the Health District, School Districts, and the Bicycle Alliance of Washington to build their program. An extensive volunteer network helps with community education events and walking school buses. Many of the volunteers are connected to the program through Gonzaga University.

## Recent Success

- The City developed a sidewalk inventory identifying ADA facilities, crosswalks, and dangerous intersections that help prioritize improvements for pedestrian safety.
- Program staff created maps outlining safe active transportation routes for students throughout three school districts.
- Staff organize walking school buses and Walk/Bike to School day events.



## Funding

The Spokane SRTS program is funded through federal, state, and local sources. In the state of Washington, SRTS grant funding is supported with funds from the Washington Climate Commitment Act. Mutually beneficial partnerships with the City and local organizations help supplement funding and capital for projects. The City of Spokane and school districts are also able to use the SRTS program to leverage funding for improved sidewalks and safer street crossings.

## Spokane, WA at a glance:

- Population: 230,160 (2022)
- Spokane is a Metropolitan area.
- Home to Gonzaga University

# Safe Routes to School case study: Moscow, Idaho

## How SRTS started in Moscow, ID

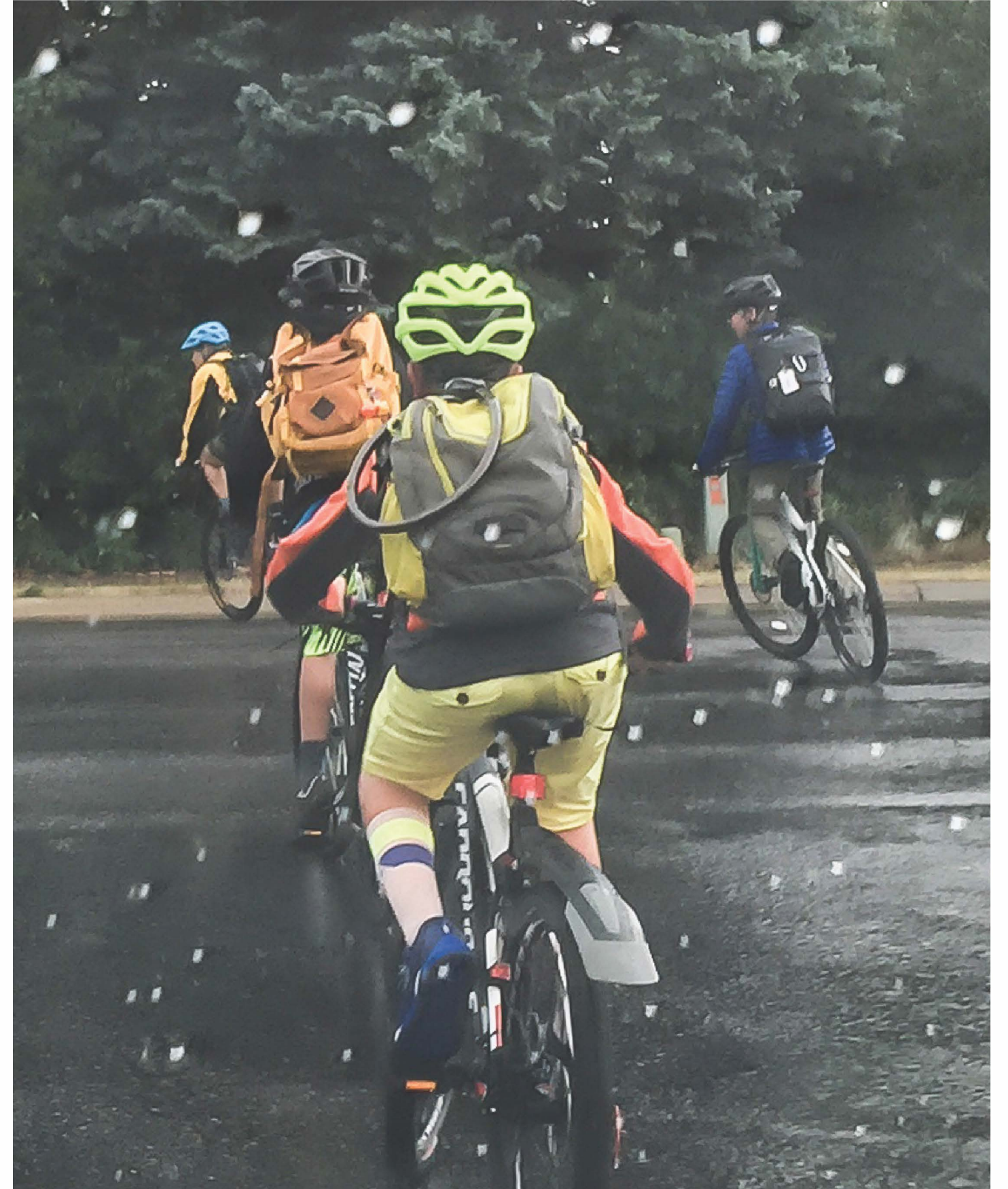
The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program in Moscow, ID started through the federal SRTS program. It began as a way to address community concerns about student safety traveling to and from school and to recognize the importance of encouraging healthy habits for kids. In 2007, with help from the University of Idaho, the SRTS program was expanded to include all K-8 schools who wanted to participate.

## Recent Success

- Program staff organize four events each year: International Walk to School day, the Polar Walk, Fill the Racks!, and Officer Newbill Kids Safety Fair.
- Staff and volunteers work with the City of Moscow to fundraise for new sidewalks around schools.
- The program provides route maps for all K-8 students and works with school principals to meet school needs such as crossing guards and getting helmets for students.
- Staff coordinate with schools to improve drop-off and pick-up procedures to ensure safety and efficiency.
- The program collaborates with University of Idaho students, community members, parents and teachers to implement mutually beneficial active transportation events and programs.

## Moscow, ID at a glance:

- Population: 26,249 (2022)
- Home of the University of Idaho, the state's land-grant institution and primary research university.
- Moscow, ID is classified as a metropolitan area.



## Funding

The SRTS program in Moscow, Idaho started with funding from the federal SRTS program. Today, the program is funded through a combination of federal, state, and local sources. Since 2006, the City of Moscow has partnered with the University of Idaho and obtained grant funding to implement SRTS programming. The City also partners with several local community businesses and organizations:

- Moscow school district
- Moscow Parks and Rec
- Paradise Creek Bikes
- Gritman Medical Center
- NIATT (UI engineering Department)
- & Many more