

Councilman Al Austin
City Council Meeting
June 21, 2022
R-29: Safe Passages Plan
Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are Safe Passage Programs?

Safe passage programs post trusted volunteers or for-pay community members along student's paths to and from school to ensure each student is kept from harm and arrives safely. These programs help deter many of the dangers children face while walking before and after the school day, including abduction, bullying, harassment, and physical assault.

2. What Safe Passage Programs have existed in Long Beach?

- The Long Beach Police Department previously utilized Operation Safe Passage, which assigned two patrol cars to five local high schools before and after the school day. This program is no longer in use.
- The community organization Centro CHA successfully launched its Safe Passages program in 2016 following the stabbing of a Cabrillo High School student in 2015. Their program provided training and paid community members who participated, but due to a lack of funding, this program is no longer operating.
- Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles launched its Safe Passage program serving Washington Middle School in 2018. Their volunteer-based program trained parents and community members based on the Tenderloin Safe Passage Project ran in San Francisco. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this program is currently not operating, but hopes to return for the 2022-2023 school year.

3. Is there a Safe Passage Program included in the Long Beach Recovery Act?

Yes, the upcoming Long Beach Advancing Peace (Safe Passage) Program, one of the Long Beach Recovery Act's "Healthy and Safe Community" initiatives, will provide funding for city-wide community engagement events such as community fairs, picnics, neighborhood clean-ups, and grant Cabrillo, Poly, and Millikan High School students safe passages to and from their schools.

4. How would this Safe Passage Plan be different from current efforts?

While current initiatives will support safe passages at select schools, the Safe Passage Plan would utilize input from LBPD, LBUSD, qualified organizations already doing this work, and community groups to devise a best-practices manual for establishing safe passage programs. This manual would empower neighborhood associations and communities interested in developing their own safe passage programs for middle and high school students not included in the aforementioned initiative.

5. Is there data that shows the effectiveness of Safe Passages?

The Safe Passage Program in South Los Angeles, which is administered by the nonprofit Community Build, Inc., has served over 30,000 students since its inception in 2019, working with 24 schools and patrolling 13 nearby parks as well. Their efforts led to an 8% decrease in violent crime in and around parks served by the program in 2019. Chicago's Safe Passage Program has resulted in a 20% decline in criminal incidents around schools served, a 27% drop in bullying incidents among students, and a 7% increase in attendance in local high schools over a 2-year-period.