

# Programs

## Employees of the city of Littleton walk and bike to better health

In addition to supporting 10 Colorado communities in encouraging more walking and biking through their Walk and Wheel program, Kaiser Permanente has also granted funds to 10 workplaces to create programs that will encourage their employees to walk and bike more. One of those workplaces is the city of Littleton.

Julie Lanier is spearheading Walk and Wheel efforts at the city. She worked closely with Jenna Berman of Bicycle Colorado to shape encouragement programs for both walking and biking that would stand out from some of the existing wellness challenges. One of the big differences this time, according to Julie, is that, “employees were allowed to set their own goals so they were able to be in charge of their own destiny.”

Together, the programs have had more than double the participation rate of past challenges. For the walking challenge, Julie planned for 40 participants, but 80 signed up and more joined a waiting list. For the biking challenge, 26 employees participated,



Bicycle Colorado staff train Littleton employees

representing all departments. Biking challenge participants averaged an impressive 245 miles over the 14 weeks of the challenge.

Asked about the success of the program, Julie said, “I believe this challenge was more popular than previous challenges because it was so different in that we provided, via Bicycle Colorado, tangible skills—changing flats, rules of the road—and removed barriers up front by providing helmets, bike tune ups, tubes, CO<sub>2</sub> inflators and more in order for employees to have all of the tools they need to be successful.”

Based on the early success of the Walk and Wheel program, Julie was invited to apply for additional funding from the Kaiser Permanente Fund to grow the program. With this additional funding she created a program called “Discover Littleton,” in which teams of employees walked and biked to locations around the city and took photos, raising awareness of the many places in Littleton that are within walking or biking distance.

So why is Littleton doing so much to encourage walking and biking? It’s simple, Julie says. “We want employees to be healthy and active.”

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR OFFICE MORE BIKE-FRIENDLY

Active employees are happier, healthier and more productive. Here are a few ways to make your workplace more bicycle-friendly:

**Add bike parking:** Adding bike parking in a visible, secure, covered location or dedicating an indoor space for employees to park their bikes mitigates concerns about theft and wear and tear.

**Appoint a bicycle coordinator:** A bicycle coordinator can spearhead events like Bike to Work Day and be a point of contact for new cyclists.

**Provide a place to change (or even showers if they’re in the budget):** Having a convenient place to change allows people who choose to ride in cycling-specific clothing to quickly change into work-appropriate attire.

**Extend driving benefits to cyclists:** Extending mileage compensation or paying out parking stipends to those who bike instead of driving encourages biking without costing your company any more than it would if those employees were driving.

**Relax the dress code:** Instituting a more relaxed dress code (to be clear: we’re not talking about allowing spandex in the office!) can make it easier for people to bike more often.

**Provide a company-owned pool of bikes:** While it may not be feasible for everyone to bike to work, providing a company-owned pool of bikes (or bike library) can allow people to bike to meetings or lunch, potentially increasing productivity.

**Buy a set of tools and a pump for the office:** Having tools and a pump at the office—whether installed outside or kept in the care of a bicycle coordinator—can give potential bike commuters peace of mind.

**Offer Bicycle Colorado’s Bicycle Commuter Services Program:** Check out [bicyclecolorado.org/learn/adult-bike-safety](https://bicyclecolorado.org/learn/adult-bike-safety) for information about commuter classes that we can offer to your employees.