

Summary of Available Grant Sources for Walk/Bike Projects

Introduction

Implementation of engineering improvements can be too expensive for municipalities to handle on their own. Fortunately, there are state and federal funding programs dedicated to assisting with the implementation of projects that would improve the safety of students walking and biking to school. Funding programs are competitive, and the application process requires time to complete. In addition, funding requests are received far more than can be obligated. However, New Jersey TMAs are available to provide assistance in determining appropriate funding sources and preparing grant applications.

The funding programs listed below are provided as a general guide, and are not an exhaustive list of available funding sources. For more information on a specific program, please contact the granting agency or refer to the grant program guidelines found on the program websites.

Federal Funding under SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users)

Currently, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), Division of Local Aid and Economic Development, and/or the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) administer the Federal Aid Programs:

The Local Scoping Program: *Funding is limited to proposals with local scoping costs greater than \$50,000.*

This program provides Federal funds directly to member sub regions for the advancement of projects through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and preliminary engineering, thereby developing a solution to a defined problem and making the project eligible for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The program provides funding to select municipalities to move projects from final design to construction. The projects must be part of the National Highway System (NHS) or be designated a Federal Aid route. This is a highly competitive program where MPOs select the projects for inclusion; contact your MPO for more details.

The Local Lead Program: *Funding is limited to proposals with design costs greater than \$100,000 and construction costs greater than \$250,000.*

This program provides an opportunity for sub regions to apply for federal funding for the advancement of projects through final design, right-of-way, and/or construction. Projects must be located on roads with certain function classifications and must be part of the NHS system.

Local Safety Program:

This program provides counties and municipalities funding for improvement of known safety hazards on local and county roads. The improvements must be construction ready (no design) and deliverable in a short period of time; prioritized projects will include collected crash data. All projects are reviewed and rated by the MPO and its review committees.

High Priority Projects:

The passage of SAFETEA – LU in 2005 authorized the spending on a number of specific transportation projects. These projects are specified by name and location in the Act.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure Program: *Total available funding is no less than \$1 million per state, per year.*

Federal funding is available for SRTS projects that improve the safety of children walking or biking to school. The program is administered through NJDOT. Eligible projects which may include the planning, design and construction or installation of sidewalks, crosswalks, signals, traffic calming devices and bicycle facilities must be within two miles of an elementary or middle school (K-8). Local and regional governments, school districts and individual schools are eligible to be project sponsors and receive direct funding. For more information, contact Elise Bremer-Nei, New Jersey Safe Routes to School Coordinator, at (609) 530-2765.

Designated Transit Villages: *Total available funding is \$1 million for projects in 5 communities.*

The Transit Village Initiative helps to redevelop and revitalize communities around transit facilities to make them an appealing choice for people to live, work and play, thereby reducing reliance on the automobile. It is a goal of the Transit Village Initiative to bring more housing, businesses and people into communities with transit facilities. Programs include bicycle/pedestrian paths, bike routes signs, bicycle parking, and storage and bicycle/pedestrian safety education program. Municipalities can get more information about how to apply here: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/village/>

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): *Total funding available is \$8.2 million in fiscal year 2014.*

TAP is a federal funding program administered through NJDOT. The program is designed to foster more livable communities and promote alternative modes of transportation such as biking and walking. Eligible activities include bikeway construction, acquisition of right-of-way for bikeways and many other projects. Activities funded by TAP were previously funded by the Transportation Enhancements Program contained in previous federal transportation bills. A key addition to the TAP program in the current federal transportation bill (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century or MAP-21) is the funding eligibility for projects dedicated to the construction, planning and design of infrastructure projects that provide “safe routes for non-drivers” which includes children, seniors and disabled persons. NJDOT is providing the 20% match required under the new MAP-21 legislation. Eligible project sponsors for TA funds include local and regional governments, transit agencies, school districts and individual schools.

Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP): *Total available funding is \$67 million for 63 TEP projects.*

TEP links state and federal policy, providing grants to help local governments creatively integrate transportation facilities into their local surroundings. Projects focus on designing, preserving, and protecting environmental and cultural resources, and promote alternate modes of transportation. There are several restrictions that apply to the grants, which are explained in detail online: <https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/tep>. Municipalities, local agencies, and non-profit groups may apply for the grants, but regional projects must have both municipal and county endorsement.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds: *Total available funding is \$10.1 billion in fiscal year 2014.*

The program gives states flexibility to invest in a wide variety of transportation activities, specifically bicycle and pedestrian facilities and walkways. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements may be incidental improvements within larger projects which establish bicycle compatibility or designated bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The funds can also be used for independent bicycle and pedestrian projects along or in the vicinity of roadways, shoulder paving, bicycle safe drainage grates, construction of sidewalks or bikeways, installation of pedestrian signals, crosswalks or overpasses. Under SAFETEA-LU, it is specified that these funds may be used for the modification of sidewalks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

National Highway System (NHS):

The NHS provides funding for projects on NHS roadways that can be used for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, or on any land adjacent to any NHS system highway, including interstate highways. Past project examples include paved shoulders, drainage gates, signed routes, bike lanes and paths, and crosswalks. It also includes funding of independent bicycle and pedestrian projects (projects that are initiated primarily to benefit bicycle and pedestrian travel) along or in the vicinity of NHS roadways.

Highway Traffic Safety:

Administered by: Division of Highway Traffic Safety, Department of Law & Public Safety

Deadline: every April

Typical grant: \$20,000-\$65,000

Types of projects: drunk driving, seat belt and pedestrian safety enforcement, bicycle safety, teen driving education, car seats, etc.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ): Total available funding was \$2.3 billion in fiscal year 2013.

CMAQ provides funds for surface transportation and other projects that help to reduce congestion and improve air quality. Funds are mainly used to help communities in non-attainment areas and maintenance areas to reduce emissions. Bicycle and pedestrian programs are the two main types of programs funded under this grant. Funds are available to local governments, non-profit organizations, and private organizations as part of a public-private partnership, and require a state or local match. All CMAQ projects must be part of a state's transportation plan and region's transportation spending plan, called the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Contact your state and/or MPO for more information.

State Aid Programs

State Aid for Counties (County Aid): 2014 funding is \$78.75 million for projects in all 21 counties in NJ. County aid funds are appropriated annually for improvement of public roads, and bridges under county jurisdiction, as well as public transportation and other transit projects. The grant is non-competitive, but each county must develop an Annual Transportation Program (ATP) with all project details and the total cost of the pool of projects. The minimum project allotment is \$300,000.

State Aid for Municipalities (Municipal and Urban Aid): 2014 funding is \$78.75 million for projects in all 21 counties in NJ.

Municipal Aid is for roadway and bridge improvements, including bicycle and pedestrian projects. Each county is appropriated funds for their constituent municipalities based on a formula. Municipalities must submit applications detailing a potential project to their local NJDOT District Office. Projects awarded funds in 2012 included construction of bicycle lanes and pedestrian safety improvements. School districts and individual schools are not eligible to apply for these funds directly, however they should encourage their municipal government to apply for these funds and direct them towards improving the bicycle and pedestrian safety around their schools. Funds are appropriated based on municipal road mileage and county population.

Hazard Elimination Program: Total available funding is \$3 million (\$1 million per MPO) annually in NJ. The Hazard Elimination Program is administered by NJDOT Bureau of Traffic Engineering and Safety, and awards MPOs funding to assist counties and municipalities with projects targeting safety hazards on local and county roadways. In general, projects are selected on the basis on excessive occurrence of a particular accident type at a given location.

Recreational Trails: 2012 Funding was \$2.2 million for projects in 35 towns

Administered by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) every February, a maximum of \$24,000 in grants allocated to projects focused on maintenance and restoration of existing trails and facilities, new trail construction in existing parks, equipment, etc.

Centers of Place: FY 2011 funding was \$1.1 million for projects in 5 towns

This state program is designed to assist municipalities who have formally participated in implementation of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The program provides an opportunity to apply for funds to support non-traditional transportation improvements that advance municipal growth management objectives. The NJDOT notifies eligible municipalities as to the application process administered through the Division of Local Aid and Economic Development. See website for more information: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/centerplace.shtm>.

Sources:

“Funding Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning, Programs, and Projects: A Compilation of Funding Sources.” http://bikeped.rutgers.edu/ImageFolio43_files/gallery/Funding/Documents/VTC_2009_Funding_Bicycle_Pedestrian_Projects_NJ.pdf

“Bicycle and Pedestrian Provisions of the Federal Aid Program.” http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/bp-broch.cfm

“New Jersey Department of Transportation Division of Local Aid & Economic Development Federal Aid Handbook.” <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/documents/FEDERALAIDHANDBOOK.pdf>

“New Jersey of Department of Transportation, Transportation Trust Fund Authority Act, State Aid Handbook.” <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/documents/StateAidHandbook.pdf>

CMAQ: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/reference/safetea-lu/safetea.pdf



NEW JERSEY
Safe Routes to School