



Tools to Increase Biking and Walking  
**Advocacy Advance**



## Nebraska Department of Roads Federal Funding Profile

Navigating the funding transportation funding process, especially the federal funding process can be difficult, for both agency staff and advocates. Each state and jurisdiction has particular rules, practices, personnel and contexts, which determine how decisions get made. To understand the system, it is helpful learn the **who, what, where and when** of each funding source. The following is an attempt to answer these questions for the State of Nebraska. This profile template can be used as a guide to gather this information in any community.

The focus of this profile is on un- or under-utilized programs like the Surface Transportation Program (STP), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and the State and Community Highway Safety Grants (Section 402).

## **Transportation Alternatives Program (TA)**

*MAP-21 combines previous biking and walking funding programs – Transportation Enhancements (TE), Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails – into one program: Transportation Alternatives. Funding for the Recreational Trails Program is taken off the top, then remaining TA funding is divided up into two equal pots: 50% will be distributed by the state DOT through a competitive grant process and 50% will be distributed according to the share of population with the state. MPOs with populations greater than 200,000 will administer their own grant process; the other communities will be funded through the state DOT's grant process.*

**When is your TA call for proposals and application deadline? When is the state's call for proposals and application deadline?**

**NDOR is currently developing new application and selection process; anticipate taking applications Summer of 2014.**

**Are you doing a separate SAFETEA-LU call for proposals?**

**No**

**Has the TA application been written?**

**No**

**What are the selection criteria?**

**The Selection Criteria are currently under development with anticipated completion Spring of 2014.**

**Are bicycling and walking projects prioritized over other activities, such as environmental mitigation and boulevard conversion?**

**The Selection Criteria area currently under development with anticipated completion Spring of 2014. At this time environmental mitigation is not an eligible category.**

**Will the selection process prioritize a few large projects or more, smaller projects?**

**The Selection Process is currently under development with anticipated completion Spring of 2014. NDOR's goal with Federal funded projects is to prioritize larger projects over smaller projects.**

**Who sits on the selection committee?**

**The selection process is still in development. As such no selection committee has been selected or appointed.**

**Are bicycling/walking advocates included as part of the selection committee?**

**The selection process is still in development. As such no selection committee has been selected or appointed.**

## Surface Transportation Program (STP)

*The Surface Transportation Program provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities for projects on roads, bridges and transit. STP funds may be used for either the construction of bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways, or non-construction projects (such as maps, brochures, and public service announcements) related to safe bicycle use and walking.*

**Is funding distributed among funding categories? Are funding categories tied to federal categories or another system? If another system, what is it?**

**A portion of STP is sub-allocated to TMAs for their use. NDOR's portion of STP funds are dedicated to inspect and preserve existing assets as identified by NDORs annual needs study. NDORs existing asset preservation needs exceed funding available.**

**What is the project selection process?**

N/A

**Who sets the project selection policy?**

N/A

**Who makes funding decisions/selects projects?**

N/A

**What does the project application look like? How was it written? Do good bike/ped projects score well?**

N/A

**Who rates the applications?**

N/A

**Who administers the projects?**

N/A

**What is the timeline for project selection? Key dates for application and selection?**

N/A

**STP Resources:**

N/A

## Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The CMAQ program funds transportation projects that improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion.

See our Advocacy Advance report on CMAQ: [http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/lab\\_cmaq.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/lab_cmaq.pdf)

FHWA recently confirmed that bike/ped projects are eligible for CMAQ funds:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/cmaqfunds.htm>

### Where are the non-attainment areas in your state?

For Ozone Status, PM-10 (Particulate Matter) and PM-2.5;

- Currently no counties in Nebraska have a non-attainment status.

A State *without* a national ambient air quality nonattainment or maintenance area may use its CMAQ funds for any CMAQ or STP-eligible project. Monitors in the MAPA area are sometimes close to, or over, the national ambient air quality standards and could go non-attainment if the standards are made more restrictive.

### Who sets project selection policy?

Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR)

### What is the project selection process?

Requests for CMAQ funding will need the following information:

- Project Description
- Purpose and Need for the project
- Estimate of the project cost and local contribution
- Requested CMAQ funding amount

In the request, as outlined in federal guidance, discuss the following; *will the transportation project likely contribute to the attainment or maintenance of a national ambient air quality standard, with a high level of effectiveness in reducing air pollution?* It is recommended that the discussion include computed estimates of the reduction air pollution.

### Who makes the project-selection decisions?

The NDOR recommends that a First Class City or Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) be the project sponsor because they are familiar with the federal aid process. NDOR approves funding for requested projects.

### When are programming decisions made?

Once the project is approved by NDOR, the sponsoring agency would prepare a schedule with consideration of the federal aid project development process. CMAQ projects would be considered during spring programming meetings (February to May) where projects are examined for need, cost and deliverability. Local Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) are due to the NDOR by June 15<sup>th</sup> for inclusion in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIP).

### Can good bike/ped projects compete for funds?

Map-21 guidance describes that CMAQ funds may be used for transportation projects likely to contribute to the attainment or maintenance of a national ambient air quality standard, with a high

level of effectiveness in reducing air pollution. The NDOR will considering funding those projects that contribute most effectively to reducing air pollution.

### Funding History

The NDOR has approved funds to support a Regional Metro Ride Share program in the Omaha (MAPA) area and an Electric Fueling Station in the South Sioux City (SIMPCO) area. Most recently NDOR approved \$75,000 in CMAQ funding for a MAPA project to continue the existing Ozone Education program.

### CMAQ Resources:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air\\_quality/cmaq/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/)

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/cmaq.cfm>

## Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

*The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds safety projects aimed at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Bike and pedestrian safety projects are eligible for HSIP funding. All public roads – including state, borough and local roads – are eligible for HSIP funding. Examples of eligible projects include bike lanes, roadway shoulders, crosswalks, other intersection improvements and signage. See the Advocacy Advance report on HSIP case studies:*

[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/hsip\\_casestudies\\_shsp\\_emphasis.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/hsip_casestudies_shsp_emphasis.pdf)

**Are bicycle and pedestrian safety identified as emphasis areas in your state’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan?**

No

**Have state HSIP funds been allocated to bicycle and pedestrian safety at a “fair share” in proportion to fatalities?**

Yes – Three local and statewide upgrades of pedestrian signal heads to countdown pedestrian signal head projects have been funded.

**What are the project selection criteria?**

Eligible projects must address one or more of the CEA’s of the state SHSP and be supported by a crash data-driven analysis providing appropriate benefit to cost improvement.

**Who sets the project selection criteria?**

The Critical Emphasis Areas (CEA) of the Nebraska SHSP was established by the Interagency Safety Committee.

**Who makes the project selections?**

NDOR Safety Committee

**When are the proposals and decisions made?**

Monthly

**HSIP Resources:**

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/summaryinfo.cfm>

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidehsip.cfm>

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/hsip.cfm>

**Nebraska Strategic Highway Safety Plan 2012-2016:**

<http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/traffeng/shsp/shsp-current.pdf>

## Section 402 – State and Community Highway Safety Grants

*Section 402, the State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program, is a federal program that provides funds for education, enforcement and research programs designed to reduce traffic crashes, deaths, injuries, and property damage. Under Section 402, bike and pedestrian safety programs are eligible to receive funding for projects such as these:*

- *Comprehensive school-based pedestrian and bike safety education programs*
- *Helmet distribution programs*
- *Pedestrian safety programs for older adults*
- *Training in use of pedestrian and bicycle design guidelines*
- *Community information and education programs*
- *Public information in May, such as “Bike Safety Month”, and in September, “Back to School Safety Month.”*
- *Public information for school zone and crosswalk safety*
- *Public information about older adults and impaired pedestrian*

### **Which agency administers 402 grants?**

Nebraska Department of Roads

### **What is the selection process?**

Grant proposals are evaluated and rated based upon the potential contributions in meeting Nebraska’s Annual Section 402 Performance-Based Strategic Traffic Safety Plan of reducing traffic fatalities and injuries and corresponding rates. The seven member NOHS professional staff (with over 170 years of combined Section 402 highway safety planning, project, activity, and evaluation experience) review and rate grant applications for consideration. As the NOHS Administrator, it is my responsibility to make a determination whether or not the project will be included as part of our fiscal year grant activity.

### **Who makes the selection decisions?**

**NDOR’s Nebraska Office of Highway Safety (NOHS), Traffic Engineering Division, Nebraska Department of Roads**

### **What else do we need to know?**

At present, Nebraska is fortunate because pedestrian and bicycle fatality and injury numbers and rates are very low in comparison to our Section 402 Plan problem identification priority emphasis areas:

The Section 402 Plan Emphasis Areas and Goals are:

Overall Goal: Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes

Decrease Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes by 4% from the 2009-2011 calendar base year average of 5,137 to 4,851 by December 31, 2014.

Emphasis Area: Alcohol

Goal: Decrease Alcohol-Related Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes by 6% from the 2009-2011 calendar base year average of 606 to 563 by December 31, 2014.

Emphasis Area: Occupant Restraint Use

Goal: Increase the Statewide Observed Seat Belt Use of Front Seat Outboard Occupants in Passenger Vehicles by 6.4 percentage point(s) from the 2012 calendar base year average usage rate of 78.6% to 85.0% by December 31, 2014.

Emphasis Area: Speed-Related Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes

Goal: Decrease Speed-Related Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes by 11% from the 2009-2011 calendar base year average of 417 to 369 by December 31, 2014.

Emphasis Area: Youth-Involved (Age 16 to 20) Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes

Goal: Decrease Youth-Involved Fatal, A and B Injury Crashes by 8% from the 2009-2011 calendar base year average of 1,577 to 1,401 by December 31, 2014.

(Injury type: A – disabling; B – visible but not disabling)

Because of the limited annual funding provided for all Section 402 project activity (\$2.2 million), pedestrian and bicycle related grant activity is unlikely to be able to compete with the other priority emphasis grant applications for consideration. Current annual funding directed toward pedestrian and bicycle issues have been limited to printed (reflectorized zipper/backpack/shoe lace tags) and audio visual public information materials provided through the NOHS office.

(<http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/nohs/pdf/videocat.pdf>)

#### 402 Resources:

Here is a link to the NOHS FY2014 [Grant Contract Proposal Guide and Policies and Procedures](http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/nohs/pdf/Policies14.pdf):  
<http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/nohs/pdf/Policies14.pdf>



## Other Relevant Funding Sources

### General questions

Who owns the majority of the roads?

How are the non-federal matching funds paid for?

## Contacts

**State Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator**

**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

**Statewide TIP (STIP)**

**Surface Transportation Program**

**Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality**

**Highway Safety Improvement Program**

**Section 402 safety grants**

**Safe Routes to Schools**

**Transportation Enhancements**

**Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinators**

## Documents

Safety plans

Clean air policy:

Transportation Improvement Program/State Transportation Improvement Program