



Tools to Increase Biking and Walking

Advocacy Advance



Omaha Regional 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 Omaha, 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?

MAPA Call opens December 6, 2013 Application due date January 10, 2014
NDOR/State N/A

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

No, SAFETEA-LU funds have been obligated to projects

Has the TA application been written?

Project Selection criteria are currently under development for the selection of projects in the FY2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program

What are the selection criteria?

Currently under development by the Project Selection Sub-Committee

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

No explicit prioritization, but bicycle pedestrian activities are likely to receive higher rankings based on preliminary draft criteria.

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

Due to the lack of carryover for regional funds (TAP and STP), smaller projects are more likely from year-to-year

Who sits on the selection committee?

Project Selection Committee (ProSeCom) members include:

- City Staff (Planning, Public Works)
- County Engineering Staff
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Representative
- Metro Transit
- NDOR and IDOT Representatives

Recommendations by ProSeCom are reviewed and approved by the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

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

Yes, a position on the Project Selection Committee is reserved for a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advocate (currently the Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for the City of Omaha)

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?

Surface Transportation Program (STP) applications are currently solicited for three categories:

- General Roadway
- Transportation Alternatives*
- Systems Management*

* Up to 25% of the region's STP appropriation is reserved for TA and Systems Management projects

What is the project selection process?

Selection process overview:

- Review and revision to project selection criteria by the Project Selection Sub-Committee (ProSeCom)
- Approval of criteria by the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC)
- Solicitation of Applications for STP
- Review of Applications by ProSeCom and Recommendation to TTAC
- Programming of projects by MPO staff
- Approval of recommended program by TTAC
- Incorporation of selected projects in the annual revision of the Transportation Improvement Program
- Approval of TIP by TTAC and Policy Board

Who sets the project selection policy?

The Project Selection Sub-Committee recommends project selection criteria to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee which ultimately sets the policy

Who makes funding decisions/selects projects?

Staff recommends to ProSeCom, ProSeCom recommends to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC), TTAC recommends to MAPA Board, MAPA Board approves.

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

Application is primarily completed in an Excel spreadsheet with small amount of narrative required. Project selection criteria are under revision; likely outcome is that projects that incorporate multimodality and principles of complete streets will receive higher scores. Priority corridors are being identified to focus invest regional transportation funds and to implement LRTP goals of mode shift and complete streets.

Who rates the applications? MPO staff.

Who administers the projects?

MPO allocates funding to projects; local Responsible Charges are responsible for project delivery in coordination with state and federal partners

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

Applications likely due in January 2014; new project selection criteria and process under development

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

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?

N/A

Who sets project selection policy?

No current project selection process; NDOR current utilizes most CMAQ funding for STP-eligible projects. Regional stakeholder committee has been convened to develop a prioritized list of projects within the MAPA TMA for which we intend to seek CMAQ funding (transit, bike-ped, and ITS projects are all likely to be included).

What is the project selection process?

N/A, proposals for CMAQ projects reviewed individually

Who makes the project-selection decisions?

NDOR administration

When are programming decisions made?

No set date

Can good bike/ped projects compete for funds?

No examples of successful bike/ped projects receiving CMAQ funds to date.

Funding History

Ozone Outreach and Reduced Fares – MAPA, 2013

Balance of funding has been flexed to STP-eligible projects outside the urbanized area

CMAQ Resources:

N/A

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

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?

No

What are the project selection criteria?

Proposals are made to the Nebraska Highway Safety Committee and evaluated based upon their merits. The safety committee reviews projects based upon their potential for reducing crashes, cost effectiveness, and location identification through the Hazard Location Analysis Program.

Who sets the project selection criteria?

The Nebraska Highway Safety Committee

Who makes the project selections?

The Nebraska Highway Safety Committee

When are the proposals and decisions made?

Annually

HSIP Resources:

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?

The Nebraska Highway Safety Committee

What is the selection process?

Proposals are made to the Nebraska Highway Safety Committee and evaluated based upon their merits. The safety committee reviews projects based upon their potential for reducing crashes, cost effectiveness, and location identification through the Hazard Location Analysis Program.

Who makes the selection decisions?

The Nebraska Highway Safety Committee

What else do we need to know?

402 Resources:

Other Relevant Funding Sources

General questions

Who owns the majority of the roads?

Local jurisdictions

How are the non-federal matching funds paid for?

Bonds, general fund revenues, special improvement district fees

Contacts

State Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator

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Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

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Statewide TIP (STIP)

Amy Starr, 402-479-4708

Surface Transportation Program

Amy Starr, 402-479-4708

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality

Amy Starr, 402-479-4708

Highway Safety Improvement Program

Fred Zwonechek, 402-471-2515

Section 402 safety grants

Fred Zwonechek, 402-471-2515

Safe Routes to Schools

Michael Kleffner, 402-479-4881

Transportation Enhancements

Michael Kleffner, 402-479-4881

Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinators

Carlos Morales, 402-444-5150

Documents

Safety plans

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

Clean air policy:

Transportation Improvement Program/State Transportation Improvement Program

<http://mapacog.org/transportation-improvement-program>

<http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/STIP/>