

# Navigating MAP-21

## Transportation Alternatives Advocacy Tool Kit





## Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed the new federal transportation law, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, known as MAP-21. This law means new challenges and opportunities for bicycling and walking projects.

We are not going to let 20 years of progress in biking and walking come to a halt! It's true that MAP-21 has reduced guaranteed funding for biking and walking. But thanks to advocates who called, wrote, and e-mailed Congress as the bill was being written, we are still very much in the game.

Advocacy Advance, working with our partner organizations in the America Bikes coalition, is committed to helping state and local advocacy organizations ensure that states and regions use every opportunity in the new law to increase the safety and convenience of biking and walking. Together, we can maximize biking and walking investments under MAP-21.

### *Purpose of the Transportation Alternatives Advocacy Toolkit*

This toolkit provides materials that state advocacy organizations can use to ensure state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) take full advantage of the potential bicycling and walking funding in MAP-21. This particular toolkit focuses on the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program and on spending funding available through the existing bicycling and walking programs. Future resources will discuss how to maximize all of the bicycling and walking eligibility under the law and how to engage Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in spending their Transportation Alternatives funds.

### *Audience for the toolkit*

The intended audience for this toolkit is state bicycling and walking advocacy organizations and their partners. We have identified a lead organizer for this campaign in each state.

The materials may also be appropriate for local groups working on state policy, but we encourage local groups to do so in conjunction with their state lead organizer (see next section for contacts). Coordination among the organizations working on MAP-21 implementation is important and will ensure that state decision-makers are hearing a strong and consistent message.

If you are an individual, unaffiliated with a group, we are glad that you are interested in this topic. Please contact your state's lead organizer for the campaign (see next section for contacts) to see how you can support their work.

### *Working with your state's lead organizer on the campaign*

We have identified contacts in each state to coordinate efforts around the country and track each state's plan for implementing MAP-21. These contacts will lead their state-wide effort – often in coordination with other partners – to encourage DOTs to fully fund, staff and implement Transportation Alternatives, use all available eligibility in MAP-21 and spend down SAFETEA-LU funds.

The list of state contacts is available at: <http://bit.ly/MAP21stateleads>.

**If you are an individual or a local group interested in supporting the MAP-21 campaign efforts, please email the state lead listed in the [contact list](#) first.** They are informed about the most up-to-date information, your state's unique circumstances, the advocacy campaign priorities and how you can plug in. They are your conduits for action.

If there is not a lead identified for your state or contact information listed, you can contact [info@AdvocacyAdvance.org](mailto:info@AdvocacyAdvance.org), and we will assist with your efforts.

### *Make it your own*

These resources are meant to provide ideas and models for your statewide group and actions. Each state is unique and has its special set of circumstances. We encourage you to customize the materials so that they fit your state's needs. Some states are asking for even more funding than you will see in most of these samples. For example, some groups are asking DOTs to transfer funds *into* the TA program. That is great. Other state advocates have identified targets other than, or in addition to, governors and DOT heads that must be influenced.

Each group needs to determine the most appropriate strategy for their state. We encourage you to edit and use these documents as you see fit. The Advocacy Advance team is also happy to work with you to create resources for your campaign. Contact us at [info@advocacyadvance.org](mailto:info@advocacyadvance.org).

## Goals of the Campaign

When Congress passed MAP-21, the law came with significant changes to federal funding for bicycling and walking that could diminish your ability to seek and secure funding to build safe facilities for bicycling and walking. However, active transportation advocates have an opportunity to make the case that the state DOT retain or even increase its commitment to bicycling and walking.

By pulling together a strong and broad coalition, you have the power to ensure that your state DOT:

- Understands the value of bicycling and walking to the state and to local communities, in terms of transportation accessibility, congestion reduction, safety improvements, economic competitiveness and healthy lifestyles.
- Comprehends the breadth of support throughout the state for active transportation.
- Fully uses its Transportation Alternatives funding for bicycling and walking.
- Spends any remaining funds in Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails programs before they expire.

The various sections of this toolkit are meant to help you understand and articulate the campaign, gather intel from your DOT to tailor the campaign to your state's specific circumstances, spearhead a broad coalition of support, and appeal directly to your state's leadership to **fully fund, staff and implement Transportation Alternatives** and to spend any remaining resources in existing programs.

Before you dive into the campaign itself, it is important to understand the details of MAP-21 and the primary goals of the campaign. This will allow you to speak knowledgeably with organizations and individuals you are recruiting to the campaign, and to your state leadership. If the details get overwhelming, remember that the most important message is that bicycling and walking investments are critical to your community.

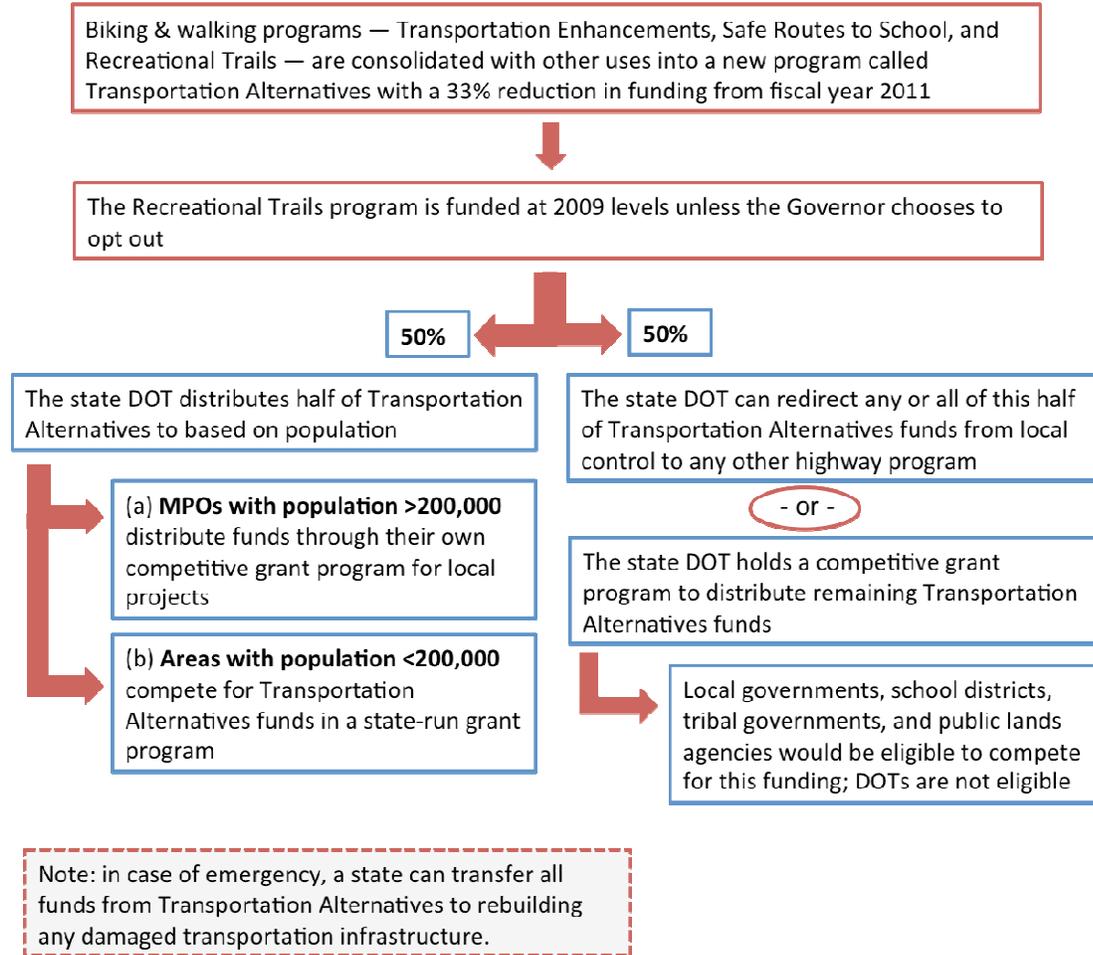
### *Understanding MAP-21*

The existing programs (Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancements and Safe Routes to School) have been combined into a new program called Transportation Alternatives (TA). Unfortunately, this new program also comes with several provisions that can limit funding for bicycling and walking:

- An overall decrease in funding available, ranging from a 20% to 50% decrease, depending on your state.
- Provisions giving the state DOT options for transferring out up to half of the available funds for Transportation Alternatives.

- Additional eligibilities for things like environmental mitigation and boulevard construction.

To mitigate these provisions, Congress has also incorporated a new structure and decision-making process for distribution of these funds. All Transportation Alternatives funds must be awarded through a competitive grant process. Some funds are awarded by the state DOT. And, some funds are sub-allocated to MPOs serving 200,000 people or more, making those MPOs decision-makers on which projects to fund. The graphic below delineates the funding breakout.



This description and the chart above are meant to be a simplified and more general overview of the changes in MAP-21 to funding for bicycling and walking. There is a wealth of resources available online to help you get a more in-depth understanding. We recommend that you review the resources listed below to become well-versed in the transportation bill and its impact on bicycling and walking.

- Statement from America Bikes coalition on the transportation bill: [http://www.americabikes.org/new\\_transportation\\_bill\\_cuts\\_biking\\_walking\\_funding\\_by\\_more\\_than\\_60\\_percent](http://www.americabikes.org/new_transportation_bill_cuts_biking_walking_funding_by_more_than_60_percent)

- Powerpoint overview of MAP-21 for bicycling and walking:  
[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/Moving\\_Ahead\\_For\\_Progress\\_Final.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/Moving_Ahead_For_Progress_Final.pdf)
- Analysis of Transportation Alternatives:  
[http://www.americabikes.org/analysis\\_of\\_the\\_new\\_transportation\\_bill\\_map\\_21](http://www.americabikes.org/analysis_of_the_new_transportation_bill_map_21)
- Impact specific to Safe Routes to School:  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/node/914/>
- Webinars on MAP-21 (recordings of past webinars plus links for future webinars):  
<http://www.advocacyadvance.org/MAP21#webinars>
- Explanation of funding level, state by state, complete with detailed funding tables:  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/blog/map-21-numbers> and  
<http://blog.bikeleague.org/blog/2012/08/map-21-how-much-money-will-my-state-get/>
- Broader overview of MAP-21 from the Federal Highway Administration:  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/summaryinfo.cfm>

It is also important to note that many states have not yet fully allocated their funds from the existing programs, Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails. Funds provided through FY2012 for these programs remain available for three years before they expire (although Safe Routes to School funds do not expire) and can be spent according to the rules and regulations of these original programs. This provides an opportunity for states to continue to support bicycling and walking through these programs until the funds are exhausted.

### *The Campaign “Platform”*

Through the America Bikes coalition, national bicycling and walking groups have worked together to identify a framework for these campaigns that unifies the various bicycling and walking interests (so that one program isn’t pitted against another for support) into a cohesive campaign. We have identified a few key phrases to capture the goals. Below is our collective platform for the campaign. Additional details on each of these concepts are available in the next section, “Understanding the Campaign.” You know the specific circumstances of your state. Please adapt the platform asks to the most appropriate situation in your state.

**The Navigating MAP-21 Campaign Platform:** While it is true that MAP-21 slashes guaranteed funding for bicycling and walking, states and local governments have many opportunities in the new law to increase the safety and convenience of bicycling and walking. Together, we can maximize bicycling, walking and Safe Routes to School investments — both under MAP-21’s new Transportation Alternatives program and the larger core transportation and safety funds.

We expect every state to:

- **Fully fund, staff, and implement** the new Transportation Alternatives program. Specifically, states should:
  - *Fully fund*: Do not transfer any funds away from Transportation Alternatives or opt-out of the Recreational Trails program
  - *Fully staff*: Preserve or increase staff support for Transportation Alternatives by maintaining state Safe Routes to School coordinators and bike/ped coordinators
  - *Fully implement*: Promptly award Transportation Alternatives grants with participation of relevant stakeholders
- **Fully maximize the state's investments** in safe, accessible streets: utilize each MAP-21 funding programs — including HSIP, CMAQ, and STP — to include biking and walking in all transportation projects
- **Fully spend remaining funds** from the existing Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails programs

Please read on to the next section for more details on each of these concepts; however note that the resources on “fully maximize the state’s investment” will be made available in a few weeks, separate from this toolkit.

## Understanding the Transportation Alternatives campaign

*What do we mean when we say we expect DOTs to fully fund, staff, and implement the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program and fully spend existing funds?*

### *Fully fund Transportation Alternatives*

This one might seem obvious, since Congress has apportioned \$808 million nationally to the Transportation Alternatives program. What could DOTs do with the funding besides spend it?

The answer: MAP-21 makes it easier for state DOTs *not* to spend TA money on TA projects. There are several ways, described below, that they can do this. States can also add additional resources to Transportation Alternatives to mitigate the cuts if they so choose. Below are options for what “fully fund” Transportation Alternatives could mean in your state:

- *Do not transfer funds out of TA:* The previous federal transportation law, SAFETEA-LU, limited the amount of funding that states could transfer away from the Transportation Enhancements program and did not allow any transfers out of the Safe Routes to School program. That protection no longer exists under MAP-21. This means that as advocates we need to let states know how important these funds are and insist that they use them on bicycling and walking projects.

TA funds are divided into two pots – one distributed to areas of the state according to population and one for a statewide grant program (see prior section for additional details). Theoretically, a state could transfer all of the TA funds reserved for the statewide grant program to other Federal-aid highway programs, like the Surface Transportation Program or the National Highway Performance Program. That would wipe out half of TA in one move. We want a commitment from each state DOT that they will spend TA funds on TA projects and not transfer any funds out.

- *Consider transferring funds into TA:* Funding for biking and walking funds took a hit in MAP-21. Nationally, Transportation Alternatives funding for FY 2013 is 28 percent lower than Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails received in FY 2012. Some states will see greater losses ([http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/TA\\_simple2.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/TA_simple2.pdf)). Many states and regions have already programmed projects based on the expectation that the funding level would remain the same. In order to pay for these planned projects, states may transfer funds *into* the TA program. Other states may value bicycling and walking as a key part of its transportation system, and may want to make funding for bicycling and

walking “whole” – or comparable to prior years’ funding levels. Transferring funds into TA would show Congress and the state’s residents how important the program is.

- *Don’t let TA funds accumulate:* If a state does not spend any of their TA funds by August 1, 2014 (if greater than 100% of one year’s funds remain unobligated), the state has the option of using those funds for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program projects. We don’t necessarily want to remind states that they have this option, as we don’t want to prompt any states to delay to gain more flexibility in funding. The message to DOTs is to use the TA funds available for TA projects.
- *Don’t opt-out of the Recreational Trails Program:* MAP-21 says, “A State may opt out of the recreational trails program... if the Governor of the State notifies the Secretary not later than 30 days prior to apportionments being made for any fiscal year.” This means that by September 1 of each year, a state’s governor has to decide to either maintain the Recreational Trails program as-is, or to opt out and roll those funds into the general TA funds. We urge each state to maintain the Recreational Trails program to ensure that those funds get spent on trail projects and are not transferred or used on unrelated TA project activities.
- *Find it, Fund it – Spend TA funds on TA projects:* In addition to the ways DOTs can move money out of the TA program, there are several concerns about eligible uses within the program itself.

First, some of the former Transportation Enhancements (TE) activities have been changed to allow broader use – for example, environmental mitigation, which used to have narrow purposes, now applies to any environmental mitigation activity. For more on the changes to Enhancements activities, see:

[http://www.enhancements.org/download/Publications/Briefs/MAP-21\\_and\\_Transportation\\_Enhancements.pdf](http://www.enhancements.org/download/Publications/Briefs/MAP-21_and_Transportation_Enhancements.pdf).

Second, TA funds may be used for designated Transportation Alternatives activities, Recreational Trails activities, and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program activities. However, it may also be used for “Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.” These large boulevard projects could easily consume large swaths of the TA budget with very few projects.

The best way to avoid this is to have excellent bicycling and walking projects on hand, in planning documents, and in the public eye. We call this *find it, fund it*. State decision-makers need to know that there are needed and popular projects in the queue. So make sure you have good examples of the types of projects and facilities that are badly needed in communities throughout the state.

### *Fully staff Transportation Alternatives*

To make the most of important non-motorized investments, we urge DOTs to have a full time bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, a full time Safe Routes to School Coordinator and a Transportation Alternatives coordinator.

Transportation planners and engineers shepherd existing projects through the byzantine planning and funding process, and they guide the implementation of new projects. Staff with experience and expertise planning and implementing Transportation Alternatives projects will be needed to ensure those projects flow through the pipeline efficiently.

Under SAFETEA-LU, full-time Safe Routes to School coordinators were required in each state as part of the Safe Routes to School program. Until federal guidance is issued, it is unclear how those requirements will apply under MAP-21, but these coordinators will at least be encouraged and could possibly be required as long as Safe Routes to School projects are in the pipeline. Regardless of what comes out in guidance, these coordinators are essential to shepherding the thousands of outstanding Safe routes to School projects through the federal requirements to get them built, to spend any remaining available Safe Routes to School funds, and to ensure that the broad Safe Routes to School constituencies are included in the new Transportation Alternatives program.

Bicycle/pedestrian coordinators were required in the past, and continue to be required under MAP-21. They have a valuable role to play in the state DOT to ensure that policy and programs throughout the DOT are inclusive of bicycling and walking. In addition, most states had Transportation Enhancement program coordinators that will prove valuable in implementing the Transportation Alternatives program.

Dedicated staff makes an impact. An analysis of staffing levels in the 50 largest US cities, by Advocacy Advance shows a correlation between larger bicycling and pedestrian staff and higher bicycle commuting levels and over-all bike-friendliness. See: "Why Communities & States Need Bicycle and Pedestrian Staff,"

[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/why\\_bike\\_ped\\_staff\\_april\\_2010.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/why_bike_ped_staff_april_2010.pdf)

### *Fully implement Transportation Alternatives*

MAP-21 is a two-year law. That means in less than two years, Congress will be working on a new law. We need to show that bicycling and walking projects remain popular and successful. To do so, we need DOTs to implement the program as quickly and effectively as possible.

Under MAP-21, states allocate half of funds through a statewide competitive process—a grant competition or a call for projects. A system like this is generally already in place for TE and SRTS. States should promptly schedule a call for projects under the new Transportation Alternatives program. Some states have indicated they may simply tweak their existing Safe Routes to School and Transportation Enhancements competitions for the new eligibilities and funding levels, while others have indicated they are considering a new unified grant program. It is up to

you to assess which option will be best for your state, and to ensure that the state considers input from stakeholders in setting up its process.

The other half of the funds is to be allocated by population, and a portion of these funds are to be distributed by MPOs, also through a competitive grant process. Some examples of MPO grant processes already exist.

- Kansas City's Mid-America Regional Council:  
<http://www.marc.org/transportation/committees/moenhancement.htm>
- Northwestern Indiana Planning Commission:  
<http://www.nirpc.org/transportation/nonmotorized.htm>

An acceptable grant process:

- Involves community stakeholders, including bicycling and walking advocates and “non-traditional” partners, like health professionals, in project selection and policy determination
- Has criteria which recognizes the importance of non-motorized transportation
- Is implemented promptly to program the maximum number of and highest quality projects

We will provide more information on MPO grant process best practices in future tool kit.

### *Fully spend existing funds*

The programs that advocates are familiar with (Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, Recreational Trails) have been combined into a new program. But that doesn't mean that funds authorized for these programs are gone. They're not. Safe Routes to School funds do not expire. TE funds are usually available for three years after they are given to the states.

We urge states to promptly use the existing SAFETEA-LU funds available in these programs. Many states and regions are moving forward with grant programs right now. We ask all states to join them until funds from these programs are fully spent.

To find out whether your state has funds remaining, please see the following resources for each program:

- Transportation Enhancements: *(Shows funds allocated to each state)*  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_enhancements/funding/apportions\\_obligations/app\\_ob\\_summ.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_enhancements/funding/apportions_obligations/app_ob_summ.cfm)
- Safe Routes to School: *(Shows how much each state has spent of their allocation)*  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/State-of-the-States-June-2012.pdf>

- Recreational Trails Program: (*Shows funds allocated to each state*)  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/funding/apportionments\\_of\\_ligations/recfunds\\_resc.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/funding/apportionments_of_ligations/recfunds_resc.cfm)

### *Summing it up*

Bicycling and walking are critical components of our transportation system and they need to be prioritized in our transportation planning processes as well. State DOTs should commit to fully funding the Transportation Alternatives program, implement the program promptly and effectively, and fully staff it, while taking advantage of all non-motorized funds available, including existing ones.

## Organizing and Planning Your State's Campaign

Now that you have some background knowledge about MAP-21 and the goals of these campaigns, it is time to gather intel in your state, adapt the campaign goals to your state's situation, build a coalition and engage your state's leadership. The remainder of this toolkit is full of resources to help you achieve full utilization of Transportation Alternatives in your state.

In this section of the toolkit, we focus on the groundwork you need to do to understand the situation in your state and who you need to influence. In addition to this toolkit, another resource that may be helpful is an Advocacy Advance resource on how to build a successful funding campaign:

[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/Developing\\_a\\_Successful\\_Funding\\_Campaign.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/Developing_a_Successful_Funding_Campaign.pdf)

### *Suggested timeline for campaign implementation*

Now is the time to act! The law has passed, and it goes into effect October 1. There are immediate steps to take in campaign implementation, and there are additional actions after October. Below is a suggested timeline for your campaign, incorporating the key dates for MAP-21.

\* **Remember** that every state is different. Action items listed below are suggested steps for your campaign, but not appropriate in all circumstances. Let the Advocacy Advance team know if you have any questions.

#### August

- **Understand MAP-21.** Advocacy Advance will supply resources, webinars, newsletters, and technical assistance explaining the changes and opportunities in MAP-21.
- **Identify decision-makers, gather intel and tailor the campaign goals for your state.** Read this chapter for detailed suggestions.
- **Prepare some state-specific examples of good projects.** Additional details are at the end of this chapter.
- **Build your coalition.** See the next chapter for suggestions on who you should reach out to and engage in your effort.

#### September

- **Circulate and then send sign-on letters to your Governor/DOT Director/other key decision-makers.** See the "Putting It All Together" chapter for details.
- **Request and have a meeting with your DOT/Governor to discuss your campaign requests.** See the "Putting It All Together" chapter for details.
- **If necessary, engage the media in your campaign.** Media stories about your campaign and sign-on letters will help spread public awareness about biking and walking and may help persuade key decision-makers. See the last chapter for details.

October 1

- **MAP-21 Goes into Effect**

Early October

- **The U.S. DOT will issue guidance.** State DOTs and regional staff will receive recommendations and expectations for State DOT implementation. At the national level, we are meeting with DOT to give our recommendations.

October and November (resources pertinent to these actions to follow, separate from this toolkit)

- **Understanding MAP-21, Part II.** Advocacy Advance will disseminate information on US DOT guidance and how that will inform or help your campaigns.
- **Follow up with DOT staff** (Secretary's office as well as bike / ped staff) and MPO staff on the US DOT guidance to ensure that Transportation Alternatives is being implemented per your campaign goals.
- **Educate Mayors, advocates and other elected officials** about how to compete for Transportation Alternatives funds.
- **Engage MPOs** about their competitive process under Transportation Alternatives.
- **Pursue maximizing investment in bicycling and walking through other transportation programs.**
- **Pitch stories about your campaign's progress to local media outlets.** As your state and communities make progress, keep an eye out for opportunities to engage the media.

*Identifying your state's key decision-makers*

Who can actually make the decision to implement change? This exercise will help you identify power relationships and show you how to influence them.

Primary targets (specific people) are the decision makers. Secondary targets (specific people) have influence on the primary target. Public audiences (stakeholders) are groups of people who have influence on secondary or primary targets. They can be your potential / active allies. By identifying your primary target and who influences them, you are able to identify where in the chain you have influence and help you to determine exactly where and how you should focus your strategy and outreach.

**Key transportation decision-makers and contacts:**

- Governors:  
<http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Governors.shtml>
- State DOT directors:  
<http://www.transportation.org/default.aspx?siteid=37&pageid=332>
- State DOT bicycle and pedestrian coordinators:  
<http://www.walkinginfo.org/assistance/contacts.cfm>
- State Safe Routes to School coordinators:  
<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/find-state-contacts/listing-state>
- State Transportation Enhancements program managers:  
<http://www.enhancements.org/Stateprofile.asp>

**Step 1: Determine who makes transportation decisions in your state.**

- *Does your state have a Transportation Commission? Commissions often act as a Board of Directors to the DOT Secretary or Commissioner, directing decisions at the highest level.*
- *Does your state have Transportation Advisory Council? Advisory councils often advise the DOT Secretary but do not direct him or her.*
- *How interested/involved is your Governor?*
- *What role does the legislature play in transportation funding? In many states, the State Legislature sets limits of federal transportation funds. In some states, the funding flows directly to the DOT without legislative input.*

**Step 2: Identify your primary target.** From the list from Step 1, determine the person who has the power to make the change you seek.

- *Your primary target will likely be your state DOT head or Governor, but could include an additional target(s) depending on your state's structure.*

**Step 3: Identify your secondary targets.** Determine key decision-making institutions, associations, or individuals that have influence on your primary target or your campaign issue. These can be people you know or don't know. There may be more than one person associated with each of the institutions or there may be some institutions where people don't know the names. Here you can note a question like, "Who is the department head?"

- *Your secondary targets for implementing MAP-21 will be informed by how your DOT works. Make sure to do your background research or collaborate with an ally who has this local knowledge.*
- *Secondary targets may include your state DOT commission, state legislative committee, and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) directors. List elected officials to reach out to – state legislators, mayors, MPO heads, city councilors, etc.*
- *Additional ideas for secondary targets are listed on the next page.*

**Step 4: Identify your key public audiences.** Now, think about the people / stakeholders / associations connected to these key individuals. This helps you identify the easiest ways to reach your primary target — by tapping into existing relationships between people.

- *Engage diverse stakeholders!*
- *Mobilize supporters representing a wide variety of backgrounds. Consider principals, PTAs, bike / ped advisory committees, cyclists of all ages, types and abilities, senior citizen organizations, neighborhood associations, etc.*
- *See the next chapter, Building a Coalition, for additional information on potential public audiences to engage.*

**WANT MORE?** If you want to take this exercise to the next level, at this point you can complete a "power map" for your primary target. Details on the additional steps you can take are available at:

[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/powermapping\\_additional\\_steps.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/powermapping_additional_steps.pdf)

**Step 5: Develop a plan.** Create some action steps for what to do next. These can be fairly straightforward. Determine the best approaches to accessing these individuals and institutions through relationships. Who will be responsible for what and by when?

*Refer to this toolkit’s campaign guide. Action steps could include:*

- *Send a sign-on letter to your state DOT head and / or Governor showing broad support for Transportation Alternatives.*
- *Get mayors to send their own support letters*
- *Meet with your state DOT head and / or Governor.*
- *Present to the DOT commission (with a coalition of supporters)*
- *Coordinate a statewide effort / listening tour to share info*

Secondary Targets

The table below includes additional ideas for secondary targets (step 2). These are individuals who may have some power and influence within your DOT.

State & local Bicycle and pedestrian coordinators	Who are your bicycle coordinators? State coordinators make sure bicycling and walking projects in regional planning and programming. Local coordinators can facilitate submission of projects to the MPO.
State & local Bicycle and pedestrian committee	Who is on your bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee? Committees establish bicycling and walking as priorities and give input on regional and local planning.
State and local bicycling and walking advocates	Which are the active advocacy groups in the area? Strong advocacy groups are critical to building support and providing information on bicycling and walking needs.
State program staff	Who coordinates the funding program? Each federal-aid program typically has a contact person on the state level with expertise on program details. This person can make sure you stay abreast of key deadline, project criteria, and other details.
Other agency staff	Which other transportation agency staff are involved and influential? With the growth of Complete Streets policies and increased attention to bike/ped needs, the whole range of agency staff should be invested in advancing bike/ped projects.
Elected officials	Who influences the agency? Governors, state representatives, and city council members can ensure that transportation agencies prioritize bicycling and walking projects. Bike/ped projects provide good ribbon cutting opportunities. (See next chapter, Building a Coalition, for more details)
The public	Is there public support? Elected officials want to know that there is public demand and support for bicycle and pedestrian projects. (See next chapter, Building a Coalition, for more details)

In addition to identifying the key advocates, agency staff, and elected officials that you will be working with, take time to learn how individuals fit into the funding *process*:

- Who sets the project selection policy?
- Who makes funding decisions/selects projects?
- Who rates the applications?
- Who administers the programs?

Refer to Advocacy Advance's [state and regional Funding Profiles](#) for examples.

### *Gathering intel specific to your state*

You can learn a lot about how your state might fund and implement Transportation Alternatives by looking to their past behavior in implementing Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails. Did your state fully use its existing bicycling and walking funds, or has it been extremely slow to hold project competitions, rescinded much of available funds and minimized bicycling and walking? There are some national compilations of information available you can review – see the sidebar below for resources you can review. And, it is critical to talk to DOT staff that work directly on bicycling and walking. They can be a helpful asset to you. See below for tips on who to talk to and what to ask.

Agency staff are valuable sources of information, but it matters **who** and **what** you ask.

**WHO.** The following order-of-operations is suggested when gathering intel from DOT / staff officials:

- Start with **existing contacts**. If you have an established relationship with planning, transportation, active transportation director(s), etc., reach out to them.
- If you don't already have an agency contact, your first step should be to call or email your state DOT **Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator**. Find contact information here: [http://www.walkinginfo.org/assistance/contact\\_s.cfm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/assistance/contact_s.cfm)

#### **Rating your state's bike/ped friendliness:**

- Bike-friendly state rankings and recommendations (League of American Bicyclists): <http://www.bikeleague.org/program/s/bicyclefriendlyamerica/bicyclefriendlystate/>
- How your state has used TE funds (Enhancements Clearinghouse): <http://www.enhancements.org/Stateprofile.asp>
- State profiles of bike/ped investments and federal legislator support: [http://www.americabikes.org/state\\_data\\_index](http://www.americabikes.org/state_data_index)
- State fact sheets on Safe Routes to School investments: email [margo@saferoutespartnership.org](mailto:margo@saferoutespartnership.org) for a copy of your state's fact sheet

#### **Understanding your state's past rescissions:**

- Explanation of what rescissions are (Advocacy Advance): [http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/Understanding\\_Rescissions\\_%282011%291.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/Understanding_Rescissions_%282011%291.pdf) and [http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/Rescissions\\_FAQs.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/Rescissions_FAQs.pdf)
- Examining rescissions from 2009 (Advocacy Advance): [http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/rescissions\\_restoration\\_april\\_2010.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/rescissions_restoration_april_2010.pdf)

- Next up, contact your state **Safe Routes to School Coordinator**. Find contact information for your coordinator here: <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/find-state-contacts>
- If you don't have luck with the coordinators in your state, or to supplement the information you receive, contact your **Transportation Enhancements Program Manager**. Find contact information here: <http://www.enhancements.org/Stateprofile.asp>

**WHAT.** Here are some tips for what to ask your agency contacts, and how to ask them:

- **Your MAP-21 “Ask”** – Ask if your state will fully fund, staff and implement the new Transportation Alternatives program. Ask if your state will fully spend remaining funds from the Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails programs. Set the stage for future discussions on HSIP, CMAQ, STP so your state fully maximizes its investments for biking and walking in all transportation projects. Anything you can learn about the programs, process and decisions will help inform your campaign needs.
- **Relationships Matter** – You are asking for a favor to know how your state's DOT may be planning on using Transportation Alternative funds. Always start with someone who you've worked with before to increase the likelihood they'll share info with you. If necessary, promise that this is off-the-record gathering of intel so you can figure out how to proceed with your state campaign. If you promise this, do keep the information confidential and do not identify your source.
- **Expect Uncertainty** – State DOTs are still waiting for guidance on MAP-21, and may be hesitant to give “yes/no” answers to every question. That's okay, be sure to have follow-up information you can leave at meetings/email after calls. Commit to staying in touch with your DOT contact. Make clear that you want them to stay in touch with you and share any information they can. If they don't have any definitive answers, ask them if they are concerned, based on past experience, that the DOT will transfer money away from Transportation Alternatives.
- **Know Your Allies** – Not every state DOT employee has a lot of contact with the public, even though their work may have an impact on the community. Or they only interface with the public in certain circumstances (not all are pleasant). DOT bike/ped staff should be your allies, but they may be defensive about criticisms and suggestions. Don't take defensiveness as hostility, and make sure they leave the meeting knowing you're both on the same side. It can help to clearly state that you value these programs, and want to ensure that the DOT prioritize the program and the staff who will implement it. Some coordinators may be worried about the future of their positions, and you can be an ally for them.

- **Know The Decision Makers** – State DOTs tend to be top-down organizations. If you're meeting with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, chances are they won't have any way to impact a decision on TA other than giving their own input. The task right now is to collect intel from friendly DOT staff that will help when you later meet with DOT leadership who will be making the final decisions. And, ask them who they think the decision-makers are, which can help you with your power-mapping, and who would influence them most.
- **Find New Allies** – Ask if there is anyone else who may be good to chat with to find out more (other DOT employees, governor's aide, etc).

### *Tailoring the campaign to your state's situation*

Now that you have gathered information about your state's past treatment of bicycling and walking funding and options that are on the table for implementation of Transportation Alternatives, you can adapt the campaign platform to your state. You should flesh out your specific ask in each of the categories below. A few illustrative examples follow; again, please adapt for your state. You will likely want to review these proposed campaign goals with others in your coalition to ensure that everyone can be supportive of the asks.

#### **Fully fund** Transportation Alternatives.

- In a state with a strong funding history for bicycling and walking, your ask here could be that the state transfer funds into Transportation Alternatives from other transportation programs to make up for the significant cut in funding experienced by Transportation Alternatives.
- In a state that has rescinded lots of bicycling and walking in the past and where your DOT allies warn you it's going to be a tough battle, your request here could be not to opt out of Recreational Trails and not to transfer funds away from Transportation Alternatives until after local communities have had a chance to compete. (In other words, let communities determine whether they want this funding; if not enough applications come in and there are left-over funds, then the state could transfer them out).

#### **Fully staff** Transportation Alternatives.

- In a state with a strong funding history for bicycling and walking, your ask here could be to retain all existing staff (SRTS coordinator, bike/ped coordinator, and TE program manager).
- In a state with a weak funding history, your ask here could be to retain the SRTS and TE program coordinators for a few years until the existing projects in the pipeline have been built, and then to transition to a TA coordinator.

**Fully implement** Transportation Alternatives.

- This ask will likely be strongly influenced by the intel you gather from supportive DOT staff. They may already be thinking about retaining the existing grant program structures (i.e. separate Safe Routes to School and Transportation Enhancements competitions) or in merging them.
- Whatever the preferred model in your state, emphasize the need to hold a grant competition promptly and to ensure that stakeholders are engaged. You can also be supportive of a specific competition model, or suggest modifications to whatever is being considered.

**Fully spend** existing bicycling and walking funds.

- If your state has done a good job using all available resources, your only ask here may be to emphasize the importance of the state getting all the projects currently in the pipeline through the regulatory process and completed.
- If your state still has substantial balances remaining from Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and/or Recreational Trails, you will want to ask for a clear plan for when the state will hold the next competition to use all available resources.

*Examples of successful projects*

Another important task to take on while you are organizing your campaign is to identify some good examples of past state investments in bicycling and walking. These will be very helpful either to include in your letters to the Governor/DOT or to include in your talking points in a meeting with the DOT or Governor.

To make sure you are prepared, we advise you to spend a little time well in advance of these meetings to identify a few key examples of good bicycling and walking projects that show a definitive value for your state. Ideally, you will have one example each, including a description and a picture, for a Safe Routes to School project, a trail project and a transportation enhancements project. A few succinct examples we have used nationally follow to illustrate what you are seeking:

- **Minneapolis, MN.** Transportation enhancements were used to turn an obsolete industrial railroad trench through the center of the city into a thriving corridor for active transportation. The resulting Midtown Greenway draws 3000 cyclists a day, gets more traffic than 77% of city roads, and has revitalized surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Mount Prospect, IL.** In 2007, the village of Mount Prospect received a \$76,000 federal Safe Routes to School award to construct one quarter mile of sidewalk along a high traffic road connecting the elementary street with a large apartment complex. This small project allowed the school system to eliminate a bus route in the morning, midday, and afternoon, saving the district \$66,657 annually.

- **Hatfield-McCoy Trail, WV.** Established in 1996 to provide trail-based outdoor recreational opportunities in southern West Virginia, the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System has grown to span nine counties and has increased the state's economic output by \$7.7 million, increased state revenue by \$2.7 million, and created 146 new jobs.

You may already know of some good examples in your state. If you don't, you can ask your state's bicycle and pedestrian staff (TE program manager, SRTS coordinator or bike/ped coordinator) if they have ideas. Consider talking to other bike/ped advocates in the state to see if they have ideas. As a last resort, you can consult the national databases of projects funded under the core bicycling and walking programs:

- Transportation Enhancements: <http://www.enhancements.org/projectlist.asp> and <http://www.enhancements.org/library/index.asp>
- Safe Routes to School: [http://apps.saferoutesinfo.org/project\\_list/](http://apps.saferoutesinfo.org/project_list/)
- Recreational Trails: <http://www.funoutdoors.info/rtphome.html>

### *Showing what's needed*

Another tactic is to bring in examples and pictures of future projects identified in the TIP or in your bicycle and pedestrian plan. A description and/or design of the project planned can visually show what the community is losing if the state does not fund the program. You could also use a "before" photo to demonstrate the unsafe situation that the project is seeking to address.

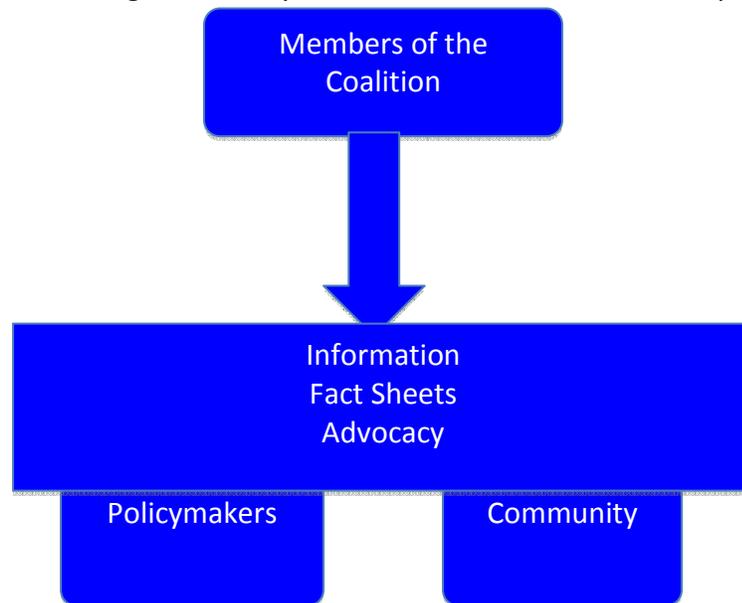
## Building a Coalition for Your State's Campaign

Coalition building is critical to providing information to the community and effectively communicating your message to policy makers. Coalitions have helped combat major public health concerns, such as tobacco control and injury prevention campaigns, and overall assisted organizations with accomplishing their goals.

The coalition approach to advocacy for walking and biking will bring many organizations and individuals together to promote and support active living transportation options and ensure communities have the infrastructure and capacity to achieve these goals. After all, we all know that bicycling and walking infrastructure has benefits for safety, mobility, health, the environment, economic competitiveness and more. So, make sure that organizations and interest groups that care about these issues are engaged in your Transportation Alternatives campaign.

The beauty of a coalition is its diverse membership, upon which many ideas and resources are brought to the table. The challenge for you, as the coalition leader, is to bring out the best in each member while ensuring all coalition members keep the vision and mission front and center. This chapter of the toolkit is designed to assist you with:

- 1) building an effective coalition, with recommendations on how to engage both traditional and non-traditional partners;
- 2) engaging policy makers in your coalition, since this group is influential at the state and local level;
- 3) suggestions on how to manage a coalition; and
- 4) useful links to fact sheets on how to promote active transportation options such as walking, and biking to a variety of audiences to build successful projects.



### *Types of groups to engage in your coalition*

Our first step in this process is to develop a list of types of groups you want and need to reach out to in support of walking and biking projects. In addition to reaching out to the traditional bike/pedestrian and rails to trails groups, you also want to reach out to other non-traditional partners, such as safety organizations, public health organizations and businesses. At the national level, we were able to engage a broad coalition in support of changes to Transportation Alternatives. Take a look at our letter on the transportation bill for national groups supportive of bicycling and walking; many of these have state or local chapters you can reach out to for your state campaign:

<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/Natl-groups-letter-5-30-12.pdf>

Below are some recommendations on the types of groups to contact. You may know many of these organizations/associations already. If not, start with one group in each category and contact them, and see if they can then help you reach other similar groups.

It is important to pitch bicycling and walking to these groups in a way they can understand and relate to. For example, for business groups, talk about the impact bicycling and walking has on the economy. For health-related organizations, talk about the physical activity benefits. Use the fact sheets and resources in the sidebar to help you craft your “pitch” to these various groups.

#### **Education Institutions**

- Schools – in particular those that participate in the Safe Routes to School program
- Parent teacher organizations such as PTA’s
- Universities – Advocacy Offices and Offices of Environmental Sustainability

#### **Business and Economic Development Groups**

- Bicycle dealers
- Local merchants near a trail site
- Local realtors
- Landscape architects
- Main Street businesses
- Local Chambers of Commerce or downtown associations
- Local Economic Development Agencies
- Tourism agencies

#### **Fact sheets: Selling the benefits of bicycling and walking to diverse audiences**

- Job-creation benefits of bicycling and walking infrastructure:  
[http://www.americabikes.org/peri\\_study](http://www.americabikes.org/peri_study)
- National business impacts of investing in bicycling and walking:  
[http://www.americabikes.org/federal\\_investments\\_in\\_biking\\_and\\_walking](http://www.americabikes.org/federal_investments_in_biking_and_walking)
- State-specific fact sheets on federal investment in bicycling and impact on businesses:  
<http://www.bikeleague.org/conferences/summit12/factsheets.php>
- Statistics on how bicycling helps the economy, health, safety and the environment:  
<http://www.bikesbelong.org/resources/stats-and-research/statistics/> and  
[http://bikesbelong.oli.us/Resources/Stats2011\\_Octuplate.pdf](http://bikesbelong.oli.us/Resources/Stats2011_Octuplate.pdf)
- How Safe Routes to School relates to health, safety, congestion and more:  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/SRTS-policy-report-fact-sheet.pdf> and  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/resourcecenter/quick-facts>

#### **Civic and Community Centers**

- Youth organizations such as YMCA
- Neighborhood community groups

### **Environmental Groups**

- Local chapters of Sierra Club and National Wildlife Foundation
- Audubon societies

### **Faith-Based Institutions**

- Churches
- Synagogues
- Other Faith-based institutions

### **Health Associations**

- Local medical groups and nurses associations
- Local chapters of cancer society
- Chronic disease directors
- Local chapters of the American Heart Association

### **Mobility and Aging Organizations**

- Area Agency on Aging
- Local chapter of AARP
- Disability groups

### **Public Health Organizations**

- State public health organizations
- Public health institutes
- State dietetic associations
- Obesity prevention groups
- Local hospitals (American Hospital Association can provide a list of local hospitals. Many hospitals have a Community Benefits Department)

### **Safety Organizations**

- Fire Department, EMS, Police Department
- Injury prevention groups like SafeKids chapters

### *Policymakers to engage in your coalition*

Policymakers influence whether or not policies and laws are passed in the state, county and city. They play a very important role in assuring resources are devoted to walking and biking programs. And, they can be powerful in influencing how other policymakers act. For example, mayors could be a group that could help encourage the state DOT to use all its available funds in Transportation Alternatives. Below are listed some examples of the types of policymakers that could be helpful to your campaign.

You may know some of these individuals already in key communities throughout your state and can engage them in your campaign directly by calling or emailing them. Other organizations or individuals you engage in your campaign may have connections with policymakers they can tap into as well. Another means may be through reaching out to “government” groups in your state. For example, there may be a state association for mayors or city councils that you can engage, that will then help you reach individual mayors and city councilors throughout the state.

Types of policymakers to engage:

- City Council Representatives
- City or county Board of Health representatives
- County Commissioners
- Metropolitan Planning Organization staff or representatives
- State legislators (Senate, Assembly, etc.), including those on key Committees with jurisdiction over transportation.
- Mayors
- Municipal Managers
- Local public officials such as Selectboard
- School Board representatives
- Recreation and Parks department heads
- Planning and zoning administrators
- *While federal lawmakers are not directly involved, if you have relationships there, you may want to reach out to their district staff to ask for support and involvement throughout the process. They may be able to help connect you with many of the other policymakers on this list.*

### *Managing the Coalition*

Managing the coalition is also a very important part of the process. A coalition is designed to bring together diverse individuals and organizations that are fighting for a common cause. With that definition in mind, coalition leaders should make sure they follow strategies and tactics for successful management of coalitions. Below are recommended steps on how to get the most, and the best from each member of the coalition.

- **Have a shared and common vision:** Make sure the members of the coalition continue to unify around the common vision. Communicate clearly your state’s campaign goals and ensure consensus, and make sure coalition members speak with one voice.
- **Effective leadership:** Keep balance and harmony within the coalition, promote openness and a participatory process, and make sure the coalition activities stay focused on the mission and vision.

- **Communicate your plan and actions with your coalition:** Make sure that your coalition members understand the plan of action you developed for your campaign (see p. 19 in the Organizing and Planning your Campaign chapter). Keep them updated regularly over email (an email distribution list or google group may help facilitate participation). Plan phone calls when discussions are necessary, and plan the meeting dates in advance and circulate an agenda beforehand. Having a regular meeting time and date can make communication easier.
- **Consider Forming a Coalition Team:** This campaign can benefit from the help of a core team of committed coalition members to help you carry out the various aspects of your campaign. For example, if a coalition member has a strong media capacity, see if you can enlist them to spearhead developing a public relations/media strategy for the campaign. Another coalition member may have strong connections with elected officials and could take the lead on getting mayors to write letters to the DOT and Governor. It helps to have clear assignments and areas of responsibilities for these team members to ensure that your campaign continues to move forward.

## Putting It All Together: Engaging Your Governor and DOT in the Campaign

Now that you have determined what your campaign's platform is in your state and have built a coalition of supportive groups, it is time to take action to influence your Governor and DOT Director (or any other key decision-makers your campaign has identified). We have outlined several key steps for your campaign below.

### *Key Campaign Activities: Letters to the DOT/Governor and Meetings*

**Step 1:** Get your coalition members to join you on a sign-on letter to the Governor and DOT Director in support of your campaign goals. We have prepared sample letters and materials to help you with this step. Please follow the links below to download the samples (in word format). They should be personalized and adapted for your state's campaign. Once you have the letters crafted, you can use the sample email text to circulate the letter to your coalition to secure sign-ons.

- Sample sign-on letter to the Governor/DOT from nonprofit groups, associations and advocates:  
[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/organizational\\_sign-on\\_letter.doc](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/organizational_sign-on_letter.doc)
- Sample email to send to coalition members to get them to sign the letter:  
[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/coalition\\_email\\_final.doc](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/coalition_email_final.doc)

**Step 2:** Ask your coalition members to circulate a sample policymaker letter to any elected officials they know—particularly local elected leaders like mayors, city councilors, school board members, etc. Try to get as many policymakers as possible to send support letters, personalized for their community, to the Governor and DOT Director.

- Sample elected officials letter:  
[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/electeds\\_letter.doc](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/electeds_letter.doc)

**Step 3:** Follow up on the sign-on letters by sending a letter to the Governor/DOT requesting an in-person meeting. Before you send the meeting request letter, you should think carefully about who else you will invite to the letter with the Governor or DOT Director (or their aides).

You should limit the number of participants to no more than five. Focus on meeting participants that have a compelling story, can offer a viewpoint that may resonate with the Governor and/or DOT director, or have the capacity to answer technical questions and provide follow-up information.

Try to get some diversity to represent your coalition – for example, someone from a trail advocacy group, a business person, a parent, and a health official, plus you. Reach out to these individuals and make sure they are willing to attend, if the meeting timing works out, and identify some dates that would work for your meeting attendees.

- Sample meeting request letter:

[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/meeting\\_request\\_letter.doc](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/meeting_request_letter.doc)

**Step 4:** Prepare for and conduct the meeting. You will need to consider who to invite to your meeting, and prepare an agenda and supportive materials. See the “Sample Agenda and Materials” section that immediately follows for our recommendations on meeting materials, agenda and talking points.

**Step 5:** Report back to Advocacy Advance. Contact anyone on the Advocacy Advance team directly (or use [info@advocacyadvance.org](mailto:info@advocacyadvance.org)) to let them know how your meeting went. Share any commitments or comments made by the Governor or DOT Director. And if you need help responding to any requests for information during the meeting, just ask the team for help!

**Step 6:** Send a thank you note after the meeting, and continue to follow up with the appropriate contacts with the DOT and Governor to ensure the state acts on what was discussed at the meeting.

- Sample thank you note:

[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/thank\\_you\\_note.doc](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/thank_you_note.doc)

### *Sample Agenda and Materials for a Meeting with the Governor or DOT Director*

As soon as you send the letter requesting a meeting, you should begin preparing for the meeting. Think carefully about how you want to present your campaign asks, what information you have to help support your asks, and who is the best messenger for each ask or perspective. Prepare an agenda in advance, produce some packets of materials to bring with you, and work with your meeting attendees in advance to come up with talking points. It is important that you agree in advance as to who will lead the meeting, what key points each participant will make, and how the meeting will hopefully flow.

Below you will find materials you can adapt, including a sample meeting agenda, ideas for materials to include in your packets, and sample talking points. As with all other materials in this toolkit, they should be adapted for your state’s specific situation.

#### **Sample Meeting Agenda**

- Introductions
- Why We’re Here – MAP-21 Changes
- Overview of Walking and Biking in [State]

- Our Ask: Fully Fund, Staff, and Implement Transportation Alternatives and spend existing funds
- MAP-21 Implementation and Next Steps

### Sample Meeting Materials

*Copies of your organization and policymaker sign-on letters on the Transportation Alternatives campaign.* Bring extra copies for meeting participants to highlight your asks and the coalition of supporters.

*Good fact sheet about bicycling and walking.* See the sidebar on p. 26 for examples of fact sheets you can either use or adapt for your state.

*Good examples of bicycling and walking projects in your state.* See p. 23 for details on how to gather this information.

*MAP-21 Analysis: A summary of the law by the America Bikes Coalition*  
[http://www.americabikes.org/map\\_21\\_analysis](http://www.americabikes.org/map_21_analysis)

*How Your State Fares: MAP-21 By the Numbers: A table showing the total percent change in funding for bicycles and pedestrians between FY 2012 (Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails Program) and FY 2013 (Transportation Alternatives). Prepared by the League of American Bicyclists.*  
[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/TA\\_simple2.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/TA_simple2.pdf)

*Funding for Metropolitan Areas and States: A table showing the allocation of Transportation Alternatives funds by population (distributed by MPO process) and statewide grant program (distributed by state DOT). Prepared by the Safe Routes to School National Partnership.*  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/state-allocations-FY13-Transportation-Alternatives.pdf>

*Current Status of SAFETEA-LU Dedicated Funds: Tables showing the current obligation rates for the three dedicated funding streams under the previous transportation law.*

- Safe Routes to School:  
<http://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/pdf/State-of-the-States-June-2012.pdf>
- Transportation Enhancements:  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_enhancements/funding/apportionments\\_obligations/app\\_ob\\_summ.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_enhancements/funding/apportionments_obligations/app_ob_summ.cfm)
- Recreational Trails Program:  
[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/funding/apportionments\\_obligations/recfunds\\_resc.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/funding/apportionments_obligations/recfunds_resc.cfm)

Other resources you might find useful are available at <http://www.advocacyadvance.org/MAP21>. We will be adding to this resource list constantly, so check back for new information.

### *Sample Talking Points for a Meeting with the Governor or DOT Director*

These talking points will help guide your conversation with your Governor and/or DOT director. They are divided into an opening statement, a set of arguments and a final ask. Please make sure to review these talking points with everyone attending the meeting. Decide ahead of time which points you want to stress, who will make each point, and which local bicycling and walking projects and stories you will cite to help support your points. \* Adapted from materials provided by America Bikes.

There are two critical pieces in making this meeting a success:

**Make the Point:** Bicycling and walking are essential to your community. The best way to showcase that is to pick two or three local examples that make that point. While there are several options listed below please pick the two or three that your group can best illustrate in this meeting.

**Make the Ask:** Ask the Governor and/or DOT director if they will support directing the entire state share of Transportation Alternatives to fully fund the program, and immediately awarding and obligating existing bicycle and pedestrian funding.

#### ***I. Opening Statement***

Thank you very much for taking the time to meet with us today to talk about bicycling and walking.

[Have everyone in your group briefly introduce themselves.]

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The federal transportation investments that support these activities boost our economy, help individuals and government agencies save money, and directly address key societal challenges such as obesity and road congestion. Twenty years of experience has shown that federal investments in bicycling and walking have resulted in valuable, cost-effective quality of life improvements. Children can safely walk or bike to school. Businesses save money on health costs. People have a choice in how they move in their community. [Add to or replace with specific examples from your state that you feel may resonate more].

MAP-21 has already significantly cut available funding for bicycling and walking in [State] by [Number, see <http://tinyurl.com/citnos2>] percent. Any additional reductions due to diversions

will significantly undermine the growing movement to make our communities friendlier for walking and biking.

We are here to ask for your support fully fund, staff and implement the Transportation Alternatives program, as well as immediately award and obligate existing bicycle and pedestrian funds.

## **II. Make the Point**

[Divide your pitch into two parts: 1) reminding the Governor and/or DOT director that bicycling and walking are an important part of the transportation system, and 2) outlining the “fully fund, staff and implement” message.]

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[For the first part, there are several arguments listed below. Please pick two or three that you believe will resonate most and include any local examples you can share.]

- **Cost-Effective:** Although 12 percent of the trips nationally are accomplished by either bicycling or walking, the federal investment in bicycling and walking infrastructure and programs is minimal—only about 1.5 percent of federal transportation spending.
- **Bicycling and Walking Boost the Economy:** [Only cite this point if you have local information on businesses or a specific project in your district]
  - Summarize and describe any that apply:
    - Bicycling businesses
      - The number of bicycle retail stores, jobs, and sales
      - Supplier/distributor businesses, jobs and sales (if applicable)
      - Bike tourism, events, or other bike businesses (if applicable)
    - A local bicycling and walking infrastructure project or network that is heavily used. Explain how these facilities, or Transportation Enhancement or Safe Route to School projects, have benefited the community and the local economy, such as:
      - businesses that benefit from proximity to the infrastructure;
      - jobs building or maintaining it;
      - increases in real estate values associated with the quality of life and convenience benefits of the infrastructure.
- **Popular:** Americans will make more than 4 billion bike trips and 42 billion walk trips this year. More bicycles will be sold than cars and trucks combined. The U.S. Census reports that bike commuting increased more than 40 percent between 2001 and 2008.
- **Practical:** Half of all trips Americans make are three miles or shorter and one-quarter are less than a mile. This is an easy distance to walk or pedal—but only if conditions are safe.

- **Addressing Safety:** 14 percent of roadway fatalities are bicyclists or pedestrians. Small investments in improving roadway safety not only make the road safer for bicyclists and pedestrians but also make drivers feel more comfortable and remove conflicts among road users.
- **Healthy:** Health concerns related to obesity and overweight costs our country \$270 billion per year in increased medical costs and loss of economic productivity. A simple solution is to build physical activity into our lives by walking and bicycling more to school, work and shops.
- **Money Saving:** People who bike or walk instead of driving save money with every two-wheel trip. Bicycling and walking save the government money, too. That's why city and small town mayors are working so hard to promote active transportation and replace single-occupancy car trips that increase road congestion and sap worker productivity due to time stuck in traffic. Biking and walking inflict minimal wear and tear on roads and bridges, and require only modest, inexpensive parking facilities. Every trip made by biking or walking instead of motor vehicle helps reduce government spending on road and parking infrastructure.

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For the second part, the main talking points are outlined below. Additional information on these points can be found in the “Understanding the Transportation Alternatives Campaign” section of the toolkit.

- **Do Not Transfer Funds Out of TA:** TA funds are divided into two pots, one of which is for statewide use. A state could transfer all of this funding to other Federal-aid highway programs, wiping out half of TA in one move. This would further decrease already dwindling federal funding and deny communities the opportunity to create safer streets for walking and biking.
- **Consider Transferring Funds Into TA:** Nationally, Transportation Alternatives funding for FY 2013 is 28 percent lower than Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails received in FY 2012. Some states will see greater losses ([http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/TA\\_simple2.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/TA_simple2.pdf)). Many states and regions have already programmed projects based on the expectation that the funding level would remain the same. In order to pay for these planned projects, states may transfer funds *into* the TA program. Transferring funds into TA would show Congress how important the program is.
- **Do Not Opt Out of Recreational Trails Program:** Trails provide important transportation connections for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially in rural areas. Maintain the Recreational Trails Program to ensure these funds are spent on trail projects, not unrelated TA project activities.

- Spend TA Funds on TA Projects: Communities and regions across the state are ready to spend this money. [Include local examples of projects on hand that only need funding to proceed.]
- Fully Staff TA: We need staff with the experience and expertise in planning and implementing TA to ensure efficient project delivery. Please retain our state's bicycle and pedestrian coordinator, the Safe Routes to School coordinator, and the Transportation Enhancements coordinator. There is a correlation between larger bicycle and pedestrian staff and higher bicycle commuting levels. [See the Advocacy Advance report to get specific numbers for your state.  
[http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/why\\_bike\\_ped\\_staff\\_april\\_2010.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/docs/why_bike_ped_staff_april_2010.pdf)]
- Fully Implement: MAP-21 is a two-year law, meaning Congress will be working on a new one in less time than that. The state must promptly schedule a call for projects. The existing system used to distribute Transportation Enhancements and SRTS funds can be used for TA.
- Fully Spend funds left over in Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancements and Recreational Trails. These programs have been critical in helping communities throughout the state build infrastructure and programs that make bicycling and walking safer. We ask that you issue a call for projects for the remaining funds this fall, so that we can utilize all these available funds.

### III. Final Ask

[It is critical to make this ask before you leave the office. As soon as the Governor and/or DOT director starts to end the meeting, please make sure to make this ask before they leave.]

**For all the reasons we have discussed here today, we urge you to fully fund, staff and implement Transportation Alternatives, and to spend any funds left in the existing bicycling and walking programs.**

- Will you support directing the entire state share of Transportation Alternatives to fully fund the program, and immediately awarding and obligating existing bicycle and pedestrian funding?
- What steps will the state be taking to move forward on Transportation Alternatives?
- Who is the best person for me to follow up with after this meeting on implementation matters?

[If their answer is vague or non-committal you can follow up with: Is there any information I can provide that will help you support continuing dedicated funding for bicycling and walking?]

## Engaging the Media in Your Campaign

By publicizing your efforts to increase your state's investments in biking and walking, you can spread public awareness, gain more support for your campaign, and highlight the importance of the issue for state decision-makers.

This chapter contains a template letter to the editor, op-ed piece, and press release to help you conduct media outreach about your campaign, if you so choose.

Every political context and media market is a bit different, and a course of action that works in one state may not be appropriate for another. If you have questions or would like to further strategize about media outreach, feel free to contact the Advocacy Advance team.

### *Submitting op-eds and letters to the editor*

After assembling and sending sign-on letters to your Governor, DOT director, or other key decision-makers, you may want to publicize your work for greater impact. Writing letters to the editor and opinion articles can help build pressure on decision-makers and showcase opportunities for biking and walking in your state.

Below, you'll find a template op-ed and letter; feel free to adapt them for your campaign.

Here are a few tips:

- **Stick to the rules.** Each newspaper has its own length limits and technical requirements for letters and op-ed pieces. Check with your local paper to learn their requirements.
- **Submit to your highest priority publication first.** Most newspapers will not print op-ed pieces that have appeared elsewhere, so don't double or triple submit. Send to the largest paper first. If your first choice doesn't bite, move down your list.
- **Choose a high-profile person for the byline.** Op-ed articles and letters are more likely to be published if its author is well known or holds a prestigious title.
- **Tie in stories that are relevant to your state.** Customize this template to fit the local context. If there was a recent high-profile traffic fatality that attracted a lot of media coverage, tie it in.
- **Find state-specific numbers.** Use the America Bikes state resources pages ([http://www.americabikes.org/state\\_data\\_index](http://www.americabikes.org/state_data_index)) to find biking and walking stats for your state. If any of these numbers stands out, be sure to include them.

### Sample Op-Ed

#### **Under New Law, [State] Has a Choice: Improve Biking & Walking**

[Lead with a short, 3-sentence personal story about someone biking or walking for transportation. Personal stories tend to get picked up more.]

In [State], more and more people, like [name of person in personal story], are realizing the benefits of riding a bicycle for transportation, exercise, and fun. As Governor [Name] and the [State] Department of Transportation work to implement the new transportation law that Congress recently passed, it is imperative that our state officials utilize this opportunity to make streets safer and more accessible for people like [person].

Sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways help turn downtowns into destinations, as local businesses benefit from increased foot traffic. As families are faced with higher gas prices, biking and walking offer economic transportation choices, too. And, by replacing car trips with biking and walking, adults and children increase their everyday physical activity, reducing the obesity crisis across America.

Put simply: When more people choose to travel by bicycle or on foot, cities and towns see improved health, cleaner air, safer streets, and less congestion.

[If you have local information on business or a specific project in your state] Encouraging more biking and walking helps boost [State] businesses. There are [xx] bicycle retail stores in our state, collectively employing [xxx] people. [More details: on bike tourism, supplier / distributor businesses, bike events that bring tourism...]

[Details about a local bicycling / walking infrastructure project that is heavily used and successful; how these facilities have benefitted the community and local economy]

Studies have shown that more people bike and walk when there is safe infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians. Nationally, bicyclists and pedestrians make up 14 percent of roadway fatalities — deaths that, for the most part, could have been easily prevented with safer street design. Small, inexpensive improvements to our streets keep the most vulnerable road users safe, including children and seniors. [Add state fatality data, other safety data, or relevant news stories, if applicable]

Even people who never ride a bicycle benefit when fellow citizens choose to walk and bike. Trips taken by bicycle or on foot reduce congestion, making traffic move more smoothly for those who drive. Fewer cars on the roads means less exhaust and pollution, too, so everyone breathes a little easier. Because biking and walking inflict minimal wear and tear on roads and bridges, taxpayers save money on road maintenance and repair costs when more people choose to bike and walk.

The transportation bill that Congress passed this summer includes new ways for states and communities to access funding for biking and walking. Faced with this new federal legislation,

it's up to [State] leaders to utilize these funds effectively to make [State] streets safer and more accessible for biking and walking.

A broad coalition of organizations, including [3 – 5 most high-profile groups], have signed letters encouraging Governor [Name] and the [State] Department of Transportation to fully utilize opportunities in the new transportation bill for better biking and walking in [State]. Going forward, we hope that [State] continues its commitment to providing safe, healthy streets for all citizens.

[Close with a reference to the personal story in the beginning.]

### Sample Letter to the Editor

To the editor:

In [State], more and more people are realizing the benefits of riding a bicycle for transportation, exercise, and fun.

Sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways help turn downtowns into destinations, as local businesses benefit from increased foot traffic. As families are faced with higher gas prices, biking and walking offer economic transportation choices, too. And, by replacing car trips with biking and walking, adults and children increase their everyday physical activity, reducing the obesity crisis across America.

Put simply: when more people choose to travel by bicycle or on foot, cities and towns see improved health, cleaner air, safer streets, and less congestion.

[Any compelling state-specific stories]

The transportation bill that Congress recently passed includes new ways for states and communities to access funding for biking and walking. A broad coalition of organizations, including [3 – 5 most high-profile groups], have signed letters encouraging Governor [Name] and the [State] Department of Transportation to fully utilize opportunities in the new transportation bill for better biking and walking in [State].

[Name]

[City, State]

### *Sending out a press release*

Sending out a press release about your letters to state officials can help drum up coverage about your campaign. Feel free to adapt the sample press release in this section to publicize your campaign.

Tips for sending out a press release:

- **Build a press list.** List press outlets—newspapers, blogs, radio stations, and TV stations—in your state. For each of the outlets you’d like to target, compile a list of relevant reporters. Who has covered biking and walking or transportation issues in the past? Keep their email addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers on hand.
- **Send at a reasonable time.** Reporters are most likely to see your press release mid-morning during the week. Releases sent at 4:55 PM on a Friday will likely drown in inboxes.
- **Make your pitch stand out.** When personalizing your press release, frame your release to grab reporters’ attention. For more details, see the press release tips from Alliance for Biking Walking at [http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site\\_images/content/Breaking\\_News\\_Press\\_Releases\\_Made\\_Easy\\_Carolyn\\_Szczepanski\\_7.22.2011\\_.pdf](http://www.advocacyadvance.org/site_images/content/Breaking_News_Press_Releases_Made_Easy_Carolyn_Szczepanski_7.22.2011_.pdf).
- **List a press contact on your press release and make sure they are prepared.** When reporters pick up the phone, the person listed as the press contact on the release should be available and primed with talking points.
- **Keep track of your press hits.** Set up a Google alert for your organization’s name or for key terms in your press release so that you know when a story arises.
- **Send thank-you notes.** When a reporter covers your issue, send a note to thank them for their story.

### Template Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**

[First and last name]

[Organization]

[Phone number]

[Email address]

### **In Wake of New Transportation Law, Groups Urge [State] to Invest in Biking & Walking**

*Governor [Name] and [State] Department of Transportation have opportunity to make streets safer, more accessible for biking and walking*

[City, State — Month, Day, 2012] — [Short, 3-sentence compelling personal story about someone biking for transportation. Or, if possible, relate to a story that’s currently in the news or a recent event that reflects need for safety.]

In [State], more and more people, like [name of person in personal story], are realizing the benefits of riding a bicycle for transportation, exercise, and fun.

More than xx organizations, including [2 to 3 most high-profile groups], united today to urge Governor [Name] and [State] Department of Transportation officials to fully fund biking and walking projects under the new federal transportation law.

The transportation law that Congress recently passed includes new ways for states and communities to access funding for biking and walking infrastructure such as sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and bike paths. As Governor [Name] and the [State] Department of Transportation work to implement the new law, it is imperative that state officials utilize this opportunity to make streets safer and more accessible for people like [person in personal story, if applicable].

[Quote from a leader in one of the organizations: touch on business benefits of biking & walking, how biking and walking helps ease family budgets, increasing physical activity, a successful local facility, need for safer streets, etc.]

[Quote from a leader in another organization: touch on business benefits of biking & walking, how biking and walking helps ease family budgets, increasing physical activity, a successful local facility, need for safer streets, etc.]

### **About [your organization]**

[Brief description of your organization: who you are and what you do]

### *Talking Points for Interaction with a Reporter*

If you have an interview with a reporter about your campaign, feel free to adapt the following talking points to discuss your campaign.

#### **Biking and walking mean business.**

- Biking and walking infrastructure like sidewalks, crosswalks, and bikeways help turn downtowns into destinations. When more people walk and bike, local businesses benefit from increased foot traffic.
- There are [xx] bicycle retail stores in our state. Those businesses together sustain [xxx] jobs.
- [Examples of bike tourism, supplier / distributor businesses, bike events that bring tourism in your state]
- [Examples of heavily used local biking / walking infrastructure or network and how they benefit the community and economy (businesses that benefit from proximity, jobs created in construction and maintenance, increases in real estate value)]

#### **Biking and walking saves people money.**

- As families are faced with higher gas prices, biking and walking offer economic transportation choices.
- Because biking and walking inflict minimal wear and tear on roads and bridges, taxpayers save money on road maintenance and repair costs when more people choose to bike and walk.

**Biking and walking are growing in popularity.**

- Americans will make more than 4 billion bike trips and 42 billion trips on foot this year.
- More bicycles will be sold this year than cars and trucks combined.
- Bike commuting increased more than 40 percent between 2001 and 2008.

**Biking and walking are practical transportation options if conditions are safe.**

- Half of all trips we make are three miles or shorter, and one-quarter are less than a mile. Taking such trips by bicycle or on foot saves money and burns calories, but people need the right street conditions to travel safely.

**Biking and walking infrastructure saves lives.**

- Bicyclists and pedestrians make up [xx] percent of roadway fatalities in [State] and 14 percent of roadway fatalities nationally.
- For the most part, these deaths could have been easily prevented with safer street design.
- Better biking and walking infrastructure puts drivers at ease, too. Well-designed facilities remove conflicts among road users in addition to keeping people safe.

**More biking and walking means healthier people.**

- Incorporating biking and walking for transportation into our everyday lives is a great way to increase daily physical activity.
- Communities with more biking and walking infrastructure see lower rates of obesity and obesity-related health problems.
- Obesity-related health issues cost our country \$270 billion per year in medical costs and loss of economic activity.

*Getting More Coverage: Show-Me Events*

The best way to get more media coverage is to create a newsworthy event.

Inviting your target or secondary target to a biking and walking event is a great way to show state officials why these issues matter. Arranging your target's participation in a public, fun event can make them look good and help them connect with biking and walking in your area.

America Bikes has a tool kit on planning "show Congress" events that can easily be adapted to state officials. If you're interested in arranging an event, feel free to visit

[http://www.americabikes.org/how\\_to\\_plan\\_show\\_congress\\_events](http://www.americabikes.org/how_to_plan_show_congress_events) to access the tool kit.

## Appendix: MAP-21 Language

### Transportation Alternatives Program Eligible Projects

(b) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—A State may obligate the funds reserved under this section for any of the following projects or activities:

- (1) Transportation alternatives, as defined in section 101.
- (2) The recreational trails program under section 206.
- (3) The safe routes to school program under section 1404 of the SAFETEA-LU (23 U.S.C. 402 note; Public Law 109–59).
- (4) Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

### Transportation alternatives activities

(29) TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES.—The term ‘transportation alternatives’ means any of the following activities when carried out as part of any program or project authorized or funded under this title, or as an independent program or project related to surface transportation:

(A) Construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

(B) Construction, planning, and design of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.

(C) Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other nonmotorized transportation users.

(D) Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.

(E) Community improvement activities, including—

- (i) inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
- (ii) historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
- (iii) vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and

(iv) archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.

(F) Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to—

- (i) address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133(b)(11), 328(a), and 329; or

(ii) reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

### **“Coburn opt-out”**

(d) FLEXIBILITY OF EXCESS RESERVED FUNDING.—Beginning in the second fiscal year after the date of enactment of the MAP-21, if on August 1 of that fiscal year the unobligated balance of available funds reserved by a State under this section exceeds 100 percent of such reserved amount in such fiscal year, the State may thereafter obligate the amount of excess funds for any activity—

- (1) that is eligible to receive funding under this section; or
- (2) for which the Secretary has approved the obligation of funds for any State under section 149.

### **Recreational Trails opt out**

(f) CONTINUATION OF CERTAIN RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROJECTS.—Each State shall—

- (1) obligate an amount of funds reserved under this section equal to the amount of the funds apportioned to the State for fiscal year 2009 under section 104(h)(2) for projects relating to recreational trails under section 206;
- (2) return 1 percent of those funds to the Secretary for the administration of that program; and
- (3) comply with the provisions of the administration of the recreational trails program under section 206, including the use of apportioned funds described under subsection (d)(3)(A) of that section.

(g) STATE FLEXIBILITY.—A State may opt out of the recreational trails program under subsection (f) if the Governor of the State notifies the Secretary not later than 30 days prior to apportionments being made for any fiscal year.