



Houston, TX, Funding Profile¹

Limited funding is often cited as a reason for slow progress in the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In fact, funding is the principal obstacle to all transportation infrastructure projects. You might be surprised to learn, however, that bicycle and pedestrian projects are broadly eligible for funding from almost all the major federal-aid highway, transit, safety, and other programs. This guide focuses on traditional funding sources administered by federal and state governments – especially the Surface Transportation Program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, the Highway Safety Improvement Program, and the State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program – and their application in the Houston region.

Federal funds for transportation are made available to state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) through Congressional authorizing legislation that establishes or continues a federal program or agency and establishes the amount of money estimated to be available to states and transit operators. Congress generally reauthorizes federal surface transportation programs over multiple years.² The distribution of program funds among states and metropolitan areas is based on an apportionment formula. Typically, the state is the designated recipient for federal highway and transit funds. In large urbanized areas transit funds flow directly to designated recipients. Only certain projects and activities are eligible to receive federal transportation funding, but in general bicycling and walking transportation projects are eligible. Some federal programs, such as the Transportation Enhancement Program and Safe Routes to School, encourage the development of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations that meet specific programming criteria to be eligible for funding consideration. For other program, bicycling and walking projects compete against road projects. Most federal transportation programs require a non-federal match of at least 20 percent.

¹ Many thanks to the Texas Department of Transportation and the Houston-Galveston Area Council for their significant contribution to the funding profile.

² SAFETEA-LU, signed into law in 2005, expired in 2009. Since that time, transportation has been funded by continuing resolution at 2009 levels.

Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

About Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements may be incorporated into the design of any federal-aid highway, including those on the National Highway System (NHS), bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intra-city and inter-city bus terminals and facilities. STP funds may be used for carpool projects, fringe and corridor parking facilities and programs, bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways, and the modification of public sidewalks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. A state agency or local government typically must contribute 20 percent of the capital cost for highway and transit projects. Generally, STP funds may not be used for roads functionally classified as local or rural minor collectors, but there is an exception for bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways.³ The project sponsor must demonstrate the transportation benefits associated with proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvements to be considered for federal funding.

About Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds are sub-allocated to air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas within a state.⁴ Since 1991, bicycle and pedestrian activities have been eligible for CMAQ funding consideration. Specifically, eligible activities include:

- Constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities (paths, bike racks, support facilities, etc.) that are not exclusively recreational and that reduce vehicle trips
- Non-construction outreach related to bicycle safety
- Establishing and funding state bicycle/pedestrian coordinator positions for promoting and facilitating non-motorized transportation modes through public education, safety programs, etc. (Limited to one full-time position per state).

Who makes funding decisions/selects projects?

In Texas, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) administers STP funds. TxDOT divides federal allocations into 12 program categories for roadway maintenance and construction as established by the Texas Transportation Commission. Of the 12 program categories, the state sub-allocates federal funds for two categories, CMAQ and Metropolitan Mobility and Rehabilitation (STP-MM) to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) as required by the authorizing legislation.⁵ MPOs are responsible for developing project selection policies, criteria and processes for CMAQ and STP-MM funds within their

³§ 133. STP: http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscode_sec_23_00000133----000-.html

⁴ There are 3 ozone non-attainment areas in Texas. The Houston-Galveston-Brazoria nonattainment area encompasses Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller counties.

⁵ CMAQ funds are sub-allocated solely to air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas within the state.

jurisdictions. The Texas Transportation Commission is responsible for the evaluation and selection of projects for all other funding categories, though this process often requires input from MPOs.

CMAQ and STP-MM sub-allocations to the Houston region vary each year based upon federal appropriations. Over the past five years, the region's sub-allocations have varied considerably, with CMAQ averaging \$55,340,000 million annually and STP-MM averaging \$57,420,000 annually.

Which entity makes project selection decisions in the Houston region?

In the greater Houston region, the policy making body for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the Transportation Policy Council (TPC). The TAC is responsible for establishing policies, processes and selection criteria for CMAQ and STP-MM funds. The TPC also has input in TxDOT's Transportation Enhancements project selection process.

The TPC approves the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the 4-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). All projects selected for federal funding must be included in the MPO's RTP and TIP and will require execution of an agreement with TxDOT for project oversight and implementation.

What is the project selection process for the Houston region?

The project selection process is multi-layered, involving several different committees. The TPC delegates the development of the project selection process to its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC in turn has established several subcommittees that provide input in the evaluation and selection of projects. The most directly involved of those committees is the TIP subcommittee. The TIP subcommittee makes recommendations regarding timelines, criteria, scoring and selection of projects to the TAC. The TIP subcommittee and the TAC often turn to other subcommittees, such as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee and the Regional Transit Coordination Subcommittee, for input in making recommendations. Ultimately, the TPC must approve all project selections and corresponding funding for projects.

What does the project application look like?

Transportation funding applications may be program specific and often require a brief description of the project, its anticipated transportation benefits, total estimated project cost and the percentage of federal funding requested. To receive federal transportation funding, a bicycle and/or pedestrian project must demonstrate a direct relationship to the surface transportation and the project cannot be intended for recreational use only. The project nominator must demonstrate transportation benefits such as providing congestion relief, transportation alternatives for low-income populations, or significant safety benefits. The local entity will be required to provide matching funds.

How are projects scored?

Projects are scored using quantitative and qualitative criteria. The quantitative measures are based on results from the region's travel demand model administered by the MPO. Qualitative measures are developed by staff, vetted by the appropriate committees and approved by the TPC as part of the project selection process. The TAC is currently working with the various TAC subcommittees on revising and improving the scoring system and criteria. Qualitative assessments are subjective and intended to balance travel demand results with regional priorities and project benefits that cannot be modeled.

Do good bike/ped projects score well?

In the Houston region, bicycle and pedestrian projects often compete with roadway and transit projects for CMAQ and STP-MM funds. CMAQ funding requires a demonstration of emissions reductions. For bicycle and pedestrian projects, emissions reductions are calculated by assuming that a new or improved bicycle or pedestrian route will reduce single-occupancy vehicles from a parallel roadway. These assumptions are based upon the latest national research available to transportation network modelers. Bicycle and pedestrian projects are sometimes funded with STP-MM funds if they are developed in conjunction with an approved roadway improvement or if they score well in emissions reductions but there is insufficient CMAQ funding for the project.

Both funding scenarios put bicycle and pedestrian projects at a disadvantage compared to roadway or transit improvements simply because they do not always score as well current formulas for emissions reduction or congestion reduction benefits as other types of roadway improvements, such as, high occupancy vehicle lanes, traffic signalization and synchronization, and intersection redesigns.

Who rates the applications?

Project applications are evaluated by MPO staff using the criteria and scoring mechanisms approved by the TPC. The list(s) of program eligible projects are reviewed by the appropriate subcommittees to the TAC. Projects and project rankings are often reevaluated several times based upon input from the subcommittees, MPO staff, and the public involvement process. The TAC is ultimately responsible for making final project selection recommendations to the TPC.

What is the timeline for CMAQ and STP-MM project selection?

A Call for Projects is typically conducted every other year by the MPO in conjunction with the development of a new 4-year TIP. The MPO issues a call to the state and local governments for projects eligible for CMAQ and STP-MM funding.

Who administers the CMAQ and STP-MM projects?

The MPO administers the CMAQ and STP-MM programs, in conjunction with TxDOT. Projects must meet state and federal guidelines and local governments will be required to execute an advance funding agreement with TxDOT to design and construct federally funded bicycle and pedestrian projects with oversight by TxDOT.



Highway Safety Improvement Program

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) established the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) as a core federal-aid program. The overall purpose of the program is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through the implementation of infrastructure-related highway safety improvements. Funds may be used for projects on any public road or publicly-owned bicycle and pedestrian pathway or trail. Each state must have a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) to be eligible to use up to 10 percent of its HSIP funds for other safety projects including education, enforcement and emergency medical services. It must also certify that it has met its railway-highway crossing and infrastructure safety needs.

The Texas HSIP is made up of two safety construction programs, the Hazard Elimination Safety (HES) and the High Risk Rural Roads (HRRR) programs. The HES program focuses on construction and operational improvements for locations both on and off the state highway system (excluding interstate highways). The HRRR program focuses on construction and operational improvements on high-risk rural roads. High-risk rural roads are paved roadways functionally classified as rural major or minor collectors, or rural local roads with a fatal and incapacitating injury crash rate above the statewide average for those functional classes of roadways.

TxDOT's Traffic Operations Division (TRF) administers both the HES and HRRR programs. They are part of the TxDOT Unified Transportation Program (Category 8).

Are bicycle and pedestrian safety identified as emphasis areas in Texas's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)?

Yes. The Texas SHSP identifies bicyclists and pedestrians as roadway system users that require special protections to enhance roadway safety. The SHSP identifies countermeasures for these users that include: public information campaigns to increase awareness of bicyclists and pedestrians; the construction of sidewalks; local ordinances for helmet usage; and improved signals, signs and crosswalk markings at intersections. The SHSP also recommends continued funding support for a comprehensive Safe Routes to Schools program in Texas.

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

This is difficult to determine. HSIP funds are allocated to a variety of different roadway safety improvements that may indirectly reduce conflicts between motorists and bicyclists and pedestrians. However, according to the "Texas Strategic Highway Safety Plan: A Report of Progress for 2009," crash reduction goals have not been achieved in either emphasis area. For the bicycle emphasis area, the report states that "countermeasures should continue at a determined level." It also recommends a revision in the plan's recommendations to include a 10 percent reduction in pedestrian fatalities.⁶

⁶ http://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/library/pubs/gov/final_shsp_2009.pdf

What are the project selection criteria?

Funding of projects under the Texas HSIP is focused on areas identified as having the greatest need in the most current Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

What is the project selection process?

TxDOT's Traffic Operations Division requests proposed highway safety projects from the 25 TxDOT Districts through a statewide program call as funds are available. Questions regarding the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) should be addressed to TxDOT's Traffic Operations Division.

Who makes the project selections?

The Texas Transportation Commission approves all HSIP project funding.



(Photos: H-GAC)

Section 402 – State and Community Highway Safety Grants

The State and Community Highway Safety Grant Program, commonly referred to as Section 402, provides grants to assist states and communities in the development and implementation of highway safety programs designed to reduce traffic crashes, deaths, injuries and property damage. Funds are distributed to all states according to a formula, based 75 percent on road miles and 25 percent on population. A minimum of 40 percent of a state's 402 funds must be expended by local governments or be used for the benefit of local governments. For fiscal years 2006 through 2011, Texas received authorization of \$15 to \$17 million annually for the Section 402 program.

What types of projects are eligible for Section 402 funding?

Section 402 funds can be spent in nine national priority areas, including pedestrian and bicycle safety and non-construction aspects of roadway safety.

What is the selection process in Texas?

State agencies and other organizations interested in traffic safety issues submit project proposals when requested by TxDOT's Traffic Operations Division. These project proposals constitute the organizations' traffic safety intentions and are submitted for every program area, depending on the interests of the particular organization.

The TxDOT Traffic Operations Division - Traffic Safety Section (TRF-TS) uses these highway safety project proposals in the development of the State Highway Safety Performance Plan (HSPP). Proposals must be submitted through the TxDOT Traffic Safety Electronic Grants Management System (eGrants) by the announced deadline.

Proposals must include the most current data available to identify a traffic safety problem, a workable solution linked to the identified problem, a detailed action plan and budget that demonstrates an understanding of the various issues to be resolved, and a reasonable approach to resolving the identified problem(s). Projects must identify the problem and propose a logical solution that will result in a positive impact to traffic operations.

Who makes the selection decisions?

The Texas Transportation Commission approves projects for Section 402 funding.

Which agency administers the program?

The program is jointly administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) at the federal level and by TxDOT's Traffic Operations Division at a state level.

Use of Federal-Aid Transportation Funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects, 2006 – 2010

	National	Texas	Houston
Surface Transportation Program (STP) -- General			
Total STP spending ('09-'10)	\$17,861,846,461	\$2,076,482,837	\$38,267,051
Annual average	\$8,930,923,230	\$1,038,241,419	\$19,133,526
Total STP to bike/ped ('09-'10)	\$154,284,048	\$13,520,787	\$0*
Annual average	\$77,142,024	\$6,760,393	\$0*
Bike/ped spending per capita (average annual)	\$0.25	\$0.27	\$0*
Percent of total funding to bike/ped ('09-'10)	0.86%	0.65%	0%*
Surface Transportation Program (STP) -- Transportation Enhancements (TE)			
Total TE spending ('06-'10)	\$2,981,592,910	\$188,786,867	\$247,979,048
Annual average	\$53,055,649	\$3,826,640	\$49,595,810
Total TE spent on bike ped ('06-'10)	\$1,326,391,230	\$95,665,998	\$18,007,664
Annual average	\$265,278,246	\$19,133,200	\$3,601,533
Bike/ped spending per capita (average annual)	\$0.86	\$0.77	\$1.59
Percent of total TE spending to bike/ped ('06-'10)	44.49%	50.67%	7.26%
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)			
CMAQ spending ('06-'10)	\$5,545,176,299	\$533,069,630	\$97,630,449
Annual average	\$1,109,035,260	\$106,613,926	\$19,526,090
Total CMAQ spent on bike/ped projects ('06-'10)	\$332,002,824	\$11,525,503	\$3,869,173
Annual average	\$66,400,565	\$2,305,101	\$773,835
Bike/ped spending per capita (average annual)	\$0.22	\$0.09	\$0.34
Percent of total CMAQ funding to bike/ped ('06-'10)	5.99%	2.16%	3.96%
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)			
Total HSIP spending ('06-'10)	\$4,806,519,148	\$483,166,393	\$0*
Annual average	\$961,303,830	\$96,633,279	\$0*
Total HSIP to bike/ped ('06-'10)	\$19,416,775	\$0*	\$0*
Annual average	\$3,883,355	\$0*	\$0*
Bike/ped spending per capita (average annual)	\$0.01	\$0*	\$0*
Percent of total HSIP funding to bike/ped ('06-'10)	0.4%	\$0*	\$0*
All Federal-Aid Transportation Funding			
Total spending ('06-'10)	\$210,556,109,536	\$16,640,426,584	\$1,148,904,351
Annual average	\$42,111,221,907	\$3,328,085,317	\$229,780,870
Total to bike/ped ('06-'10)	\$3,327,394,455	\$191,242,751	\$24,355,909
Annual average	\$665,478,890.97	\$38,248,550	\$4,871,182
Bike/ped spending per capita (average annual)	\$2.17	\$1.54	\$2.15
Percent of total spending to bike/ped ('06-'10)	1.58%	1.15%	2.12%

Source: FHWA Financial Management Information Systems (FMIS)

***Some projects are not coded as bicycle and pedestrian despite benefits to those modes, therefore they are not captured here.**

Additional Programs

Transportation Enhancements (TE) Program

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program offers funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through 12 eligible TE activities related to surface transportation. Categories include funding opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. TE projects must relate to surface transportation and must qualify under one or more of the eligible categories. Projects must go above and beyond standard roadway improvements regularly performed by TxDOT. The nominating entity must exercise jurisdiction over the geographic area in which the project is located and be willing to commit to the recommendation, implementation, development, construction, maintenance, and financing of the project. The definition of “Nominating Entity” has been expanded to include all political subdivisions eligible to receive funds from the Federal Highway Administration. Projects must have an eligible nominator. The federal funds provided by this program are on a cost reimbursement basis (up to 80% of allowable costs). The local entity will be required to provide a 20% cash match (in-kind donations will no longer be considered part of the local funding match). The Federal funding allocated to a TE project is limited to the amount approved by the Texas Transportation Commission. The local entity is responsible for cost overruns.

What types of bike/ped projects are eligible for TE funding?

The construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the provision of pedestrian and bicycle safety and education activities, and the conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails are among some of the eligible activities.⁷

What is the selection process?

Local entities nominate TE projects through TxDOT’s application process. The Texas Transportation Commission (the Commission) will allocate one-half of the TE funds to metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) operating in transportation management areas. The state allocates TE funds for local projects through a competitive statewide process. TxDOT staff and the Transportation Enhancement Project Evaluation Committee (TEPEC) will evaluate eligible projects not selected by MPOs.

The TEPEC Committee is comprised of the executive directors or designee of the Texas Department of Transportation; the Texas General Land Office, the Economic Development and Tourism Division of the Governor, the Texas Historical Commission, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality. TE project nominations will undergo technical reviews to assess the project’s conformity with technical standards established by applicable laws, regulations, and accepted professional practice. The reviews will also consider the feasibility and appropriateness of the

⁷ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/>

scope of work, including review of the project's itemized cost estimate. These evaluations and recommendations are provided to the Commission for selection consideration. The TE Program operates under the rules adopted and revised by the Commission on November 17, 2011, and may be found in Title 43 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§11.200-11.221.

What does the application look like?

When TxDOT announces a Call for TE Project Nominations, it posts relevant information, including a new Program Guide and an application package, on TxDOT's TE website.

The information provided by TxDOT for the last TE Call for Projects is available for review at the following web address: <http://www.txdot.gov/business/governments/te.htm>

It is strongly recommended that local entities begin developing their TE project proposal in advance of TxDOT's TE Call for Project Nominations. Local entities may contact TxDOT's District TE Coordinator to better understand the application process and for assistance in developing their TE nomination.

When are applications accepted?

There is no set schedule. A Call for TE Project Nominations will be at the discretion of the Texas Transportation Commission.

Who approves project selections?

Project funding must be approved by the Texas Transportation Commission. Projects located within an MPO boundary must have the concurrence of the MPO.

Safe Routes to School

The Safe Routes to School Program was established to enable and encourage primary and middle school children to walk or bicycle to school. The objective is to improve the quality of children's lives and support national health objectives by reducing traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. Safety funds apportioned under the Safe Routes to School Program are to be used for infrastructure-related projects including the planning, design and construction of projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school and non-infrastructure projects to encourage walking and bicycling to school.

What types of projects are eligible for funding consideration?

Infrastructure related improvements include the following work types: sidewalk improvements; traffic calming and speed reduction improvements, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements; on-street bicycle facilities; off-street bicycle and pedestrian; secure bike parking; and, traffic diversion improvements. All infrastructure improvements must be within the vicinity of qualifying schools (approximately 2 miles). Such projects may be carried out on any public road or any bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail in the vicinity of qualifying schools. Non- infrastructure related improvements include: public awareness campaigns and outreach to press and community leaders; traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools; student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and environment; and training volunteers and managers of safe routes to school programs.

Who selects SRTS projects?

The TxDOT Safe Routes to School Committee and/or an advisory committee appointed by the Texas Transportation Commission evaluate the Safe Routes to School Program projects and make recommendations to the Texas Transportation Commission. The Commission selects and approves all projects for this category. Districts/Divisions receive program authority for the projects selected for inclusion in the Safe Routes to School Program.

For more information:

http://www.dot.state.tx.us/safety/safe_routes/default.htm

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. Projects funded by the RTP are not necessarily ineligible for other federal-aid highway funds (for example for a second or subsequent phase of a project) and other federal-aid highway funds may be used to make up the matching fund requirements for RTP projects. States may make grants to private organizations or to any government entity.

What types of projects are eligible for RTP funding?

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds for pedestrian and bicycle projects that are primarily for recreational purposes, rather than for transportation. RTP funds may be used for:

- maintenance and restoration of existing trails
- development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages
- purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment
- construction of new trails (with restrictions for new trails on federal lands)
- acquisition of easements or property for trails
- assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance
- operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection

The RTP may not be used to improve roads for general passenger vehicle use or to provide shoulders or sidewalks along roads.

What is the project selection process?

Funding provided by this program is on a cost reimbursement basis. Project sponsors must initiate their approved projects with their own funds and be reimbursed up to 80 percent of allowable costs after submitting documentation of expenses. Individual trail grants can range from \$4,000 (\$5,000 total project cost) to \$200,000 (\$250,000 total project cost). The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department authorizes funding for selected projects based on the recommendations of the Texas Trails Advisory Board, which is made up of both motorized and non-motorized trail users.

Who administers the program?

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department administers the National Recreational Trails Fund in Texas under the approval of the FHWA.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/grants/>

Transportation Community and Systems Preservation Program (TCSP)

The Transportation Community and Systems Preservation Program (TCSP) Program is intended to address the relationships among transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices and identify private sector-based initiatives to improve those relationships. States, MPOs, local governments, and tribal governments are eligible for discretionary grants to carry out eligible projects to integrate transportation, community, and system preservation plans and practices.⁸

Are bicycle and pedestrian projects eligible for funding?

Eligibility is broadly defined as a project eligible for assistance under Title 23 or Chapter 53 of Title 49, U.S.C, or any other activity the Secretary of Transportation determines to be appropriate to implement transit-oriented development plans, traffic calming measures, or other coordinated TCSP practices. Bicycling, walking, and traffic calming projects are eligible activities and may factor as an integral part of many proposed projects that address larger land use and transportation issues.

What is the project selection process?

The Secretary of Transportation makes grants based on applications from states, and tribal, regional, and local governments, with priority consideration given to applicants that:

- have instituted coordinated preservation or development plans that promote cost-effective investment and private sector strategies
- have instituted other TCSP policies such as those addressing high-growth areas, urban growth boundaries, "green corridors" programs that provide access to major highway corridors for controlled growth areas
- address environmental mitigation, and encourage private sector involvement.

Who administers the program?

The annual grant program is administered by the FHWA, in partnership with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Environmental Protection Agency.

For a listing of TCSP funded projects, visit:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/grantaward.cfm>

⁸ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/>

Federal Transit Programs

Bicycle and pedestrian projects are broadly eligible for funding under most federal transit programs. Transit agencies are encouraged to include facilities and access for bicycles and pedestrians in the design of new transit systems. The purchase of new buses can specify the attachment of bicycle racks, new rolling stock can be ordered to accommodate bicycles on-board, and passenger facilities can be designed to include safe pedestrian access, secure bicycle parking, and convenient access.

Urbanized Area Formula Program

The Urbanized Area Formula Funding program provides funding to urbanized areas and to states for transit capital and operating assistance in urbanized areas and for transportation related planning. An urbanized area is an incorporated area with a population of 50,000 or more.

Urbanized Area Formula Grants Transportation Enhancements Set-aside

In areas with population over 200,000, Federal law requires that transit operators set aside 1 percent of their Urbanized Area Formula funds for 9 specific Transit Enhancement activities. These include improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access, bicycle storage facilities, and installing equipment to transport bicycles on mass transportation vehicles.

What is the project selection process?

Projects are selected by transit providers in urbanized areas greater than 200,000 and by transit operators and the state in areas with populations between 50,000 and 199,999. However, their selections are informed by public opinion and needs are identified through a planning process that includes input from local governments.

Who administers the program?

The Federal Transit Administration, public transit providers and the state.

Job Access Reverse Commute Program

The Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program provides competitive grants to local governments and non-profit organizations to develop transportation services that connect welfare recipients and low-income persons to employment and support services. Programs, which must be approved by a transit agency, may include activities that encourage bicycling. Project selection is made by states in communities under 200,000 and by MPOs in urban areas with population of more than 200,000.

For more information, visit: http://www.txdot.gov/business/governments/grants/public_transportation.htm

General Questions

Who owns the majority of the roads?

The majority of Texas roadways are owned and maintained by county and municipal governments. Out of roughly 650,000 lane miles, the state owns and maintains an “on-system” network of approximately 153,000 lane miles.

What type of projects are bicycle and pedestrian projects competing against?

The types of projects that compete against one another largely depend on the funding source. For example, in the Safe Routes to Schools program, bicycle and pedestrian projects compete against similar projects. In the CMAQ program, bicycle and pedestrian projects often compete against other traffic management projects. These include intersection redesign, signal timing and synchronization, construction of roundabouts, etc. They also compete against travel demand management projects such as carpooling and vanpooling. When competing for TE funding, bicycle and pedestrian projects may compete against a historic rail depot renovation or scenic landscaping along a roadway.

What are barriers to funding bicycle and pedestrian projects in Texas?

Transportation projects are typically evaluated on a per project basis that is predicated on reduction in travel delay. When compared to a variety of roadway improvements, the benefits of individual bicycle and pedestrian facilities are difficult to quantify in a way that makes them consistently competitive. Federal guidance allows a systems-level approach when evaluating new or enhanced transit system segments. A similar, more comprehensive, approach that evaluates the benefits of an interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to the larger transportation system is called for.



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Documents and Resources

Safety plans:

<http://www.txdot.gov/safety/>

ftp://ftp.dot.state.tx.us/pub/txdot-info/library/pubs/gov/final_shsp_2009.pdf

CMAQ guidance:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/policy_and_guidance/cmaq08gm.cfm

TxDOT Design Manual:

http://onlinemanuals.txdot.gov/txdotmanuals/rdw/safety_enhancements.htm

2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program for the Houston region:

<http://www.h-gac.com/taq/tip/default.aspx>

2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update for the Houston region:

<http://www.h-gac.com/taq/plan/default.aspx>

H-GAC bikeway planning:

<http://www.h-gac.com/community/publications.aspx>

H-GAC Pedestrian-Bicyclist Planning Resources:

<http://www.h-gac.com/community/qualityplaces/pedbike/default.aspx>

H-GAC Pedestrian and Bicycle Special Districts Studies:

<http://www.h-gac.com/community/qualityplaces/pedbike/special-districts/default.aspx>

