Finding Funding Beyond the Feds: State and Local Sources of Funding to Improve Walking, Biking, and Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School National Conference
November 2019
Workshop Agenda

- WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS
- ABOUT THE VOICES FOR HEALTHY KIDS INITIATIVE
- STATE AND LOCAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL FUNDING
  - Why do we need it?
  - What are the key considerations?
  - What funding mechanisms are available?
- BREAKOUT GROUPS
  - The policy and funding landscape
  - The opportunity and political climate
  - Funding mechanisms and equity considerations
  - Building a coalition and campaign strategy
- PUTTING THIS INFORMATION INTO ACTION
MISSION

The mission of the Safe Routes Partnership is to advance safe walking and rolling to and from schools and in everyday life, improving the health and well-being of people of all races, income levels, and abilities, and building healthy, thriving communities for everyone.
I am the Healthy Communities Manager at the Safe Routes Partnership.

I live in Philadelphia, where I ride my bike, walk, take public transit, use car share and bike share, and occasionally drive my own car.

You can find me on Twitter at @marisacjones
I am the Senior Technical Assistance Manager at the Safe Routes Partnership.

I live in Orange County, CA, where I enjoy walking to the park with my preschool-age daughter, with the dog around the block, to the nearest coffee shop, and wherever else I can get to on foot.

You can find me on Twitter at @mslieber
As the Program & Policy Director at the Safe Routes Partnership, I live the Safe Routes to School lifestyle in Berkeley, California.

I bike my second grader to school every day and lead a twice-weekly bike train, my middle child walks or bikes to high school, and my oldest takes the bus.

You can find me on Twitter at @saraziesque
I am the State and Community Advocacy Manager for the Voices for Healthy Kids initiative at the American Heart Association.

I live in Los Angeles county, California.
Hello!

- Name
- Organization/Agency
- Where you live/work
- Are you actively considering running an active transportation/Safe Routes to School funding campaign? Are you looking for funding specifically for your local Safe Routes to School program?
Claudia Goytia
State and Community Advocacy Manager
Voices for Healthy Kids
Voices for Healthy Kids

Is an initiative of the American Heart Association, with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, working to make each day healthier for all children.
We all win when every child grows up with access to healthy, affordable foods, safe drinking water, and family-friendly places for physical activity.
Our model is grounded in science and drives towards health equity.

Our Structure:

- Funding Campaigns
- Campaign Research and Development
- Technical Assistance and Skill Building
- Collaboration & Partnerships
Advocating for health equity is not optional. It’s our mission.

Every kid deserves a seat at the table.

Funding Campaigns
State and community campaigns
Campaign organizer
Non-lobbying tactics
Lobbying tactics

Field Consultation
Technical assistance and skill building
Annual face-to-face grantee meeting
Regional trainings
Virtual trainings

Campaign Research & Development
Message research
Policy analysis and development
Grassroots
Media advocacy
Science

Collaboration & Partnerships
Leveraging coalitions
Power building

American Heart Association
Voices for Healthy Kids
Impact Across the Nation

197 Policy Wins
180 million people impacted by policy wins
50% increased chance of state policy win with support from Voices for Healthy Kids
## 6 years of progress

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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Policy Successes</th>
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<td>FY 13-14</td>
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<td>FY 14-15</td>
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<td>• Policy Targets</td>
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<td>Step Two</td>
<td>• Policy Priorities/levers</td>
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<td>Step Four</td>
<td>• Set Annual and Long-term Policy Outcome Targets</td>
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<td>Step Five</td>
<td>• Develop Issue Advocacy Campaign Resources</td>
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2019-2020 Policy Levers

**Healthy, Accessible Foods and Beverages**
- SNAP incentives
- Healthy food purchasing
- Healthy restaurant meals
- Sugary drink taxes

**Early Childhood**
- Early care & education
- Early Head Start
- Head Start

**Healthy, Equitable Schools**
- School foods
- Physical education
- Physical activity
- Wellness policies
- Water access in schools

**Active, Equitable Communities**
- Complete Streets
- Bike & ped appropriations
- Safe Routes to Schools*

**Preemption**
- Defense
- Repeal

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**Science & Health Equity**
Active, Equitable Communities: Support state and local policies that make communities and neighborhoods livable and promote physical activity.

Specific policies include:
- Complete streets
- Bike and pedestrian appropriations
- Safe Routes to School
Voices for Healthy Kids Campaigns and Stories

- Safe Routes Healthy Kids Campaign 2015
- Investing in Place Measure M 2016
- Denver Streets Partnerships Local Funding 2018
Washington Safe Routes Funding 2015

• Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition
• Statewide Poll
• 2015 Connecting Washington funding (11.9-cent gas tax)
• $56 Million for Safe Routes
• In 2018, 255 applications were received, totaling $187.4 million in request for funding.
Measure M (voter approved sales tax) 2016

• A Local funding source (no sunset)
• 2% for Active Transportation
• First/last mile, complete streets, river bike paths
• Measure M will bring $860 million annually to LA County
  • $17 million every year for biking and walking
Denver Streets Partnership (Budget Advocacy)

- The Denver Streets Partnership (DSP)
- DSP advocated for $22 million in 2018
- $15 million for bike and pedestrian improvements allocated
Join the Movement

Calls for Application

Equity focused community driven

Non-profits that have ability to lobby

Follow us on Twitter: @Voices4HK
FB: @VoicesForHealthyKids
Web: Voicesforhealthykids.org

Policy advocacy campaigns
Unique Resources

- Dollars 4 Advocacy Campaign
- Tool Kits P2Action Messaging
- 1x1 Support with Experts
- National Partners Involvement
Claudia Goytia
State and Community Advocacy Manager
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What is active transportation financing?
What is active transportation financing?

- Active transportation financing is funding that is dedicated to planning, infrastructure, or programs that support safety, comfort, and convenience for people walking, bicycling, or using other human powered means to get around, and can include taxes, bonds, fines and fees, and a variety of other mechanisms.

- For the purpose of this workshop, we are including Safe Routes to School funding in this definition.
Why do we need state and local active transportation funding?
We need **money!**

- Today’s roadway infrastructure is crumbling & much of highway system is nearing end of life
- We’ve been building for cars rather than people for decades
The way we currently fund active transportation is **inadequate**

- We chronically underfund transportation & we are losing ground.
  - Gas tax has not kept up with inflation
  - Higher fuel efficiency/alternative fuel cars

Photo Credit: howstuffworks.com
The way we currently fund active transportation is inadequate

- Federal: Key source, but <25% of trans funding
- In spite of ability to use federal funds for walking and biking, many states don’t
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is the primary source of federal funds for bike/ped
The way we currently fund active transportation is **inadequate**

- State and local governments foot the bill for over 2/3 of transportation funding
- States have less to spend on transportation as other costs go up
- State and local funding is more flexible than federal funding
Underfunding active transportation is deadly and inequitable!

- 35% increase in walking deaths in last decade
- Underinvestment & dangerous investment in communities of color yields more collisions & fatalities
The way we currently fund active transportation is **short-sighted**

- Scrambling to get funding to build one project at a time is better than nothing, but walking and biking relies on connected networks for getting people around. The way we are paying for and building projects isn’t enough.
Safe Routes to School works to keep kids safe.

- CDC HI-5
- The Community Preventive Services Task Force issued a recommendation supporting interventions to increase active travel to school based on strong evidence they increase walking among students and reduce risks for traffic-related injury.
What is the status of state and local active transportation funding?
State funds for active transportation

- 16 states have a source of state funding for walking and biking
- Amounts of money range from $200,000 or less per year to $50 million or more per year

2018 Active Transportation Field Scan Results

- 26 AT or health coalitions or organizations interviewed
- Interviewees included executive directors, board presidents, and policy directors of small non-profit organizations
State funding for Safe Routes to School:

Hawaii

- $25 surcharge for speeding violations in a school zone and $10 surcharge on various traffic violations; funds go directly to special SRTS program fund.
- Generates ~ $550,000 per year for Safe Routes to School
- In perpetuity
State funding for active transportation:
**Illinois**

- Active Transportation Alliance *Walk and Roll the Vote* campaign (2019)
- $50 million annual set aside for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and rail-trail conversions
- Equity language: min. 25% funding to high-need communities; local match based on need
Local funds for active transportation

• In 2018, voters across the country approved 13 ballot measures to raise funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects (3 failed) resulting in nearly $24 million in funding for multimodal projects.  
  (Eno Center for Transportation)

• In 2019, voters have approved ballot measures generating $1.5 billion for bike projects.  
  (People for Bikes)
Local funding for sidewalks: Kansas City, Missouri

• In 2017, voters approved GO KC bond for $600 million for streets, bridges, sidewalks
• $150 million just for sidewalks. $7.5M/annually for 20 years
• City now responsible for residential sidewalk repairs rather than homeowners
What are key goals for state and local active transportation funding?
Key considerations for state and local AT funding

- Funding levels are **high** enough to address significant projects
- **Long term**, rather than one time or stop gap
- Ongoing **community engagement** is built into the process from start to finish
- Funding is available for both street **infrastructure** projects & also **education and encouragement** programs
- Prioritized for projects in **high need** areas (look at data around injuries & fatalities, health indicators, rates of walking for children & adults, historic levels of investment, etc.)
- Funding **avoids negative incentives** or unintended consequences, esp. for low income communities & communities of color.
What funding mechanisms are available for active transportation at the state and local levels?
Common Sources of Significant State and Local Active Transportation Dollars

- Bonds
- Taxes
- Fines
- Fees
- General funds
State Versus Local Efforts

- Considerations: political, practical, state law
- Many of the funding mechanisms are the same
- Local efforts often raise similar or more money for active transportation
Key Issue!
Does Your State Have Extra Hurdles for Your Desired Financing Mechanism?

• Some states: limitations on state & local ability to raise money; may require public vote, supermajority, etc.
• State authorization may be required for certain types of local actions
• In some states, fines and local taxes long authorized
• In others, specific action required to allow
Key Issue!
How equitable are various sources of state and local funding?

- Funding mechanisms cannot be ranked from least to most equitable
- How are funds generated?
- How are funds spent?
- Is our process for running our campaign and allocating funding transparent and inclusive?
- Think about the overall effects of the funding package as a whole.
Key Concepts:

- A bond is basically a loan
- Usually general obligation bonds, not revenue bonds
- May create a longer term source of funding – often 20 to 30 years.
- Common to see used for transportation & active transportation

Examples:
Denver, Chicago, Dallas, Durham, Nashville, San Francisco
**Key Concepts:**

- **Sales taxes:** add a small tax on sales that is dedicated to AT
- **Property taxes:** tax based upon value of property, usually used to provide services that are essential for property
- **Fuel taxes:** usually flat tax per gallon of gas

**Examples**

- Hillsborough, FL: 1 cent sales tax for 30 years, raising $276 million/year for sidewalks, transit, repaving, etc.
- Snohomish County, WA: property tax raises $1 mil/year for paths, sidewalks and crosswalks near schools; about $5/year for $250,000 home

**Sales tax authorization:** 29 states allow localities to pass local sales taxes, 18 of those require voter approval

*Source: National League of Cities*
Key Concepts:
Money collected to address user impacts/needs

- **Electric vehicle & hybrid fees**: fees to address costs of operating & maintaining transportation infrastructure since EVs/hybrids consume less gas, but still use infrastructure
- **Road user charges**: fee charged based on how many miles people drive
- **Ridehailing/micromobility fees**: fees per ridehail ride/shared micromobility trip; on operators or surcharges paid by riders
- **Motor vehicle registration/transfer fees**: fee charged upon registration or transfer

States with fees on EVs/hybrids
Key Concept:
• Charge a fine when people violate traffic laws & reinvest $ in street safety improvements

Example:
• Seattle: Revenue from school speed cameras & 20% of revenue from the city’s red-light cameras generates $5-$13 mil/year for Safe Routes to School

Important equity consideration:
Traffic fines are not adjusted for income & can set off a cascade of negative consequences into play for low-income people
Key Concepts:
- A general fund is the primary state or local government fund where taxes & other revenues come in
- If bike/ped/SRTS is a priority, may well be general fund $ available

Examples:
- Safe Routes to School coordinators frequently funded through general funds
- Cupertino CA; Columbus OH
Other Potential Sources of AT Funding

- Transportation utility fees (e.g. Corvallis, OR); vehicle impact mitigation fee
- Local income taxes
- Value capture
- Public private partnerships (very common for transit)
- Advertising or naming rights: ads on buses, transit cars, bikeshare, trails
- Targeted district financing (Business Improvement Districts and/or Tax Increment Financing)
- Adopt-a-Path and naming programs
- State lotteries
- Grants, donor campaigns, crowdfunding, events
- Bicycle registration fees/taxes*
- Specialty license plates
Standalone active transportation financing campaigns or part of a transportation package?
Standalone active transportation campaign

- Need reasonable levels of political support for active transportation
- Favored when specific goal &/or specific source of funding
- Usually smaller total AT funding amounts
As part of a larger transportation package

- Total active transportation funding amounts may be larger
- Requires a significant funding effort to be underway
- Advance notice to get in on deal
- Inside game
- Compromises
- Strange bedfellows
Our job is to convince state and local decisionmakers
now let's turn to action
Breakouts

Facilitators will rotate between 4 groups (10 mins each)

- Understanding the policy landscape & your state’s funding landscape (Michelle)
- The opportunity and political climate, state or local campaign? (Marisa)
- Selecting a funding mechanism and equity considerations (Sara)
- Building a coalition & campaign strategy (Claudia)
Resources and Funding for Taking Steps Toward State and Local Active Transportation Financing
Resources

www.saferoutesp partnership.org
Peer Learning Opportunity

Connect with likeminded advocates! Join the State and Local Active Transportation Financing workgroup
  ○ Meets monthly via Go to Meeting
  ○ For more information, email: marisa@saferoutespartnership.org
Funding

- State and/or local Safe Routes to School and Bicycle and Pedestrian funding campaigns
- Grant awards up to $125,000 for staffing, priority population grantee, includes funding for lobbying
- Rapid response funding also available
- Technical assistance and resources provided
- Reach out to us with questions to see if you would be a good fit

www.voicesforhealthykids.org
Thank you!