

Chapter 7: Leveraging and Funding Opportunities

The following sections provide an overview for developing active transportation plans and policies, leveraging opportunities for project development, and securing federal, state, and local funding for active transportation.

Policy and Planning

The first step in implementing active transportation is creating strong local comprehensive plans and policies. Policy statements in local plans that support multimodal activities and emphasize the importance of safety will help map out future active transportation project planning and development. In addition, when local jurisdictions apply for federal or state funding sources for their active transportation projects, some funding sources require or prioritize jurisdictions that have local plans with policy statements supportive of active transportation, or that specifically list their planned active transportation projects. Another way to facilitate adequate provisions for active transportation is to include strong supportive language in local and regional ordinances, resolutions, code citations, design manuals, executive orders, and agency internal policies. Smart Growth America has definitions and model language that can assist jurisdictions with defining and implementing Complete Streets and other active transportation policies.⁴¹

Partnerships in Project Development

Once jurisdictions have active transportation plans and policies in place, the next step in project development is to identify potential opportunities for partnerships. During project development, transportation departments can help maximize the success of their projects by working with other agencies within their local government, as well as external public and private partners. At the same time, they should coordinate across different subsectors within the transportation department to ensure that planners consider all modes of travel and other important aspects of the transportation planning process during project development. Roadway and transit projects should also consider walking and bicycling access when planning for improvements, both for new facility construction and the maintenance and preservation of existing facilities.

Another way to maximize funding resources and improve the robustness of projects is to coordinate interdepartmentally. Other agencies can help inform project planning and scheduling, provide cross promotional opportunities, and enhance projects features and amenities. The following are examples of agencies that can serve as useful partners in project development:

- **Utilities:** Timing transportation projects with utility maintenance can save effort when reconstructing roadways. There are also opportunities for the shared use of space. For example, power line corridors can provide available connected parcels for trail alignments, particularly in

⁴¹ Smart Growth America (n.d.). *Model Language*. Retrieved from <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/complete-streets-local-policy-workbook/>

dense urban environments where little available right-of-way remains for shared use pathways. Trails can sometimes be placed on top of levees for public use when planning for flood management. Off-road trail corridors are often great places to lay fiber-optic cable because the pavement is not disturbed as often as it is along paved roadways.

- **Education:** Schools can play a significant role when educating young people and parents about safe transportation alternatives.
- **Parks and Recreation:** Parks and open spaces are important amenities for recreational facilities, as well as destinations for people bicycling and walking.
- **Public Health:** With an increased emphasis on the health benefits of bicycling and walking, Public Health departments are a great resource when promoting increased bicycling and walking within communities, particularly when planning for safety, education, and promotional activities.

In addition to working with other agencies on an individual basis, jurisdictions can create more formal project planning and review committees with representatives from multiple agencies. This allows project developers to coordinate scheduling, maximize resources, and demonstrate interdepartmental coordination, which can be helpful when applying for funding. As an example, the City of Tacoma coordinates interdepartmentally with their *Design Integration Review Team*, which has representation from several different departments, including Transportation, Public Works, Historic Preservation, Environmental Services, and Health.

For external partnerships, working with neighboring jurisdictions on projects is a great way to maximize resources and coordinate different project segments, especially for larger projects. As an example, the cities of Edgewood, Pacific, Milton, and Sumner worked together to create a plan for the gaps in the Interurban Trail that is planned to go through each of their respective communities.

In addition to working with other public entities, jurisdictions can work with local residents, community groups, and the private sector to leverage opportunities. *Interlocal agreements* are an important tool for projects that involve multiple public and private entities. These agreements are used to facilitate project coordination and establish roles for each entity involved. For instance, an Interlocal Agreement for a new trail facility could be between land-owners, local jurisdictions, and a party responsible for facility maintenance. Further examples of community partnerships include:

- Transportation planners can work with land owners on property easements for facilities through private properties.
- Community “steward groups” or “friends of” groups are often willing to help with maintenance of active transportation facilities.
- Mile markers or name plates can be sold to help fund trails or other amenities, such as benches.

Private sector partnerships are a great resource for facilitating and enhancing active transportation components of new developments. Transportation planners can work with private developers to put together *development agreements*. These agreements require developers to contribute to active

transportation and transit systems near new developments as part of the mitigation process. There are numerous examples in the Puget Sound region, including:

- Microsoft contributed in kind right-of-way to help build the 36th Street Bridge in Redmond.
- Amazon provided a public benefits package that included the purchase of a new streetcar for the South Lake Union line, along with designing a new protected bike lane and other pedestrian amenities near their campus in downtown Seattle.

Funding Opportunities

There are a wealth of opportunities and resources available for jurisdictions looking to fund their active transportation projects. The following sections provide an overview of the different federal, state, and local funding sources available for active transportation projects in the Puget Sound region, as well as how they are administered and distributed to jurisdictions. Detailed information for each federal and state funding source mentioned is provided in the “State and Federal Funding Sources” table at the end of this chapter.

Federal Funds

The majority of federal funding for active transportation projects comes to the region through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. Funding originates from legislatively passed transportation acts, which authorize programs and funding for a specific period, usually five or six years. The most recently passed federal transportation act, Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), was enacted in 2015. Active transportation projects are eligible for almost all the funding programs under the FAST Act, to various degrees.

Federal transportation dollars are categorized as either apportioned, also known as formula funds, or allocated, also known as formula discretionary funds.⁴² Formula funds are distributed to states using a formula provided in law. They are then distributed to local jurisdictions by states and regional MPOs. The U.S. Congress, FHWA, FTA, and other federal agencies have primary responsibility for selecting transportation projects to receive funds from federally managed discretionary funding programs. Examples of these programs include the New Starts program and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program.

Outside of the U.S. Department of Transportation, a number of other federal agencies provide funding and other resources that can be used to construct or enhance active transportation projects. The National Parks Service provides technical assistance around trails, and supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also provides technical assistance to communities planning for smart growth, including planning for multimodal community streets. The EPA also has grant opportunities related to water management and projects near wetlands, streams, rivers or along watersheds.

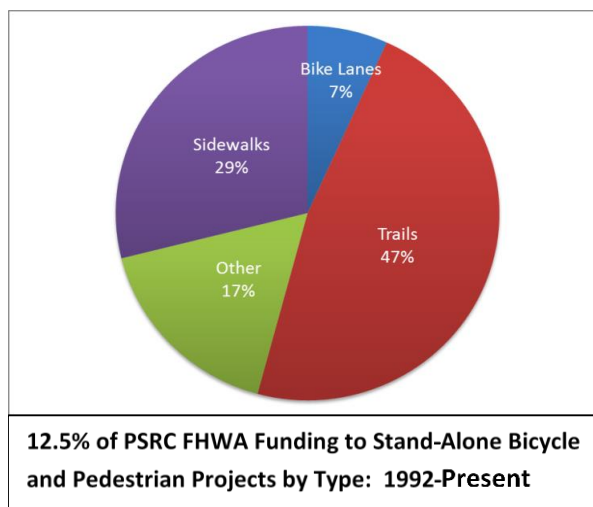
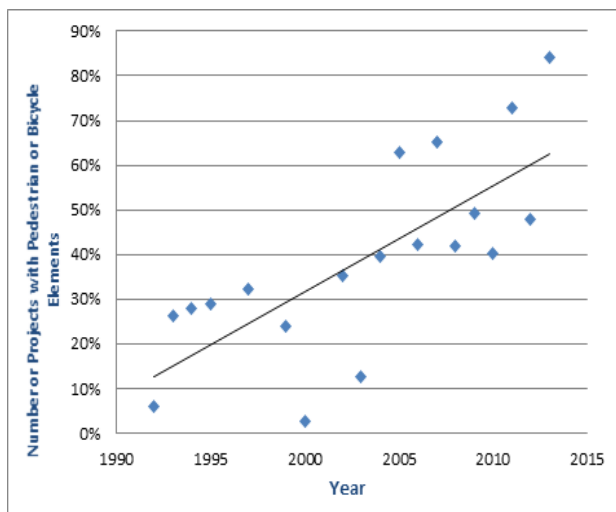
⁴²U.S. DOT FHWA. *Funding Federal-Aid Highways* (January 2017). Retrieved at: <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/olsp/fundingfederalaid/03.cfm>
Regional Transportation Plan
Appendix L: Active Transportation Plan

As mentioned, states and regions have a shared responsibility for distributing funds from federal formula funding programs. The state of Washington has responsibility for selecting projects to receive funds from many federal programs, including the Highway Safety Improvement Program, National Recreational Trails Program, and Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program. This funding is primarily managed and distributed through the Washington State Department of Transportation.

PSRC is responsible for selecting projects to receive FHWA and FTA funds under the following programs:

- Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula program funding (sections 5307, 5337, 5339, and 5310)

Funding is distributed approximately every two to three years through PSRC's project selection process.⁴³ For FHWA funds, PSRC conducts a shared regional and countywide process to recommend and select projects to receive PSRC's STP and CMAQ funds. The total estimated amount of both STP and CMAQ funds is split between the regional and countywide forums based on a regionally adopted funding split. Competitive processes are used by all forums to recommend projects to receive the funds. Since 1993, 10% of the combined estimated total of STP and CMAQ funding has been set aside for non-motorized priorities. The Non-Motorized Set-aside is assigned to the countywide processes for distribution.



Transportation Alternative Program funding is awarded through a regionally competitive process conducted by PSRC. This competition is held approximately every three or four years, contingent upon federal transportation legislative updates, changes, or continuing resolutions. FTA formula funds are programmed using a process coordinated with FTA and the public transit agencies in the region.

⁴³ Puget Sound Regional Council. *Project Selection*. Retrieved at: <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/funding/project-selection>
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Federalizing Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

When applying for federal funding, it is important to note that meeting federal funding requirements can be onerous and time consuming. Project sponsors should plan accordingly for both scheduling and budgeting when choosing to “federalize” a bicycle or pedestrian project. The scale and cost of projects should be a factor when choosing to apply for federal funds. Some federal requirements, depending on the specific program, include:

- State/local match requirements
- Delivery requirements
- Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Buy America program requirements
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program requirements

Some requirements have waivers or apply only to specific funding sources. It is important to research and understand the rules and requirements depending on the specific funding source or program and project type prior to accepting and eventually obligating any federal funding.

State and Local Funds

Federal dollars are not the only source of funds for supporting active transportation projects. Active transportation projects are eligible for several state funding programs, including the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program and Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. State agencies responsible for managing and distributing these funding programs include the WSDOT, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, Washington Transportation Improvement Board, and Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. The Department of Ecology has programs that can contribute to aspects of projects that also help control storm water, such as permeable sidewalks and rain-gardens.

Local jurisdictions have many tools available to assist in finding and leveraging local dollars. Cities, counties, ports, transit agencies and other entities have primary responsibility for selecting projects to receive each agency’s local funds. Examples of different types of funds jurisdictions can use to support active transportation include:

- **General Funds:** Jurisdictions can use these funds to emphasize multimodal transportation when prioritizing transportation projects as part of the local Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process
- **Targeted Funds:** These are funds that have been collected for specific purposes and must be allocated by law toward those purposes.
- **Levies:** Local communities in the central Puget Sound region have a strong history of supporting packages that benefit increased infrastructure for bicycling and walking. Some regional examples include:
 - King County Parks – Trails, and Open Space Replacement Levy (2013)
 - The City of Kirkland – City Street Maintenance and Pedestrian Safety and City Parks Maintenance, Restoration, and Enhancement Levy (2012)
 - Mukilteo – City Park Purchase Levy Proposition (2012)
 - Seattle – Parks and Green Spaces Levy (2008) and “Bridging the Gap” Levy (2006)

- **Transportation Benefit Districts:** Councils can pass vehicle license fees up to a set amount without a vote of the public, or a higher amount with a vote of the public. Other types of taxes can also support these benefit districts if approved by voters, such as sales and use taxes. Local examples include:
 - Mountlake Terrace passed a Transportation Benefit District to help fund their Main Street project, which includes substantial sidewalk improvements
 - In 2014, the City of Tacoma approved Transportation Benefit District – Proposition A, which uses sales and use taxes to fund street improvements.
- **Local Improvement Districts:** Property owners affected by a project vote on whether or not to help pay for an improvement. The City of Kent is a local example of a jurisdiction using these funds to improve their active transportation network.
- **Excise taxes:** These are taxes paid when purchases are made on a specific good. The Regional Transit Authority (RTA) tax is an excise tax that funds Sound Transit.

State and Federal Active Transportation Funding Sources Available

Table 6: An overview of major state and federal funding sources available to jurisdictions in the Puget Sound Region.

Funding Program	Type of Funds	Funding Agency in PSRC Region	Description	Eligible Non-Motorized Projects	Eligible Project Sponsors
<u>Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)</u>	Federal (US DOT)	U.S. Department of Transportation	Supports capital projects which repair bridges or improve infrastructure to a state of good repair; projects that implement safety improvements to reduce fatalities and serious injuries; projects that connect communities and people to jobs, services, and education; and, projects that anchor economic revitalization and job growth in communities	Access enhancements to public transportation; on-road and separated bike facilities, bike parking and storage, bike racks on transit, bike share, Bridges/ overcrossings for pedestrians and bicyclists, engineering improvements for non-motorized transportation, sidewalks, trail improvements	State, local, and tribal governments, including U.S. territories, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations, other political subdivisions of State or local governments, and multi-State or multi-jurisdictional groups
<u>Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)</u>	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	US DOT Federal Highway Administration	Provides funds to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands	Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations that provide access to or within federal or tribal lands	State, local agencies, and tribal governments
<u>Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program</u>	Federal (US NPS)	U.S. National Parks Service	Supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects	Regional trails, parks	State or local agencies, Native American Tribes, nonprofit organizations, citizen groups, federal agencies if in partnership with local organizations

Funding Program	Type of Funds	Funding Agency in PSRC Region	Description	Eligible Non-Motorized Projects	Eligible Project Sponsors
Safe Routes to School (SRTS)	State/Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Washington State Department of Transportation	Aids public agencies in funding projects within two-miles of primary and middle schools (K-12) that provide children an alternative to riding the bus or being driven to school	Operational and physical non-motorized infrastructure improvements, educational and promotional activities, law and community enforcement, outcomes evaluation	All public agencies in Washington (including tribal governments), and nonprofit entities responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs.
National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Washington State Department of Transportation	Provides support for the condition and performance of the National Highway System (NHS), for the construction of new facilities on the NHS, and to ensure that investments of Federal-aid funds in highway construction are directed to support progress toward the achievement of performance targets established in a State's asset management plan	Construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, and preservation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure associated with an NHS facility.	State and local agencies
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Washington State Department of Transportation	Funds projects for reducing fatal and serious injury collisions and follow <i>Target Zero</i> , WSDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. WSDOT administers the funds under its City Safety Program and County Safety Program	On-road facilities, pedestrian walkways, bicycle facilities	State and local agencies

Funding Program	Type of Funds	Funding Agency in PSRC Region	Description	Eligible Non-Motorized Projects	Eligible Project Sponsors
<u>FTA 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas</u>	Federal (US DOT FTA)	Washington State Department of Transportation	Provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations	Bicycle and pedestrian routes to transit, bike racks, shelters and equipment for public transportation vehicles	States, Native American Tribes. Subrecipients may include state or local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation or intercity bus service.
<u>Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)</u>	Federal (US DOI)	Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office	Provides funding to preserve and develop outdoor recreation resources, including parks, trails, and wildlife lands	Community parks, recreational facilities, trails	State agencies, local agencies, special purpose districts, Native American Tribes
<u>National Recreational Trails Program</u>	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office	Funds rehabilitation and maintenance of recreational trails and facilities that provide a backcountry experience	Rehabilitation and maintenance of existing unpaved trails, off-road facilities, and pedestrian walkways (non-urban), recreational and trail-related educational programs	Native American Tribes, state agencies, federal agencies, trail-related, non-profit organizations, local agencies, some special purpose districts
<u>Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)</u>	Federal (USHUD)	Washington State Department of Commerce/ Local municipalities	Provides grants for community planning initiatives that benefit low- and moderate-income persons, prevent or eliminate slums or blight, and address urgent community development needs	Trail construction; commercial district streetscape improvements; sidewalk improvements; safe routes to school; neighborhood-based bicycling and walking facilities	Local governments (cities under 50k and counties under 200k); WA State
<u>Surface Transportation Program (STP)</u> [AKA Surface Transportation Block Grant]	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Puget Sound Regional Council	Funding for highway and bridge construction and repair; transit capital projects; bicycle, pedestrian and recreational trails; and construction of ferry boats and terminals.	Bicycle and pedestrian improvements on local roads and federally classified facilities, bicycle and pedestrian related non-construction projects (coordinator positions, encouragement programs, maps, data gathering)	State, local agencies, transit agencies, and Native American Tribes

Funding Program	Type of Funds	Funding Agency in PSRC Region	Description	Eligible Non-Motorized Projects	Eligible Project Sponsors
<u>Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)</u>	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Puget Sound Regional Council	Funds specific categories of transportation projects and programs that provide air quality benefits by reducing emissions and congestion. General purpose roadway projects are not eligible.	Off-road (not exclusively recreational) and on-road facilities, pedestrian walkways, bicycle facilities	State, local agencies, transit agencies, and Native American Tribes
<u>Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)</u>	Federal (US DOT FHWA)	Puget Sound Regional Council	Funds projects defined as transportation alternatives, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, community improvement activities, environmental mitigation, and other similar types of projects.	Off-road and on-road facilities, pedestrian walkways, bicycle facilities, safe routes to school, safety education (K-8 only)	Local governments; Regional transportation authorities; Transit agencies; Natural resource or public land agencies; School districts, local education agencies, or schools; Tribal governments; Other local or regional governmental entities
<u>FTA 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Program</u>	Federal (US DOT FTA)	Puget Sound Regional Council	Provides grants to Urbanized Areas (UZA) for public transportation capital, planning, job access and reverse commute projects, as well as operating expenses in certain circumstances.	Bicycle and pedestrian access and walkways; bicycle storage facilities and installing equipment for transporting bicycles on public transportation vehicles	Funding is made available to <u>designated recipients</u> , which must be public bodies with the legal authority to receive and dispense Federal funds.
<u>FTA 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities</u>	Federal (US DOT FTA)	Washington State Department of Transportation/Puget Sound Regional Council	Improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services and expanding transportation mobility options available. Must be part of the region's Coordinated Plan.	Pedestrian improvements that provide access to public transportation facilities	Private nonprofit organizations, area agency on aging, state or local governmental authority, or an operator of public transportation

Funding Program	Type of Funds	Funding Agency in PSRC Region	Description	Eligible Non-Motorized Projects	Eligible Project Sponsors
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program	State	Washington State Department of Transportation	Supports public agencies in funding cost-effective projects that reduce bicycle and pedestrian related collisions, and work to increase walking and biking. T	Off-road and on-road facilities, pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities	Public agencies, including tribal governments
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program	State	Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office	Supports a range of land protection and outdoor recreation, including park acquisition and development, habitat conservation, farmland preservation, and construction of outdoor recreation facilities.	Regional trails, recreational facilities (benches, paths, shelters, restrooms)	State agencies, local agencies, special purpose districts, Native American Tribes, salmon recovery lead entities
Mini Grants (Up To \$300)	State	Washington Traffic Safety Commission	Helps children walk and bike to school safely through grants of up to \$300 per school to assist with crossing guard equipment.	Training materials, equipment, and supplies for school zone crossing guards	Public, private, and tribal elementary and middle schools
TIB Funding Programs for Small City Customers	State	Washington Transportation Improvement Board	Funds projects for reconstructing or maintaining transportation infrastructure for small cities and towns through five grant programs: Small City Arterial Program, Small City Sidewalk Program, Small City Preservation Program, Relight Washington Program and the Complete Streets Program.	Pavement and sidewalk maintenance, non-recreational pedestrian projects, street lighting, arterial extensions	Cities and towns with a population of less than 5,000
Non-Highway and Off-Road Vehicle Program	State	Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office	Provides funding to develop and manage recreation opportunities, as well as education and enforcement programs.	Building, renovating, maintaining and rerouting trails, educating trail users	Local agencies special purpose districts, Native American Tribes, state agencies, federal agencies

Funding Program	Type of Funds	Funding Agency in PSRC Region	Description	Eligible Non-Motorized Projects	Eligible Project Sponsors
Rural Arterial Program	State	County Road Administration Board	Funds rural arterial road and bridge reconstruction.	Improving rural roads which are primarily local use or recreational to be multi-modal	WA state counties