

Show Me the Money: Finding Local Funding for Your Safe Routes to School Program

October 4, 2012 webinar

Questions and Answers

Regarding passage of HB 2626 which imposes fines for traffic violations, and dedicates the money for Safe Routes to School in Hawaii, how long did it take from start to finish?

Bev met with state legislator, Derek Kawakami, who in October 2011 took on the passage of the bill. By January 2012 the process had begun and by July 2012, the bill was passed.

Was law enforcement a partner in your efforts?

In Portland, OR, law enforcement, which includes a local judge, have been critical partners. Their input gave us the expertise to figure out how to change the state law, and how best to administer the fine money.

In Nashville, TN, they did not engage with law enforcement around their plan (other than having an officer on their Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee).

The use of STP funds for bike/ped education seems to be a major talking point, as these ed programs aren't eligible for MAP-21 Transportation Alternative funds, correct? Do you happen to have a statutory citation or source of information regarding this fact that STP funding can be used for education?

Here is a clip from the overall MAP-21 language with reference to education We are not not sure if MAP-21 is changing education eligibility under STP:

Section 1033 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (1991 ISTEA, Public Law 102-240) amended 23 U.S.C. 217 to reflect the impacts of the STP, CMAQ, and NHS on bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways. In addition to the ISTEA provisions in the Eligibility section above, other important revisions were as follows:

- Each State must use some of its STP and CMAQ moneys to fund a State DOT "bicycle and pedestrian coordinator" position for promoting and facilitating (a) the increased use of non-motorized modes of transportation, including developing facilities for the use of pedestrians and bicyclists, and (b) **public education, promotional, and safety programs for using such facilities.**

For Leslie - We'd like to replicate your transportation and health study. Would you share your tools, methodology, and results?

All the vision and goals and scoring criteria are on the [nashvillempo.gov website](http://nashvillempo.gov).

How do I start working with my MPO?

Get to know your MPO members, get to know the political climate -- Leslie recommends starting with a community vision that engages the public. The broader a vision around building healthy communities the better the starting place from which to then discuss transportation in general, and then bicycling and walking priorities developed from there.

What if your organization is a public agency and you cannot speak to policy makers or lobby the legislature?

The National Partnership cannot lobby for a lot of its work due to restrictions from funders, but we are able to make a lot of policy change through internal public agency decisions. Policy change is done in two ways, through administrative change within agencies and through legislation at the local or state or federal level. It is not lobbying to work with an agency to change its internal decisions, unless you are influencing an executive order. For instance, getting the DOT to change its criteria for funding to include walking and bicycling, you can get more funds for Safe Routes to School without lobbying.

You can educate policy makers without it being considered lobbying. Education cannot include a call to action to the public, and cannot be connected to a bill or even the idea for a bill. If you have or can build policy change coalitions in your community, you should have both public and private partners at the table. Nonprofit groups and corporations are eligible to lobby. If they are at the table and are educated on the issue, such as Safe Routes to School, they might be inspired to lobby for a legislative bill, and you are not connected to lobbying.

So, policy change can happen thru educating decision makers, which is not the same as lobbying.

If you are not sure, check with legal experts within your coalition. Public agencies do have strict guidelines on lobbying.

Not using the complete streets lingo - why?

It was an unintentional effort - it was more about starting with the broad vision for a Liveable and Healthy Community in which Complete Streets is a component, and avoiding the cart before the horse. Buy in from the public happened much more easily because of that broader approach.

So, identifying steps to achieve the broad vision, and then identifying that CS and smart growth, and bike/ped can be solutions.

By starting with broader goals that speak to everyone's values, support can build that will eventually lead to policy and program efforts that get detailed out. During that process, bicycling, walking, complete streets, and other active transportation and health issues can become component parts of the larger solution. This technique avoids the typical polarization that occurs when advocates walk in to decision-makers offices, or committee meetings and push their specific agenda, which can seem too narrow or divisive. But by starting with a general call for improving the overall community, those elements can be added in later in a collaborative manner as tactics get developed.

Can Safe Routes to School funds be used for a public library outside of city limits, but still within walking/biking distance?

- A. If you mean for infrastructure on the library property, not under SAFETEA-LU funds, since they must be used for walking and bicycling to and from schools and homes within two miles of the school. The exception could be if the library is a Walking School Bus stop, or a remote drop off point, then improvements could be made to help with that, but you would need to check with your state Safe Routes to School Coordinator on the details of your plan.

However, walking and bicycling access to the library could work under MAP-21, because of the flexibility of the fund, active transportation to libraries, for instance, could be eligible under several of the funding pots - we are still waiting for FHWA guidance, though, which is coming in pieces over the next three months. There may be opportunities with MAP-21 \$ to do Safe Routes to Libraries, or Safe Routes to Bus Stops.

Since Marin passed their measure, how many meetings should people expect to hold, what kind of support needs to be built.

In Marin, the pilot program helped build up support within schools and agencies for 3 yrs. before going after the tax. So, it was a longer time frame. With the sales tax, there were about 4x year meetings, and representatives from the community served on the planning and campaign committees. So, we used existing relationships to build support for the idea of the good benefit that comes from the tax itself. So, start with a SRTS task force, bridge with the school district, and then do strong network building before going after a tax.

What is the role of the school district in the sales tax campaign?

They were not strongly involved with supporting the campaign. Some board members were involved. But it was the city and county that were most involved with the campaign.