Program

1. Will the Safe Routes to Parks Accelerator program explore increasing access to a range of local, regional, state, and federal public parklands?
   We will primarily focus on local/regional parks since those are the ones that are typically close enough to home to merit a trip via walking/biking and connections to other everyday destinations. Typically, we think of Safe Routes to Parks as approximately ten-minute walks or bike rides to parks that are conveniently located within approximately one half mile (10-minute walk) from where people live. However, we understand that different states may have different contexts where expanding past this baseline may make sense.

2. Is there any guidance on how you will determine which state team will receive funding for the three to five community-based organizations to further advance Safe Routes to Parks efforts?
   We are going to select a state that is ready to hit the ground running with a state-specific Safe Routes to Parks program early in 2023. If you are interested in starting up something similar but not necessarily ready to get everything moving early in 2023, we could work on setting up a framework and identifying potential funding as part of your technical assistance.

3. For the state that will be working with nonprofits, would the grant funds be distributed directly to the non-profits or would they flow through one of the state agencies?
   The funding for community-based organizations will be distributed directly to the organizations by Safe Routes Partnership.

4. What are the expected outcomes of this program? Would they be similar to the Activating Communities grant where teams develop an action plan, or is this more along the lines of capacity building and communication between departments?
   Ultimately, we have the flexibility to tailor the program to the needs of each state team. During this program, we expect to work with state agencies to build systems to better coordinate work and communicate across programs. For actual outputs, we plan to collaboratively develop an action-oriented work plan that targets a short-term, significant change to advance Safe Routes to Parks and we will support implementing that plan for the year-long program. This could look very different for different places but some ideas include increasing agency cross-training so there is more interdisciplinary expertise, implementing project checklists that promote consistent project bundling, or establishing an easier pathway to get traffic calming around parks. We are open to discussing what the opportunities are in your state based on what is already happening, where there is interest, and where we can best add value. We will also work with teams to set longer-term goals and identify the programmatic and funding resources that are needed to accomplish them. That can ultimately be part of a formal plan or something less formal depending on what works for folks.

Project Team

5. Are there any rules around who at each agency can be part of the team?
   The primary contact for each agency can have a major effect on the program experience based on their decision-making authority and length of experience. The team will depend on each member's ability to speak on past and present experiences, give detailed insights into systemic
issues, and reflect on the many aspects of Safe Routes to Parks work. If the point person has limited time, influence, or authority, that can make it more challenging to significantly shape an agency’s processes or policies that are key to advancing Safe Routes to Parks work.

6. **Can we involve interns?**
   We are looking for teams with members from each agency that have significant experience and the opportunity to influence the work of their agency. We have no issue with interns supporting the project and it could certainly be an exciting learning experience, but this cannot be a project owned by interns.

7. **We have a unique agency that manages the same work as one of the three essential agencies (transportation, public health, environment). Is it acceptable for this agency to be the one represented?**
   If it is a clear equivalent to other states’ versions of a public health, transportation, or conservation and natural resources agency then that is okay. If that is not fully the case, consider the following:
   - How do you think that would affect your ability as a team to get things done?
   - Have you worked together on past projects focused on shared goals?
   - Are they interested in doing work that is more focused on park access via walking and biking?

8. **Is there a maximum number of representatives we should have?**
   We would have representation from the three core departments, but we also identified other strategic state agency partners.
   We consider the core list of public health, conservation and natural resources, and transportation the minimum, and we think it is great to bring in other strategically aligned partners if that makes sense for your state (especially if you have strong existing relationships with those agencies). The only consideration is the balance between creating a large team that has broad connections and the efficiency of moving the work forward within the program period. A core group committed and able to move things forward is more important to us than the number of partners. I’m sure you’ve experienced this balance before so I trust you can make the judgment call on how to balance those interests, but if you want to talk it through further we can certainly do that as well!

**Funding**

9. **What is the source of the funding? Is it federal funding that you are receiving and then providing to the grantees?**
   This is a technical assistance award which means that no funds are directly awarded to state agencies. Safe Routes Partnership staff will provide free coaching and consulting services. In the single state that works on building a state Safe Routes to Parks program, Safe Routes Partnership will provide small grants for community-based organizations to kick-start implementation. The funding is coming from a private philanthropic foundation.