

# Federal Funding for Safe Routes to School: Evolution Through Four Transportation Bills

2005-2012

## A New Program: Stand-Alone Safe Routes to School Funding

*SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users)*



New program provided more than \$1 billion to all states over 7 years



Funding to states for Safe Routes to School infrastructure & non-infrastructure grants to local schools and communities



Each state Department of Transportation had state-level Safe Routes to School coordinator

2012-2015

## Combined Funding for Safe Routes to School, Walking, and Biking

*MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act)*



Eliminated stand-alone federal funding stream for Safe Routes to School



Combined federal Safe Routes to School program and other bicycling and walking programs into Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

30%  
less  
funding



Overall 30% reduction in federal funding for Safe Routes to School, walking, and bicycling

2015-2021

## Continuation of Combined Funding for Safe Routes to School, Walking, and Biking

*FAST Act (Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act)*



- The funding is still known as the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), although official name changed to "Surface Transportation Program Setaside"
- The FAST Act retained most of MAP-21's TAP features, with a few changes, such as making nonprofits eligible for the funding & modestly increasing the total amount of TAP funding per year
- States were permitted to transfer up to 50 percent of TAP funds away from walking and biking
- Funding was less than total for Safe Routes to School, walking, and biking when they were separate programs

2022-2026

## Increased Combined Funding for Safe Route to School, Walking, and Biking, and Safe Routes to School Expands to High Schools

*Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (also known as Bipartisan Infrastructure Law)*

### Key features of Current TAP funding:

- 60 percent increase in funding: average of \$1.4 billion annually from 2022-2026
- TAP is now set as 10 percent of Surface Transportation Block Grant rather than a fixed dollar amount
- All TAP dollars are awarded through a competitive process by the state or metropolitan planning organizations, with local governments, school districts, and nonprofits eligible to apply
- More funding is suballocated based on community size
- Tighter restrictions on state transferring funds away from walking and bicycling
- States may use up to five percent of funds (after suballocation) to provide technical assistance that improves access to funds and project delivery
- New flexibility for local match including match at program level rather than individual project level and allows HSIP funds to be used as match for TAP projects
- States must define and prioritize "high need" communities when selecting TAP projects
- Funding can be used for Safe Routes to School infrastructure and non-infrastructure, including state and local Safe Routes to School coordinators
- Safe Routes to School projects can now benefit high schools, making K-12 schools eligible