

FUNDING FOR KIDSWALK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

KidsWalk-to-School is intended to be a cost-free program; however, improving the pedestrian environment generally will require funding. Fortunately, most of the funding to support pedestrian and bicycle facility improvement may be obtained through state and local departments of transportation.

Walking and bicycling are important elements of an integrated, intermodal transportation system. Constructing sidewalks, installing bicycle parking at transit stations, teaching children to ride and walk safely, installing curb cuts and ramps for wheelchairs, striping bicycle lanes, and building trails all contribute to our national transportation goals of safety, mobility, economic growth and trade, enhancement of communities and the natural environment, and national security.

All of these activities, and many more, are eligible for funding as part of the Federal-Aid Highway Program. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), signed into law on June 9, 1998, enhances the ability of communities to invest in projects that can improve the safety and practicality of walking and bicycling for everyday travel and confirms the place of walking and bicycling in the mainstream of transportation decision making at the state and local levels.

It should also be noted that many improvements can be made simply by choosing pedestrian/kid-friendly options during planning, maintenance, and development efforts. Decisions about city traffic engineering, police enforcement, and zoning are often made without adequate pedestrian mobility considerations.

For more information visit the Federal Highway Administration Bicycle and Pedestrian program Web site at www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/index.htm.

