How FHWA programs can help support your livability efforts

Livability in Transportation is about leveraging the quality, location, and type of transportation facilities and services available to help achieve broad community goals such as economic revitalization, access to jobs, and safer communities. Livability is an outcome of a multimodal transportation planning process involving nontraditional partners and advancing policies and projects integrating transportation solutions into broader community goals. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding programs provide opportunities to incorporate livability principles and better align projects with local interests and needs.

FHWA programs that support livability. Within the Federal-Aid Highway Program, several major funding programs support a broad range of livability-related projects. These programs include the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program, National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), Metropolitan Planning Program, and Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Program. The STBG and NHPP funds allow flexibility while also advancing projects promoting livability. The Metropolitan Planning Program and Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Program funds support livability-related planning, research, training, and technical assistance. Bicycle and pedestrian projects are eligible for most Federal-Aid Highway and transit program funds.

- **Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds** are a set-aside of the STBG program for a variety of smaller scale transportation programs and projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity. TA funds were used to install a pedestrian bridge across the Lehigh River in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania. The project supports safe passage for hikers, bikers, and pedestrians, and it further contributes to the city's economic revitalization as an outdoor tourism destination.

- **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program** provides funding to areas in nonattainment or maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide, and/or particulate matter to support surface transportation projects and other related efforts that contribute to air quality improvements and provide congestion relief. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Green Line Extension Project extends the Green Line by 4.7 miles, eliminating the need for bus and rail transfers, constructing seven new stations, and providing a new vehicle storage and maintenance facility in Somerville, MA. CMAQ funds provided $72.6 million, which was 3 percent of the total funding.

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1. FHWA, Transportation and Livability. 2018.
2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Opportunities: USDOT, FTA and FHWA Funds. 2018.
The **Eco-Logical Approach** offers technical assistance in applying an approach to deliver projects and is an ecosystem-based framework for planning, developing, and delivery integrating infrastructure and natural resources. FHWA maintains a library of resources including case studies, webinars, and guides to showcase successful practices in applying the approach. The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) used the approach for the Atlantic Salmon Programmatic Consultation. The project led to significant habitat restoration, improved trust and cooperation among agencies, and improved the resiliency of completed projects.  

The **Federal Lands Highway and Tribal Transportation Programs** fund transportation improvements in the National Parks, Forests, Wildlife Refuges, Recreation Areas, and Tribal Lands. One example is the Olympic Discovery Trail, which took bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrians off the high-speed US 101 highway, and onto a trail paralleling the highway.

The **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** provides funds to states for recreational trails and trail-related facilities. This program helped fund the acquisition of land for a 21-acre multi-use park called Tahlequah Mission Park. The project proposes to be an eco-friendly, healthy lifestyle inspired park providing walking and biking trails while preserving area wildlife. It is located on Tribal land in the heart of Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma.

**Success Stories**

**Transportation choices help clear the air.** Georgia Commute Options, a travel demand management and public education and outreach program, incentivizes commuters to switch from single-occupant vehicles to other options by providing trip planning, discounted transit passes, and guaranteed rides home. Clean commute options promoted through the program include public transit, telework, carpool, vanpool, biking, and walking. CMAQ funds provided $16 million, which was 80 percent of the total funding.

**Safe Routes to School save lives.** Since the beginning of its Vision Zero program in 2016, Fremont, CA has achieved a 92 percent reduction in crashes among people under the age of sixteen. Fremont’s Vision Zero focus on child safety included implementing 300 low cost safety improvement projects in school zones, including curb extensions, new signs, and pavement markings.

**Trails provide important connections to communities.** The people of Walhalla, South Carolina are greatly benefitting from RTP investments made for the development of the Ross Mountain Passage, which provides a continuous connection from the downtown area to Oconee State Park and beyond. This connection allows hikers and mountain bikers to travel along the Palmetto Trail from the Stumphouse Mountain Bike Park to their campsite at the state park or to the restaurants and shops on Main Street. This trail has served as a catalyst for economic growth and cultural enrichment for the Walhalla community.

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5 FHWA. *FHWA Initiatives to Accelerate Project Delivery*. 2020.
7 Olympic Discovery Trail. 2020. Tribal governments are not limited to these funds.

Federal Highway Administration: www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability