



## Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTP) Program Update -- January 2007

**Pedestrian Plan and Bicycle Parking Program Approved.** At its January 2007 meeting, the Transit for Livable Communities (TLC) Board conditionally approved the funding for two initial projects: \$150,000 for a pedestrian plan for the City of Minneapolis and \$200,000 for bicycle parking in Minneapolis. Funds for these important projects will be made available upon the City's agreement to the scope of work and specifications developed by



TLC to best support NTP goals. While the City of Minneapolis has a bicycle plan, it does not have a pedestrian plan. A pedestrian plan will help the city identify barriers to walking and prioritize investments. A lack of bicycle parking is widely recognized as a significant barrier to bicycling, so the new bicycle racks funded by NTP will be placed throughout the City. Racks will be located at places listed in the federal NTP law including schools, employment centers, recreation facilities, transit stops, and other community activity centers.

**Infrastructure, Operations and Planning Grants.** In early February 2007, Transit for Livable Communities will issue a request for proposals for the first of two rounds of federal NTP funding. Up to \$7.3 million will be available for planning and infrastructure projects. The funding will be available in the following categories:

	Minimum	Maximum	Total in category
Planning Grants	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$300,000
Operations Grants	\$20,000	\$150,000	\$2,000,000
Infrastructure Grants	\$50,000	\$3.5 million	\$5,000,000

Planning grants will help communities develop plans or design solutions for locations where there is currently limited, problematic, or unsafe access for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Operations grants will help to make the existing transportation infrastructure safer, more convenient, and more appealing to bicyclists and pedestrians. An example of an operations grant would be the conversion of a four lane road to a three lane road (including a left turn lane) with bicycle lanes.

Infrastructure grants will be awarded in four categories: 1) on-street and off-street bicycle facilities, 2) pedestrian districts, 3) complete streets or boulevards, and 4) bicycle and pedestrian connections to transit. There will be a separate application for each of the four categories.

TLC staff has been meeting regularly with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to develop the solicitation materials.

**Education and Community Outreach.** In February 2007, the TLC Board will adopt a plan for the first major educational efforts funded by the NTP program. Those efforts will likely include a Bicycle and Pedestrian Ambassador Program, a public awareness campaign, and a series of workshop and seminars focusing on innovative ways to improve conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians. TLC has also submitted an application with two private sector partners to participate in The Eco Experience at the Minnesota State Fair in August 2007. TLC, along with the other pilot communities, is a part of a contract for communications work with Rails to Trails Conservancy.

**Decision Making.** The Board of Directors of Transit for Livable Communities is the decision making body for the program in Minneapolis and its adjoining communities. TLC has a contract with the City of Minneapolis for program management activities for the NTP program. TLC is working closely with its agency partners: FHWA, MnDOT, and the Metropolitan Council.

The TLC Board established a 29 member committee to advise it on implementation of the program. The committee includes representatives from neighborhood organizations, non-profits, small businesses, citizen activists, elected officials, and agency partners. The advisory committee meets monthly and is organized into three subcommittees – all meetings are open to the public. For more information check [www.tlcmnnesota.org](http://www.tlcmnnesota.org)

TLC is working closely with the other pilot communities to share information and ideas. TLC meets twice years with staff from the other three communities and participates in twice monthly conference calls.

**Needs Assessment.** TLC staff is completing a needs assessment that will inform TLC's implementation of the NTP Program. This document examines current levels of bicycling and walking and identifies both barriers and opportunities to increasing bike-walk mode share. Included in the assessment is an analysis of bike and pedestrian crashes, the level of service for bicyclists and pedestrians along main corridors, possible improvements to better accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, and a gap analysis for the most cost-effective investments. Other issues examined are current design standards, zoning regulations and other policy issues that impact the environment for walking and bicycling.

**Measurement and Evaluation.** Since this is a pilot project, measurement is a key part of the program. The pilot communities will initiate both community-wide measurement surveys and project specific measurement surveys and counts. Last fall, the four communities collectively hired the Center for Transportation Studies (CTS) at the University of Minnesota to do baseline and bookend surveys in the four communities. The initial mail and telephone surveys, which track travel behavior and attitudes, will soon be complete.

In addition, there will be project-specific surveying and bicycle and pedestrian counts. The Volpe Center at the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) is helping the pilot communities develop a project measurement protocol. This past fall, TLC organized bicycling and pedestrian counts at 20 locations in Minneapolis with the help of 31 volunteers.



**Public Involvement.** TLC continues to solicit feedback and suggestions from residents, policy makers and advocates throughout the region. Contact: Steve Clark at 651-767-0298 or [stevec@tlcmnnesota.org](mailto:stevec@tlcmnnesota.org) to volunteer, provide ideas or learn more about this program.