

“My community is energized about pedestrian and bicycle safety! Where do we go from here?”

Applying for grants to fund pedestrian and bicycle safety

On January 18, 2023, SafeTREC held the first session of the 2023 Peer Exchange Program, “My community is energized about pedestrian and bicycle safety! Where do we go from here?” Fifteen participants from urban and rural communities throughout Northern, Central, and Southern California attended the virtual event to discuss the topic “Applying for grants to fund pedestrian and bicycle safety.”

Developing Grant Proposals

Developing a problem statement:

Jill Cooper of SafeTREC launched the webinar by introducing two tools for understanding traffic safety data: [Transportation Injury Mapping Program](#) (TIMS) and [Street Story](#). A compelling problem statement shares data evidence and communicates key insights.

- TIMS is an online tool for querying and mapping state traffic crash data and supports grant writers in defining a traffic safety problem by providing tables and maps of traffic crash and injury data at specific locations, corridors, or neighborhoods. It allows users to focus on a number of crash factors, including pedestrian and bicycle crashes, and injury severity.
- Street Story provides crowdsourced data for the individuals’ travel experiences, including near-misses and hazardous-feeling places. Grant writers may report on community perceptions of safety through entries, which include written narratives describing detail about travel experiences. It also allows grant writers to document public participation in traffic data which can help frame understanding problem areas.

Peer Exchange Overview

Over the last five years, SafeTREC and California Walks have conducted 119 CPBST workshops statewide. The Peer Exchange Program is a three-part webinar series for individuals, community agencies, and governmental agencies interested in furthering ideas and actions that surfaced in past [Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Trainings \(CPBST\)](#) or [Comunidades Activas y Seguras \(CAyS\)](#) program trainings. Other stakeholders interested in pedestrian and bicycle safety programming are also invited to join the webinars.

The purpose of this webinar was to:

- Bring together stakeholders to learn about grant development and management for pedestrian and bicycle programs;
- Engage in discussions related to developing, scoping ideas, building budgets, and managing grants once they are obtained; and
- Identify strategies to translate ideas into fundable grant proposals.

Grant proposal development from a city perspective:

Christine Viterelli, City of Arvin Grants Manager, summarized approaches she uses in developing proposals. She stressed the importance of Arvin's use of a palette of resources such as [Recommendations to Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety for the City of Arvin](#) (CPBST, 2018), Street Story training and data, and TIMS data. She underscored the importance of communicating with community members preferred language (Spanish in Arvin) when appropriate, as well as the narratives made available in Street Story that provide context for data. These resources support and strengthen the city's proposals, she mentioned, because they document community involvement and commitment.

Grant proposal development from a non-profit agency perspective:

Germán Quiñonez, Neighborhood Development Director from Every Neighborhood Partnership (ENP) in Fresno, discussed applying the community recommendations developed during CBPSTs in [2018](#) and [2021](#) to raise funds for projects. As ENP works to build economic mobility through education, one priority they have is engaging communities through public school contacts. Using recommendations from past CBPSTs, Germán and his colleagues scoped a proposal for resources from the [Go Human Kit of Parts Pilot Project](#). Caltrans and California Walks allocated funding which allowed them to pay stipends to residents to help set up a [temporary demonstration](#) at an intersection of concern for the community.

Discussion:

The discussion centered around the relationship between non-profit agencies, community residents, and city/county governments, and the role each of these groups has separately and together in reaching safety goals.

- Non-profit agencies must partner with governmental agencies to be eligible for many state grants, such as [Office of Traffic Safety](#) and Caltrans [Active Transportation Program](#) grants. It is critical for city agency personnel to listen and collaborate with community residents. Funders increasingly want to see that cities have ensured community voices and involvement are part of their pedestrian and bicycle safety planning. This partnership helps to ensure success of infrastructure and programmatic efforts. To do this, city personnel may involve the community in organizing and holding temporary demonstrations, safety awareness efforts, and petitions, as well as inviting city residents to attend and present at city council meetings.
- Non-profit organizations are able to mobilize community residents to ask for improvements from local elected officials and government personnel. One way they can do this is by collecting community stories to present to the city council to get their support for projects.

- Attendees suggested that community residents or agencies find a champion in a local agency's transportation staff or on the city council, and to cultivate that relationship. Finding opportunities to get small grants may help a community build support for larger efforts. Some examples of small grant opportunities include: [AARP Community Challenge Grants](#), [Southern California Association of Governments' \(SCAG\) Go Human Kit of Parts](#), [America Walks Community Change Grants](#), etc. SafeTREC maintains a shortlist of opportunities on our [CATSIP website](#).
- Many cities or counties have Pedestrian/Bike Coordinators or Advisory Committees. Caltrans districts also have [Pedestrian/Bike Coordinators](#). These individuals or committees may support local efforts and serve as a liaison between communities and elected or state officials.
- Small communities may face challenges in documenting crash problems since their crash numbers are relatively small compared to those of larger cities. Further, large cities may have so many areas of concern, it is hard to document how one improvement can help a crash problem. One approach cities of any size may use is to focus in a particular location or region. That way, crash data may highlight a safety problem that stands out and needs attention.
- Projects may take a while to build. Momentum may come from tragic events, national attention, and/or local champions.
- Documenting equity needs in a community may take place on a large, e.g., an entire town or city, or small scale, e.g., a neighborhood or corridor within a jurisdiction. It is fundamental to ensure that voices from marginalized communities are heard and included in planning.



About the CPBSP

The Community Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Program (CPBSP) is a statewide active transportation and community engagement project of UC Berkeley Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC) and California Walks (Cal Walks). It uses an adapted Safe System Approach to engage residents and advocates to develop an action plan to improve active transportation safety in their communities, support complete streets planning, and strengthen collaboration with local officials and agency staff.

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