



Idaho Walk Bike Alliance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Walking Project Proposals Far Exceeds Available State Funds

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Two million dollars of improvements to walking infrastructure across Idaho is expected to be completed by the end of this year. The funding is part of the Strategic Initiatives Program which was approved by House Bill 334 during last year's legislative session to fund the Children Pedestrian Safety Program.

Seventy-one applications for proposed projects were received with a total estimated cost of \$12 million dollars. "The good news is the state strategic initiative fund will provide two million dollars of walking infrastructure projects across the state. The bad news is there are 12 million dollars of proposed projects to choose from," said Cynthia Gibson, Executive Director of the Idaho Walk Bike Alliance.

"We were surprised by the number and quality of the projects proposed coming in from all corners of the state. It tells us there is a pent-up demand for better walk and bike infrastructure from medium sized cities to small rural towns," added Gibson.

Idaho State House Minority Leader Mat Erpelding spearheaded House Bill 334 which funded the projects. "Our communities value safe, efficient transportation corridors and that includes pedestrians and cyclists. HB 334 provides some of the badly needed resources to ensure our communities provide safe pedestrian corridors for our children and families," said Representative Mat Erpelding.

Proposed projects include sidewalks, pathways, sidewalk repair, traffic signals, lighting improvements, sidewalk connections, path extensions, drainage improvements, school zone signs, and school crossings. Projects were submitted for consideration in December of last year. If approved projects must be bid ready and started within 90 days of the award in mid April and completed by November 16th of this year.

Project proposals were submitted from transportation advocates, public officials and transportation organization staff and had to be sponsored by an Idaho city or county. The 2 million dollars of funding was awarded for one year by the Idaho Transportation Board and is part of surplus state budget funds. The Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) is managing the program in conjunction with the Idaho Transportation Department. Project awards are being decided by a 3-person LHTAC committee based upon criteria that would improve pedestrian safety close to schools in a cost effective manner. Parents dropping kids off at school and school bus traffic is responsible for a large percentage of morning traffic congestion. These projects are designed to increase safety and increase opportunities for students to walk to school.

About the Idaho Walk Bike Alliance

The mission of the Idaho Walk Bike Alliance is to promote active transportation as healthy, safe, and reliable for all Idahoans. For more information or to support Idaho Walk Bike Alliance, visit www.idahowalkbike.org.

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