



Fundraising

Typical funding sources for any kind of project include:

- Government grants or funding
- Foundation or corporate grants
- Individual donations
- Business/corporate donations
- Events or other activities
- In-kind donations (labor, materials, equipment rental, etc.)

Government Funding

Local, state and federal programs provide funding to bicycle facility projects, each with different priority areas and application processes.

Federal: For a list of federal sources and what kinds of facilities they fund, see the Federal Highway Administration website:

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/bp-guid.cfm#bp4

The Rails to Trails Conservancy also provides a comprehensive list of federal funding sources, with descriptions of each and examples of how these sources have been utilized by rail-trail projects,

http://www.railstotrails.org/ourWork/trailBuilding/toolbox/informationSummaries/funding_financing.html#statelocal

State and Local: Departments of Parks and Recreation, Health, Sustainability, and Transportation are potential sources of funding. Some advocacy groups have successfully lobbied city or county governments to designate a portion of certain taxes to fund bike/ped infrastructure and some communities have passed referendums that include increased funding to these kinds of facilities.

Foundation/corporate grants

Potential grants sources include:

- SmartWool Advocacy Fund, http://www.smartwool.com/PDF/SmartWool_Advocacy_Fund_Guidelines.pdf
- The North Face Explore Fund, <http://explorefund.org/>

- Walmart Store and Sam's Club Giving Program, <http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/8916.aspx>
- Specialized Grant Program, <http://www.specialized.com/us/en/bc/SBCGlobalPages.jsp?pageName=SpecializedGrantProgram>

Research through the Foundation Center, state or local foundation resources (check your local library), and on the websites of corporations with local offices or facilities can help identify other sources of funding. Local Community Foundations (serving the city or county) have a great deal of knowledge about local funding sources and may have funding priority areas that match your project.

Individual Donations

Soliciting individual donors is most successful if you have a particular project or plan to present with goals and timelines for completion. Ideas to consider:

- Efforts to get the word out about your great project can include presentations, activities at existing facilities, farmers' markets or other community events, partnerships with local bike shops or related advocacy organizations, etc. Always have materials with Ways to Support the Project available, and "Ways" may include in-kind donations of labor or materials!
- Matching Gifts – time-limited efforts to match one large donation are very effective if you have a network of potential supporters to connect to
- Employer matches – ask all donors if their employers match donations; human resources departments can usually provide the right forms or information
- How many pieces of your trail can you "sell?" Kiosks, benches, maps, trees, signs, and parts of the trail/path can have a dollar amount attached to them with recognition appropriate to the purchase
- Say thank you early and often – most facility projects take some time to complete, so stay in touch with your donors through updates on your progress and appreciation for their part in making it happen

Corporate/Business Donations

Local businesses or corporations are most likely to support facilities that will benefit their employees and customers. Websites may include community giving, philanthropy, or giving back pages with information on how to apply for donations. Many companies support employee requests, or make donations to non-profits where their employees volunteer, so providing this kind of information to your network of supporters may result in more gifts. Check the League of American Bicyclists list of Bicycle Friendly Businesses (<http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/bicyclefriendlybusiness/>) to identify local BFBs. These businesses are already making a commitment to

promote cycling among their employees and may be more willing to support the effort community-wide.

Always include information on how donations will be recognized in any approach to companies or businesses – these donations can come out of marketing budgets as well as giving or foundation budgets.

Remember in-kind donations!

- Food and drinks for events
- Items or experiences for auctions
- Materials, equipment rental or tools for trailbuilding
- Employee volunteers for workdays

These should be valued and recognized just like cash donations!

Events/activities

- Online Silent Auction – time-limited opportunity to purchase donated item(s) or experiences online can make great fundraisers (bicycle, gear, signed poster/photo, a ride with Local Celebrity, etc.)
- Events don't have to be formal affairs with hundreds of attendees; many small non-profits organize "friendraisers" where the event is a casual gathering at a private home and the goal is to introduce people to the project or group and get them involved as supporters and volunteers – without pressuring them to give