

Nevada
Active Transportation Plan
+ Complete Streets Implementation

2024 Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program:
Project Narrative



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JOE LOMBARDO

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1263 S. Stewart Street
Carson City, Nevada 89712

TRACY LARKIN THOMASON, P.E., PTOE, CPM

June 7, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Local match commitment for the Nevada Department of Transportation's Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) Grant Application for a Complete Streets Policy and Statewide Active Transportation Plan

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

This letter serves as the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) commitment to its \$645,000 contribution for matching funds in conjunction with NDOT's application submittal for the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program. NDOT will provide the local match from Nevada's SB-821 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program, funded through the Driver License renewal fees.

The state of Nevada is at a critical point in time where needs and conversations around safety and affordable and active transportation options are in alignment. NDOT's strategic goals provide the charge to work proactively with communities across the state to improve safety for all transportation system users. To meet our state goals, NDOT must be forward-thinking and provide meaningful guidance to communities of all sizes and contexts to link them together for everyone regardless of how they choose to travel. NDOT is committed to developing a meaningful statewide Active Transportation Plan that also significantly updates our Complete Streets Policy to continue moving the needle in active transportation, access, and safety for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes in Nevada.

Thank you for consideration of NDOT's ATIIP grant application. We appreciate your support of this important project.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy Larkin Thomason". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Tracy Larkin Thomason, P.E., PTOE, CPM
Director
Nevada Department of Transportation



Project Description

With a growing population and significant recreational tourism, the pressure on the Nevada's transportation system continues to grow. The demands of people who live, work, and recreate in Nevada is also evolving, requiring transportation corridors to accommodate a greater variety of modes and users. The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) is applying for ATIP planning funds to develop two integrated documents to fundamentally shift how transportation projects will be developed, coordinated, and funded across the state. The Nevada Active Transportation Plan (NATP) will:

- Prepare an **active transportation plan** that identifies needed improvements and implementation strategies to integrate active transportation options into the transportation system for rural areas and the transitions into urban areas. The plan will provide consistent design concepts to be integrated throughout the state. Development of the plan will include a health and equity review, a crash and safety analysis, and an implementation framework.
- Implement a **Complete Streets framework and implementation toolbox** by updating NDOT's 2017 Complete Streets Policy, defining the standards for implementing active transportation elements into all NDOT projects and projects that interact with NDOT facilities, create performance measures that account for equity and protection of vulnerable road users, and serve as the implementation arm of the Active Transportation Plan.

The NATP will be a significant step forward, embracing momentum around active transportation goals and investments through updated policies, interagency collaboration, and a comprehensive process for coordinating, evaluating, prioritizing, and implementing projects that will improve safety, equity, mobility, connectivity, and sustainability across NDOT's system.

Problem Statement

Nevada's rural, suburban, and urban communities face barriers to accessing destinations due to a lack of safe multimodal options. For many communities, the state highway system is both a point of access and a barrier. Many existing facilities do not meet current multimodal design best practices or there are gaps in the network that present safety and accessibility challenges. Where communities have made multimodal improvements, networks that provide meaningful access for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes are still incomplete. Additionally, state funding is not consistently leveraged in an equitable manner, and a lack of early coordination across NDOT departments results in missed opportunities to incorporate safe multimodal options. NDOT is committed to making meaningful changes, but currently lacks the necessary tools and policy directive to do so.

Background

Over the past decade, NDOT has been listening and learning, and applying new strategies to implement projects that will make Nevada's transportation system safe, resilient, and accessible for all. Municipalities have also made improvements in Complete Streets, bikeways, sidewalk and ADA enhancements, transit service, and more; however, the state's multimodal transportation system remains disconnected. The Nevada legislature has made two significant moves in the past few years that are driving change. Passage of SB285 encourages Complete Streets planning at the local and regional levels and stipulates multimodal considerations for all projects; and updates to the Revised Statutes that created a Complete Streets Fund to implement projects.

The NATP is needed at the state level in Nevada because many smaller communities need better contextual guidance and assistance to be competitive for funding streams. As part of NATP, NDOT will partner with the communities to develop the plan that will help them find paths to implement more active transportation projects.

Project Information



The NATP will strive to **bring all communities up to a common standard** that is rooted in best practices, yet tailored for the context and needs of Nevadans and visitors. The evolution of best practices in design and policy will allow NDOT to make significant strides toward achieving safe, connected, and active transportation options. **Drawing from lessons learned in Nevada and other states, the NATP will provide the tools needed to move more projects into development and implementation** while strategically coordinating and leveraging available resources to improve safety and connectivity for everyone.

The NATP will include a comprehensive look at **connections between communities and filling network gaps** and map out **comprehensive strategies** to improve active transportation options within the state, **for rural areas, transitions to urban areas, and urban cores**. These strategies will integrate benefits, metrics, community needs, design standards, and project opportunities that can be implemented with state and regional funding mechanisms.

Across such a large state with many NDOT departments and even more local governments to work with, communication and working together can be difficult. NATP will provide NDOT with **consistent design concepts that can be integrated across departments** so everyone can understand when and how to coordinate active transportation options and effectively implement Complete Streets. The plan will specify design guidelines to be created and adopted, along with performance

measures that **produce actionable data that account for equity**. Additionally, the NATP will leverage previous work by enhancing and integrating recommendations provided through the State Highway Safety Improvement Program. The integrated approach will allow for an **implementation pipeline** that local governments can easily understand and use to be competitive for funding.

Key components of this plan will also focus on making sure data is leveraged and communicated in ways that achieve the goals. This will include a **integrating a health and equity review, a crash and safety analysis, and an implementation framework**. These components will be leveraged by local governments and be a tool to understand community needs and priorities.

Engaging the Community

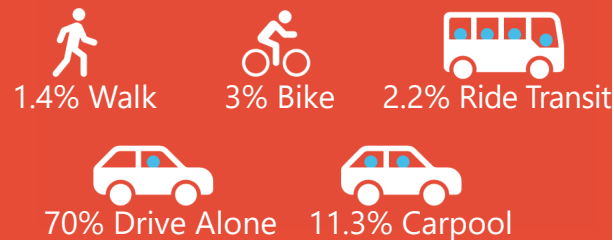
NDOT is committed to educating and engaging people across Nevada in ways that allow them to see their input and ideas reflected in the NATP. Providing tailored engagement to the myriad of local communities and people of differing ages, abilities, and income levels is a tall task, but it is one that Nevada is ready for.

Engagement ideas that NDOT will explore with communities and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to achieve the right mix will include, but are not limited to, interactive and tried-and-true methods, such as:

- Conducting listening sessions with local governments, community organizations, and advocacy groups across the state.

3.9% of (or more than 50,000) households have no vehicle access

Commute Mode Share:



Source: US Census, 2022 American Community Survey



NDOT participating in a Walking School Bus

Project Information



- Leveraging partnerships to help distribute messaging and encourage participation.
- Hosting walking and biking tours to help understand the opportunities, issues, and barriers while obtaining real-time inputs.
- Developing an ambassador program to bring trusted community members into the process, providing credibility and transparency.
- Integrating relationships built from the Federal Lands Connectivity Study, including Tribal communities to obtain input from these often underrepresented community members.

Building on Previous Plans

Over the past decade, NDOT has made progress providing access and mobility options for people using all modes of transportation. **NDOT has completed several plans and projects that incorporate all modes of travel, demonstrating its commitment and capability to deliver plans similar to the NATP** proposed in this application. [NDOT's 2017 Complete Streets Policy](#) aimed to direct the development of safe, accessible facilities, but is ineffective because it does not have the ability to enforce changes or implementation, nor does it go far enough to integrate NDOT departments and funding. Additionally, Nevada's [Statewide Bicycle Plan](#) is outdated and does not provide the necessary level of information to help communities develop solutions to complex challenges or provide facilities to accommodate all modes, like people walking or using wheelchairs.

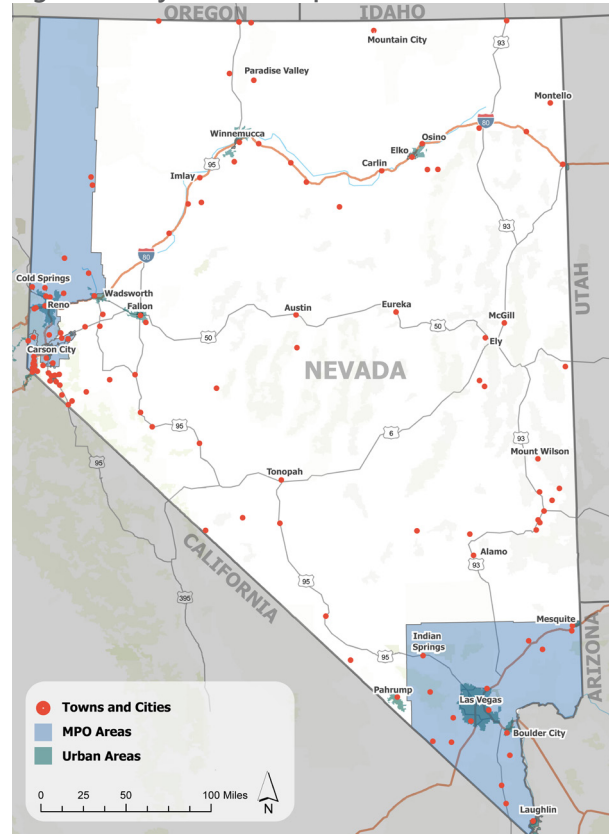
Following the development of the 2017 Complete Streets Policy, NDOT developed the [One Nevada Transportation Plan](#), the state's long-range transportation plan, which addresses current needs while strategically planning for the state's future. The **vision of One Nevada is to create a safe and connected multimodal transportation system that supports the state's economic vitality.** The goals of One Nevada align closely with the USDOT goals and have been a continual guiding star for NDOT. Subsequently, the [2021-2025 Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#) focused on leveraging data to identify safety needs across the state system.

Project Location

When completed, the NATP will apply to projects in urban and rural communities across Nevada. Due to the geographic nature of the state, there are large areas where **state-owned facilities are the main, and sometimes only, transportation corridor.** The state system has created divisions between communities and many destinations over the decades with a focus on vehicle access. These corridors are often wide, with multiple lanes of travel and few safe options for people to walk or bike along or across them to access nearby destinations. This makes the role of NDOT in planning these facilities particularly important.

Figure 1 highlights the MPO areas in blue that cover the southern tip and western border of the state. Urbanized areas are shown in green, and rural communities are represented as red dots. There are many small communities located directly along or just off NDOT facilities, including US 50 which serves multiple rural towns and is a designated US Bicycle Route. However, its multimodal infrastructure is fragmented and unsafe.

Figure 1: Project Area Map





Lead Applicant

NDOT is the lead applicant and will manage the development of the NATP. NDOT has successfully met requirements and obligations for several USDOT discretionary grant programs. These have included:

- FY 2023 RAISE – NDOT is leading the design and construction for the Ely Downtown Infrastructure and Complete Streets on US-93 and US-50, in rural central Nevada.
- FY 2021 BUILD – NDOT is a funding partner and is leading the design for improvements to Pyramid Way, a major arterial in Sparks, Nevada.
- FY 2022 INFRA – NDOT is constructing Complete Streets on two major corridors.
- Multiple grants in 2023 to develop high-speed intercity passenger rail and enhance the Elko Nevada Rail corridor.

NDOT has experience and capability in administering additional projects under the programs above, as well as the USDOT Safe Routes to School, Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail, and Corridor Identification and Development programs. No other parties will be involved to deliver the project.

Figure 2: Budget Table

| Funding Type | Amount | Percent |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Non-Federal Funds | | |
| Local Match | \$645,000 | 30% |
| Federal Funds | | |
| 2024 ATIIIP Grant | \$1,505,000 | 70% |
| Total | \$2,150,000 | 100% |

Figure 3: Project Budget by Task and Share of Costs

| Project Component | Total Cost | % Total | Non-Federal | Federal |
|---|--------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| | | | Amount | Amount |
| Project Management & Grant Administration | \$107,500 | 5% | \$107,500 | - |
| Community Engagement & Stakeholder Coordination | \$645,000 | 30% | \$167,700 | \$477,300 |
| Complete Streets Implementation Tool | \$322,500 | 15% | \$90,300 | \$232,200 |
| Active Transportation Plan | \$1,075,000 | 50% | \$279,500 | \$795,500 |
| Total | \$2,150,000 | 100% | \$645,000 | \$1,505,000 |
| Percent Share | 100% | | 30% | 70% |

Project Budget

NDOT is seeking \$1,505,000 in ATIIIP grant funds for a total budget of \$2,150,000 (Figure 2). NDOT will provide \$645,000 in matching funds from its 821 fund, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program, which is funded by driver's license renewal fees. This is a dedicated funding source (NRS 483.415) that may only be used for bicycle and pedestrian planning, and safety outreach, education, and information. This commitment of local funding demonstrates **NDOT's dedication to the project, covering 30% of the total project budget and thereby exceeding the minimum 20% local match.**

The project budget **includes sufficient contingency to cover unanticipated costs, ensuring the financial stability of the project.** This reflects NDOT's commitment to managing the project efficiently and effectively and minimizing financial risks. Additionally, **NDOT's experience managing federally funded projects further guarantees the financial viability and compliance** of this project.

Figure 3 shows the budget breakdown by project component (described in the Project Readiness section on pp. 13-14). Without ATIIIP funding, NDOT will need several years to develop the NATP, as funds become available. ATIIIP funding will allow for succinct and comprehensive project execution, resulting in active transportation projects and Complete Streets enacted sooner throughout the state. If not now, there is a missed opportunity for upcoming projects in the pipeline that will not realize the benefits of this plan.

See Appendix A: Budget Narrative for more detail.



Mobility & Community Connectivity Building Spines and Networks

The NATP will significantly improve mobility and community connectivity across Nevada. Connecting communities is a key part of NDOT's mission, and the agency is responsible for ensuring that people in smaller rural communities have safe mobility options that meet their needs, just as people in larger cities do. The NATP will provide the **framework for connections between population centers and within communities that are challenging** for municipalities and MPOs to deliver.

State-owned facilities are the backbone of the transportation network in Nevada. The NATP will incorporate the state highways as active transportation spines to connect metropolitan centers and rural communities across Nevada. **NDOT's corridors are vital to accessing jobs and other essential destinations, particularly in rural communities.** The NATP will identify locations where active transportation spines can be implemented to enhance connections to schools, workplaces, businesses, recreation areas, and other community destinations. The transition areas between urban and rural communities are of particular importance as the context significantly changes and it is difficult to navigate these areas safely.

State highways are some of the most significant barriers and most problematic corridors that present real challenges to safety and access for all users. In addition to developing spines, NDOT corridors present a **significant opportunity to fill in crucial gaps, creating functional and complete networks in urban communities.** This will improve connections for people of all ages and abilities throughout Nevada. US 50 is a great example of the needs and challenges to safely connect communities and destinations in Nevada. The examples shown in Figure 4 on the next page highlight a few of the ways the NATP will be impactful along US 50.

Top Right: Kids walking across an NDOT facility to go to school showcases the barriers and opportunities
Bottom Right: NDOT participating in a Bike Bus to school to increase safety while encouraging active transportation

The NATP will **support existing and future transit investments, improve bus stop accessibility,** and encourage ridership along NDOT facilities. By enhancing safe connections for walking and biking, transit stops will become more accessible, particularly as many transit routes operate on NDOT corridors.

The NATP will guide coordination and project development for communities and programs across the state. Three examples of existing programs that will benefit from the NATP are NDOT's Safe Routes to Schools program, Speed Management Action Plan, and the Nevada Statewide Bicycle Plan.

NDOT's Safe Routes to Schools program currently sees fewer funding applications from smaller and rural communities. These communities have indicated uncertainty about the right types of projects and how to make the desired improvements. This is compounded by the fact that **in many of these communities, state highways themselves are a barrier for safe access to schools.** The NATP will be a tool these communities can use to develop projects and compete for Safe Routes to School funding.



Merit Criteria



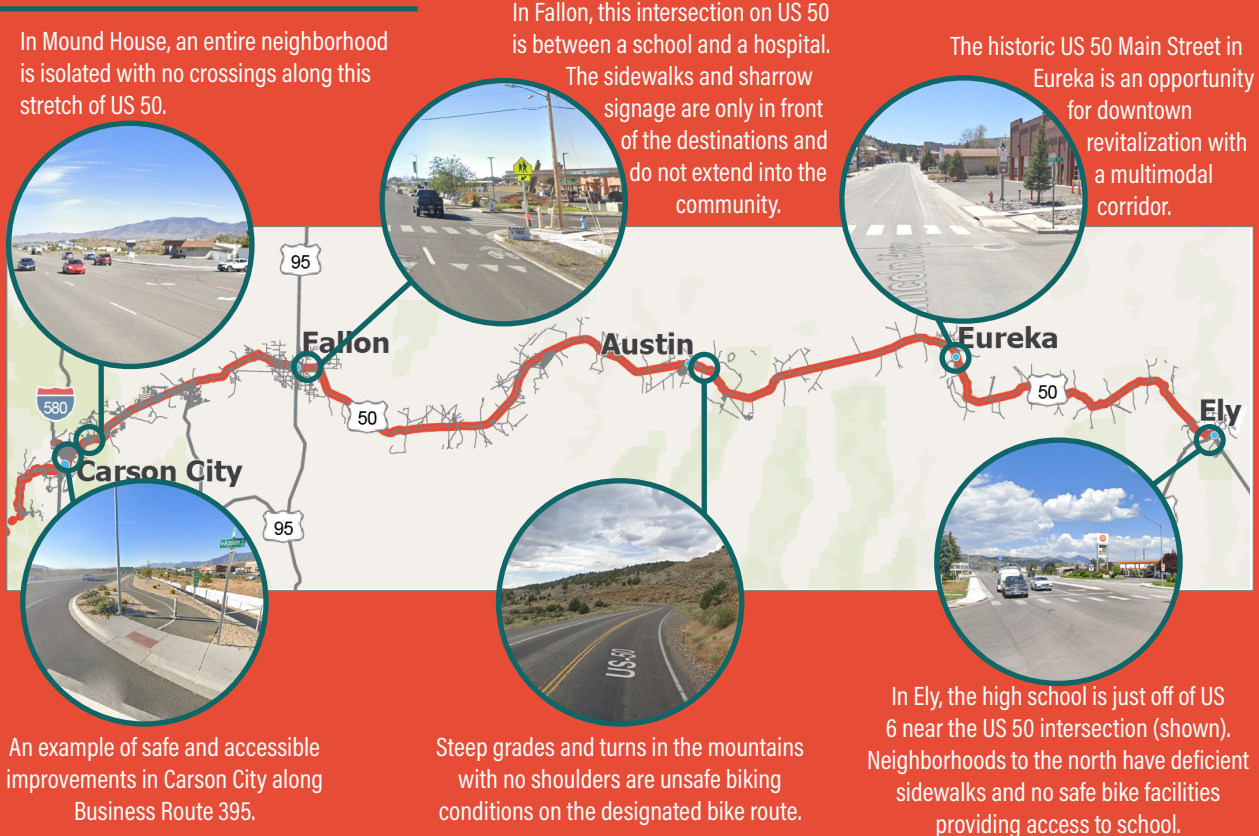
NDOT has had success using a Safe Systems Approach implementing the Speed Management Action Plan. This plan identifies safety problems caused from speed issues and appropriate countermeasures and strategies to implement. According to this plan, speeding is widespread throughout Nevada, and **more than half of all bicycle and pedestrian crashes that are fatal or cause serious injury are speed related.** The approach to the Speed Management Action Plan is threefold with a focus on being proactive, comprehensive, and systematic. NDOT will integrate lessons learned from this approach into development of the NATP to continue meaningful progress for systemwide safety improvements.

NDOT previously worked with counties across the state to develop the Nevada Statewide Bicycle Plan with individual county-level plan components. These plans have been inconsistently implemented, in part because they did not provide the right level of design guidance and linkage to NDOT expectations and funding mechanisms.

The **NATP will provide the basis for updating those plans and propel the implementation of projects** through improved design standards and policies that are contextually appropriate for different community needs and issues.

NDOT understands that data analysis is particularly powerful in ensuring that the NATP goals are met during implementation and in further reinforcing community support and buy-in. The NATP will **develop meaningful data and metrics to demonstrate the myriad of benefits of active transportation,** making a compelling case for investment in these projects. This also allows for **data-driven storytelling** after implementation to communicate realized changes. Developing key performance metrics will be integral for implementation and used in future coordination, project development, and project evaluation of active transportation improvements.

Figure 4: US 50 Example of Needs



Merit Criteria



Community Support

The need for a new statewide plan that addresses active transportation and sets communities up for success to make meaningful changes is **supported by agencies and community organizations across Nevada**. The letters of support in Appendix B detail the interest and commitment for this plan to be representative of all Nevadans. Letters of support have been received from Northern Nevada Public Health, Air Quality Management Division, Southern Nevada Bicycle Coalition, Nevada Department of Public Safety, Northern Nevada Public Health, Nevada State Parks, University of Nevada, Las Vegas Center for business and Economic Research, and each of the four MPOs in Nevada.

Community support for active transportation has also been **demonstrated through** the planning process used to develop the **One Nevada Transportation Plan**. Many projects that have been developed in accordance to community and stakeholder input reflect increased multimodal infrastructure improvements and connections for communities – both local and regional networks. **Engagement with disadvantaged communities, including tribal communities, was integral to the success of One Nevada**. The projects that have been developed and funded through this plan have continued to leverage the information provided by those communities and build on it with continued conversations so that funding is applied where and how it is needed most.



NDOT staff fitting a bike helmet at an education event for pedestrian and bicycle safety

NDOT has seen continual community support for active transportation and multimodal safety by **working one-on-one with community members** at events across the state. This includes walking school buses and bike rides with youth and parents, as well as education events like bike rodeos where staff help to fit children with helmets and teach them how to ride safely in the network. This engagement has **built trust in communities across Nevada and continued support for more funding to meet the communities' needs**.

MPOs in Nevada are developing Complete Streets projects and successfully engaging communities in active transportation planning efforts at the local and regional levels. NDOT will build on these plans and coordinate closely with the MPOs to harness their lessons learned and their outreach networks. Partnering with MPOs and local governments will help NDOT understand the local conversations and tailor approaches to educate and obtain ideas and feedback in ways that are most appropriate to a given community's priorities and needs.



Top: Historic Westside Complete Streets Project rendering
Bottom: Arts District Complete Streets Project rendering
Both projects are examples of Southern Nevada RTC's collaboration with local governments to create regional design guidance and implement safe, accessible, multimodal projects in the Las Vegas metro area.



Commitment to Active Transportation

NDOT is committed to facilitating safe, accessible options for everyone and raising the bar for what that looks like across the state. An example of this commitment is the redesign of BUS 395 in Carson City (see image on p. 8). This project provided a safe, separated mixed-use facility for people walking and biking, along with safe, high visibility crossings, and environmental design to increase comfort and resiliency. Observations show more people are walking and biking to nearby retail and services as a result, particularly those with limited mobility options.

To achieve this, the NATP will establish a new statewide network of active transportation corridors. A plan at this level for active transportation has not been attempted yet in Nevada. The Complete Streets components will reinforce the NATP planning, setting clear guidelines for rural and urban communities, better integrate the multiple departments within NDOT, and tie projects to state funding opportunities.

Complete Streets Components

A new Complete Streets framework and implementation toolbox will **focus on implementation with policy and design guidance that prioritizes safety, comfort, and accessibility** at a state level. NDOT's 2017 Complete Streets Policy was a significant step forward at the time. It elevated the importance of

active transportation modes and provided a new context for their development. However, the policy did not help NDOT move the needle as intended. The policy does not provide a clear or strong directive and is not enforceable as a requirement for project development and funding. NDOT now has an opportunity to update the state's policy, leveraging examples from peer agencies that have seen more success and implementation for active transportation modes and use.

The most significant issue and continually missed opportunity is that currently state funding can be designated for improvements to state-owned facilities that do not align with NDOT's goals for Complete Streets and active transportation. This happens because NDOT departments focus on specific issues, such as maintenance or congestion mitigation, and can miss opportunities that would result from a broader, more comprehensive assessment.

The NATP's Complete Streets components will provide direction on how departments should work together and establish a process so that all planned and funded projects consider active transportation and vulnerable road user improvements. This will **result in a more efficient use of NDOT funding, leading to the highest and best use of limited resources**. For example, a signal and intersection improvement project may not include components beyond crosswalks and pedestrian signals, but with integrated Complete



A barrier-separated trail along Business Route 395 in Carson City. This is an example of using plantings, lighting, a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon at a crossing, and physical separation to increase walking and biking. Source: Google Maps 2024

Merit Criteria



Streets components, a smart right-turn lane and a shorter pedestrian crossing distance may be considered. Additionally, repaving projects could consider incorporate new crosswalks or reduced lane widths to slow speeds; drainage projects may introduce bioswales that add visual complexity and can slow traffic while improving stormwater drainage and water quality.

Design Standards

The NATP's practical implementation guidance for active transportation elements and projects will incorporate the most recent best practices in multimodal safety for all users. NDOT recognizes that urban and rural areas have unique needs and existing policies and standards vary across regions, leading to inconsistent facilities and safety risks for people walking and biking. The comprehensive NATP will integrate the FHWA Complete Streets Design Model, creating uniform safety standards that elevate safety measures across all regions.

Having a basic level of consistency in active transportation facilities across the state will also help drivers understand how to navigate more safely when people walking and biking are present. People who are not driving will feel more comfortable using the facilities and be more likely to walk, bike, or use other forms of active transportation.

The NATP's design guidelines will provide a **consistent framework aimed to bring all transportation projects in the state in line with principles from the National Roadway Safety Strategy and Safe Systems Approach**, including NACTO and AASHTO. These standards are many times used in the urban areas, but suburban and rural communities often need more guidance given their land use and travel patterns to create affordable, safe, and healthy mobility options. **Many of Nevada's less populated counties have a higher proportion of seniors who cannot safely move around without a vehicle.** NDOT aims to assist these communities with contextual design standards in the NATP that raise the bar and offer reference materials and funding pathways to help them develop and implement safe projects.

Equitable Development

Equity is at the core of NDOT's mission of safety for all. The state of Nevada has a substantial number of disadvantaged individuals who deserve to reap the benefits of a transportation system that works for everyone. The NATP will improve equitable outcomes for communities and make meaningful progress addressing the significant needs across the state for people to be able to walk and bike safely **through a health and equity review as part of early plan development.** The NATP will address and improve equitable development by improving safety, providing greater access to opportunities, and increasing affordable mobility options. Currently **24% of traffic fatalities are people walking and biking, but they only account for 3% of total crashes** (statistic on p. 11). This is a significant and disproportionate impact on vulnerable roadway users, many of whom lack access to a vehicle or are considered disadvantaged by other metrics.

Similarly, a lack of safe and reliable transportation options affects workforce participation and mobility, especially for low-income populations. Providing safe, accessible mobility options, particularly for people who do not own or have access to vehicles. In Nevada, **3.9% of the state's population has zero auto access.** According to the DOT's Equitable Transportation Community Explorer, several areas of the state have populations that are considered disadvantaged based on cost burden, a lack of access, or safety. Overall, **32% (962,000) persons in Nevada live in disadvantaged census tracts.** Figure 5 highlights these communities. Many communities show a need for multimodal access to schools, parks, jobs, groceries, and more. Active transportation spines developed in the NATP will expand regional connectivity to these key destinations, supporting small businesses and wealth creation in communities. The data on the map is just one way to look at the needs as it doesn't show every burden and disadvantaged component. As an example, **72% of Carson City's population has Transportation Insecurity,** primarily driven by a lack of transportation access, defined by longer commute times and difficulty traveling due to a limited access to personal vehicles or transit.

Merit Criteria

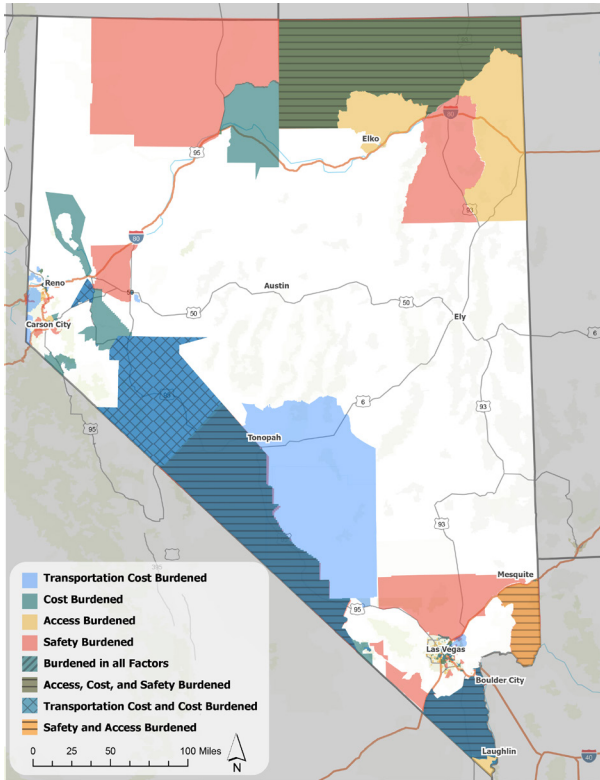


Figure 5: Map of Disadvantaged Communities

With the Complete Streets framework and implementation toolbox to set guidance and priorities tied to state funding across Nevada, the **opportunity to incentivize projects in disadvantaged communities** and impact community mobility, health, and safety is significant. To do this, NDOT will develop metrics to measure and track investments and change. NDOT will explore a “metrics that matter” approach so that the data collected and used to assess progress is easy to access, accurate, and ultimately communicates useful information that indicates where and how much progress has been made. For example, instead of identifying the number of protected bike lanes built, a more meaningful metric might be the number of schools or population that is within ¼-mile of a protected bike lane. This type of metric shows the impact of the data. NDOT will track investments made in bike and pedestrian projects and use the data to continue and reinforce project prioritization for geographic diversity and vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.



The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), is currently conducting a study in partnership with NDOT that examines Complete Streets in the national and state-level contexts to develop a method to evaluate and estimate benefits of future Complete Streets projects for all populations, including those who are disadvantaged and historically underserved. NDOT will use this information to inform the NATP and create meaningful metrics.

Additionally, this will tie into the Complete Streets components **with a framework for prioritizing projects and supporting implementation across more diverse and underserved areas of the state.**



Top: A worker crosses an NDOT intersection with a bike. While a crosswalk is provided, the intersection is wide, lacks signage, and has poor lighting.

Middle: UNLV student crossing a major arterial that has been improved with a crosswalk and an RRFB to increase visibility and safety. Source: University of Nevada Las Vegas, R. Marsh Starks

Bottom: This multimodal trail is a good example of providing safe access that connects communities and destinations as an alternative to high-traffic and high-speed corridors.



Other DOT Goals and Priorities

Safety for Pedestrians and Cyclists

Developing the NATP will be a crucial step forward for improving safety in Nevada, particularly for vulnerable road users. One Nevada has a goal to Enhance Safety with a target of zero fatalities. Between 2016 and 2021 there were **417 pedestrian and bicycle fatalities across Nevada, representing 24% of total fatalities.**

A crash and safety analysis conducted as part of the NATP and coordinated with the Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan will dig into this data to examine these trends and identify the right application of countermeasures and best practices.

State-owned facilities, which are central to the transportation network, often present significant safety challenges for non-motorized users and have higher traffic volumes and speeds. The higher vehicle speeds place people walking and biking at a greater risk for fatalities and serious injuries. As a majority of pedestrian fatalities occur at crosswalks, crossings and intersections will be a prominent point for design and future improvements to help seniors, children, and people with disabilities better navigate the network safely.

The NATP will integrate **accountability mechanisms so that significantly more projects will consider and implement countermeasures that will benefit vulnerable road users and improve safety.** By focusing on state-owned and operated corridors, the plan will address safety challenges in high-risk areas, reducing fatalities and serious injuries.

Access to Jobs & Key Destinations

Currently, many Nevada communities lack cohesive networks that connect residential areas with key destinations like workplaces, schools, and healthcare facilities. The NATP will identify infrastructure gaps and establish a core network that bridges these gaps so that there is continuous access to key destinations in urban, suburban, and rural contexts. **Across Nevada, a significant number of jobs, schools, and other community destinations are along or within a short distance of NDOT facilities.**

Communities often face significant challenges accessing jobs and essential services due to unsafe, non-ADA-compliant, and disconnected active transportation facilities. NATP will leverage statewide funding and collaboration with local jurisdictions and MPOs to prioritize improvements in disadvantaged communities, enhancing their access to jobs and services. The NATP will provide the metrics to evaluate future projects based on their ability to improve connectivity to key destinations, improve consistency, and elevate projects that promote walking and biking.

Economic Competitiveness

The **current network** has insufficient active transportation infrastructure, which **hinders access to local businesses and employment opportunities.** The NATP's development of spines and networks will facilitate future project development and implementation to provide better business access. National research indicates that businesses with safe multimodal access receive more sales and revenue. People who walk and bike to shop tend to frequent those businesses more often, resulting in higher overall sales ([Bicycling Benefits Business](#)).

The NATP will enhance economic opportunities by identifying and prioritizing projects that improve access to local businesses, thereby boosting economic activity and supporting local economies. It will also support workforce access by encouraging projects in areas with particularly poor access today. Information about workforce development goals and DBE participation is on p. 15 in the Administration Goals section.

52% of all traffic is on NDOT facilities

24% of fatalities are pedestrians and bicyclists, but they only represent 3% of all crashes

63% of pedestrian fatalities occur at crosswalks

Source: [Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#)

Merit Criteria



Outdoor Recreation Economy

Nevada's unique geography, characterized by expansive deserts, pristine lakes, and towering mountain ranges, serves as a vast and varied playground for outdoor enthusiasts. Outdoor recreation has become an integral part of the state's culture, attracting both residents and tourists who seek a wide range of activities, including bicycling as a significant activity. In 2021 outdoor **recreational economic activity** contributed **\$4.8 billion to the state's gross domestic product (GDP) and provided more than 50,000 direct jobs** (from the Improving Access to Federal Lands in Nevada Draft Study). This economic engine provides significant revenue for local businesses across the state. As this industry continues to grow, it is important for NDOT to improve multimodal access to recreation and businesses for employees and patrons. The NATP will leverage information and projects in the Improving Access to Federal Lands in Nevada Draft Study to build on active transportation connections and networks.



Environmental Protection

As transportation is a key component of pollution and climate change, active transportation is an important strategy to reduce those impacts. Vehicle use produces high emissions. Due to the landscape and historic types of transportation investments, Nevada's transportation system is highly dependent on motor vehicles, significantly contributing to poor air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Furthermore, traditional infrastructure increases runoff and pollution, affecting local ecosystems and water quality.

The NATP will **promote active transportation** as a key strategy for reducing vehicle emissions, aligning with state and community environmental goals. Additionally, the plan will enhance environmental quality and resilience by **incorporating low-impact development standards** within the NATP guidelines, such as permeable pavements and bioswales. The NATP will analyze air quality benefits and potential land use impacts and demonstrate how increased active transportation can lead to significant environmental improvements, reduce pollution, and promote sustainability.

An additional environmental benefit relates to decreasing heat impacts. Nevada is susceptible to high heat conditions, which is a cause of more serious health incidents in the U.S. than any other climate-related hazard. The NATP will complement current efforts to **combat extreme heat in disproportionately impacted neighborhoods** by reducing GHGs and increasing shade through low-impact development and inclusion of landscaping and trees where possible in projects.

Top Left: Bicyclists participating in long-distance recreation rides that are popular across the state.
Bottom Left: Bicyclists on e-bikes participating in a bike tour of Red Rocks Canyon. The popularity of e-bikes is making longer distance bike rides and tours of Nevada's recreation areas more popular and accessible.



Quality of Life

Quality of life in all Nevada communities is impacted by the availability of active transportation options. Increasing active transportation networks is a proven way to improve community health (www.cdc.gov). Sedentary lifestyles and limited access to active transportation options contribute to chronic health issues, such as obesity, heart disease, and mental health problems. Reducing GHG emissions also plays an important role in improving quality of life and health as well.

Improving environmental quality can improve rates of asthma and other diseases and allow people to be more comfortable walking and biking outside.

Active transportation systems are an effective way to provide access to parks and greenspaces. Nevada is a recreation wonderland for residents and visitors alike. However, access to these resources can be limited. These destinations will be important when identifying the right locations for spines and filling network gaps.

Another important aspect of quality of life that can be directly impacted by active transportation is the increase in social interaction and mental health in communities. In many communities across Nevada, there is inadequate multimodal infrastructure that hampers social interactions and community engagement, diminishing overall quality of life. The opportunity for the NATP to improve social connectivity and realize enhanced community engagement is real. The network improvements that will improve access to parks and recreational areas will foster greater social interaction and community vibrancy.

Furthermore, current infrastructure is too often not inclusive, failing to meet the needs of all community members, including children, older adults, and people with disabilities. **Incorporating Universal Accessibility components** in the NATP will provide more inclusive access and improvements. The NATP will address to the needs of all community members, promoting equity and enhancing daily living experiences helping people get to the places they want and need to go.

Project Readiness

NDOT has decades of experience administering federally funded transportation projects and is well positioned to successfully administer the ATIIIP Planning Grant.

Technical Feasibility

While the NATP is a lofty plan, it is feasible to complete successfully and will leverage best practices and proven, yet innovative, strategies. The tasks in the Scope of work are described below.

Scope of Work

Project Management

NDOT will manage development of the NATP partnering with contracted consultants. This collaboration will ensure that the plan meets NDOT's goals, while making it meaningful and implementable upon completion. NDOT will manage the schedule and budget to avoid overruns.

Community Engagement

As discussed in the Merit Criteria section, community engagement will be a focus of this plan to develop a comprehensive understanding of communities needs across the state and their challenges to implementation. Taking a listening first approach, NDOT will develop the plan to reflect the range of community needs, while establishing guidance that will better leverage future funding across the state. This will create more connections and safer outcomes for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.

Active Transportation Plan

This task will be the core of the NATP. A common problem across Nevada is understanding how to apply best practices to local contexts. A key component of this task will be to provide contextual guidance based on a wide variety of community typologies experienced specifically in Nevada. NDOT will utilize proven and existing guidance, including, but not limited to, NACTO, AASHTO, and MUTCD, to create a Nevada-specific Design Standards Toolbox.

Project Readiness



This task will also include an assessment of existing multimodal plans that are adjacent, along, or connect to state-owned corridors. This will identify opportunities to coordinate and improve existing planned projects, as well as identify system gaps. The plan will include a Corridor Opportunity Analysis for state-owned facilities and statewide priorities that guide project development.

Complete Streets Framework and Toolbox

NDOT's 2017 Complete Streets policy will get a complete overhaul through the NATP. Leveraging the insights identified through Community Engagement and the Active Transportation Plan tasks, the NATP's Complete Streets components will function as an implementation arm of this plan for all state-funded projects. The new Complete Streets components will incorporate best practices from other agencies that have been impactful in achieving outcomes, tailored to Nevada. Additionally, this policy will be a key internal agency driver to facilitate coordination and get the greatest return on investment from state funds. The policy is envisioned to be an umbrella that helps NDOT connect multiple policies and plans together to achieve the state's goals.

Project Schedule

NDOT is ready to move forward with this effort. With USDOT support and funding, NDOT can complete the NATP within 18 months (Figure 6). The 18-month timeline accommodates a significant stakeholder and community engagement process. It also allows for time for proper review and buy-in from NDOT departments and local agencies so that the plan is implemented throughout the agency and the state.

If ATIIP funding is not awarded, NDOT will need multiple fiscal cycles to complete the work, taking likely two to three times the amount of time. Additionally, without ATIIP funding the NATP will have to be developed in pieces rather than comprehensively. This will reduce the potential for early impact opportunities and could result in less buy-in.

Figure 6: Project Schedule

| Schedule Component | 2024 | | 2025 | | | | 2026 | |
|--|------|----|------|----|----|----|------|----|
| | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 |
| Federal Award and Contracting | █ | █ | | | | | | |
| NATP Procurement | | | █ | | | | | |
| Project Management | | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |
| Community & Stakeholder Engagement | | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | |
| Active Transportation Plan | | | | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ |
| Complete Streets Framework and Toolbox | | | | | | █ | █ | █ |



Administration Priorities

Figure 7: Administration Priorities & Departmental Strategic Plan Goals Summary

| Administration Priority | Key Points | See Also |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Safety | Safety is the top priority for NDOT. The NATP will improve safety for all users, including those who are more vulnerable to roadway threats, by developing consistent design standards for safe and accessible facilities across a statewide system for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers. Over time, improvements to facilities and existing conditions will reduce crashes, incidences, injuries, and deaths, especially among vulnerable roadway users. | Pages 5-6, 10-11 |
| Climate Change & Sustainability | The NATP will support the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection's climate change and sustainability focus areas, including climate action. Key to accomplishing USDOT and NDOT climate goals is shifting travel from driving to other modes of travel that reduce emissions. While it is difficult to estimate the mode shift anticipated from this plan due to the statewide nature, NDOT believes this plan is crucial to facilitating changes that realize higher rates of walking, biking, and transit use in communities across the state, and therefore reduce GHGs and other climate impacts. | Page 12 |
| Equity | NDOT recognizes some communities are disproportionately impacted by historic transportation investments, are cost burdened, or have other mobility challenges. This plan will create meaningful opportunities to hear their voices and turn their needs into projects that improve safety outcomes and allow them to thrive in their communities. | Pages 9-10 |
| Workforce Development & Job Quality | NDOT has a history of using Project Labor Agreements (PLA) for construction projects. The PLAs establish terms with trade unions that encourage productive and efficient construction operations and reduced costs, and timely and economical completion of the project. The unions invest in training for members, contributing to a higher-skilled, better compensated construction workforce, which benefits traditionally marginalized construction workers with little training. Additionally, NDOT has Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) goals that they must meet for all projects conducted by the agency. | Page 11 |

Priority Selection Considerations

Figure 8: Priority Selection Consideration Summary

| Selection Consideration | Key Points | Reference |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| Projects that connect key community institutions through active transportation infrastructure, particularly schools | Given the breadth of state-maintained facilities and their role in transportation networks for communities large and small, there is a significantly high opportunity for the NATP to create safe access to important destinations, including schools, jobs, parks, and more. NDOT roadways are often the primary access to schools across the state. There are more than a dozen schools along US 50 alone that would be impacted by improvements and recommendations from the NATP. | Pages 1-3, 5-6, 10-11 |
| Projects that provide substantial benefits to disadvantaged communities within or around the project area | The opportunity for NDOT to provide benefits to disadvantaged communities who lack existing access, are cost burdened, and have had lower levels of investment historically is staggering as this plan will touch rural and urban communities in every corner of Nevada. | Pages 9-10 |