



Frequently Asked Questions – updated August 4, 2016

Note: this section will be updated as additional questions are asked, and as new information is available. Please check back regularly. If you don't see the answer to your question here, please email bigjumpproject@peopleforbikes.org.

Who Can Apply?

The lead applicant should be a representative of the city, town, county, or municipal authority where a Big Jump Project focus area is proposed. Only representatives of government agencies may apply. Representatives from Regional MPO's and Councils of Government may apply as the lead applicant, but letters of support from elected officials and municipal staff where the proposed focus area is located must be included in the application submission.

Applications to participate in The Big Jump Project should be supported by a diverse team representing your intended focus area. Ideally, this team will consist of elected officials, the head of the city's transportation department or equivalent, supportive community organizations, neighborhood residents or leaders, neighborhood or bicycle advocacy groups, a local foundation or funder, and a business or business organization. These will typically be the same contacts who submit letters of support and will be involved in the ongoing efforts towards achieving The Big Jump Project goals and objectives. As part of the selection process, PeopleForBikes staff may contact one or more of these individuals to discuss the application.

Applications are limited to government agencies located in states, districts, territories, commonwealths, or tribal lands within the United States.

Non-profits, private sector organizations, businesses, community groups, other agencies and individuals are not eligible to apply. However, demonstrations of support from these voices is an important part of the application.

What Do We Mean by “Bike Network?”

One of the goals of the Big Jump is to advance the concept and understanding of effective bike networks. We know that a stripe of paint on a high speed road is not an attractive place to ride for most people and that painting bike symbols called sharrows in the middle of a lane on a busy street does little to encourage riding. We know that we need to build complete networks of comfortable places to ride bikes if we are to reap the multiple benefits of getting more people on bikes. These networks are described by a



variety of terms, including “low-stress,” “high-comfort” and “all ages and abilities.” Gil Penalosa talks of the need for a “minimum grid.” Based on successful systems internationally and in this country, we see four major components to these networks:

- protected bike lanes on busy streets,
- local streets with low volumes of cars moving at slow speeds where bikes and cars can mix comfortably (sometimes called bicycle boulevards or neighborhood greenways), and
- separated pathways such as greenways and rail-trails,
- all connected with safe crossings at intersections.

The range of language used to describe the networks and their component parts is an indicator of relatively recent arrival of the concept to the U.S. planning community. For the purposes of this document, we will simply call them “bike networks” without the qualifiers, as one of our goals is to institutionalize the idea that the only real bike network is one that connects a broad range of people to places where they want to go. Cities have been building bits and pieces of networks for years, now it’s time to fill in the missing links and complete the connections.

What Are the Goals and Objectives of the Big Jump Project?

The Big Jump Project will help ten places quickly complete planned high-comfort bike networks in a defined focus area -- a single neighborhood or district -- and use smart outreach and robust community engagement to encourage people to ride more. The identified goals of the program are as follows:

- Prove the concept: If a community completes a network of convenient and comfortable places to ride and encourages people to use it, bike use will double or triple over a three-year period with reductions in serious crashes for all modes.
- Develop best practices in changing habits and fostering a culture where it’s ordinary to ride bikes.
- Develop and institutionalize the concept of bike networks into the mainstream of the planning world as standard practice
- Develop common metrics of use and measures of success that are easily understood and replicable in any community across the U.S. Measures will include, but are not limited to,
 - Bicycle use and growth over time,
 - Safety of all road users, measured by risk of serious crashes
 - Perceptions of biking, including safety
 - Connectivity of the network including access to key destinations.
 - Broader community benefits of more biking, including:



- Access to jobs and opportunity by underserved populations
- Economic impacts of bicycling activity
- Health impacts of bicycle activity
- Environmental impacts of bicycle activity

With the help of a common usage metric these places will serve as models for other neighborhoods and cities. Additional goals and objectives will be developed in a coordinated effort with selected Big Jump participants to identify local needs and outcomes specific to each community.

What Are the Benefits of Taking The Big Jump?

The Big Jump brings together the places that are doing the best work in the nation on biking, in an environment of mutual support and shared learning with a bit of competition. This unique partnership holds up their efforts as national models to help provide a positive feedback cycle that continues local momentum.

The Big Jump project does not provide funding for infrastructure projects. When submitting applications, communities are asked to provide details about projects that are being considered or are already moving through the development process. The Big Jump will work with communities to leverage those projects and build a base support around them, but is not set up to fund their planning or installation.

It may be best to think of The Big Jump Project as a technical assistance program, but with more hands-on management and engagement than traditional support programs might offer. The Big Jump Project works to build on existing community momentum to improve bicycling and is not an off-the-shelf solution for communities. Working together with selected Big Jump places, the PeopleForBikes team will develop a customized support package based on the local needs within the context of the program. Available resources include, but are not limited to the following:

- A robust leadership support program: including study tours, training and peer exchanges with national and international experts as in-depth networking experiences for lead transportation staff, project designers, elected officials, community and business leaders. Local leaders from the ten communities have access to a robust online forum for collaboration on a wide range of topics related to implementing bike networks and encouraging people to ride.
- Support for addressing technical and strategic issues: Small grants will help bring outside experts and workshops to your city to address technical, design and strategic challenges. The Big Jump Project will publish reports and provide



information to help local leaders make the case. Topics include economic impacts of bicycling, perceptions of safety and comfort for people riding bikes, designing bike networks of appropriate size, scale, and density, ridership levels and the factors that influence them, and the health, environmental, and equity impact of bicycling in your community

- Training, best practices, and research on community outreach and communications, including robust and authentic community engagement, framing and messaging complete bicycle networks, and leading on issues of equity during the planning and implementation phase of projects
- Assistance in building community support through small grants (\$5k-\$20k) provided to local groups for outreach and events that support biking.
- We help establish identity as a national leader by providing original reporting on stories in your city that combine anecdotes and data to help build a public narrative about biking's benefits. National media focus and widespread recognition as a leader beyond your local market can help set up a positive feedback loop.

Some communities or focus areas may have the network in place, but need help generating use, while other communities may be just starting the public dialog about completing a network. We're looking for a diverse range of starting points and perspectives on this. A firm commitment to funding infrastructure projects is not required, but may help establish credibility for the momentum you wish to demonstrate.

A customized support package will be developed for each Big Jump community after local needs are assessed. Resources may increase as additional national and local funding opportunities are identified.

The Big Jump Project team is developing a toolkit to measure progress in the ten areas. We have been working with top academics and local and national agency staff to build on current best practices to develop consistent measures that will track increases in participation, reductions in the rate of serious crashes, increases in network connectivity, and perceptions and attitudes regarding biking. The project will combine existing data from cities with new measurement tools to compare progress across the ten cities. Our measurements will be open-sourced so they can be used by others, as part of our effort to create more consistent bike measurements nationwide.

What Are the Requirements for Taking the Big Jump?

Participation in the Big Jump Project involves various expectations, including ongoing collaboration and communication with the PeopleForBikes team and other focus cities,



biannual reporting, and occasional travel to participate in study tours, workshops and other events. Focus cities are expected to:

- Identify a lead contact person who will be the primary point of contact.
 - Join monthly update conference calls to share news, best practices and challenges with the PeopleForBikes team and other focus cities.
 - Provide regular updates on progress within the project area, via verbal reports on conference calls and through an annual update process.
 - Recruit participants for travel to and participation in workshops and study tours on topics related to bicycle network development, community outreach and communications, and strategies for building a base of community support.
 - Help to organize meetings with local leaders for Big Jump team visits.
- The lead contact person, the head of transportation and a key community leader are expected to attend the Big Jump kick-off meeting, to be scheduled sometime in the first quarter of 2017. Other meeting opportunities will be identified as the project progresses.
- The city will provide data, as available, to the Big Jump project team. This includes existing count and crash data. The city will provide access to GIS files as needed. The local team will also assist in lining up volunteers or partners for manual counts as needed.
- The city may be asked to help distribute surveys to residents within the project area each year by providing mailing lists or through other channels as available.

The lead municipal contact is usually a management-level implementation person within the city and most likely the person charged with filling out the application. This person will be the primary point of communication with the PeopleForBikes team. The lead contact will be the principal organizer of participation in Big Jump Project activities, including identifying delegates for events. Requirements will vary seasonally, but expect to devote an average of 2 hours per week to Big Jump Project business.

The Big Jump Project will be most successful when it involves broad participation across agencies, sectors and departments. The lead contact is encouraged to involve all team members who are actively engaged in the vision, design, communications, outreach and implementation of high-comfort bicycle network projects. For study tours and workshops in particular, participation of heads of transportation departments or equivalent, elected officials, other agency staff and community leaders will deliver the most satisfying results.



Is Local Funding Required?

PeopleForBikes and national partners are providing funding for the project so local funding is not a requirement to participate. This support package and services offered as benefits of joining The Big Jump Project is valued at \$250,000 annually per community.

However, we have found that communities can achieve better results with the partnership of local funders and foundations helping to strengthen the efforts and expand the base of support in participating communities. Applicants are highly encouraged to include a local funding partner as part of their leadership team and include a letter of commitment from them with their application package. The participation of local funders has two primary benefits: the project will be more effective with additional resources, and local funding is a strong indicator of local support.

The Big Jump is interested in local funding matches in four key areas:

- data collection, analysis, and ongoing development of the measurement toolkit,
- leadership development programs including travel support for local leaders to attend domestic and international study tours and gatherings,
- funding for local organizations to arrange outreach and engagement efforts in the neighborhoods, and
- support to bring in outside experts as needed, including workshops, technical advice and communications assistance.

Each of these activities will have tangible local benefits to the 10 selected Big Jump communities, including clear reporting on the results and outcomes. There may also be opportunities for financial participation in additional program areas of interest to local funding partners. PeopleForBikes is open to understanding other ways in which the Big Jump Project can be leveraged to achieve greater community results.

The level of financial involvements may vary community by community, but we are suggesting local funders participate at \$50,000 per year over three years - a total investment of \$150,000. Local funding partners are welcome to contribute at higher levels than the suggested annual contribution. We would encourage local funders to reach out to us directly about the appropriate levels of participation and any unique ongoing efforts that might be leveraged during The Big Jump.

We recognize that some of these programmatic themes may not meet local funding guidelines or work directly in unison with other internal restrictions funders have in place. As such, we offer this as a menu of funding options, with the opportunity for you to select where it is appropriate and desirable for local funding participation to occur.



This annual contribution can come from local government budgets, local community foundations, philanthropic partners, national or regional foundations involved in related efforts in the community, or other grant programs. Applications should include letters of interest from agencies or funders that will support the Big Jump Project demonstrating their commitment to financial participation in the local efforts conducted under The Big Jump and at what level they intend to do so. Once selection of participating communities is complete, PeopleForBikes will work through the official processes of each funder to request the funds in the appropriate manner. We are happy to discuss further and provide more details, please contact us. A webinar for potential funders was held on August 4, 2016. A recording of the webinar can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/pZiqfQeCwXA>.

When Will Applications Be Accepted?

- **Tuesday, June 28, 2016** - Applications will publicly open. The full application can be downloaded for offline reference, but must be submitted using the online submission process.
- **Thursday, July 21, 2016** - PeopleForBikes will host a webinar to present the basic framework of The Big Jump Project, the application and selection process, and allow interested communities to ask questions about the context of their application. Participation in the webinar is not a prerequisite to participate in the program, but it will provide useful information in drafting responses to the application's questions. A recording of the webinar can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/lblu9cRiAzw>.
- **Thursday, August 4, 2016** - PeopleForBikes will host a webinar specifically for potential funders (local and national) to better understand the role they can play in achieving the Big Jump Project goals and objectives as partners with prospective applicants. A recording of the webinar can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/pZiqfQeCwXA>.
- **Thursday, August 18, 2016** - Submit an online notice of interest indicating your intent to apply. This notice is not a prerequisite to participate in the program, but it does give us a sense of the types of communities that are planning to apply. Notices of intent should be submitted at <http://survey.clicktools.com/app/survey/go.jsp?iv=5jngpjxvn7um>.



- **Friday, October 28, 2016** - Complete the application in full and submit, along with supplemental materials. Letters of support from local funding partners should include a commitment to participate financially in the program and indicate what level of funding they intend to participate at. The full application can be downloaded for offline reference, but must be submitted using the online submission process at <http://survey.clicktools.com/app/survey/go.jsp?iv=1n738olesdfo4>.

When Will Selected Cities Be Chosen?

A review committee will discuss and assess all applications during the end of 2016. As part of the selection process, PeopleForBikes staff may contact one or more of the individuals listed in your applications to discuss the merits and potential of your community's involvement.

Finalists will be notified in early January 2017.

What Does A Strong Application Look Like?

Selection to be a Big Jump Project participant will be determined by several factors. Successful applications will demonstrate:

- Ambitious plans to connect a network of low-stress biking in a defined area.
- Strategy for increasing participation through outreach and events
- Evidence of strong political will from elected officials
- Supportive and engaged city transportation staff and leadership
- Evidence of strong community support
- Evidence of support from the business community
- Local funding participation at \$50,000 per year or more

We will also look for:

- Recent successes that demonstrate momentum
- Recent changes in leadership, vision or funding that may prove catalytic
- New projects slated for completion during the project term that will significantly improve access and connectivity
- Clear articulation of why being part of the Big Jump Project will help
- Leveraging local funding for support of local projects



Applicants should consider areas within their city where The Big Jump Project can be leveraged to achieve dense networks of high-comfort bicycle infrastructure and a measurable increase in bike riding once infrastructure is combined with effective community outreach programs. The size, demographics, and shape of the focus area will vary city by city and may consist of a neighborhood, business corridor, school zone, downtown, residential suburb, or other proposed boundaries. Generally, we are thinking that a zip code (about 30,000 people) may be an optimum size, but are open to other proposals. In some smaller communities, this focus area may be equal to the boundaries of the entire town.

This suggestion that 30,000 people is an appropriate size is meant to help applicants visualize the emphasis on a smaller geographic area for this program. It is not a requirement to be at this threshold and we are totally open to applications that are above or below that figure. What is more important to us is that the application clearly demonstrate ambitious plans to build a connected network for bicycles, that momentum from elected officials and community leaders is tangible and resulting in the development of strategies to build a vibrant space for bicycling, that a broad base of support from business and community leaders is present, and that city staff are engaged in the process and willing to accept technical assistance. If you feel that your community can create an application that clearly demonstrates those values, we'll gladly entertain a geographic focus area of varying sizes and populations.

Applications to participate in The Big Jump Project should be supported by a diverse group of participants representing your intended focus area. Ideally, this team will consist of elected officials, the head of the city's transportation department or equivalent, at least one supportive community organization, neighborhood residents or leaders, neighborhood or bicycle advocacy groups, a local foundation or funder, and a business or business organization.

We will work in a portfolio of places – neighborhoods in larger cities, small towns, suburbs, and downtowns - in order to provide replicable models to a range of cities. We have identified three particular areas of opportunity and will intentionally include areas with these attributes in our portfolio:

Increasing opportunity: We seek neighborhoods with concentrations of poverty where improving the bike network and changing culture around biking can improve access to jobs and education, and increase safety of the neighborhood through increased activity and reductions in serious crashes.



Linking to parks, nature and recreation: While biking to work receives the most attention, other kinds of biking may be easier gateways for getting new people out on bikes, and have multiple benefits in health and well-being. We seek project areas that are intentional in improving access to parks, natural areas, and recreational riding opportunities including spine greenway trails, mountain bike trails and road bike routes. The driving forces may include tourism and economic development. Involving kids is good.

Connecting to transit: The bike and transit connection has great potential as it increases the catchment area for transit. This is particularly important in more suburban areas where lower densities challenge the viability of transit. We are interested in working with communities that will improve access to transit by bike, with improved connections, good outreach, better bike parking. The synergy with new or improved transit services is intriguing.

Focus areas should demonstrate qualities that inherently make the Big Jump Project activities and results replicable in similar communities across the US.

While PeopleForBikes is a bicycling organization, we are well aware that bicycling fares best when it is seen as a tool to achieve broader community goals and when it is a part of a larger effort rather than standing alone. We are interested in synergies between bicycling and broader community priorities. We are looking for places with momentum and energy, where better biking may be only one piece of a larger effort to improve a community.