

# U.S. transportation officials embracing more than cars

By Josh Cohen, Next City

Local bike and pedestrian planners have long had a complicated relationship with the federal Department of Transportation. It is often incredibly difficult to pay for ambitious infrastructure projects without the U.S. Department of Transportation's help, but because the feds haven't yet codified much of those ambitious, next-generation street designs, ambitious municipal projects are ineligible for funding.

At least that's the story risk-averse engineers like to tell advocates and their bolder colleagues. But in a recent attempt to change attitudes, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published a laundry list of common funding and design misconceptions aimed at local and regional planners.

The report highlights five major funding misconceptions. The FHWA points out that federal funds can, in fact, be used for protected bike lanes, road diets and local road networks. Cities and states can also draw from far more funding sources for biking and walking projects than just the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The DOT also provides walking and biking funding via channels such as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, the National Highway Performance Program and more.

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