



WBR Virtual Series: Meet KATE, Q&A Session

1. Is there any funding available for improving public transportation?
 - a. Matt Messina: Yes there are public transportation dollars that could be available for implementing transit needs, but also an element of the evaluation for our program dollars would be related to making transit accessible.
2. Will the KDOT engineers be bringing the active transportation aspects up with municipal engineers and with road & bridge/county folks as projects come up?
 - a. Jenny Kramer (KDOT): That is something we are looking at for the VRU process. Recently had an internal meeting with KDOT and this question came up, how to affect our process so this comes up naturally, a checklist for example. So as projects are being developed it won't depend on someone at the city or an advocate to bring it up, something that comes up as a part of the process.
 - b. Tammy Sufi (Toole Design): In the background, our team is supporting the active transportation program by providing technical resources for communities, build capacity at all levels of govt for active transportation design, planning, all aspects.
 - c. Jenny: This year there will be an active transportation component to local consult. Designated and priority bike route layer is being looked at more by highway engineers planning projects across the state.
3. There was an acronym on, perhaps, the third slide that I did not recognize?
 - a. Matt: TAP = Transportation Alternatives Program, part of the Justice 40 initiative. Federal program source that is the primary funder in most states for active transportation projects. Includes eligibility for bike and ped infrastructure projects, SRTS programing and infrastructure projects, historic preservation of transportation facilities, other non-traditional highway transportation projects. Great program, funds increased 60-70% with the BIL.
4. I was told yesterday by a county commissioner that there are federal funds for walkability. He was applying for his wealthy area. Are there any chances that areas around schools could/would be prioritized over wealthy suburbs?
 - a. Jenny: Great question, this is exactly what the VRU assessment and the equity maps are for.
 - b. Matt: There's also Justice40, an executive order by the Biden administration to make sure that 40% of federal funding supports disadvantaged communities. The TAP program is linked to this initiative. Usually 40% only applies to discretionary funding programs, but it exists in the pot of money the state administers for the TAP as well as other programs across the board.
 - c. Tammy: We've also started to build the background guidelines for the statewide SRTS program. We have been discussing how to prioritize SRTS funding in lower income areas, and how to make sure we have an equitable distribution of the funding to communities with fewer resources. Equitable funding is a core element of discussions around KATE programs.



5. Actually, hopefully ALL schools, not just low-income levels, will be prioritized?
 - a. Matt: Yes, all schools. As it relates to the VRU assessment evaluation of age groups of those most impacted by collisions with automobiles. This captures school age children and has no assignment to wealth. Will help the projects with the most need rise to the top, score higher.
 - b. Jenny: SRTS projects are very competitive application process.
6. Is there any program to expand safety shoulders on our state highway system. In my years of cross-country bicycling, I found adequate and well-maintained safety shoulders served auto/truck needs as well as bicyclists.
 - a. Jenny: When shoulders are going to be repaired, or a road being improved in some way, engineers should consult the designated priority bicycle route layer available online, which has the two USBRs in Kansas on there. Engineers are to contact the KATE program to ask if there is a need to widen the shoulder and make sure that there is at least 3' outside of the rumble strip. Because we have that layer, the designated routes are identified as a route where we have to follow that policy.
 - b. Jenny: Just did a project north of Gerard on USBR 76, provided funding to widen the shoulder here. Great for cyclists, and critical for truck traffic in the event of an emergency, they have more space to be able to pull over.
7. Who will be developing the statewide Complete Streets policy?
 - a. Matt: This will be done by KDOT with influence from partners and stakeholders to help us develop a policy or a set of guidelines that applies to certain programming, that gives additional access or consideration to projects that assess the need appropriately for pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.
8. Some of the small rural towns along the Rail Trails in the state are perfectly located to take advantage of Active Tourism but suffer from too many needs and too few volunteers. Is there a way for KATE to help them take advantage of the tourism opportunities?
 - a. Jenny: Our TAP funding in particular is used to fund placemaking or streetscaping along main streets or beautifying an area. We have a project in Sterling where they are putting in shared use paths a mile or two from USBR 66. The town is becoming more friendly to cyclists with more showers and places to sleep.
 - b. Jenny: Looking at Department of Commerce opportunities as well, and the Recreation Trail program.
9. Can you talk more about the Drive to Zero initiative?
 - a. Jenny: This is part of our Strategic Highway Safety Planning process; we have emphasis area teams that are working towards getting our traffic fatalities and serious injuries down to 0. We have an online dashboard map that has been developed, if you want to see specific crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists you can zoom into the map to see locations where the fatalities and serious injuries have occurred.