

# The Supporting Statement

Introduction: This is a new clearance request to support a task on the Assessment and Delivery of Safety Funding at the Local Level.

## Part A. Justification.

### 1. Circumstances that make collection of information necessary:

Improving safety throughout the transportation sector is Department of Transportation's (DOT's) top priority. Rural road safety is particularly a concern because rural roads disproportionately account for a greater proportion of traffic fatalities. While only 40 percent of travel occurs on the nation's rural roads, 57 percent of all traffic fatalities occur on these facilities. Many rural roads are under the jurisdiction of local agencies, which often do not have the resources needed to adequately address the safety problems on the roads they maintain. The findings of this data collection effort will help identify States that could use technical assistance for distributing funding to local agencies and identify practices/processes states can consider for use in their safety program delivery process.

This data collection effort is consistent with DOT's Strategic Goal of Safety, specifically for improving safety on rural roads identified in the draft U.S. Department of Transportation Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2012-2016:

- Encourage State and local agencies to adopt data-driven, comprehensive safety strategies and collaborate with stakeholders such as the Federal land management agencies, local, and tribal governments to improve safety levels; and
- Provide national leadership in delivering safety programs and products to tribal communities, gateway communities, and local governments.

### 2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is the information used:

The intent of this data collection effort is to determine the extent of funding provided to local agencies for road safety improvement projects and to obtain information about the local safety program (funds and projects) delivery process used in each of the states and noteworthy practices/processes that can be replicated in other states. The products developed as a result of this research effort will promote the distribution of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to all public roads based on needs.

This data collection effort will ask States to report on processes used to determine funding set asides for local agencies for safety improvement projects; incentives used to encourage local agencies to develop and implement road safety projects; training opportunities and technical assistance provided to local agencies for the development of safety projects; practices used to streamline the federal aid process for local agencies; challenges and barriers faced in attempting to provide funding to local agencies for safety projects; and funding sources used to fund local road safety improvement projects. FHWA will compile this information to identify typical and noteworthy practices/processes used by States to deliver funding to local agencies for local road safety improvement projects. Ultimately, this information will be documented in a technical report and will serve as a resource for States looking to improve their current practices/processes for delivering funding to local agencies for safety improvement projects.

Additionally, States will be asked to identify either the percentage or amount they set aside for local road safety projects and to identify the amount of funding obligated to local roads by funding source for the three most recent fiscal years. The intent is to get a better handle on the extent Federal HSIP and other safety funding resources (other Federal, State, and/or local funding sources) are being distributed to local agencies for road safety improvement projects. This information will be compiled into summary tables and used by FHWA to identify which States are obligating a significant amount of funding to local agencies and those that are not that could potentially use technical assistance. Based on the challenges and barriers identified by the states in need of technical assistance, FHWA will identify other States they could be paired with for a potential peer to peer exchange

### 3. Extent of automated information collection:

The questionnaire proposed for this effort will be administered online. A link to access the questionnaire will be emailed to State Department of Transportation HSIP program managers and local public agency coordinators.

4. Efforts to identify duplication:

A gap analysis was conducted for this effort to determine the extent of information available on States' distribution of funding to local agencies for safety improvements and about States' local safety program (funds and projects) delivery process. The extent of information available from the State HSIP Annual Reports, State agency web sites, Federal obligation tables, and recent literature was evaluated. The findings of the gap analysis indicate that these resources serve as a starting point, but additional information must be collected to fully assess safety funding distribution to local governments and processes used:

- The information provided in the HSIP reports is generally limited to HSIP funding and other funding sources may be used by States for funding local safety projects. Additionally, the extent of information provided in the HSIP Annual Reports varies significantly by agency. Not all States indicate the amount of funding used for local safety improvement projects, the processes used to deliver local safety programs, or challenges faced if funds are not used for local safety improvement projects.
- Project lists on agency web sites provide general information but do not specify project funding mechanisms, costs, or scope. Additionally, project lists do not typically identify whether the sponsoring agency is a local government or if the projects are on or off the State highway system.
- The HSIP obligation tables provide funding distribution amounts for rural and urban roadways by State. However, a number of assumptions are necessary to estimate the percentage of funds used on local facilities.
- The recent literature focuses on a handful of State practices.

5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses:

Small businesses are not affected by this information collection effort.

6. Impact of less frequent collection of information:

This is a one-time information collection request. Less frequent collection of information will impact our ability to identify opportunities to advance local road safety efforts across the nation.

7. Special circumstances:

There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection.

8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8:

The proposed information collection 60-day notices is published in the Federal Register as follows: Federal Register / Vol. 77, No. 60, Page 18879-18880 / March 28, 2012 [Docket No. FHWA-2012-0023]. No comments were received during the 60-day period.

9. Payments or gifts to respondents:

There are no payments or gifts being offered to respondents as part of this information collection effort.

10. Assurance of confidentiality:

We do not assure any confidentiality of responses to this information collection effort.

11. Justification for collection of sensitive information:

We are not collecting any sensitive information as part of this information collection effort.

12. Estimate of burden hours for information requested:

We expect one response from each State Department of Transportation for a total of 50 responses. The estimated average burden per response is 5 hours, for a total estimated burden of 250 hours. There are no additional costs to respondents as the questionnaire will be completed online.

13. Estimate of total annual costs to respondents:

There are no capital/start-up or operation/maintenance costs associated with this effort.

14. Estimate of cost to the Federal government:

The FHWA Office of Safety has retained the services of a contractor in the amount of \$196,280 to support the review, research and analysis associated with this information collection effort.

15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments:

This is a new information collection effort.

16. Publication of results of data collection:

The results of this data collection effort will be summarized in a report. A draft report is scheduled to be submitted to FHWA for review on February 14, 2013 and a final report by April 11, 2013.

17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date of OMB approval:

Approval for not displaying the expiration date is not being requested.

18. Exceptions to certification statement:

No exceptions to the certification statement are being requested.