

## Local safety grants: What do YOU think?

Should the maximum amount of Iowa's Traffic Safety Fund (TSF) grants to local agencies be increased from \$500,000 to \$750,000? The Iowa DOT wants your opinion by the end of April.

### Background

When the TSF program was established in 1987, its annual budget (fiscal year 1988) was \$1.8 million, and the maximum per-project grant was \$500,000. At that time, \$500,000 covered most of the cost of a major safety improvement, like installing left-turn bays and a traffic signal at an urban intersection.

In fiscal year 2008 the annual TSF budget is \$4.5 million, and the maximum per-project grant is still \$500,000, even if a benefit-cost analysis justifies additional funding. Today \$500,000 covers less than half the cost of a major improvement like that described above, making such a project unaffordable for many local agencies.

In recent years, cities and counties have generally submitted grant applications for smaller, less expensive safety improvements that can be completely covered by a TSF grant.

### Addressing "five percent safety projects"

Of Iowa's five percent most severe road safety needs (as identified by the Iowa DOT under new federal legislation), many are located on city and county roadways. The cost to make needed improvements at these locations will far exceed \$500,000 per project.

To encourage cities and counties to apply for TSF grants to remediate "five percent safety projects" in their jurisdictions, the Iowa DOT is considering raising the maximum grant to \$750,000. A benefit-cost analysis will still be required to support the actual grant amount.

### What's your opinion?

Increasing the maximum per-project grant could have advantages and disadvantages. Please share your opinions or recommendations with the TSF advisory committee

## Conference calendar

### March 2007

2	District No. 4 Workshop	Council Bluffs	Denise Wagner 515-294-5798 aleopold@snyder-associates.com
7 8 9	Work Zone Safety	Mason City Mason City Creston	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
12–16	2007 Route Surveying Class	Ames	Duane Smith 515-294-8103 desmith@iastate.edu
16	District No. 5 Workshop	Ottumwa	Denise Wagner 515-294-5798 aleopold@snyder-associates.com
27–28	SUDAS Erosion and Sediment Control Design Workshop	Marion	Laurel Raasch 515-294-3360 lmraasch@iastate.edu
27 28 29 30	Work Zone Safety	Council Bluffs Sioux City Storm Lake Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384 tmcdonal@iastate.edu
30	District No. 6 Workshop	Iowa City	Denise Wagner 515-294-5798 aleopold@snyder-associates.com

### April 2007

3–5	NHI Bridge Inspection Course Number 130091: Underwater Bridge Inspection	Des Moines	www.ucs.Bridge Inspection mnet/_repository/2007/ nhibrIDGE/pdf/brochure.pdf
3–4	SUDAS Erosion and Sediment Control Design Workshop	Marion	Laurel Raasch 515-294-3360 lmraasch@iastate.edu
10–11	Intelligent Transportation Systems Heartland, 8th Annual Meeting	Omaha, NE	Dennis Kroeger 515-296-0910 kroeger@iastate.edu www.itsheartlandmeeting.org/
24–26	Western Plains MPO Conference	Rapid City, SD	Brad Remmich 605-773-3093 Bradley.Remmich@state.sd.us

### August 2007

16–17	Mid-Continent Transportation Research Symposium	Ames, IA	www.ctre.iastate.edu/ events/midcon2007/index.htm
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Get more information and/or register online for these events at [www.ctre.iastate.edu/calendar/](http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/calendar/).

**The TSF advisory committee wants your opinion by the end of April.**

of city, county, and Iowa DOT engineers. Contact Tom Welch, Iowa DOT transportation safety engineer, 515-239-1267, [tom.welch@dot.iowa.gov](mailto:tom.welch@dot.iowa.gov).

The TSF advisory committee will thoughtfully consider all input. ■