

# Nebraska Department of Transportation Funding Opportunities & Crash Data Case Study



There are resources available through the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) to support agencies and Traffic Incident Management (TIM)-related efforts. Funding streams can come through federal organizations like the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) or the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and may include limitations, requirements, and unallowable items. The following summary is NOT a comprehensive list of potential opportunities and is NOT all-inclusive of limitations, requirements, and considerations. Questions that cannot be answered through this resource should go to the Traffic Safety Section (402-479-4645) or the Highway Safety Office (402-471-2515 or [NDOT.HSO@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOT.HSO@nebraska.gov)).

## Traffic Safety Section

The Traffic Safety Section funds infrastructure-based transportation projects with Highway Safety Improvement Program funds<sup>1</sup>. They analyze crash patterns to identify data-driven opportunities for improvement along roadways. Possible projects/items that can be funded include, but are not limited to:

- Rumble strips
- Horizontal curve signing
- Traffic signals
- Roundabouts
- Pavement markings
- Cable median barriers
- Full-scale projects (i.e., changing intersection type)

*The ability to make changes through this department requires accurate crash report data to easily find patterns and identify effective solutions.*

## HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE

The Highway Safety Office (HSO) website<sup>2</sup> has resources available to learn about the grant application process, grant stipulations, unallowable items, and forms to use from application to implementation. Their grant proposal guide<sup>3</sup> (published for each fiscal year) explains the timeline and provides examples of successful proposals. Funding assistance through mini-grants is available to all Nebraska law enforcement agencies and non-profit organizations for items like preliminary breath testing (PBT) units, radar units, in-car video cameras, and selective overtime enforcement. Funding assistance is also available for car safety seats, traffic safety training/workshops/conferences, and public information and education activities.

To apply for a grant through the HSO, your agency must be registered through SAM.gov.<sup>4</sup>

Funding through the HSO can be received through grants and mini-grants. Possible items/activities that can be funded include, but are not limited to:

- One-time grant, e.g., speeding enforcement event
- Impaired driving events/enforcement
- Seatbelt usage events/enforcement
- Drowsy driving events/enforcement
- Overtime for enforcement events
- Fees for training and conferences
- Enforcement-related equipment (radar guns, cameras, breath testing – must participate in enforcement events to qualify)
- Loaned speed trailers
- NOT for giveaways or promotional items

1 [dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/lpa/projects/programs/hsip](https://dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/lpa/projects/programs/hsip)

2 [dot.nebraska.gov/safety/hso](https://dot.nebraska.gov/safety/hso)

3 [dot.nebraska.gov/media/wmzj2dnb/2026-grant-proposal-and-policy-guide.pdf](https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/wmzj2dnb/2026-grant-proposal-and-policy-guide.pdf)

4 [dot.nebraska.gov/media/ry1afqev/20-quick-start-guide-getting-a-unique-entity-id.pdf](https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/ry1afqev/20-quick-start-guide-getting-a-unique-entity-id.pdf)

## OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: PRIVATE FOUNDATION GRANTS

Private foundations offer competitive grants for public safety organizations. Equipment, such as guardian angel lights or vehicle extrication tools, can be funded. Some grants also fund training opportunities.

 Safety equipment/  
technology

 Training

### Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation



[firehousesubsfoundation.org/about-us](http://firehousesubsfoundation.org/about-us)

Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation awards grants in four different areas: lifesaving equipment, prevention education, scholarships, and continued education. **TIM-Related Grant Awards:** Vehicle extrication tools, training, all-terrain vehicles

#### Award limitations & requirements:

- 600 applications accepted quarterly
- If awarded, two-year waiting period to apply again
- Provide financials that show revenue and expenses

### Spirit of Blue Foundation



[spiritofblue.org/safety-grants](http://spiritofblue.org/safety-grants)

Spirit of Blue Foundation's primary initiative is funding safety grants awarded to law enforcement agencies from local to federal levels to protect their members. **TIM-Related Grant Awards:** Local police received 10 guardian angel devices (IL) and 153 guardian angel devices (TX)

### Gary Sinise Foundation



[garysinisefoundation.org/first-responders-outreach](http://garysinisefoundation.org/first-responders-outreach)

Gary Sinise Foundation grants are reserved for law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and paramedic/EMS departments. Requests are limited to equipment and training only (i.e., no weapons for law enforcement). **TIM-Related Grant Awards:** Training

#### Award limitations & requirements:

- Priority given to volunteer, low, and underfunded departments
- If awarded, one-year waiting period to apply again

### Enbridge Safe Community First Responder Program



[enbridge.com/safecommunity](http://enbridge.com/safecommunity)

Enbridge Safe Community First Responder Program opportunities are by invitation only. The programs' grants are reserved for communities within 10 miles of Enbridge operations. Open to all public safety organizations and geared toward safety equipment needs. If your agency meets the criteria, email [fuelingfutures@enbridge.com](mailto:fuelingfutures@enbridge.com) to apply for an invitation. **TIM-Related Grant Awards:** Communications and training technologies

### The Leary Firefighters Foundation



[learyfirefighters.org/grant](http://learyfirefighters.org/grant)

The Leary Firefighters Foundation funds training, equipment, and technology needs for fire departments. **TIM-Related Grant Awards:** Fire safety truck, training for professional development. Required to make a case about how other funding methods have been unsuccessful.

### MSA & DuPont's Globe Gear Giveaway



[nvfc.org/programs/globe-gear-giveaway](http://nvfc.org/programs/globe-gear-giveaway)

MSA & DuPont's Globe Gear Giveaway is conducted in partnership with the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC). The giveaway donates turnout gear and helmets to volunteer fire departments.

#### Award limitations & requirements:

- Department must be over 50% volunteer and serve a population of 25,000 or less
- Must be a member of NVFC
- If awarded, two-year waiting period to apply again

## GRANT APPLICATION BEST PRACTICES

### Know your audience

Who is the fund granter? What are their guidelines and priorities? What message will resonate with them?

### Consider joint application

Are there other agencies you should collaborate with? What agreements, MOUs, etc. can you include in your application?

Provide clear outputs & outcomes:

#### What performance measures will be used to show success?

*X staff will be trained on expedited crash investigation via Y training program. Roadway clearance time and incident clearance time will be tracked, analyzed, and reported six months prior to and six months after training.*

#### What is the project going to achieve? What problem does this grant award solve?

*The expedited crash investigation training program will support quick clearance, with a goal to reduce clearance times by X% on injury and fatal crashes.*

### Tell a story with purpose

Make sure that the story you are telling aligns with your budget. If the grant only funds a portion of the project, include matching funds and other funding sources in your proposal. Showing buy-in from other organizations will strengthen the application. Consider if letters of commitment from leadership would enhance commitment statements. Submit letters of support or include quotes from other organizations to strengthen the application.

Include specific details, memories, and descriptive language to make a compelling case for your proposed project. Back these statements with supporting data.

### Use data

Use a summary of current data on the topic you are submitting to show the need. For example, if you are applying for a grant to fund overtime pay, include staffing data to clearly show why the grant is needed. If you are planning on purchasing equipment, include statistics on how the equipment can help your organization.

Some grants will require you to submit financial information. Make sure what you submit is concise and transparent. Reviewers want to know that your organization can manage a grant.



#### AASHTOWare Safety

The NDOT provides free access to traffic and safety data through AASHTOWare Safety. To request access to AASHTOWare Safety, contact [NDOT.AASHTOWARE-SafetyAdministrators@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDOT.AASHTOWARE-SafetyAdministrators@nebraska.gov)

### Make it EASY to read

Include pictures, charts, and formatting to make important information interesting to read. Use photos to convey the context of the situation. Put the most important text into call-outs to make it stand out. If a reviewer is skimming the page, what do you hope they see or take away?

### Start early and pre-plan

Dedicate agency resources to find grant opportunities and write proposals. Need more help writing your grant? Consider hiring a grant writer<sup>5</sup> if you need more specialized support.

## CASE STUDY

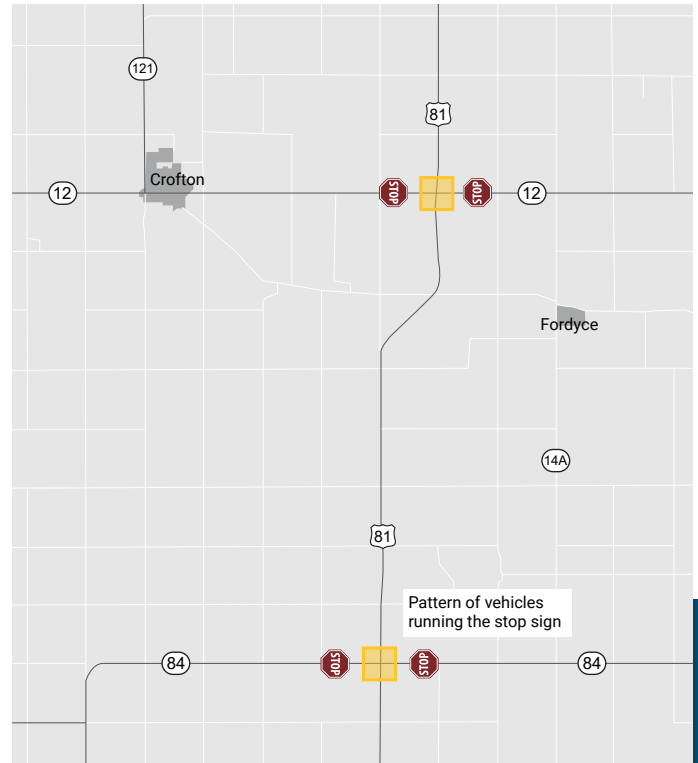
Accurate crash report data is critical for determining which high-priority transportation projects to fund. Below is an example of how crash data was used to prioritize projects and the importance of voicing concerns to drive change.

### US-81 Near Crofton, NE

Crofton Volunteer Fire Department contacted NDOT about crashes occurring at two intersections: US-81 & N-12 and US-81 & N-84 (see map).

### Process

- 1** NDOT reviews crash reports to identify patterns
- 2** NDOT and local agencies collaborate on potential safety countermeasures
- 3** NDOT conducts safety analysis for intersection improvements
  - a** Stop sign running and failure to yield at the intersections lead to right-angle and left-turn crashes. Potential improvement: roundabout
- 4** NDOT determines if federal safety funds can be used by conducting benefit-cost analysis
  - a** The societal crash cost analysis showed that converting the intersection of US-81 & N-12 to a roundabout will reduce right-angle crashes and left-turn crashes and have a project benefit-to-cost ratio that is eligible for federal safety funds.
  - b** The intersection of US-81 & N-84 had fewer crashes and did not have a project benefit-to-cost ratio sufficient for federal safety funds. NDOT reviewed other low-cost safety improvements for this location instead.
- 5** NDOT integrates into the project development process
  - a** NDOT has programmed a safety improvement project with federal safety funds to convert the intersection of US-81 & N-12 to a roundabout.



**Every reported crash was included in the safety benefit-cost analysis and was important in identifying the crash patterns for selecting a safety improvement. Completing accurate crash reports is vital for safety improvements to be implemented.**

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions that cannot be answered through this resource, please contact:

### Traffic Safety Section

402-479-4645

or

### Highway Safety Office

402-471-2515

NDOT.HSO@nebraska.gov

