**Funding Criteria**

**A. General Rules**

1. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to submit requests for funding. Student-led projects require a faculty or staff sponsor in order to have funds awarded.
2. Funding can only go to university-affiliated projects from students, faculty, staff, and departments.
3. All SSC projects must make a substantial impact on students. This may be a direct impact or an impact through education and engagement. All SSC funding is 100% from student green fees, so the projects funded by the students must benefit them.
4. SSC encourages innovation and new technologies – creative projects are encouraged to apply.
5. Unless a type of expense is specifically listed below as having restrictions, SSC can generally fund it. The items referenced below should not be taken as comprehensive list.

**B. Things SSC Can Fund, On A Case-By-Case Basis**

1. SSC can fund feasibility studies and design work; however, it must work toward ultimately addressing a sustainability need on campus.
2. SSC can fund staff positions that are related to improving campus sustainability. Strong preference will be given to proposals receiving matching funding from departments and/or plans for maintaining continuity of the position after the end of the initial grant.
3. SSC can fund outreach events with a central theme of sustainability, provided their primary audience is the general campus community.
4. SSC discourages funding requests for food and prizes but will consider proposals on a case by case basis that prove significant reasoning.
5. SSC can fund repairs and improvements to existing building systems as long as it works toward the goal of improving campus sustainability; however, a preference is shown to projects utilizing new or innovative ideas.
6. SSC can provide departments with loans for projects with a distinct payback on a case by case base. Loans will require a separate memorandum of understanding between SSC and departmental leadership pledging to repay the award in full and detailing the payback plan.

**C. Things SSC Will Not Fund:**

1. SSC will not fund projects with a primary end goal of generating revenue for non-University entities.
2. SSC will not fund personal lodging, food, beverage, and other travel expenses.
3. SSC will not fund any travel expenses.
4. SSC will not fund tuition or other forms of personal financial assistance for students beyond standard student employee wages.

**Your Step 2 funding application should include this application, the supplemental budget form, and any letters of support.**

*Please submit this completed application and any relevant supporting documentation to* *Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu**. The Working Group Chairs will be in contact with you regarding any questions about the application. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the Student Sustainability Committee at* *sustainability-committee@illinois.edu.*

**General & Contact Information**

**Project Name:** Bike Path Renovation: Armory Avenue Path South of Gregory Hall

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $50,000

**Project Topic Areas:** Transportation

**Applicant Name:** Natalie Hill

**Campus Affiliation (Unit/Department or RSO/Organization):** Civil and Environmental Engineering student

**Email Address:** nehill3@illinois.edu

**Check one:**

 [ ]  This project is solely my own

**Project Team Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Department** | **Email** |
| Natalie Hill | Civil and Environmental Engineering | Nehill3@illinois.edu |
| Sarthak Prasad | Facilities and Services | Sprasad9@illinois.edu |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |

**Student-Led Projects (Mandatory):**

Name of Faculty or Staff Project Advisor: Sarthak Prasad
Advisor’s Email Address: sprasad9@illinois.edu

**Financial Contact *(Must be a full-time University of Illinois staff member)***

Contact Name: Mike Alsip

Unit/Department: Facilities and Services

Email Address: alsip@illinois.edu

**Project Information**

**Please provide a brief background of the project, its goals, and the desired outcomes:**

This project request is to fund the design and renovation of the portion of the bike path from Mathews Avenue to Armory Avenue that lies south of Gregory Hall. The design of this bike path is outdated and the paths themselves are in poor condition, requiring immediate attention. The Campus Bicycle Plan in 2014 highlighted this path as a High Priority project but due to funding constraints the University has not been able to take the steps necessary to solve the problems in this area. The Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) approved the use of total infrastructure portion ($76,000) of the Bicycle Infrastructure and Programming Fee (Bike Fee) to start the Armory Ave bike path renovation project in FY21. With additional funds from the SSC, we would be able to extend the length of our project further down the path. The total estimate to renovate this entire bike path is ~$315,000.

Our goal for this project is to replace the two single lane bike paths with one standard 6ft wide bike path. This path would be located along the former northern lane, with adjustments made for its greater width. Some landscaping would need to be done to accommodate the larger lane, including tearing up shrubs and removing part of an old retention wall.

The outcome we would like to see is the installation of a functional and safe new bike path for students riding their bicycles. Long term, we hope that by making the campus more bicycle-friendly we could encourage healthier and ecologically friendlier habits in more than 50,000 students that make this campus their home every year.

**Where will the project be located? Are special permissions required for this project site?**

As explained above, we want to renovate a portion of the Armory Avenue path that lies south of Gregory Hall. This section lies between Armory Avenue and the pedestrian path that intersects it just east of Gregory Hall. Since Facilities and Services (F&S) is involved in this project, we have the permission we need to complete it; the project is already scheduled to begin in the FY21 utilizing the Bike Fee funding.

**Other than the project team, who will have a stake in the project? Please list other individuals, groups, or departments affiliated directly or indirectly by the project. This includes any entity providing funding (immediate, future, ongoing, matching, in-kind, etc.) and any entities that benefit from this project.**

We believe that projects improving the transportation system on campus indirectly benefit all members of the campus community by increasing the interconnection of its residents. More specifically, this path will benefit bicycle users on campus and any pedestrians that make use of the paths near Gregory Hall. The route in its current state is run down and dangerous. Pedestrians intersecting the path are obscured by outdated landscaping, the path is too narrow to allow bicycle riders to maneuver around any objects in their path, and the concrete paving the path is uneven. As a result, many bicycle users currently avoid the path altogether and ride on the pedestrian walkways, creating a hazardous situation for everyone in the area. By providing bicycle users with a convenient and safe alternative, we can contribute to making the UIUC campus a more pleasant environment.

An entity currently providing funding for this project is the FY21 Bike Fee collected from students. All of the money allotted for infrastructure improvements (~$76,000) from this funding source will go towards the Armory Avenue bike path renovation project, and more specifically the portion of it focused on by this team.

**How will this project involve and/or benefit students?**

This project is currently being led by a student. She feels that the experience she is gaining in transportation engineering, professional communication, and project development is invaluable to her future career as a civil engineer. By going through the steps of the Student Sustainability Committee’s process of applying for funding, she is also able to practice explaining the exigence of her work to others in an articulate and persuasive manner.

As stated in the answer above, this bike path would have a positive impact on the entire campus community; obviously a large portion of that community is students. This path is particularly important because it is located between the Main Quad and the Main and Undergraduate Libraries, both places of high student traffic where they may have to cross between several times daily.

**How will you bring awareness and publicize the project on campus? In addition to SSC, where will information about this project be reported?**

We feel that this project will be able to speak for itself. There will be no need to tell students that construction on the path is occurring as they will see it for themselves each time they pass by. Officially, this project will be reported online at the Bike at Illinois website, in the Campus Bike Plan annual update, and in the 2024 Campus Bike Plan. Once the project starts, F&S will also send out Traffic Closure(s) for this area and post it on the F&S website. The traffic closure information is sent out to 76 stakeholders – including several departments/units on-campus, City of Urbana, City of Champaign, Village of Savoy, MTD, Urbana Fire Department, and several News outlets. These stakeholders then forward this notification among their respective departments.

# Financial Information

*In addition to the below questions, please submit the supplemental budget spreadsheet available on the Student Sustainability Committee* [*website*](http://ssc.sustainability.illinois.edu/?page_id=2087)*. Submission of both documents by the submission deadline is required for consideration of your project.*

**Have you applied for funding from SSC before? If so, for what project?**

Last semester Sarthak Prasad applied for funding from the SSC. He asked for a greater amount of money and wanted to use those funds to work on the entire Armory Avenue path, including the portion that we are asking for funding for now.

**If this project is implemented, will you require any ongoing funding required? What is the strategy for supporting the project in order to cover replacement, operation, or renewal costs?**If this project is implemented, the bike path would then be under the control of Facilities and Services at the university, meaning that while standard bike path upkeep will be required, it will be funded through the same process as any other existing bike path and will not require any ongoing funding from SSC or other sources.

**Please include any other obtained sources of funding. Have you applied for funding elsewhere?**

As stated previously, this project will receive $76,000 dollars from the Bike Fee in FY21. However, this money is meant to be put towards the entirety of the Armory Avenue path and if we obtain funding from the SSC we can devote more of the Bike Fee funding towards other portions of the path.

Currently, we are not applying for funding anywhere else. F&S will request SFAC to allot the Bike Fee funding from the subsequent year(s) to complete this project.

# Environmental, Economic, and Awareness Impacts

**How will the project improve environmental sustainability at the Urbana-Champaign campus? If applicable, how does this project fit within any of the** [**Illinois Climate Action Plan**](https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/) **(iCAP) goals?**

This project fits directly into the Illinois Climate Action Plan goals, as one of those goals is implementing the 2014 Campus Bike Plan. Within that bike plan the renovation of the Armory Avenue path was one of the projects of highest urgency. More broadly, renovating this bike path falls under the category of reducing transportation emissions by encouraging active transportation. By making biking on campus more convenient, the hope is that more members of the community will chose to bike over less environmentally friendly modes of transportation like driving.

**How will you monitor and evaluate the project’s progress and environmental outcomes? What short-term and long-term environmental impacts do you expect?**

The project’s progress will be monitored by Facilities and Services at this university. Little evaluation will be necessary as our project will be completed once construction on the site is finished. In the short term, we expect to see increased usage of the bike path and in the long term we expect to see more bicycle riders on campus overall. Since the bike paths on campus are part of one larger system, making one section of the system more convenient will increase the effectiveness of the whole network of paths.

**What are your specific outreach goals? How will this project inspire change at UIUC?**

Our group does not intend on doing any intentional outreach work. F&S will send out traffic closure notification(s) to the stakeholders, as mentioned before. These stakeholders would subsequently reach out to their delegates to inform them about this project.

Much of the information about the benefits and environmental impacts of biking on campus are already readily available on the [Bike at Illinois](https://bike.illinois.edu/) website. We do sincerely hope, however, that this project helps to change the campus community’s mindset towards biking as a viable mode of transportation.

**If applicable, how does this project impact environmental injustice or social injustice?**

Without personal experience in the matter, it can be easy to forget that owning a vehicle is a luxury. The cost of purchasing and maintaining a car is incredibly high for anyone making the minimum wage (nearly 33.5M in 2019).[[1]](#footnote-1) When the student contributing to this project began working, she started earning the Illinois minimum wage at a fast food restaurant approximately a mile from her house. She chose not to purchase a car since the walk was short (the roads in her town aren’t very bike-friendly).

Many of the other employees at her job were not as lucky. Nearly all of them had cars (with the notable exception of a boy who walked for almost an hour to get to work) and were simultaneously facing a great deal of financial strain. One woman was experiencing tooth pains but could not afford to go to the dentist. Another was forced to move back in with an estranged husband because she couldn’t afford housing. Because America developed in such a car-centric manner, these workers had to prioritize their cars over their health and safety as without them they would not be able to work.

On a college campus, we have the unique opportunity to shape the mindsets of more than 50,000 brilliant students. If we can present them with a reasonable alternative to a car-centric society, we can inspire them to make physical changes in the places they go after graduation. Developing our towns in a more bike-accessible manner would decrease transportation costs and provide a greater degree of financial freedom to those currently struggling.

It would also help to reduce the amount of carbon emissions expelled from vehicles each year. Our planet is currently struggling under the warming effects of all the greenhouse gasses in our atmosphere. We have experienced terrible wildfires, droughts, and other unpredictable weather patterns as a result. By decreasing the contribution from vehicles, we can start to slow the rate at which our planet is changing. More indirectly, improving the quality of the bike paths on our campus also decreases the amount of wear and tear experienced by the roads and decreases the amount of maintenance they require. This, in turn, reduces the amount of new asphalt required and decreases our demand for and dependence on oil. Bikes are much gentler on the road than cars, and by convincing people to bike instead of drive our roads will last longer.

1. https://www.epi.org/publication/labor-day-2019-minimum-wage/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)