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South Shore Clean Cities members awarded \$5.3 million in Indiana Volkswagen grants

Projects to reduce tailpipe emissions, improve air quality

ST. JOHN, INDIANA — South Shore Clean Cities members and partners on Wednesday were awarded more than \$5.3 million in Indiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund grant funds, the nonprofit announced.

The Indiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund Committee approved the successful round two onroad and nonroad grant applications, written by South Shore Clean Cities on behalf of its members and partners, during a virtual meeting Wednesday. South Shore Clean Cities members and partners were awarded 16 of the 17 – 94 percent – of the successful projects.

“South Shore Clean Cities was pleased to again assist our members and partners with successful Indiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund grant applications,” South Shore Clean Cities Executive Director Carl Lisek said. “Our stakeholders continue to embrace innovative sustainable transportation methodologies with these transformative projects. We encourage others throughout the state to look to them as the leaders they are and to follow their examples.”

South Shore Clean Cities members and partners receiving grant awards include the Muncie Sanitary District, South Bend Public Transportation Corporation (Transpo), Penn-Harris-Madison School Corp. in Mishawaka, Crown Point Community School Corp., Monroe Community School Corp. in Bloomington, MSD of Lawrence Township in Indianapolis, Greater Clark County Schools in Jeffersonville, MSD of Warren Township in Indianapolis, MSD of Wayne Township in Indianapolis, New Albany Floyd County Consolidated School Corp. in New Albany, Wa-Nee Community Schools in Nappanee, Lake Central School Corp. in St. John, Michigan City Area Schools, School City of Hammond, City of South Bend and Ozinga in Gary.

The projects involve a total of 120 vehicles including refuse trucks, transit buses, school buses, municipal snow plow/dump trucks and a concrete ready mix truck with fueling systems ranging from compressed natural gas to liquid propane gas, clean diesel and electric.

Governor Eric J. Holcomb in October 2017 signed an executive order outlining steps to distribute Indiana’s \$40.9 million portion of the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund, which was formed as a result of a settlement between the U.S. Department of Justice and the Volkswagen Corporation for its violation of the federal Clean Air Act.

The executive order established the 11-member Indiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund Committee and named the Indiana Department of Environmental Management as the beneficiary of and the administrative agency for the trust fund. Projects eligible for grant funds under the program must reduce NOx emissions from diesel-powered vehicles and equipment and include the replacement and repowering of existing diesel vehicles or equipment with cleaner alternatives serving the same purpose.

This week's funding announcement builds on the past successes of South Shore Clean Cities in assisting its members and partners with Volkswagen funding projects. In 2019, South Shore Clean Cities wrote more than 40 grant applications for members and partners for the first round of onroad and nonroad Indiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust program funds. The nonprofit's members and partners were awarded more than 62 percent of the awards approved by the Indiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund Committee totaling more than \$6.1 million for projects involving 101 vehicles, more than 56 percent of all of the vehicles funded.

The 2019 grant awardees assisted by South Shore Clean Cities included a host of firsts. Gary Public Transportation Corporation in 2019 received funding for four electric transit buses, representing the first public transit fleet in Northwest Indiana to implement the technology. Roll & Hold Warehousing, a Chesterton-based company operating under the parent company Odyssey, also received funding in 2019 toward the purchase of an electric-powered rail car mover, the first of its kind in Indiana. Carmel Clay Schools in 2019 received funding to implement the first electric school bus in the state of Indiana as a result of a South Shore Clean Cities-led grant as well.

"By assisting with grant writing and project management, South Shore Clean Cities works to address economic challenges while reducing harmful emissions," Lisek said. "These projects help to lessen the burden on taxpayers and private fleets by maximizing the use of grant opportunities to fund sustainable transportation projects. We're proud of the work of our members and partners in supporting sustainable transportation across Indiana and look forward to continued success in the future."

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About South Shore Clean Cities: South Shore Clean Cities is a nonprofit, member-based coalition dedicated to promoting sustainable transportation in Northern Indiana. South Shore Clean Cities is one of nearly 100 U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities coalitions. The coalitions partner with members in the public, private and nonprofit sectors to increase the use and implementation of sustainable transportation and its infrastructure. The programs supported by South Shore Clean Cities and its members support domestic fuels, strengthen the nation's energy security, reduce dependence on imported oil, improve air quality and support local jobs and the local economy. Learn more at www.southshorecleancities.org.