



# TEXAS SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

## PROGRAM GUIDANCE AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

FY 2010



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## Program Application Links:

The application can be found and submitted at the Texas SRTS [website](#) or through the [Texas Department of Transportation](#).

# Chapter 1 — Program Description

## Introduction

The Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program was established in the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act* (SAFETEA-LU) in August, 2005. The federal transportation bill apportioned funds for administering Safe Routes to School programs in all 50 states, based on the ratio of total student enrollment in grades kindergarten through eighth (K-8) in each state compared to the total student enrollment in grades K-8 in all states.

The Program's objectives are 1) to enable and encourage children in grades K-8, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school; 2) to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and 3) to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Some of the benefits expected from SRTS programs and activities include:

- Increased bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic safety
- More children walking and bicycling to and from schools
- Decreased traffic congestion
- Improved childhood health
- Reduced childhood obesity
- Encouragement of healthy and active lifestyles
- Improved air quality
- Improved community safety
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Enhanced community accessibility
- Increased community involvement
- Improvements to the physical environment that increase the ability to walk and bicycle to and from schools
- Increased interest in bicycle and pedestrian accommodations throughout a community
- Improved partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community groups, including non-profit organizations

## SRTS Projects

The SRTS program is intended to be comprehensive, utilizing infrastructure enhancements to improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility and safety, as well as non-infrastructure approaches including bicycle and pedestrian safety education, awareness of the opportunities to safely bike and walk to school, and by addressing safety concerns through law enforcement activities. The Program is divided into five elements, which include both infrastructure and non-infrastructure components, referred to as the "5 E's." A general description of each element is provided below.

- **Engineering** — Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds or potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails, and bikeways.
- **Education** — Teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.

- **Enforcement** — Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors), and initiating community enforcement such as crossing-guard programs.
- **Encouragement** — Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.
- **Evaluation** — Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the interventions.

SRTS program participation is restricted to projects and activities benefiting public or private schools that have any of the grades from kindergarten to eighth and that encourage students to walk or bicycle to school.

## Program Funding

Safe Routes to School is a 100 percent federally funded **cost-reimbursement** program managed through the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Traffic Operations Division (TRF). Projects are funded through a statewide competitive process with funds limited to those authorized in the SRTS program. Cost-reimbursement means that sponsors will front the cost of the project and will be reimbursed throughout various stages of the project. In some cases, there will be no up-front funds required from the applicant.

Seventy to ninety percent of the total SRTS funds will be dedicated to infrastructure projects (engineering), with the remaining funds going toward non-infrastructure projects (education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation).

Safe Routes to School funds are Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds and must follow federal regulations and guidelines. While the funding provides an excellent opportunity for schools and communities, applicants are advised that following federal regulations requires a significant time and resource commitment on the part of the applicant or sponsor. Prior to submitting an application to the SRTS Program, applicants are encouraged to consider the following:

- Do I have the necessary staff to administer the funding?
- Do I have the funding to front the project costs until it is reimbursed?
- Do I have the funding to support costs that cannot be reimbursed?
- Do I have the resources to support the continuation of the program or project?

Applicants are encouraged to be as economical as possible in order to maximize state SRTS funding allocations. Supplemental funding is not required, and lack of such will not penalize an applicant.

Funding for the SRTS program is designed to be flexible to promote innovative programs and activities to encourage safe walking and bicycling by school-age children. However, applicants are advised that certain expenditures are ineligible, such as:

- projects that do not specifically serve the stated purposes of the SRTS program
- recurring costs such as crossing guard salaries
- projects that reorganize pick-up and drop-off primarily for the convenience of drivers rather than to improve child safety and/or walking and bicycling access for students
- education programs that are primarily focused on bus safety.
- improvements to bus stops.

SRTS programs and projects should aim to include, either directly or indirectly, as many of the 5 E's as possible in order to create walkable and bikeable transportation solutions for students. There is no limit on the number of projects for which an applicant can submit proposals. However, no program activity or infrastructure project will be eligible for funding unless it has been identified in an SRTS Plan ([Appendix A](#)).

This guidance and application package has been compiled to provide the applicant with detailed information, required forms, and supplemental information to assist in the preparation of an SRTS project application.

[Appendix B](#) contains a glossary of terms used throughout this document and in the project applications. If additional assistance or resources are needed, applicants are encouraged to contact the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) or visit the [Texas SRTS](#) website.

## Chapter 2 – Infrastructure Program

Research has shown that the most successful way to increase bicycling and walking is through a comprehensive program that includes the “5 E’s” (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation). A comprehensive program is established by developing a local SRTS Plan. One of the key elements to a successful program is identifying safety hazards and developing a plan to implement solutions to those hazards. **Applicants requesting funding for infrastructure projects are required to have a TxDOT approved SRTS Plan that demonstrates the need for the proposed physical improvement(s) prior to submitting an application. A SRTS plan may be submitted for review and approval only within the first 30 days of the program call. Infrastructure projects are limited to a maximum federal reimbursement of \$500,000 in construction costs per application.**

The SRTS Plan must identify safety hazards, current and potential walking and bicycling routes to school, and activities that will incorporate each of the “5 E’s” to create a comprehensive program (See [Appendix A](#) of this document). The intent of the Plan is to provide information about the type of school, the surrounding environment, and its students as well as identify problems and needs faced by the school(s) or school district relative to increasing student participation in walking and bicycling to school.

SRTS program participants are encouraged to utilize existing resources when developing an SRTS Plan. Some of these resources are included in [Appendix A](#). Additional resources are also available on the [TxDOT SRTS](#) website.

### Eligible Applicants

**Eligible applicants for infrastructure projects include state agencies and political subdivisions (a city or county within the State of Texas).** Applications should present a unified solution for improving the safety of pedestrian or bicycle routes to schools within a community and may involve more than one partner. Potential partners include (but are not limited to):

- schools, both public and private
- school districts
- cities
- counties
- state agencies
- regional planning councils
- metropolitan planning organizations
- public and non-profit entities working on behalf of a school(s)
- for-profit organization(s).

### Eligible Projects

Infrastructure projects should directly support increased safety and convenience for elementary and middle school children to bicycle and walk to and from school.

The following are some examples of infrastructure projects that may be eligible under the Program and is provided as a means to stimulate ideas for your Safe Routes to School program:

- **Sidewalk improvements:** new sidewalks, widened sidewalks, sidewalk gap closures, sidewalk repairs, curb cuts for ramps, and the construction of curbs and gutters.
- **Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements:** crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, traffic control devices (including new or upgraded traffic signals, pavement markings, traffic stripes, in-roadway crossing lights (off-system roads only), flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal-actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, pedestrian-activated signal upgrades, and sight distance improvements.
- **On-street bicycle facilities:** new or upgraded bicycle lanes, widened outside lanes or roadway shoulders, geometric improvements, turning lanes, channelization and roadway realignment, traffic signs, and pavement markings.
- **Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities:** exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways that are separated from a roadway.
- **Traffic diversion improvements:** separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities, and traffic diversion away from school zones or designated routes to a school.
- **Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements (Off-System Roads Only):** roundabouts, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crossings, raised intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, full- or half-street closures, automated speed enforcement, and variable speed limits.
- **Secure bicycle parking facilities:** bicycle parking racks, bicycle lockers, designated areas with safety lighting, and covered bicycle shelters.

Cost incurred after project award for planning, design, and engineering expenses, including consultant services, associated with developing an approved infrastructure project are also eligible to receive infrastructure funds.

The following are examples of infrastructure projects that are not eligible for funding:

- new road construction
- improvements at schools currently under construction
- improvements that are for the convenience of the driver, not the safety of pedestrians or bicyclist.

## Project Boundaries

Applications for infrastructure projects may propose safety improvements at a single school campus, multiple schools in close proximity to one another (schools on the same or adjacent campuses, neighborhood or block), a region, or a school district. If the infrastructure project involves multiple schools, a region or a school district, applicants must have a comprehensive bicycle or pedestrian master plan or similar document that identifies missing links and infrastructure improvements needed throughout the community.

Infrastructure projects can be located on any public right of way within a **two-mile radius** of an eligible school. Projects can be located on or off the dedicated state highway system, or on private lands that have a public easement if there is a written legal easement or other written legally binding agreement that ensures public access to the project. Infrastructure projects that propose construction along the state highway system (i.e. state, U.S. or

Interstate Highway) must be approved and have the endorsement of the appropriate TXDOT district engineer. Any proposed infrastructure project located on the state highway system will not be eligible if TxDOT finds that the project interferes or disrupts any planned improvements or existing infrastructure.

## **Application Submission**

All SRTS infrastructure project applications must be submitted to the local TxDOT district that is responsible for the area in which the proposed project will be constructed. If the limits of the project extend to more than one district, the applicant should contact TRF prior to the due date in order to ascertain which district office the application should be submitted to. A map of TXDOT's districts is available on the TxDOT [website](#). A list of SRTS TxDOT district contacts is included in [Appendix C](#).

Applications must be completed using the SRTS Infrastructure Project Application form. Copies of the application forms and the *Safe Routes to School Program Guidance and Application Instructions* are available at each district office as well as from TRF. The documents are also published on the TxDOT SRTS [website](#). Applicants should go online to access forms and upload the application. If there are any questions or problems, please contact Carol Campa at [ccampa@dot.stat.tx.us](mailto:ccampa@dot.stat.tx.us) or by phone at 512-416-3279. Applications must follow the submission requirements as described in the program call and must be completed and returned to the appropriate office by the deadline.

## **Project Evaluation**

The project selection process will be focused on an applicant's ability to meet SRTS Program goals and the *potential to develop long term bicycling and walking behaviors*. TxDOT will attempt to fund as many qualified applicants as possible with the available resources.

### **District Level Evaluation**

District staff will review infrastructure project applications with regard to submission requirements, appropriate countermeasures, and engineering estimates. A project proposed on the state highway system will not be eligible if the district finds that the project would interfere with or disrupt planned improvements or existing infrastructure. The district will forward all completed applications to TRF staff.

### **Division Level Evaluation**

TRF staff will review each program application for completeness and compliance with project eligibility requirements included in 43 TAC §25.502. Applications that do not comply with these requirements or that are not received by the published deadline will not be evaluated. Eligible applications are submitted to the evaluation committees.

### **Committee Level Evaluation**

Two project evaluation committees will evaluate all eligible projects. One committee is comprised of TxDOT staff with expertise in bicycle safety, pedestrian safety, roadway safety, roadway design, traffic engineering, or other related fields. The other evaluation committee is comprised of the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) as established under 43 TAC §1.85(4). Both committees will evaluate, review, and make recommendations on applications by assigning scores based on the evaluation methodology developed for the project selection criteria listed below.

- (1) identification of current and potential safe walking and bicycling routes to school;



- (2) the potential of the proposal to create a safer walking and bicycling built environment within two miles of a school;
- (3) the demonstrated need of the community and the children served;
- (4) identification of safety hazards;
- (5) the potential of the proposal to reduce child injuries and fatalities;
- (6) the potential of the proposal to encourage walking and bicycling among students;
- (7) support for the project by the community and interested parties;
- (8) identification of detailed construction costs;
- (9) compliance with TxDOT design criteria and traffic control standards;
- (10) applications that demonstrate a link to an existing or planned comprehensive traffic safety plan (which may include education, enforcement, and other construction activities); and
- (11) other factors relating to the proposed project that are deemed necessary to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety of children in and around school areas.

Applicants should structure their applications to meet as many of the selection criteria as possible.

## **Project Selection**

Each evaluation committee will submit a single evaluation score sheet and supporting documents for each application evaluated. TRF staff will combine each committee's score to create a composite score for each application. Based on the committee scores and funding limitations, the director of TRF will recommend a program of candidate projects for consideration by the Texas Transportation Commission.

Approval by the Commission is based on recommendations from the director of TRF, funding availability, the safety of the traveling public, the overall goals of the program, and safety in and around school areas. The decision of the Commission is final and is not subject to appeal. Any project not selected may be resubmitted for consideration in the next program call.

Upon Commission approval, TRF notifies the applicant and the responsible TxDOT district of the project selection status. The applicant is notified by certified mail. Approved infrastructure projects must comply with design, plan preparation, letting requirements, and other requirements established by TRF.

## **Funding Terms**

The Safe Routes to School Program is a reimbursement program for costs incurred, and any work performed by the applicant prior to receiving written authorization to proceed is not eligible for reimbursements. All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to eligibility requirements.

Costs cannot be incurred until:

- the project is selected and approved by the Commission
- a Local Project Advance Funding Agreement (LPAFA) is executed

- and Federal Project Authorization Agreement (FPAA) is in place.

**Any costs incurred by applicants prior to project approval, final contract execution, and federal project authorization are not eligible for reimbursement under the program.** Applicants that receive funding approval must follow all federal and state policies, directives, and laws. Responsibility for any costs incurred over and above the contract amount will be considered by TxDOT on a case-by-case basis. Cost overruns not approved by TxDOT will be the responsibility of the applicant.

## **Time Limit for Funding**

Infrastructure projects funded under the SRTS Program must be let to contract by the program lapse date. Project awardees will be notified of the program lapse date at the time of project award. Projects that do not meet this requirement will be canceled from the program and the funding withdrawn.

## **Special Requirements**

Projects must comply with a variety of federal and state requirements in order to proceed. Applicants should work with their local public works department or TxDOT district [contact](#) to prepare infrastructure project applications.

### **Title 23**

Projects funded by SRTS monies must comply with Title 23 requirements of the U.S. Code. USDOT regulations are available at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legsregs/legislat.html>.

As part of the Title 23 requirements, projects funded by SRTS monies must also comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations (see [Appendix D](#)). It is anticipated that the types of projects proposed under the SRTS program will be those that will have minor impacts to the environment and will likely qualify for a categorical exclusion. See [Appendix D](#) for a partial list of questions to help you determine if your project will require more than a Categorical Exclusion. Compliance is the responsibility of the applicant and will be determined during project development.

### **ADA**

Facilities must be designed to reasonably meet the needs of persons with disabilities. In so doing, the applicant must comply with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additional information is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/>.

### **Inclusion in TIP/STIP**

All projects funded by SRTS monies must be programmed in their metropolitan planning organization's or regional planning affiliation's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Applicants should work in close cooperation with their metropolitan planning organization or regional planning affiliation prior to submitting an application, to ensure local support and consistency with regulations.

### **On-System Road Improvements**

All roadway improvement designs for on-system roads must comply with the latest version of TxDOT manuals, including but not limited to, the Roadway Design Manual, the Pavement Design Manual, the Hydraulic Design Manual, the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control

Devices, and the latest versions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

### **Off-System Road Improvements**

All roadway improvement designs for off-system roads must comply with the minimum standards of the latest version of AASHTO Policy on Geometric Design of the Highways and Streets, the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and the latest versions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

### **Bicycle Paths and Bicycle Lanes**

All bicycle path and bicycle lane designs must comply with the latest version of the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, the Texas Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, the Hydraulic Design Manual, and the latest versions of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS).

For new shared bicycle lanes on a signed, designated bicycle route, the minimum lane width must be 14 feet, measured from the existing center stripe to the curb or shoulder, where applicable. See Glossary for definitions of "bicycle path" and "bicycle lane."

### **Letting Requirements**

It will be the decision of the district engineer of the responsible district as to whether an SRTS project is let to contract by the TxDOT district or the applicant (local let). All SRTS projects will be let through a competitive bid process and comply with all TxDOT letting policies.

## Chapter 3 – Non-Infrastructure Program

Research has shown that the most successful way to increase bicycling and walking is through a comprehensive approach that includes the “5 E’s” (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation). A comprehensive program is established by developing a local SRTS Plan. Applicants requesting funding for non-infrastructure projects are required to have a TxDOT approved SRTS plan prior to submitting an applications. A SRTS plan may be submitted for review and approval only within the first 30 days of the program call.

The SRTS Plan must identify safety hazards, current and potential walking and bicycling routes to school, and activities that will incorporate each of the “5 E’s” to create a comprehensive program. SRTS Plan requirements are defined in [Appendix A](#) of this document. The intent of the Plan is to provide information about the type of school, the surrounding environment, and its students, as well as identifying problems and needs faced by the school(s) or school district relative to increasing student participation in walking and bicycling to school.

### Eligible Applicants

To ensure that the program is available to the broad spectrum of groups that represent K-8 students, applicants for non-infrastructure projects may include state agencies, political subdivisions, schools, school districts, non-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations, or any combination of these entities. Applications should present a unified solution for improving the safety of pedestrian or bicycle routes to schools within a community and may involve more than one partner. Eligible partners include (but are not limited to):

- schools, both public and private
- school districts
- cities
- counties
- state agencies
- regional planning councils
- metropolitan planning organizations
- public and non-profit entities working on behalf of a school(s)
- for-profit organization(s).

### Eligible Projects

There are two different project areas that are eligible for the non-infrastructure program:

- implementing non-infrastructure improvements identified in an SRTS Plan; and
- providing statewide services in support of SRTS programs.

### **Implementing Non-Infrastructure Improvements Identified in an SRTS Plan**

To apply for funding in this category, applicants must have an SRTS Plan and the proposed activities must be identified in the Plan. Proposed activities will be limited to education, enforcement, encouragement, and evaluation. **Funding in this category is limited to a maximum of \$100,000 per application.** Eligible reimbursable expenses include (but are not limited to):

- education on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and the environment\*
- traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of identified school(s)
- creation and reproduction of promotional and educational materials\*

- public awareness campaigns and outreach efforts to the news media and community leaders\*
- modest incentives for SRTS contests and incentives that encourage more walking and bicycling over time
- safety and educational tokens that also advertise the program\*
- cost for additional law enforcement or equipment needed for enforcement activities.

\*Activities or materials in these areas may be provided by the State if the project is approved.

Specific examples of non-infrastructure projects may include:

- conducting a bicycle or pedestrian audit
- conducting a bicycle rodeo
- developing a crossing guard program
- implementing a public awareness program
- teaching traffic safety to students and parents
- developing a walking school bus and/or bike train program.

For further guidance on non-infrastructure activities see the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) [Safe Routes to Schools: Practice and Promise](#), and NHTSA's [Safe Routes to School Toolkit](#). Additional ideas may be found on the website for the National Center for Safe Routes to School Clearinghouse at <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>.

### **Providing Statewide Services in Support of SRTS Programs**

Applications in this area are limited to applicants who can provide an identified service on a statewide basis in support of SRTS programs. The Department will accept and consider applications from state agencies, non-profit organizations, and for-profit organizations, or any combination of these entities. **Funding in this category is limited to a maximum of \$500,000 per application.** Examples of statewide services include (but are not limited to):

- bicycle and pedestrian safety curricula, materials and trainers
- public information and education campaigns and materials
- school crossing guard curricula.

### **Project Boundaries**

Non-infrastructure projects may cover a single school, multiple schools, school district, multiple school districts, multiple regions, or be statewide in nature.

### **Application Submission**

SRTS non-infrastructure project applications for must be submitted to the TxDOT Traffic Operations Division at the address identified in the program call.

Applications must be completed using the appropriate SRTS Non-Infrastructure Application form. Copies of the application forms and the *Safe Routes to School Program Guidance and Application Instructions* will be available at each district office as well as from the TRF. The documents will also be published on the department SRTS [website](#).

## **Project Evaluation**

The project selection process will be focused on an applicant's ability to meet SRTS Program goals and the *potential to develop long term bicycling and walking behaviors*. TxDOT will attempt to fund as many qualified applicants as possible from the available resources.

### **Division Level Evaluation**

TRF staff will review each program application for completeness and compliance with project eligibility requirements included in 43 TAC §25.502. Applications that do not comply with these requirements or that are not received by the published deadline will not be evaluated. Eligible applications are submitted to the evaluation committees.

### **Committee Level Evaluation**

Two project evaluation committees will evaluate all eligible projects. One committee is comprised of TxDOT staff with expertise in bicycle safety, pedestrian safety, roadway safety, roadway design, traffic engineering, or other related fields. The other evaluation committee is comprised of the BAC as established under 43 TAC §1.85(4). Both committees will evaluate, review, and make recommendations on applications by assigning scores based on the evaluation methodology developed for the project selection criteria listed below.

- (1) identification of the current and potential overall need for programs to encourage and promote walking and bicycling to the proposed project location;
- (2) identification of existing safety hazards and the need for a behavioral program to increase awareness of those issues;
- (3) the potential of the proposal to reduce child injuries and fatalities through education, enforcement, or other activities;
- (4) the potential of the proposal to encourage walking and bicycling among students;
- (5) support for the project by the community and interested parties; and
- (6) a plan for evaluating the success of the project.

Additional consideration is also given to other factors relating to the proposed project that are deemed necessary to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety of children in and around school areas. Applicants should structure their applications to meet as many of the selection criteria as possible.

## **Project Selection**

Each evaluation committee will submit a single evaluation score sheet and supporting documents for each application evaluated. TRF staff will combine each committee's score to create a composite score for each application. Based on the committee scores and funding limitations, the director of TRF will recommend a program of candidate projects for consideration by the Commission.

Approval by the Commission is based on recommendations from the director of TRF, funding availability, the safety of the traveling public, the overall goals of the program, and safety in and around school areas. The decision of the Commission is final and is not subject to appeal. Any project not selected may be resubmitted for consideration in the next program call.

Upon commission approval, TRF notifies the applicant of the project selection status. The applicant is notified by certified mail. Approved non-infrastructure projects must comply with the requirements included in the program call.

## Funding Terms

The Safe Routes to School Program is a reimbursement program for costs incurred, and any work performed by the applicant prior to receiving written authorization to proceed is not eligible for reimbursements. All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to eligibility requirements.

Costs cannot be incurred until:

- the project is selected and approved by the Commission;
- a funding agreement is executed;
- and a Federal Project Authorization Agreement (FPAA) is in place.

**Any costs incurred by applicants prior to project approval, funding agreement execution, and federal project authorization are not eligible for reimbursement under the program.** Applicants that receive funding approval must follow all federal and state policies, directives, and laws.

## Time Limit for Funding

The time limit for non-infrastructure projects funded under the SRTS Program will be based on the type of work being performed and the applicants work plan.

## Appendix A — Drafting an SRTS Plan: Required Elements

The purpose of the plan is to define the fundamental needs, issues, and impediments facing the school(s) in their attempt to increase the number of students who bike and walk to school and the goals that have been set to achieve increased participation in biking and walking.

The Plan is also intended to set the path towards implementing action-oriented solutions that increase biking and walking to school, as well as to define who will be involved in that effort and their respective roles. An SRTS Plan should include the following information:

### Description of Existing Conditions:

- Location of school(s)
- Environment type (urban, suburban, rural)
- Enrollment
- Type of school (elementary, middle)
- Student participation data for each school, including, but not limited to, the following elements:
  - total number of students
  - % students within 2 mi
  - % students walking or bicycling
  - potential walking/bicycling outside 2 mi (remote drop off — survey)
  - % participating in a free or reduced lunch program
- Identification of the current walking and biking routes to a school(s). Inclusion of a graphic representation (diagram, picture, etc.) of the current routes provides a better representation of the current environment as well as highlights the potential for improvement, especially for those who are not as familiar with the local situation. However, it is acceptable to articulate these routes in a narrative format (see [Appendix E](#)).
- Current travel modes including student survey results (including walk, bike, bus, auto).

### Identification of Existing Problems or Needs:

- Detailed analysis of existing conditions and impediments to safe biking and walking (physical barriers, safety issues, awareness)
- Parent and student desired travel modes (include survey data)
- Traffic, safety, and other relevant data including citations, crashes, injuries and/or fatalities, if applicable.

### Proposed Activities Related to Problems or Needs:

- Identification of a program “Champion” — person(s) to spearhead the effort
- Identification of a “Team” or Action Committee that will develop and implement the Plan and subsequent projects or activities



- Identification of stakeholders — parents, students, teachers, school admin, elected officials and how they might contribute to the development or execution of the Plan
- Evidence that all stakeholders have been identified and invited to participate
- SRTS Policy Statement defining the school's/school district's intent/mission relative to an SRTS initiative
- Outreach and publicity strategy (include school specific stakeholders as well as community partners such as homeowners and law enforcement)
- Responsibilities and tasks for enacting the plan
- Potential developments and/or improvements to safe walking and bicycling routes to a school(s) (again, narrative descriptions of these potential routes is useful, but it is preferred that some graphic representation be included in the Plan to demonstrate the location of the suggested routes [see [Appendix E](#)])
- Identification of strategies to address the issues raised in the problem identification section of the plan as well as specific goals and objectives, both short-term and long-term, related to the strategies. These strategies should be organized in a manner that demonstrates that education, evaluation, encouragement, enforcement, and engineering are considered and/or addressed.

#### Evaluation, Coordination, and Support Activities:

- Activities that address the monitoring, review, and update process related to the Plan
- Plan for how the initiative(s) will be sustained
- Methods and measures of success for the strategies included in the SRTS Plan
- Reference to or inclusion of a non-motorized master plan or similar document

Additional resources on SRTS Plan development may also be found at:

- [National Safe Routes to School Clearinghouse](#). This is a centralized resource of information on successful Safe Routes to School programs and strategies. Users will find information on how to start and sustain a Safe Routes to School program, case studies of successful programs, as well as many other resources for training and technical assistance.
- [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#). They have developed an SRTS toolkit for schools, communities, and others who wish to start an SRTS program.
- [Safe Routes to School Practice and Promise](#). The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has made available online documentation and information about SRTS programs.
- [The Delaware Safe Routes to School Program Sourcebook](#). The Delaware DOT Sourcebook provides guidance on how to develop an SRTS plan and references other resources.
- [Maryland Safe Routes to School Guidebook](#). A guide for parents and communities to establish a successful and ongoing SRTS program.

## Appendix B — Definitions

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** — Federal regulation that sets minimum design standards (in addition to other policies) so that people with disabilities can have access to items developed with federal funds.

**Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)** — Committee formed by Texas Transportation Commission with representation from various stakeholders and other partners to serve as a project evaluation committee to review, evaluate, and make recommendations on the proposals submitted for the SRTS program.

**Bid Letting** — For infrastructure projects, it is the date and time set when the estimates of the contractors proposing to perform the work are opened and the proposal with the lowest bid is tentatively selected as the contractor to carry out the construction work.

**Bicycle Lane** — a portion of a roadway that has been designated by striping, signing, or pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.

**Bicycle Path** — a bikeway separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier, either within the highway right of way or within an independent right of way that may also be used by pedestrians, skaters, joggers, wheelchairs, and other non-motorized users.

**Commission** — Texas Transportation Commission.

**Construction Engineering** — One of four types of work recognized by the FHWA for authorization. It is the work to ensure that the infrastructure project is being constructed according to the specifications, plan and accepted construction practices. Depending on the type of construction work done, a registered professional engineer may need to perform this work.

**Cost-Reimbursable** — The SRTS program is a 100-percent federally funded cost-reimbursement program, which means recipients of the funds will front the cost of the project and will be reimbursed during various stages of the project. **Costs incurred prior to federal authorization are not eligible for reimbursement.**

**Department** — Texas Department of Transportation.

**District** — One of 25 geographical areas, managed by a district engineer, in which the department conducts its primary work activities.

**Division** — Texas Department of Transportation, Traffic Operations Division.

**Eligible school** — A public or private school that contains any of the grades from kindergarten to eighth grade.

**Endangered Species** — All infrastructure projects must be reviewed to determine if they will have any adverse effect on Federal or State threatened or endangered species. Review for federally listed species is done by the TxDOT Environmental Division.

**Environmental Document and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** — Refers to a law passed by the US Congress in the late 1960s which requires that any project which

expends federal funds must look at the effects that spending those funds will have on the environment.

**Estimate** — A detailed and reasonable accounting of the cost to complete the proposal.

**Federal Authorization** — Paperwork is submitted by TxDOT to the FHWA informing them that a federal aid project is ready to commence and has met all requirements to expend federal funds.

**FHWA** — Federal Highway Administration.

**Infrastructure Project** — A project involving the construction, maintenance or rehabilitation of a public roadway.

**Non-Infrastructure Project** — A non-construction project.

**Off-System Road** — A road or highway open to the public that is not part of the designated state highway system, such as a county road or city street.

**On-System Road** — A road or highway that is a portion of the designated state highway system.

**Political Subdivision** — A municipality or county within the State of Texas.

**Preliminary Engineering** — One of four types of work recognized by the FHWA for authorization. It can be the work to prepare the NEPA document, construction plans and specifications, design or other work necessary to complete the Project.

**Program** — The Safe Routes to School Program.

**Programmatic Categorical Exclusion** — A document which covers the NEPA requirements on projects which are anticipated to have little or no impacts or controversy. It is assumed that most of the infrastructure projects proposed for Safe Routes to School will meet this level of documentation.

**Public property** — Property owned by a state, city, or county.

**Registered Professional Civil Engineer** — Person licensed by the State of Texas (Texas Board of Professional Engineers) to oversee work done and designed in Texas. Depending on the magnitude and type of construction, a registered professional civil engineer may need to be involved in your project.

**Reimbursable** — All Title 23 funds are distributed on a reimbursable basis. This means that the bills for the plan or project must be paid and the receipts and/or invoices must be sent in to TxDOT for approval and reimbursement of the expenses. Funds are not provided to the sponsor "up front."

**Right of Way (ROW)** — The strip of land over which is built, or may be built, a public road and appurtenant structures (sidewalks, shoulders, drainage, etc)

**Safety Improvement Project** — Infrastructure improvements aimed at enhancing bicycle and pedestrian safety and/or facilitating bicycle and pedestrian mobility and access.

**Section 4(f), Public recreational land** — Examples are parks, campgrounds, wildlife refuge, golf course etc. Infrastructure improvement projects that propose to use even a portion of 4(f) property will require additional steps prior to authorization. In certain cases, school property may be 4(f). Projects that are only multi use trails are exempt.

**Section 6(f), Public recreational land that was developed or purchased with federal funds** — Infrastructure improvement projects that propose to use even a portion of 6(f) property will require additional steps prior to approval.

**Sponsor** — Entity with fiscal responsibility for the project, including the responsibility that it is completed in accordance with all state and federal regulations.

**State Highway System** — The system of highways in the state included in a comprehensive plan prepared by the executive director with the approval of the Commission, in accordance with Transportation Code, [§201.103](#).

**TRF** — The Traffic Operation Division of TxDOT.

**Trip Generator** — Any significant origin or destination for trips. This could include neighborhoods or subdivisions, schools, parks, businesses, shopping centers, etc.

**TxDOT** — The Texas Department of Transportation.

## Appendix C — TxDOT SRTS District Contacts

<b>District</b>	<b>Point of Contact</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<a href="#">Abilene</a>	Roy Wright	(325) 676-6805
<a href="#">Amarillo</a>	Tracy Muno	(806) 356-3291
<a href="#">Atlanta</a>	Deanne Simmons	(903) 799-1308
<a href="#">Austin</a>	Elizabeth Prestwood Ed Collins	(512) 832-7284 (512) 832-7041
<a href="#">Beaumont</a>	Janet Manley	(409) 898-5768
<a href="#">Brownwood</a>	Carl Johnson	(325) 643-0467
<a href="#">Bryan</a>	Michael Jedlicka	(979) 778-9759
<a href="#">Childress</a>	Bart Sherrill	(940) 937-7152
<a href="#">Corpus Christi</a>	Cliff Bost	(361) 808-2258
<a href="#">Dallas</a>	Melanie Young Cheryl Cook	(214) 320-6229 (214) 320-6291
<a href="#">El Paso</a>	Edgar Fino	(915) 790-4306
<a href="#">Fort Worth</a>	Kathy Neely	(817) 370-6626
<a href="#">Houston</a>	James Keener	(713) 802-5185
<a href="#">Laredo</a>	Willie Dougherty	(956) 764-1213
<a href="#">Lubbock</a>	Karen Peoples	(806) 748-4478
<a href="#">Lufkin</a>	Herbert Bickley	(936) 633-4472
<a href="#">Odessa</a>	Kelli Williams	(432) 498-4752
<a href="#">Paris</a>	Darius Samuels	(903) 737-9498
<a href="#">Pharr</a>	Steve Walker	(956) 702-6142
<a href="#">San Angelo</a>	Gary Enos	(325) 947-9233
<a href="#">San Antonio</a>	John Gianotti	(210) 615-6028
<a href="#">Tyler</a>	Wendy Simmons	(903) 510-9192
<a href="#">Waco</a>	Jim Reed Cindy Parks	(254) 867-2733 (254) 867-2725
<a href="#">Wichita Falls</a>	Patsy Walls	(940) 720-7708
<a href="#">Yoakum</a>	Billy Goodrich Marla Jasek	(361) 293-4381 (361) 293-4356

## Appendix D — National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)

As a federally funded program, all SRTS Projects must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In many cases, a simple Categorical Exclusion or project memo may be filed. Categorical exclusions are "a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment...and for which, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required." Applicants may take up to ninety (90) days following preliminary engineering approval to submit all NEPA documents relating to Safety Improvement Projects. Failure to submit categorical exclusions and/or all other NEPA documents could result in the project being cancelled.

A project memo addresses the environmental impacts that the project will have to the project area. It is anticipated that the types of projects proposed under the SRTS program will be those that will have minor impacts to the environment. Impacts reviewed in a project memo include: impacts to park or recreational property (positive and negative); impacts to historical features currently existing in the project area; impacts to federal and state threatened and endangered species; and amount of permanent and temporary easements needed to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed project. Impacts to water resources such as floodplains, wetlands, and open water must be addresses as well.

Examples of typical SRTS improvement projects that qualify for Categorical Exclusion may include:

- traffic signal modifications
- pavement markings not affecting the number of through traffic lanes
- anti-skid treatments
- curb and/or gutter construction and curb ramps for the handicapped
- lighting and electrical work
- upgrading or providing safety features
- shoulder widening to accommodate bike lanes
- other improvements within the highway right of way.

The above list is only a partial tool to help in your assessment. As an applicant, it is your responsibility to identify and provide all necessary local permits and NEPA materials that may be required of your project. For more guidance on Categorical Exclusions, please visit the FHWA website:

<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/projdev/docuce.asp>.

**If you are not familiar with the NEPA process, seek assistance from your local TxDOT District SRTS contact or your local public works department.**

## Appendix E — Determining Existing Safe Routes

Through the course of evaluating existing conditions and developing an SRTS Plan, schools must determine which, if any, existing routes provide for safe biking or walking to school. This should include real and perceived conditions, if possible, as reflected by parental attitudes toward children walking and biking to school. This will not only allow schools to identify existing safe routes, but will assist in identifying deficiencies that need to be addressed as well as targeting specific routes and transportation networks that should be the focus of the school's SRTS Plan.

Due to the broad and disparate nature of conditions and development patterns around schools, there is no formulaic approach that can be applied when determining the existing safe routes that connect residential areas with the schools that serve them. However, some prime considerations when evaluating existing routes should include:

- minimal traffic crossings required
- connectivity to residential areas
- existing signalization
- routes that have slower speed limits
- existing crosswalks and sidewalks
- routes that have the least traffic volume
- existing traffic calming measures
- routes without at-grade rail crossings
- pedestrian separation from traffic
- existing bike paths, trails, or lanes.

Conditions should be evaluated in the context of the specific community and the existing travel environment and conditions within the 2-mile radius of school(s) for which the project is being developed and implemented.

## Appendix F — Milestones

All applicants are required to submit a proposed time line covering the period from when the project is authorized by TxDOT to the project's completion. Key milestones are listed below but applicants are encouraged to develop and include additional milestones for SRTS non-infrastructure projects because they will vary greatly in scope. Include community-specific information such as public meetings, events, etc.

Final dates will be established once the funds are authorized and will become part of the project agreement. Failure to make substantial progress on the identified milestones by the agreed upon date could result in the termination of the project funding. Any work performed by the applicant prior to receiving written authorization to proceed is not eligible for reimbursement.

Applicants are encouraged to hold pre-application meetings with appropriate federal, state, and local government agencies to determine requirements, processes, and schedules that may affect their project.

### SRTS Non-Infrastructure Projects

Date	Milestone
	1. Agreement between TxDOT and sponsor prepared
	2. Competitively hire outside services, if needed
	3. Project work commences
	4. Project work completed
	5. Project deliverables audited and closed



## Appendix G — Recommended Evaluation of Safe Routes to School Programs

Projects selected, authorized, and completed using SRTS funds must be evaluated to gauge their effectiveness in promoting walking and biking to school. Ongoing review and evaluation activities associated with state and local SRTS Programs are vital for the continual improvement of each program.

The task of evaluating local SRTS projects and their resulting outcomes will largely be the responsibility of the applicant. Documentation of pre-project conditions and post-project improvements are the recommended framework for the evaluation report, although the nature of the project may point to alternative evaluation formats.

Evaluating crash data is a good way of pointing out safety outcomes of local SRTS projects. An appropriate cycle to review crash data is 3 years prior, and 3 years after implementing the SRTS improvement. This time frame may not be appropriate for many SRTS projects. Measured changes in public perceptions of safety, the effect on safety behaviors among program participants, and increased awareness of safe walking and bicycling practices are also acceptable evaluation formats. **Because the intent of SRTS is to increase the numbers of students choosing biking and walking travel modes, evaluation of this increase is imperative.**

### Examples of Measures:

- The number of students walking/biking to school before the program and after the program is established.
- The number of new partnerships created as a result of the program.
- The number of students and/or schools reached through the program.
- Measurements of student health, air quality, congestion, and other metrics noted or implied by the legislative purposes of the Safe Routes to School program.
- Documented improvements to the built environment that benefit and foster the ability to walk and bicycle to and from schools (new facilities, trails, sidewalks, etc.).

Additional guidance will be provided in the future with regard to the evaluation of the local SRTS program success. A more comprehensive package of standardized evaluation tools will be made available by the National SRTS Clearinghouse (<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>). These will be provided to project sponsors in time for project evaluations.