

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program

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- Goal is to eventually have a SRTS program in every eligible school
- Funding will be provided via a competitive grant process with two types of grants; infrastructure and non-infrastructure grants
- Grant applications and a guidelines document are ready to be distributed upon official announcement
- Virginia has chosen to allocate the maximum 30% of funding to non-infrastructure efforts



Program Grants

- 1st year focus on funding the development of a SRTS Plan for localities/schools. Few have plans today.
- Up to \$25k for school division-wide planning and program development (up to \$5k for individual schools)
- Six months to one year to complete plans
- Subsequent Program Grants can be used for Plan implementation and Program development

Project Grants

- Focus on School Division or community-wide systematic improvements for maximum effectiveness
- Grants available for up to \$500k to provide for several improvement types and/or locations within a locality
(same as the Bike and Ped Safety Program)
- Application can be concurrent with Program application, but funds are awarded following approval of SRTS Plan

1. Program Grants (non-infrastructure)

- 1st stage – lays the groundwork for localities & targets safety improvements
- Provide funds to develop and implement required local SRTS Plans and programs
- Requires a needs assessment specific to the application which *could* include
 - Physical/safety improvements
 - Education & Encouragement components
 - Traffic and safety enforcement
- Calls for rapid grant award process

2. Project Grants (infrastructure)

provide physical improvements that will enhance or facilitate safe biking and walking to school

- **Safety enhancements**
 - Signalization
 - Signing
 - Traffic calming
- **Bike & pedestrian facilities**
 - Sidewalks
 - Crosswalks
 - Bike lanes/paths
 - Multi-use trails
 - Secure bike racks

1. **Plans** – lay the groundwork, identify needs, establish goals, develop strategies, reach out to stakeholders, identify partnerships (parents, law enforcement, local officials & staff)
2. **Programs** – develop the tools, implement the plan, develop partnerships, generate interest and involvement through stakeholders
3. **Projects** – improve the built environment, build bike and pedestrian accommodations, enhance safety where needed

Funding Guidance:

- Limited SRTS \$\$ should be maximized, if possible, by leveraging other funding sources
- FHWA encourages leveraging but it cannot be a requirement for applicants
- SRTS funds cannot serve as a match for other federal funds
- Consideration of additional funding may not unfairly disadvantage low-income communities when competing for grants

Related Transportation Funding Resources

- Transportation Enhancements Program
- Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Program
- Surface Transportation Program
- Equity Bonus Funds
- Highway Safety Improvement Program
- NHTSA 402 Traffic Safety Funds

Non-Transportation Funding Sources

- Health
- Recreation
- Physical Education
- Law Enforcement
- Safety

SAFETEA-LU requires that schools receiving SRTS grant funds address needs in a comprehensive manner

- **All Grant applicants must have a SRTS Plan or a proposal to develop one.**
- **Program Grants can be used to develop a Plan.**
- **A Plan must be in place before Project Grant awards can proceed.**

Program Grants proposing SRTS Plan development should include:

- Location, size, and type of school
- Identifying a “Champion” to lead a local effort
- Identifying the “Team” that will develop and implement the local program
- Identifying stakeholders
- SRTS Policy Statement
- Additional elements, as practical, should be submitted for projects seeking Program Grants.

Comprehensive SRTS Plan – plans for schools or divisions proposing infrastructure improvements should include, as part of a needs assessment, the following elements:

- A non-motorized master plan or similar document which includes existing conditions and impediments to safe biking and walking
- Traffic, safety, and other relevant data
- Current student travel modes
- Parent and student surveys of desired travel modes
- Proposed timeline for project implementation
- Outreach strategy
- Short-term and long-term goals
- Proposed measures of success and evaluation steps
- Stakeholders and their involvement
- Plan for a sustained initiative and leadership ascendancy

Grant applications should:

- Propose comprehensive solutions to increase students walking and biking to school through the 5 Es:
- Identify specific problem(s) with targeted solutions
- Propose measures to monitor and demonstrate the success of the program & projects
- Demonstrate a commitment to sustaining a local SRTS program
- SRTS Plan completed or proposed when applying for Project Grants
- Resolution of support from school board or locality Board of Supervisors/City Council (Project Grants only)

VDOT grant applications will be evaluated on criteria that include:

- Demonstrated needs
- Identification of current and potential safe walking and bicycling routes to schools
- Identification of safety hazards
- Number of current and anticipated child pedestrians and bicyclists
- Potential to create and encourage safer walking and bicycling
- Community support for application

The first round of grant applications will be evaluated to identify candidates for “model schools”:

- **Existing plans for improving bicycle & pedestrian access and safety**
- **Potential for reduction in VMT resulting from the proposed improvements**
- **Capacity to rapidly advance improvements & to work in coordination with local government**

Model School Format

- VDOT will identify schools/divisions which have developed SRTS Programs that can serve as models to other schools with similar needs and demographics
- These model schools can serve as examples of best practices and “lessons learned”
- VDOT will facilitate information sharing

Statewide Distribution of Resources

- Each of VDOT’s 9 construction districts will have a model school to help ensure statewide distribution of financial resources as well as to provide prime examples of successful SRTS programs and projects within regions throughout the state

- VDOT lead with representatives including DMV, DOE, VDH, DCR, professional organizations within the education community, and advocacy groups (e.g., BikeWalk VA).
- Evaluates top candidates' applications and awards grants.
- Provides guidance on program development, criteria for grants, and program administration.
- Serves to publicize SRTS and receive feedback on the program for future consideration and changes.

September 2006	Convene Advisory Committee
Ongoing	Promote SRTS Program
December 2006	Award first Program Grants
April 2007	Award first Project Grants Award additional Program Grants
August 2007	Annual SRTS Report to CTB

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For information on starting a local SRTS program or initiative go to the National Clearinghouse for Safe Routes to School:

www.saferoutesinfo.org