



New Jersey Department of Transportation



SafeRoutes  
to School

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL-AID

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

APPLICATION GUIDANCE



March 2014



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## A. INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been developed to provide guidance to applicants seeking to apply for the federally funded Safe Routes to School Program administered in the state of New Jersey.

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program strives to empower communities to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. The Program makes funding available for a wide variety of projects and activities that support and encourage students to walk and bicycle to school.

The objectives of the SRTS Program are to:

1. Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
2. Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy, active lifestyle from an early age; and,
3. 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.

In New Jersey, these funds are available through the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) in partnership with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO). They can be used to fund a variety of both infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects that benefit elementary and middle school children in grades K-8, both public and private schools. All projects funded under this program must be located within two miles of an elementary or middle school.

**SRTS is a reimbursement program and only costs incurred after Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) project authorization are eligible for reimbursement.** Based on the federal enabling legislation, no matching funds are required but all federal regulations must be followed. This means that all projects must meet the requirements of Title 23 and Title 49 of the United States Code, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) and the Department of Transportation Act – Section 4(f). For projects that involve funding for design, the project sponsor must comply with the requirements of the Brooks Act and Federal Policy Guide 23 CFR 172A.



Infrastructure projects constructed with these funds must be accessible to persons with disabilities, per the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) at 28 CFR Part 36, Appendix A, as enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice and FHWA, and as required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

All of the above is covered in the federal aid project agreement signed by the grantee prior to the initiation of the project. For a description of the federal aid process, see the web site below:

### **NJDOT Federal Aid Handbook**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/documents/FEDERALAIDHANDBOOK.pdf>

The NJDOT has prepared this Guidance Document in recognition of the considerable interest in this unique funding opportunity. This document contains information on the application process, project eligibility and the selection process. The NJDOT's goal is to make this program and application process understandable and accessible to all potential applicants. Information about Safe Routes to School and other funding programs is located here:

### **NJDOT Community Programs**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/>

The NJDOT utilizes an online grant management system, **SAGE** (System for Administering Grants Electronically), to accept, review, approve and manage grants. The SRTS application process is online and all applicants are required to submit their applications using **SAGE**. This system requires authorization for access. If you belong to a county or municipality you already have an Authorized Official registered with access to the NJ Department of Community Affairs **SAGE**. If you belong to any other type of organization, you may request access as an Authorized Official directly through the NJDOT **SAGE**, found on the NJDOT web site:

### **New Jersey Department of Transportation**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/>

## **B. QUESTIONS?**

For more information concerning the SRTS program please visit the following Web sites:

### **NJDOT Safe Routes to School**



<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/>

**NJ SRTS Resource Center** (Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University)

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/>

**Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Safe Routes to School**

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>.

**The National Center for Safe Routes to School**

<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

Throughout this handbook, we provide direction to help you through the application process. For further assistance you can contact the NJDOT Division of Local Aid and Economic Development District Office or the local Metropolitan Planning Organization in your area.

### NJDOT LOCAL AID DISTRICTS

**District 1**

Roxbury Corporate Center  
200 Stierli Court  
Mount Arlington, NJ 07856  
Phone: (973) 601-6700  
Fax: (973) 601-6709  
Morris, Passaic, Sussex,  
and Warren Counties

**District 2**

153 Halsey Street -5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Phone: (973) 877-1500  
Fax: (973) 877-1556  
Bergen, Essex, Hudson,  
and Union Counties

**District 3**

New Jersey Department of Transportation  
District 3 Bureau of Local Aid  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
Phone: (732) 625-4291  
Fax (732) 625-4292  
Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex,  
Monmouth, Ocean, and Somerset Counties

**District 4**

1 Executive Campus  
Route 70 West, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08054  
Phone: (856) 486-6618  
Fax (856) 486-6771  
Atlantic, Burlington, Camden,  
Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and  
Salem Counties



## Metropolitan Planning Organizations

### **North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)**

One Newark Center

17th floor

Newark, NJ 07102

Phone: (973) 639-8400

Fax: (973) 639-1953

Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren Counties, and the Cities of Jersey City and Newark

### **Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)**

190 North Independence Mall West

Philadelphia, PA 19106

Phone: (215) 592-1800

Fax: (215) 592-9125

Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer Counties

### **South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO)**

782 South Brewster Road, Unit B6

Vineland, NJ 08360

Phone: (856) 794-1941

Fax: (856) 794-2549

Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem

## **C. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

SRTS funds are intended to be used for a wide variety of projects and activities that facilitate walking and bicycling to school. In the SRTS context, these projects or activities are categorized into five (5) "E's."

1. **E**ngineering: infrastructure upgrades that improve the walking and biking environment
2. **E**ncouragement: programs to encourage or promote walking and biking
3. **E**ducation: programs to educate students, parents and the public about safe walking and biking
4. **E**nforcement: activities to improve safety and security for those walking and biking to school



5. Evaluation: efforts to monitor and evaluate progress towards the achievement of SRTS goals

Proposals must define a complete, identifiable and usable facility or activity. Funds are not available for partial activities that cannot function as a complete and useful whole or for projects that do not have independent utility.

It is anticipated that these projects will not only have a direct impact on the school commute, but that their implementation will result in other outcomes, serving as a catalyst wherever possible, for the development of other projects and programs that lead to more walkable and bikeable communities supporting active, healthy lifestyles. Desired outcomes 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/security
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Enhanced community accessibility
- Increased community involvement
- Improved physical infrastructure that increases the ability to walk and bicycle to and from schools
- Improved partnerships among schools, local municipalities, parents, and other community groups, including non-profit organizations
- Increased interest in bicycle and pedestrian accommodations throughout a community

As has been noted above, there are two major types of eligible projects and activities: *infrastructure projects* and *non-infrastructure activities*.

**For 2014, only infrastructure projects will be funded through the competitive grant program administered by the Department's Division of Local Aid & Economic**



Development in partnership with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO). Non-infrastructure programs (education, enforcement and encouragement) will be made available through the New Jersey Safe Routes to School Resource Center. More information on the non-infrastructure program can be found on the following web sites:

**NJ SRTS Resource Center** (Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University)

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/>

**NJDOT Safe Routes to School Program**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/>

Any infrastructure project application should indicate whether appropriate non-infrastructure activities (enforcement, education or encouragement) have taken place or are being implemented to coordinate with the proposed infrastructure project.

### *Infrastructure Projects*

Eligible infrastructure projects include the design (initial design to the preparation of plans, specifications and estimates), environmental studies (if needed), and construction of physical elements that will improve the ability of students to walk or bicycle to school. **For 2014, only specially designated communities will be able to apply for design funds.** These include Urban Aid Communities as determined by the Department of Community Affairs and those municipalities containing Schools Development Authority (SDA) Districts as outlined by the Educational Facilities Construction and Financing Act. For listings of Urban Aid Communities and SDA Districts, please see the following web sites:

**NJ Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services**

[http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dlgs/resources/muni\\_st\\_docs/2013\\_data/urban\\_2013.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dlgs/resources/muni_st_docs/2013_data/urban_2013.pdf)

**NJ Schools Development Authority**

[http://www.njsda.gov/GI/SDA\\_Districts.html](http://www.njsda.gov/GI/SDA_Districts.html)

Applicants may submit up to three applications to the program and, if they are a disadvantaged community as defined above, may apply for more than one phase (design and construction). Each phase of an infrastructure project must be applied for separately.





Below are examples of potential infrastructure projects that have been used for existing SRTS or related programs. This list is not intended to be comprehensive; other types of projects that are not on this list may also be eligible if they meet the objective of improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and access around schools.

- **Bikeways**

- On-Street Bike Lanes or Shoulders
- Off-Road Bike Paths or Trails
- Bike Route Signs
- Bicycle Parking (Racks or Lockers)

- **Pedestrian Safety**

- New or Upgraded Sidewalks
- ADA Curb Ramps
- Crosswalk Installation or Striping
- Pedestrian Crossing Signs
- Pedestrian Pushbuttons or Signal Heads

- **Combination Pedestrian/Bikeway**

- School Zone Delineation (signs, striping, lighting)
- Traffic Calming Devices (mechanisms used to reduce the speed or other negative effects of motor vehicle traffic) Examples include center island medians, curb extensions, speed humps/tables, and full/partial street closures.
- New or Upgraded Intersection and/or Crosswalk Treatment (allows pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the street more safely) Examples include median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, traffic signals, pavement markings, traffic stripes, in-roadway crossing lights, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, pedestrian activated signal upgrades, and sight distance improvements.

For infrastructure projects, public funds must be spent on projects within the public right-of-way. This may include projects on private land that have public access easements. Public property includes lands that are owned by a public entity, including those lands owned by public school districts.



Construction and capital improvement projects also must be located within two miles of a primary or middle school (grades K – 8). Schools with grades that extend higher than grade 8, but which include any of grades K-8, are eligible to receive funding for infrastructure improvements.

Infrastructure projects must be designed to American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), NJDOT's Planning and Design Guidelines for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, and all other applicable professional design standards. **Infrastructure projects must also comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.** For guidance on ADA, please see the following web sites:

**FHWA Accessibility Resource Library**

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/accessibility/index.cfm>

**Revised Draft Guidelines for Accessible Public Rights-of-Way**

<http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/streets-sidewalks/public-rights-of-way/background/revised-draft-guidelines>

To ensure that any proposed infrastructure projects protect and enhance the environment, the Local Public Agency (LPA) is responsible for securing all applicable environmental approvals. SRTS infrastructure projects must conform to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) and the Department of Transportation Act – Section 4(f) which protects parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and public and private historical sites. For guidance on federal environmental regulations, please see the following web sites:

**United States Environmental Protection Agency**

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/nepa/>

**Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**

<http://www.achp.gov/106summary.html>

**United States Department of Transportation**

<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/4f/index.asp>

For projects on private land, there must be a written legal easement or other written legally binding agreement that ensures public access to the project. There must be an



easement filed of record, which specifies the minimum length of time for the agreement to maximize the public investment in the project. The project agreement should clearly state in writing:

- The purpose of the project
- The minimum timeframe for the easement or lease
- The duties and responsibilities of the parties involved
- How the property will be used and maintained in the future

The project must remain open for general public access for the use for which the funds were intended, and for the timeframe specified in the easement or lease. The anticipated level of public access should be comparable to the nature and magnitude of the investment of public funds.

Reversionary clauses may be appropriate in some instances. These clauses would assure that if access to the property is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was acquired, it would revert to the original owner.

*Note:* As you complete your application, please keep in mind that all funded projects must be advanced in accordance with federal and state laws, regulations and procedural requirements, some of which may require extensive administration and time to complete. In some cases, an infrastructure project may take 12-18 months from the time of grant notification before the construction may begin due to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) approval process, procurement requirements and other compliance issues.

### *Non-Infrastructure Activities*

Non-infrastructure activities are activities that encourage walking and bicycling to school, including:

- Public awareness campaigns and outreach to media and community leaders;
- Traffic education and enforcement in the vicinity of schools; and
- Student sessions on bicycle and pedestrian safety, health, and the environment.

**These activities will not be funded through New Jersey's 2014 SRTS competitive grant program.** The New Jersey Department of Transportation has partnered with the New Jersey Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) to administer a statewide education and encouragement program using Safe Routes to School Federal SAFETEA-



LU funds. The goal of this non-infrastructure program is to educate and encourage more children to walk and bicycle to school. For more information about the program, please contact the TMA in your area. TMA contacts can be found here: <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/about/regional-coordinator-tmas/>.

A number of sources can provide guidance on non-infrastructure activities, including those listed below:

**NJ SRTS Resource Center** (Voorhees Transportation Center, Rutgers University)

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/>

**NJDOT Safe Routes to School Program**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/>

**NJDOT Safe Routes to School Toolbox**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/started.shtm>

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**

**Safe Routes to School: Practice and Promise**

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/safe-routes-2004/>

**NHTSA Safe Routes to School Toolkit**

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/Safe-Routes-2002/index.html>

## **D. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND FUNDING RECIPIENTS**

Under New Jersey's SRTS Program, any state, county, municipal government, school district, or school may submit an SRTS application, provided that they demonstrate an ability to meet the requirements of the program. Nonprofit organizations will not be directly eligible to apply. However, nonprofit organizations may partner with a Local Public Agency (LPA) that will assume responsibility and administration for the grant. Upon request, NJDOT will provide a preliminary determination on the eligibility of any potential applicant or the eligibility of any proposed project or activity. NJDOT has final authority to make a determination on the eligibility of an applicant.

If the applicant is awarded a SRTS grant, then the LPA's receiving the grant must have the financial capability to advance project costs for materials and contractors. Before applying, prospective LPA's should assess their capability to comply with state and federal requirements for procurement of materials and services, accounting practices,



right-of-way and easement acquisitions, environmental regulations and applicable design standards.

LPA's receiving federal-aid funds are responsible for administering their projects and meeting all federal-aid requirements. The NJDOT, through its Stewardship Agreement with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is responsible for ensuring that each LPA receiving FHWA funds is adequately staffed and suitably equipped to undertake the federal-aid projects; to provide the supervision and inspection required to complete each project in conformance with the approved plans and specifications; and to ensure that all federal requirements are met. Generally speaking these requirements are set forth in Title 23 - Highways; 48 CFR - Federal Acquisition Regulation; and 49 CFR 18 - the Common Grant Rule.

All public right-of-way and facilities are required to be accessible for all users regardless of funding source. Recipients of federal and state grants will be required to comply with the provisions of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

In order to make this eligibility determination the NJDOT will assess each LPA's policies, procedures, organizational structure, and internal controls prior to the authorization of federal-aid funds. There will be two parts to the eligibility assessment:

1. Completion and certification of NJDOT's Division of Local Aid's Federal Aid Highway Program Administrative Questionnaire by the LPA.
2. An assessment of the LPA's existing Project Management and contract administration internal controls by NJDOT.

Additional information is available at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/eligibility.shtm>

Each LPA seeking federal-aid funds will be asked to complete NJDOT's Division of Local Aid's Federal Aid Highway Program Administrative Questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed to assess the adequacy of an LPA's accounting controls and administrative management systems.

### *Contracting Authority*



While individual schools may submit applications for funding, ultimately, selected SRTS projects will be funded under contracts (federal project agreements) with either the school district, municipality, or county (depending on the type and location of the project or activity). The Department's Division of Local Aid will be the contract administrators for these grants.

If the applicant is a municipality or county, the school district involved must demonstrate support **in the form of a resolution**.

If the applicant is a school or a school district, and the proposed project is not on school property (i.e., is on a public right of way), the agency with jurisdiction over the public right of way where the project is proposed (i.e., the county or municipality) must show support for the project **in the form of a resolution**.

#### E. ELIGIBLE COSTS

Infrastructure project costs eligible for funding include design and construction. Ideally, these projects should be carried out in fulfillment of an existing SRTS Travel Plan. **The preparation of a SRTS Travel Plan is not eligible for funding but it is highly recommended.** In order to earn points, the School Travel Plan must contain six basic elements: School Description, Working Group/Partnerships, School Neighborhood Map, Barriers and Opportunities, Goals and Actions, and Measuring Progress. School travel plans that include the proposed projects will garner additional points for the applicant. Guidance on travel plans is available here:

#### **New Jersey SRTS Travel Plan Guide website**

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/resources/stp/>

Every possible effort should be made to develop accurate cost estimates. A detailed cost estimate of all pay items with backup documentation and a project schedule which shows the tasks needed to accomplish the activities for which Safe Routes to School funds are being sought, must be presented as a part of the application. Guidance on the preparation of a cost estimate for a SRTS project can be found here:

#### **Estimating Improvement Costs for SRTS**

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/estimating-improvement-costs-for-srts/>



**The SRTS Program is a reimbursement program for costs incurred.** It is not a “cash-up front” program. Costs incurred prior to FHWA project approval are not eligible for reimbursement. LPA’s must have the financial capability to advance project costs for materials and contractors. Before applying, prospective LPA’s should assess their capability to comply with state and federal requirements for procurement of materials and services, accounting practices, right-of-way and easement acquisitions, environmental regulations and applicable design standards.

**Note: Any activity or work that is performed before the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) formally authorizes the project cannot, and will not, be funded through this program.**

## F. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The application due date is stated in the application solicitation letter sent out by the NJDOT to prospective applicants and shall be posted on the NJDOT web site:

**NJDOT Division of Local Aid and Economic Development, SRTS Program**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/srts.shtm>

### **Application Format**

The NJDOT utilizes an online grant management system, **SAGE** (System for Administering Grants Electronically), to accept, review, approve and manage grants. The Safe Routes to School application process is online and all applicants are required to submit their applications using **SAGE**.

Applicants are encouraged to include photographs, maps and project details with their applications to convey what will be accomplished. These attachments may be uploaded during the electronic application process.

Applicants should read and follow the instructions on each page of the online application. For NJ DOT SAGE site technical assistance, please contact your Local Aid District Office Representative. A contact list is provided in Section B.

The following guidance is provided to assist you in the completion of your application:

Prior to initiating a new application, all LPA’s must acknowledge that they have read the statements regarding ADA Compliance and LPA Eligibility Assessment requirements.



## Eligibility

For a project to be eligible for funding, the application must satisfy the following requirements:

- 1) **The project must be within 2 miles of a K-8 school.** Part of an infrastructure project may lie outside a 2-mile radius as long as at least some of it is within 2 miles (for example, a length of sidewalk). An 8.5 x 11 inch map showing the locations of the project and of the school must be attached.
- 2) **Each application must include, as attachments, resolutions of support or letters of agreement from the school board and from the governing body of each municipality in which the project is to be located.** In other words, if the municipality is the applicant, the school board's support must be documented (as well as the municipality's), and if the applicant is the school board, then there must be proof of the municipality's support (as well as the school board's). If the applicant does not have jurisdiction over the property where the project is proposed, then a letter of agreement must be provided by the jurisdictional owner for the proposed project.
- 3) **In the application, the applicant must indicate and certify the continual ownership and maintenance by a municipality, county, or local public agency for the useful life of the project.** A resolution or letter from the responsible party must be attached to the application by the application deadline.
- 4) **Each applicant must identify a person in responsible charge for each project.** The responsible charge is defined in 23 CFR 635.105(a) (4). Federal regulations require Local Public Agencies' (LPAs) to provide a full-time employee to be in responsible charge of Federal-aid construction projects. The person in responsible charge of LPA administered projects need not be an engineer, but they must be an employee of the LPA. A name and title of the person who will be in responsible charge of the project is required.

If any of the above requirements are unmet, the project is ineligible for funding and the application will not be considered.





### **Type of Improvement**

NJDOT SAGE categorizes infrastructure projects as Bikeways projects, Pedestrian Safety Projects, or a combination of the two. Select the category that is most appropriate for the project for which you are seeking funds.

### **Project Name/Limits**

Indicate the name of the project and its limits. The limits may indicate either mileposts or the streets or intersections that form the borders of the project, for instance "From: Main Street", "To: Broad Street".

### **Project Location**

From the drop down menus, select the county and municipality in which the project is to be constructed or installed.

### **School Information**

Provide complete information for each school that is participating in or will benefit from the proposed project or activity. Provide complete contact information for the designated lead coordinator at each school. Provide information about how students currently travel to and from school and the method used to collect this data. Provide information about the percentage of students living within two miles of the school. Indicate whether courtesy/hazard busing is currently provided, and estimate the number of students that will benefit from the project or activities included in this application.

Each applicant should indicate whether:

1. the school is part of a School Development Authority District (a listing of these districts is available at [http://www.njsda.gov/GI/SDA\\_Districts.html](http://www.njsda.gov/GI/SDA_Districts.html)), or
2. the school is located in an Urban Aid Community. A list of these communities is available at: [http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dlgs/resources/muni\\_st\\_docs/2013\\_data/urban\\_2013.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dlgs/resources/muni_st_docs/2013_data/urban_2013.pdf)

### **Problem Statement**

Describe the current conditions for walking and bicycling in the school(s) area. You are encouraged to reference supporting documentation such as: maps, history of traffic problems, accident reports, traffic counts, speed surveys, health statistics, crime reports, photographs of deficiencies, walkability audits, census information and survey results. Include a description of obstacles (physical or perceived) to walking or bicycling to school and current risks facing children who walk or bicycle to the school(s).



### **Demonstrated Commitment**

Describe existing programs and improvements that demonstrate a commitment to encouraging walking and bicycling, emphasizing those recently implemented (i.e., within the past two years). Additional consideration will be given to communities and schools that have shown a commitment to walking and bicycling by implementing various improvements or programs and/or have taken steps to plan for better pedestrian and bicycling facilities.

Describe clearly any programs to encourage or support walking and bicycling to school (e.g., Walk to School Day, bicycle rodeo).

Describe any recently implemented physical improvements that encourage walking and bicycling to school (warning signs, sidewalks, bicycle racks), or any improvements that are in process (excluding those funded or to be funded under this program). Indicate whether the proposed project is a continuation of a previously funded project or study and if it will connect to an existing regional bicycle or pedestrian network.

Indicate whether a School Travel Plan has been prepared and attach it if one has. A travel plan helps to create safer routes for pedestrian and bicycle travel by identifying key contacts and team members, problem areas and proposing solutions. A SRTS Travel Plan Guide was created to provide example format and content. It is available here:

### **New Jersey SRTS Travel Plan Guide website**

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/resources/stp/>

State whether the school benefiting from the proposed project has a written policy supporting walking and bicycling to school. Adopting policy is a mandated function of the school board. Policies establish direction for the district and its schools, set the goals, assign authority, and are the means by which educators are accountable to the public. The most important reason to have a policy is to make expectations consistent district-wide. Adopting a school bicycling or walking policy standardizes the transportation safety rules for the district. Students and guardians may not be aware of safe pedestrian or cycling behavior. A policy like these can help lay the groundwork for better and safer behaviors. Model walking and bicycling to school policies can be found here:

### **NJ SRTS Resource Center Tools, Tips, and More**

<http://www.saferoutesnj.org/resources/tips-tools-and-more/>



Indicate whether walking and/or bicycling to school is supported in a School Wellness Policy and attach the Policy's relevant pages if it is. In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the U.S. Congress established a requirement that all school districts with a federally-funded school meals program develop and implement wellness policies that address nutrition and physical activity. The National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA, [www.nanacoalition.org](http://www.nanacoalition.org)) put together a task force of health, nutrition, physical activity and education professionals to create a set of model school wellness policies that school districts can adopt. Resources for local school wellness policies can be found here:

### **Model School Wellness Policies**

<http://www.schoolwellnesspolicies.org/WellnessResources.html>

### **Problem Documentation**

As mentioned above, provide a location map covering a two-mile radius from the school(s), showing the school site(s) and problem areas relevant to this application. Maps, photographs, and other data which provide evidence of the severity of the problem, may be uploaded to SAGE. Documentation can include a history of traffic problems, accident reports, traffic counts, speed surveys, crime reports, walkability audits, photos of deficiencies, health statistics, census information and survey results.

### **Project Proposal**

Applicants may apply for more than one phase of an infrastructure project, but funding for each phase must be applied for separately. Phases are limited to Design and Construction/Installation. Funding for the design phase is only available to designated School Development Authority School districts and Urban aid Communities. These phases apply to every type of infrastructure project. If applicable, indicate the length of the proposed improvement.

Indicate the schools that benefit from the project and explain how the project will create a safer walking and/or bicycling environment or encourage more children to walk or bicycle to school. Discuss how many children will benefit from the project and whether it targets one neighborhood or the entire school community.

Provide information about the location of the project(s) and show the location(s) on a map (must be within two miles of the school). Indicate whether the project is on a walking or bicycling route to school and illustrate the relationship between the school and the project on the map.



Provide other information as requested on the other potential project impacts (including utility relocation, Right-of-Way requirements, permit requirements, and involvement with other facilities, such as railroads or traffic signals). If needed, provide an explanation in the application.

### **Schedule**

Describe the anticipated project schedule (in a table or list format) from start to finish, including completion and evaluation of results, for each project or activity for which funding is being sought. Indicate milestone dates (such as easement acquisitions, Right-of-Way (ROW), permits, utility relocations, environmental or historical preservation approvals, bid, advertise, award, and start of construction) by the number of months from written authorization to proceed to project completion and evaluation of results.

The project must receive federal authorization for construction or implementation within two years of the date that the applicant is notified of project selection. If the project is not authorized within two years of selection, the grant will be rescinded and the applicant will have to reapply. *The Safe Routes to School program will not reimburse applicants for any expenses incurred prior to federal authorization.*

### **Partnerships and Public Outreach**

You may attach up to five (5) letters of support from community organizations, citizens, all levels of government and elected officials (other than the applicant), and any and all interested parties will be considered. This should include neighborhood or business associations, and local residents. In order to be eligible, letters must be dated no earlier than January 1 of the current calendar year. **Any letters of support should be addressed to the applicant, NOT to the Department of Transportation.**

### **Cost Estimate**

You must provide the total amount of funding requested with a breakdown for each project or activity (information cost breakdowns can be found on the NJ SRTS Resource Center web site: <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/estimating-improvement-costs-for-srts/>). For infrastructure projects, provide an engineer's construction estimate according to FHWA guidelines. The budget should include the costs (if any) associated with evaluating the results of the project.

### **Evaluation**

This program is intended to yield measurable results. Describe how you will be measuring the results of the projects and activities that are part of this funding request. Include evaluation in the proposed timeline. At a minimum, grant recipients will be



required to record the number and type of improvements installed, the number of participants in their SRTS programs, and the results of a follow-up survey of how students get to school. Other outcomes can also be a part of your evaluation process including:

- Changes in public/student perception of safety (survey)
- Increased awareness of safe walking and bicycling behaviors
- Increased awareness of safe driving behaviors
- Reduction in crashes
- Improvement in crime statistics
- Improvement in health statistics

Describe how each element of the project is to be evaluated/measured.

## G. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

The basic requirement is that projects be directly related to the facilitation of walking and biking to school. Each project will be evaluated based on information provided in the application form and attachments. Specifically each application will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- The application and project meet all eligibility requirements.
- The application has been submitted by a valid applicant.
- The applicant identifies a valid funding recipient.
- The applicant is responsive to the information requested in the application: specifically, completing each section of the application including full contact information requirements; providing information on the current modal split of students traveling to and from school and the number of child pedestrians or bicyclists anticipated to use the walking/cycling routes affected by the project.
- The project, as described, has the potential to make walking or cycling to school safer.
- The project, as described, has the potential to increase the number of students walking or bicycling to school.
- The applicant has demonstrated a commitment to walking and biking to school through past activities.
- The proposed project is an element of a completed School Travel Plan.
- The school(s) benefiting from the proposed project has a written policy supporting walking and bicycling to school, including a School Wellness Policy.
- The application includes a detailed budget.



- The application includes a realistic timeline for the project, including milestones, from implementation through evaluation.
- The application includes appropriate evaluation measures that will be employed to measure results.
- The applicant has demonstrated a readiness for construction/implementation.
- The application clearly and accurately describes the hazards or issues that hamper walking or biking to the targeted school(s) as well as the severity of the problem.
- The applicant has employed quality data sources to document the problem.
- The application clearly and accurately describes the projects and how well they will address the deficiencies identified in the problem statement.
- The proposed project will benefit more than one school.
- The proposed project connects to a regional bike or pedestrian network.
- The applicant has demonstrated commitment to walking and biking through previous infrastructure projects.
- The applicant has received authorized for previous Safe Routes to School projects within the allotted timeframe. Projects have been closed out within six months from the date of completion on previous Safe Routes to School grants.
- The application includes letters that indicate community support for the project.
- The proposed project will benefit a disadvantaged community.  
Extra consideration will be given to projects located in Urban Aid Communities , a Schools Development Authority (SDA) District.
- The municipality in which the project is proposed has adopted a Complete Streets policy.

## H. PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for SRTS projects and activities includes the participation of a SRTS Selection Committee that is charged with applying the selection criteria as discussed in this document and preparing the recommended “shortlist” of projects for consideration by the Commissioner of Transportation.

The SRTS Selection Committee is made up from individuals representing the following organizations:

- New Jersey Department of Transportation
  - Division of Local Aid and Economic Development
  - Division of Traffic Engineering and Safety
  - Division of Environmental Resources



- Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs
  - Federal Highway Administration – New Jersey Division
  - North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
  - Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
  - South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

Other organizations or individuals may be added to the Committee at the discretion of the Commissioner of Transportation.

A two-tiered selection process is used for optimum consideration of all applications. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – New Jersey Division Office observes and monitors the selection process providing comments when needed.

The Selection Committee evaluates the applications. NJDOT staff will visit each infrastructure project site and prepare comments for the Selection Committee.

In the first tier evaluation, the Selection Committee members evaluate each application. The Department of Transportation may also use this review period to consult with other agencies with knowledge and experience that will benefit the selection of the best candidate projects. Projects are evaluated using the criteria presented in Section G of this document – PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA. The result is a short list of the highest rated projects, equal to about twice the value of the program funds available.

In the second tier of evaluation, short-listed projects will undergo further internal review and evaluation by the NJDOT staff to establish technical feasibility (the time frame, design standards, permits needed, potential for environmental constraints on construction, etc.), to determine the accuracy of project costs and to ensure that the recommended group of projects meets the program goals. There are no preferred project cost levels or goals. However, the recommended project short list will be developed with consideration given to geographic and demographic distribution. The final selections must be approved by the Commissioner of Transportation.

If your application is chosen, you will be required to attend a project kick-off meeting with Department staff to learn more about the implementation and authorization process. **All selected projects are required to receive Federal authorization for construction or implementation before any work on the project begins AND within two years of the grantee receiving notice of the award. If the project is not authorized within two years of the award announcement, the grant will be rescinded and the applicant must reapply for funds.**



## I. DESIGN GUIDELINES

Infrastructure projects must be based on appropriate design standards. These include American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), NJDOT's Planning and Design Guidelines for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, and all other application professional design standards. Infrastructure Projects must comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The NJDOT requires the use of licensed professionals in the design and construction of the projects.

## J. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The NJDOT utilizes the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE), an online grant management system, to accept, review, approve and manage grants. The Safe Routes to School application process is online and all applicants are required to submit their applications using **SAGE**. This system requires authorization for access. If you belong to a county or municipality you already have an Authorized Official registered with access to the NJ Department of Community Affairs **SAGE**. If you belong to any other type of organization, you may request access as an Authorized Official directly through the NJDOT **SAGE**, found on the NJDOT web site:

### **NJDOT Division of Local Aid and Economic Development, Online Application**

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/sage.shtm>

If there are difficulties in uploading any attachments to NJDOT SAGE, documents may be submitted by mail by the deadline indicated on the solicitation letter. They must be addressed to:

**Michael Russo, Director**  
**Division of Local Aid and Economic Development**  
**New Jersey Department of Transportation**  
**1035 Parkway Avenue**  
**P.O. Box 600**  
**Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600**

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