



**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**FEDERAL-AID**

**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

**January 2008**



**New Jersey Department of Transportation**



**U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration**



# APPLICATION GUIDANCE

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## A. INTRODUCTION

The federally funded 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 federal-aid Safe Routes to School program provides federal-aid highway funds to State Departments of Transportation over five fiscal years (FY 2005 – FY 2009). The legislative details of the Program are contained in Section 1404 of the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).”

Specifically, the SRTS Program was created 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 and 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 and administered by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). 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.

**SRTS is a reimbursement program and only costs incurred after Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) project authorization are eligible. Based on the federal enabling legislation, no matching funds are required. All traffic education, enforcement and infrastructure projects funded under this program must be located within two miles of a school.**

The NJDOT prepared this Guidance Document in recognition of the considerable interest in this unique funding opportunity. This Guidance 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.

Beginning in 2008, the NJDOT will be utilizing a new online grant management system, **SAGE** (System for Administering Grants Electronically), to accept, review, approve and manage grants. Starting Fiscal year 08, the Safe Routes to School application process will





be online and all applicants will be 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: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/>.

This Guidance Document and other information about Safe Routes to School and other funding programs are located at <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/>.

For more information concerning the SRTS program please visit the NJDOT Safe Routes to School web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/> and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Safe Routes to School web site at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>.

## B. QUESTIONS?

Throughout this Guidance Document, we have tried to anticipate your questions and provide direction to help you through the application process. But we also recognize it is not possible to anticipate every question. We share your desire to have your application be the best it can be so if you do need assistance, please contact a representative from the NJDOT Division of Local Aid and Economic Development District Office in your area.

### NJ Local Aid Representatives

#### DISTRICT 1

**Counties: Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, and Warren**

Roxbury Corporate Center  
200 Stierli Court  
Mount Arlington, NJ 07856  
Phone: (973) 770-5070/5068  
Fax: (973) 770-5172

#### DISTRICT 2

**Counties: Bergen, Essex Hudson, and Union**

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

#### DISTRICT 3

**Counties: Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean**

Route 79 and Daniels Way  
Freehold, NJ 07728  
Phone: (732) 308-4002  
Fax: (732) 308-4003

#### DISTRICT 4

**Counties: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem**

1 Executive Campus  
Route 70 West, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08054  
Phone: (856) 486-6618  
Fax: (856) 486-6771



### C. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds are intended to be used for a wide variety of projects and activities that both lead to the implementation of SRTS Travel Plans (see note below) and facilitate walking and bicycling to school. In the SRTS context, these projects or activities are categorized into five (5) “E’s.”

1. **Engineering:** infrastructure upgrades that improve the walking and biking environment
2. **Encouragement:** programs to encourage or promote walking and biking
3. **Education:** programs to educate students, parents and the public about safe walking and biking
4. **Enforcement:** 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

**Note: Preparation of a SRTS Travel Plan is not an eligible activity for funding. However, schools are encouraged to prepare a SRTS Travel Plan and technical assistance is available through New Jersey’s SRTS Program. Applicants who have completed a SRTS Travel Plan will receive additional points.** See the SRTS Toolbox on the NJDOT web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/>) for information on how to develop a SRTS Travel Plan for your school, and on receiving technical assistance.

Projects and activities for which funding is being sought should be included in a pre-existing SRTS Travel Plan. Applications will be considered, however, regardless of whether or not a SRTS Travel Plan has been completed. 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*.

**NEW FOR 2008:** The applications for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects are now separate. Applicants may apply for one or both types. However, as in previous years, any infrastructure project application must indicate that appropriate non-infrastructure activities (enforcement, education or encouragement) have taken place or are being implemented to coordinate with the proposed engineering project.

### ***Infrastructure Projects***

Eligible infrastructure projects include the planning, design (initial design to the preparation of plans specifications and estimates), property acquisition, environmental studies, if needed, and construction of physical elements that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school.

**NEW FOR 2008:** Each phase of an infrastructure project must be applied for separately. Phases include: Planning, Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction. These phases apply to every infrastructure project, regardless of type. Applicants may apply for more than one phase.

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 objectives of reducing speeds and 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 traffic 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 approximately 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 application professional design standards. Infrastructure projects must also comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To ensure that any proposed infrastructure projects protect and enhance the environment, the sponsor 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 DOT Act – Section 4(f).

**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 the property is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was acquired, it would revert to the original owner.

### ***Real Property Acquisition***

For real property acquisition, all project sponsors must comply with the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. Regulations implementing this Act are found in 49 CFR Part 24. These regulations will be applied to evaluating the acquisition of real property and any potential displacement activities. See <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/realestate/ua/index.htm>.

**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 SHPO approval process, procurement requirements and other compliance issues.







## *Non-Infrastructure Activities*

Eligible 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 categories are broad in nature. A number of sources of information can provide further guidance on non-infrastructure activities, such as the Toolbox on NJDOT's SRTS web site, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) [Safe Routes to Schools: Practice and Promise](#), and NHTSA's [Safe Routes to School Toolkit](#).

Below is a listing of non-infrastructure activities that have been included in SRTS programs:

- Education
  - Creation and reproduction of promotional and educational materials
  - Bicycle and pedestrian safety, health or science curricula, materials and trainers
  - SRTS training workshops that target school- and community-level audiences
  - Pay for substitute teacher if needed to cover for faculty attending SRTS functions
- Enforcement
  - Equipment and training needed for establishing crossing guard programs
  - Costs for additional law enforcement or equipment needed for enforcement activities such as speed enforcement or crosswalk stings
  - Crime Prevention Initiative
- Encouragement
  - Walking School Bus Program
  - Frequent Walker/Rider Program
  - Modest incentives for SRTS contests
  - Incentives that encourage more walking and bicycling over time
  - Safety and educational tokens that also advertise the program
  - Photocopying, duplicating, and printing costs, including CDs, DVDs, etc.
  - Mailing costs
  - Costs for data gathering, analysis, and evaluation at the local level
  - Stipends or expenses for parent or staff coordinators [Note: the primary intent is to reimburse volunteers for materials and expenses needed for



- coordination and efforts, not to pay volunteers for their time. In some cases, however, NJDOT may permit paying a stipend to an individual to coordinate a local program(s).]
- Costs to employ a SRTS Program Manager, which is a person that runs a SRTS program for an entire city, county, or some other area-wide division that includes numerous schools (Note: Program Managers may coordinate the efforts of numerous stakeholders and volunteers, manage the process for implementation at the local or regional level, and may be responsible for reporting to the State SRTS Coordinator.)
  - Costs to engage the services of a consultant (either non-profit or for-profit) to develop or manage SRTS activities or programs as described in the prior bullet

This listing is not all-inclusive, although activities not listed must meet the purposes of the SRTS Program as specified by SAFETEA-LU, and should be generally comparable to those listed above or in the legislation. The NJDOT has discretionary authority on the eligibility of specific activities.

### *Activity Locations*

Traffic education and enforcement activities must take place within approximately two miles of a primary or middle school (grades K – 8). Encouragement activities under the non-infrastructure portion of the SRTS Program do not have a location restriction. Education and encouragement activities are allowed at private schools.

## **D. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY AND WHO MAY RECEIVE FUNDS**

Under New Jersey's SRTS Program, any state, county, municipal government, school district, school or non-profit organization may submit an SRTS application, provided that they demonstrate an ability to meet the requirements of the program. 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.

### *Contracting Authority*

While individual schools may submit applications for the funding of SRTS activities or projects, ultimately, selected projects will be funded under contracts (federal project agreements) with either the school district, municipality, county or an authorized non-profit organization (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.



### *For Infrastructure Projects*

If the applicant is a non-profit organization, 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 must show support for the project **in the form of a resolution**. Regional projects (affecting more than one municipality) must receive county endorsement in addition to the endorsement of affected municipalities.

If the applicant is a non-profit organization and the project is to be implemented on school property, the school and school district must show support for the proposed project **in the form of a resolution**.

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

### *For Non-infrastructure Activities*

If the applicant is a municipality or county, they must demonstrate the support of the school district and schools involved. If the applicant is a non-profit organization, they must show evidence of support and cooperation for the project from the school and school district involved. They must also show support for the project from the municipality, preferably in the form of a resolution. Regional projects (affecting more than one municipality) must receive county endorsement. If the applicant is a school or school district, they must show evidence of support from the municipality.

## **E. ELIGIBLE COSTS**

All costs associated with the preparation and implementation of infrastructure improvements carried out in fulfillment of a SRTS Travel Plan or which serve the general purposes of this program are eligible for funding under this program. Project costs eligible for funding include planning, design, right-of-way acquisition and construction. Applicants may include costs for cultural resource surveys, and preliminary engineering, although these projects generally receive lower scores. Although matching funds are not required, applicants are encouraged to utilize funds from other sources to pay for the costs of environmental documentation, planning, design and all other “soft” costs. Projects seeking only construction or implementation costs will receive additional consideration.

All costs associated with the preparation and implementation of education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation activities (non-infrastructure projects) carried out in fulfillment of a SRTS Travel Plan or which serve the purposes of this program are eligible for funding under this program.



**Note: the preparation of SRTS Travel Plans is not an eligible activity**

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, should be presented as a part of the application.

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. Sponsors must have the financial capability to advance project costs for materials and contractors. Before applying, prospective sponsors 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 letter sent out by the NJDOT to all prospective applicants and shall be posted on the NJDOT web site. All applications must be submitted to NJDOT on or before **noon** on the date set forth in the annual program announcement.

### *Application Format*

Beginning in 2008, the NJDOT will be utilizing a new online grant management system, **SAGE** (System for Administering Grants Electronically), to accept, review, approve and manage grants. Starting Fiscal year 08, the Safe Routes to School application process will be online and all applicants will be 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: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/>.

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 on line application. For NJ DOT SAGE site technical assistance, please contact your Local Aid District Office Representative, whose phone number can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/office.shtm> .

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

## **Type of Improvement**

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

NJDOT SAGE categorizes infrastructure projects as Bikeways projects, Pedestrian Safety Projects, or a combination. Select the category that is most appropriate for the project for which you are seeking funds. SAGE categorizes non-infrastructure projects as Education, Enforcement or Encouragement. Select the category that describes the primary focus of your project or program.

## **Project Name**

Indicate the name of the project and its limits. If it is an infrastructure project, the limits may indicate which streets or intersections form the borders of the project (From: Main Street, To: Broad Street). If the project is a non-infrastructure activity, the limits may indicate the period of time for which the program will run (From: September, To: June).

## **Project Location**

Indicate the county and municipality in which the project or program will take place.

## **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 (if available) about current modal split for school trips and the method used to collect it. (Information on how to complete a Needs Assessment is available in the Toolbox on the NJDOT SRTS web site). If this information was gathered as part of a survey, indicate the day or days the survey was carried out. Provide information about the percentage of students 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. Note that if this information has not been





collected in advance of preparing the application, collecting this information will be required of all successful applicants as part of their SRTS implementation program.

It is especially important to indicate whether:

1. a SRTS Travel Plan has been developed (information about SRTS Travel Plans can be found in NJDOT's Toolbox, available on the NJDOT SRTS web site: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/>),
2. the school is a special needs (Abbott) district, (A listing of these districts is available at: <http://www.nj.gov/cgi-bin/education/abbotts/abbotturls.pl?string=code&maxhits=100>), or
3. the school is an Urban Aid Community (a listing of these municipalities is available at: <http://www.nj.gov/dca/lgs/muniaid/aidmenu.shtml>)

## **Problem Statement**

Describe the current conditions for walking and bicycling in the school(s) area. You are encouraged to reference supporting documentation such as: history of traffic problems, accident reports, traffic counts, speed limits, crime reports, photographs of deficiencies, census information and (survey) results. Include a description of obstacles (physical or perceived) to walking or bicycling to school; current risks facing children who walk or bicycle to the school(s). 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. Attachments may be uploaded to SAGE in the Problem Documentation section of the application or mailed in to the Department.

## **Demonstrated Commitment**

Describe existing programs and improvements that demonstrate a commitment to encouraging walking and bicycling to school, emphasizing those recently implemented (i.e., within the past two years). 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). Identify any funding received for pedestrian or bicycle improvements under other programs (Pedestrian Safety Grants, Safe Streets to School Program, etc.).

## **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 may be uploaded to SAGE or mailed into the Department of Transportation by the due date listed in the solicitation letter.

## **Project Proposal**

### ***Infrastructure 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 include: Planning, Design, Right-of-Way Acquisition, and Construction. These phases apply to every type of infrastructure project. If applicable, indicate the length of the proposed improvement.

Indicate the schools that are the targets for 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.

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. Indicate if right-of-way must be acquired, and identify any property that must be acquired.

Identify previous, current or planned encouragement and education activities and whether funding for such activities is being included in this application.

Provide other information as requested on the other potential project impacts or involvement with other facilities.

### ***Non-infrastructure Activities***

List and describe the proposed education, enforcement, or encouragement activities in for which you are applying for funding. You are not required to apply for more than one project, but a comprehensive program is given greater consideration by the selection committee.

For EACH activity proposed, briefly describe the project and indicate the schools at which the project will take place. Explain how the project will encourage walking and/or bicycling to school, and explain how the project will make walking and bicycling to school safer.





## Timeline

Describe the anticipated project timeline from start to finish for each project or activity for which funding is being sought. Indicate milestone dates from which progress can be indicated.

## Partnerships and Public Outreach

Identify all partner organizations that will play a role in completing the project, including a description of each partner's responsibility. Provide a letter of agreement from each partner, acknowledging their participation in the project. If the applicant is not the funding recipient, a letter of agreement or resolution from the funding recipient is required. Resolutions are preferred over letters of agreement. Describe any outreach activities that were carried out during the development of your SRTS Travel Plan and this application.

You may provide up to three (3) letters of support from non-participating organizations, although this is optional. These letters may be scanned in and uploaded via SAGE or mailed to the Department. **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 in NJDOT's Toolbox, available on the NJDOT SRTS web site: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/srts/>). For infrastructure projects, provide an engineer's construction estimate according to FHWA guidelines.

## 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. At a minimum, grant recipients will be required to record the number of participants in their 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





Describe how each element is to be evaluated/measured.

**Note:** The Department is currently in the process of developing or identifying appropriate means or targets for tracking the success of the SRTS funding program. Applicants will be required to provide the data and results of their program relative to the measures selected. Successful applicants will be notified of these reporting requirements as soon as they have been established.

## G. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

The basic requirements are that projects be directly related to the facilitation of walking and biking to school.

Each project will be evaluated against criteria based on information provided in the application form and attachments. Specifically each application will be evaluated on:

- Whether the application has been submitted by a valid applicant.
- Whether the applicant identifies a valid funding recipient.
- Whether a pre-existing SRTS Travel Plan has been completed/provided.
- Whether the applicant has attended an NJDOT SRTS Federal Funding Workshop.
- Responsiveness 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 routes.
- Demonstrated need: the clarity of the description of the safety hazards or problems or issues that pertain to walking or biking to the targeted school(s).
- Demonstrated commitment to walking and biking to school through past activities.
- The clarity of the description for non-infrastructure activities and their potential to successfully support the goals of the program.
- The clarity/accuracy of the description of infrastructure projects and how they have the potential to encourage walking and biking and improve safety.
- The inclusion of a detailed, but realistic timeline for implementation.
- Evidence of required support and cooperation from partnering agencies and evidence of support or endorsement from interested parties.
- The inclusion of appropriate evaluation measures that will be employed to track progress.
- Readiness for construction/implementation:
  - Infrastructure projects must receive federal authorization for construction or implementation within two years of the date that the Sponsor is notified of the project selection. The time frames to purchase right-of-way, move utilities,





acquire permits, such as wetlands, local building permits, or official determination by the State Historic Preservation Office bear on the construction readiness of the project. Applicants should demonstrate that the necessary permits, approvals and environmental clearances also can be obtained within that time period.

**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.**

- Maintenance commitment:
  - For infrastructure projects the applicant shall indicate and certify the continual ownership and maintenance by a municipality, county, or sponsor for the useful life of the project. You should assume a commitment of maintenance for a minimum of twenty (20) years after the construction is completed. A resolution or letter from the responsible party should be attached to the application.
- Whether or not the proposed projects or activities are elements of a completed SRTS Travel Plan.
- Urban Aid Communities:
  - Extra consideration will be given to projects located in the Urban Aid Communities as determined by the NJ Economic Development Authority. A listing of these municipalities is available at: <http://www.nj.gov/dca/lgs/muniaid/aidmenu.shtml>
- Abbott Schools:
  - Extra consideration will be given to projects involving Abbott Schools. A listing of these districts is available at: <http://www.nj.gov/cgi-bin/education/abbotts/abbotturls.pl?string=code&maxhits=100>

## H. PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for SRTS projects and activities includes the participation of a SRTS Advisory Committee that is charged with applying the selection criteria as discussed in this brochure and preparing the recommended “shortlist” of projects for consideration by the Commissioner of Transportation. The committee’s recommended “shortlist” is not fiscally constrained by the actual Program budget.

The Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee is made up from individuals representing the following organizations:

- New Jersey Department of Transportation
- New Jersey Department of Education
- New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
- New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety
- 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-tier 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 Advisory Committee evaluates the applications. NJDOT staff will visit each infrastructure project site and prepare comments for the Advisory Committee.

In the first tier evaluation, the Advisory 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 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 distribution and the variety of projects. 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 award announcement. 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

Beginning in 2008, the NJDOT will be utilizing a new online grant management system, **SAGE** (System for Administering Grants Electronically), to accept, review, approve and manage grants. Starting Fiscal year 08, the Safe Routes to School application process will be online and all applicants will be 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: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/>.

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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