



Safe Routes to School (SRTS) 2022 Frequently Asked Questions

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Q1: Can nonprofits apply for Safe Routes to School grants?

A: Nonprofits are highly encouraged to partner with their local agency such as their municipality, county, school, or school district. The majority of applications are from municipal governments, however, counties, schools, school districts, or boards of education may also submit an application. This includes public, charter, and private schools, provided that the project is in the public right-of-way.

Q2: Are design, right-of-way, and construction costs eligible under Safe Routes to School grants?

A: **No.** Only construction costs are eligible under Safe Routes to School. All grant recipients will be provided the opportunity to utilize Design Assistance Program once it becomes available.

Q3: Are construction inspection costs eligible in Safe Routes to School?

A: **Yes.** Construction inspection costs are eligible if included in the total requested amount and detailed cost estimate in the application. Consultant services for construction inspection must be procured and administered in accordance with the federal requirements including the Brooks Act, 40 U.S.C.

Q4: Is additional funding available for Safe Routes to School projects beyond the grant award amount in the event project costs increase?

A: **No.** Funding is limited to the grant award amount and is based on the eligible costs identified in the detailed cost estimate provided with the application.

Q5: Are letters and resolutions of support required?

A: **Yes.** The application must include as attachments board approved resolutions of support from the governing body applying for the grant. Resolutions of support are required as they demonstrate compliance with federal regulations allowing an opportunity for public participation and community input. The resolutions further demonstrate there is formal local stakeholder support of the proposed improvements. Resolutions must be dated within one year of the solicitation. The resolution must be signed providing evidence of board action of adopting the resolution. Unsigned resolutions will not be accepted. The resolution must refer to the project.

Letters (signed by the Mayor, County Freeholder, or Executive Director of the organization) or resolutions of support are required from the participating school board or Board of Education, and the owner of the public right of way in which the project is to be located. In addition, if the ownership of the public right-of-way where the project is proposed (the municipality or county) is different than the applicant, they must show support for the project in the form of a letter signed by the Mayor, County Freeholder, or Executive Director of the organization or an approved resolution. If the applicant is a private school, a letter signed by the executive director may be attached in lieu of a resolution.

For projects on a state highway, there will be no resolution of support from the NJDOT. Sample resolutions of support can be found in SAGE application and on saferoutesnj.org/funding.



Q6: Are resolutions accepted after the application deadline?

A: No. Resolutions must be included as an attachment as part of the online application. No resolutions will be accepted after the closing date of this solicitation.

Q7: What type of documentation is required for the maintenance commitment?

A: The applicant must indicate the entity responsible for continual ownership and maintenance for the useful life of the project. The useful life will vary depending on the type of project. A resolution or letter from the party having maintenance jurisdiction must be attached to the application. This certification of ownership and maintenance may be included in the resolution of support provided by the applicant as described above. If the applicant does not have jurisdiction over the right of way where the project is proposed, then a signed letter or board approved resolution must be provided by the grant application deadline. The letter must be addressed to the applicant not to NJDOT and refer to your project.

Q8: Can an applicant apply for more than one project?

A: No. Only one application is allowed per eligible applicant. Applicants can only apply for funding for the construction/installation phase of an infrastructure project.

Q9: What documentation is required if the proposed project is located on a state highway?

A: The applicant must coordinate with the appropriate regional NJDOT office to receive the necessary highway occupancy permit approvals prior to federal authorization of construction. For projects on a state highway, there will be no resolution of support from the NJDOT.

Q10: Who is responsible for preparing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents?

A: The NJDOT Bureau of the Environmental Program Resources will produce the NEPA documents. The funding recipient is responsible for providing all necessary documents and location maps in support of the NEPA document.

Q11: Is the name of the “responsible charge” required?

A: Yes. Applications will not be accepted without the name of the responsible charge. Federal regulations (23 CFR 635.105(a) (4)) require Local Public Agencies (LPAs) to provide a full-time employee to be in responsible charge of federal-aid construction projects. Applicants must provide a full-time employee as responsible charge of your project. The person must be a full-time employee of the applicant. The name, title, and employer of the person who will be in responsible charge of the project is required. Consultants are not eligible to serve as a responsible charge. The responsible charge is accountable for the project and expected to perform duties and functions following federal requirements and day-to-day operations such as:

- Administering project activities, including cost, time, adherence to contract requirements, quality, and scope
- Maintaining familiarity of day-to-day project operations, including project safety issues



- Participating in decisions about changes in conditions or scope
- Reviewing the project financial processes, transactions, and documentation
- Directing project staff, agency, or consultant, to carry out the project.

Q12: Should all the questions in the application be answered?

A: **Yes.** The program is a competitive grant program. Applicants are encouraged to provide as much information as is relevant to the question asked. NJDOT is seeking projects with a high likelihood of success; well-planned projects that are construction ready and meet the overall goals of the Safe Routes to School program. Applicants should attach photographs, maps, surveys, studies, and reports to assist the reviewer in his or her assessment of the project.

Q13: How does my municipality get a Complete Street policy passed?

A: By adopting a Complete Streets or Complete and Green Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners, engineers, and public works departments to routinely design and operate the entire street right-of-way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Information on Complete Streets policies can be found here:

<https://www.nj.gov/transportation/eng/completestreets/resources.shtm>

A list of municipalities and counties with adopted Complete Street communities can be found at: <http://njbikeped.org/complete-streets-2/> The NJ Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center located at Voorhees Transportation Center – Rutgers University provides resources to localities that wish to develop a Complete Streets policy or seek assistance. If you are interested in learning more about Complete Streets or seek technical assistance, please email the NJBPRC at bikeped@ejb.rutgers.edu. While not required for consideration, extra points are given to applicants with certified Complete Streets policies.

Q14: Are contingency costs allowed in the estimate?

A: **No.** Contingencies will not be considered in the grant award amount. The cost estimate needs to be detailed and developed for the year of anticipated expenditures.

Q15: Will the applicant be required to report to the NJDOT the results of a follow-up survey of how students travel to school following the project's construction?

A: **Yes.** This program is intended to yield measurable results. The application should include a description of how the applicant will measure the results of the projects that are part of the funding request. At a minimum, grant recipients will be asked to record the number and type of improvements installed, the number of participants in their Safe Routes to School programs, and the results of a follow-up survey of how students get to school. Other outcomes can also be a part of the evaluation process including:

- Increase in the number of children walking or bicycling to school
- Changes in public/student perception of safety (survey)
- Increased awareness of safe walking and bicycling behaviors
- Increased awareness of safe driving behaviors
- Reduction in speed limit violations
- Reductions in failure to stop for pedestrians



- Reduction in crashes involving bicyclists/pedestrians
- Decrease in motor vehicle traffic around arrival/dismissal
- Change in crime statistics around the school
- Change in health statistics for school children

Q16: Where can I get additional information on how to apply?

A: In addition to the NJDOT and MPO websites, information about the program can be found here:

- <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/srts.shtm>
- <https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/rideshare/tma.shtm>
- <http://www.dvrpc.org/SafeRoutes>
- <http://www.sjtpo.org/srts>
- <http://www.saferoutesnj.org/resources/funding>

Q17. Are utility relocation costs eligible under Safe Routes to School?

A: As per State statute, NJDOT cannot fund utility relocation for locally administered projects.

Q18. Would a bike share program (equipment and installation) be eligible for funding under Safe Routes to School funding?

A: Capital costs for bike share systems would be eligible. However, operating costs would not be eligible.

Q19: Are School Arrival and Departure Travel Tallies required for submission of the grant application?

A: Due to the COVID pandemic Safe Routes to School Student Arrival and Departure Tallies are not required as part of the 2022 application submission. Grant recipients will be required to submit Tallies upon notification of the grant approval.

Student travel tallies are administered to students on three days of any given week to determine how children are traveling to and from school. and should be conducted at K-8 schools that will be impacted by the proposed infrastructure improvements. The tallies should include every grade level of the school. Tally forms and instructions can be downloaded from the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center, <https://www.saferoutesnj.org/conducting-travel-tallies/> or you can contact us at srts@ejb.rutgers.edu with any questions.

Q20: What projects are eligible for Safe Routes to School funding?

A: Only construction costs are eligible for Safe Routes to School grant funding. Infrastructure funds are intended to be used for projects that facilitate walking and/or bicycling to school. 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.

- Projects to encourage and enable children in grades K-8 to walk and/or bicycle to school
- Must be within **2 miles of a K-8 school**



- Must be infrastructure projects only
- 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. 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

Q21: What projects and project costs are not eligible for funding?

A: Projects not eligible for Safe Routes to School infrastructure funds include:

- Education and encouragement programs which are available through free technical assistance with Safe Routes Regional Coordinators at the 8 Transportation Management Associations throughout New Jersey. Visit, <https://www.saferoutesnj.org/find-your-srts-regional-coordinator/>
- Projects that serve only high school students. This is funding for K-8 schools, however if the project serves a K-8 school and a high school then it is eligible. The high school cannot be the focus of the infrastructure.
- Funds cannot be used to make traffic smoother or easier for parents to drop off or pick up their children in cars at schools. Remember the primary beneficiaries are children walking and bicycling. However, improvements that remove motor vehicles from the school zones, like moving parking for parents to a location off school grounds for temporary road closures in front of and around the school is eligible.
- Crossing guard salaries.

Project costs not eligible for funding include:

- Administrative costs
- Miscellaneous “contingencies”
- Right-of-way
- Utility relocation costs
- Uniformed traffic directors unless required by design

Q22: What is required to apply for the grant?

A: There are 5 must-have requirements. If any of the following requirements are not met, the project and the application will be considered ineligible.

1. Resolutions/letters of support (see Q5)
2. Maintenance Commitment (see Q7)
3. Responsible Charge (see Q11)
4. Distance to Schools (see Q20)
5. Student Arrival and Dismissal Travel Tallies (see Q19) **NOTE:** In Past Safe Routes to School grant applications, requirements included submitting student arrival and departure tallies from the K-8 schools the project will benefit, however, they will not be required for submitting applications for the 2022 grant round due to COVID-19 restrictions. Grant recipients will be required to submit tallies upon notification of approval of the grant.

Q23: What is a supportive walk/bike to school policy?

A: Adopting policy is a mandated function of the school board, and they establish direction for the district and its schools and set expectations consistent districtwide. Adopting a school district bicycling or walking policy standardizes the transportation safety rules for the district and shows support of Safe Routes to School and for students walking and bicycling to and from school. A school wellness policy includes both nutrition and physical activity and should support walking and bicycling to school as a daily form of physical activity. Model School Wellness Policies with Safe Routes to School encouragement are available on saferoutesnj.org.

Q24: What is the NJ Safe Routes Recognition Program?

A: Municipalities and schools are recognized each year by NJDOT for their commitment to and support of walking and bicycling based on four tiers of the program: Gold, Silver, Bronze and First Step. Criteria for each level and list of current winners are available on saferoutesnj.org. Winners at the gold, silver and bronze levels will receive extra consideration on their grant application.

Q25: What are School Travel Plans?

A: A School Travel Plan “maps out” how to improve pedestrian and bicycle travel to and from school to increase the number of students who walk and bike to school and to improve safety. A School Travel Plan identifies the following:

- Where students currently walk and bike
- Where students would walk and bike if they could
- What changes need to be made so that students can and will walk and bike to school

The School Travel Plan identifies short term solutions for immediate action and implementation as well as long term ones that may require further planning. If the project that you are applying for grant funding is included in your School Travel Plan, your application will receive extra consideration.

Q 26: Where can I find resources to assist with grant applications?

NJDOT Local Aid Resource Center
njdotlocalaidrc.com

NJDOT Local Aid & Economic Development
www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid

NJDOT Complete Streets Resources
www.state.nj.us/transportation/eng/completestreets/resources.shtm

NJ Safe Routes Resource Center, Rutgers University
saferoutesnj.org



NJ Transportation Management Associations

www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/rideshare/tma.shtm

Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation Federal Aid Training, Rutgers University

cait.rutgers.edu/events

Federal Highway Administration Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies

www.fhwa.dot.gov/federal-aidessentials

Federal Highway Administration Proven Safety Countermeasures

safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures