

Ohio Department of Transportation

SRTS Guidance for Applications due March 2, 2012

Important Dates:

- **January 2, 2012** – Applications available on SRTS website:
www.dot.state.oh.us/saferoutes
- **March 2, 2012 (5:00 PM)** – Application deadline; Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure
- **April 30, 2012** – Applicants notified

New for 2012:

Applications

Applications will be available on January 2, 2012 and are web based this year (www.dot.state.oh.us/saferoutes). If applying for a SRTS project you will be required to register with ODOT in order to upload mandatory documents. Please register early as this process may take up to 14 days.

STP Development

The new School Travel Plan Process will be available on the SRTS website:
www.dot.state.oh.us/saferoutes

Highlights of the new process:

1. 2 Options, ODOT Led (ODOT funded) and Local Led (locally funded)
 - a. More help when using ODOT Led process
 - b. Shorter timeframe for completion for ODOT Led process
 - c. More direction when using Local Led

If you would like to develop a plan for more than 4 schools, contact your local ODOT [SRTS coordinator](#).

2. After January 2, 2012, there will be no application cycle for STP development; communities will be able to apply for STP development at any time throughout the year. The funding cycle for Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure will remain the first two months of the year.

Non Infrastructure projects:

1. Communities seeking Non Infrastructure funding will now be able to expand project ideas to School District Wide (grades k-8 only) initiatives when at least one School Travel Plan has been completed within the district.
2. When seeking Non Infrastructure funding, a plan on how the program will be continued once funding is expired must be included with application.

Reminder

We continue to require address information to help us accurately evaluate countermeasures. If you have not submitted address information within the last 5 years, please be prepared to submit an excel spreadsheet including:

1. Address of each student attending school (include all students, **do not include names**)
2. Grade for each student
3. School attended

School Travel Plan:

- All applicants for infrastructure and non infrastructure projects must first have an ODOT approved STP.
- To view all approved School Travel Plans for Ohio: [Click Here](#)

General Information:

I. Purpose and Eligibility

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program provides funds for safety projects that encourage or enable children in grades k-8, including those with disabilities, to walk or ride their bikes to school.

ODOT's SRTS funds can be used for two types of projects in 5 categories. These categories are considered the 5 E's of SRTS. The types and categories are:

Infrastructure Projects

1. Engineering
 - Operational and physical improvements within 2 miles of schools that establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways as well as planning activities.
 - School Travel Plan (STP) development.

Non-Infrastructure Projects

2. Education
 - Education projects are those that primarily focus on personal safety as well as the mechanics of walking or bike riding to and from school.
3. Encouragement
 - Encouragement projects will encourage and focus on the benefits of walking or bike riding to and from school.
4. Enforcement
 - Enforcement of traffic laws and initiating community enforcement such as training for crossing guard programs.
5. Evaluation
 - Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the countermeasure, both infrastructure and non infrastructure. This information is critical to the longevity of the program and required for every project.

II. Process

Electronic applications will be available on January 2, 2012 and can be found at:

www.dot.state.oh.us/saferoutes Application deadline is **March 2, 2012 (5:00 PM)**. The district representative will contact you if needed to discuss the proposed countermeasure. Applicants may be invited to give a presentation on the proposed countermeasure. Countermeasure proposals, both infrastructure and non-infrastructure, will be reviewed and scored according to the following criteria, in no particular order:

1. **Safety** – Does the countermeasure address an actual or perceived safety issue addressed in the ODOT approved School Travel Plan (STP)?
2. **Data** – Has the community collected baseline data and continued to do so on an annual basis <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/data-central>

3. **Project strengths** – Will the project have a strong positive impact on the children attending the school? Does the project reduce traffic, fuel consumption or air pollution in the vicinity of the school? Does the project provide improved safety for children in grades k-8 to walk or bicycle to school? Does the project promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging children to walk or ride their bikes to school?
4. **Usage** –Percentage of k-8 children expected to benefit from proposed countermeasure.
5. **SRTS in community** – Is there an active SRTS committee in place and is the committee behind the proposal? Has the community made significant progress on their ODOT approved STP?
6. **Endurance** – Is there a plan in place to continue the SRTS program if funding is not available in the future?
7. **Award** – Will the project be ready to sell within 2 years of funding, and are projected award dates realistic?
8. **Operation and maintenance capabilities** – Does the entity applying for funding have an ongoing commitment to maintenance proven by sponsors past performance on ODOT projects, if applicable?

Once projects are selected, letters will be sent out to both award recipients and to those applicants whose projects are not selected for funding. Announcement notification is expected by **April 30, 2012**.

III. Funding Provisions

SRTS is not a grant program but a cost reimbursement program. SRTS is a Federal-aid program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Program was created by Section 1404 of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act (SAFETEA-LU)*. ODOT will be able to expend its funding in the following manner:

- 70 percent of available funds on infrastructure countermeasures;
- 10 percent of available funds on non-infrastructure countermeasures; and
- 20 percent of funds on either infrastructure or non-infrastructure countermeasures.

Countermeasures may be funded with 100% federal funds. We strongly encourage communities to leverage funds from other sources. All costs associated with the countermeasure(s) are allowable. However, Ohio has limited funds available.

Project Limits

Maximum requests for countermeasures are as follows:

- Infrastructure – \$500,000 per applicant per funding round;
- Non-Infrastructure – \$100,000 per applicant per funding round;
- School Travel Plan Development – ODOT will not provide funding for School Travel Plan development, however we will provide professional assistance.

IV. Ineligible Costs

Any approved action or work acted on prior to FHWA project authorization will make the entire project phase ineligible for compensation.

Activities funded by other FHWA programs are ineligible for funding with SRTS funds.

Some items or activities may be ineligible for funding with Federal dollars and will be the sponsor's responsibility.

V. Sponsor Responsibilities

- Upon funding notification, the project sponsor will meet with an ODOT SRTS or Safety representative to review requirements and Federal and State laws, rules and regulations.
- The sponsor must carry out and comply with all Federal, State and local laws, and acquire environmental approvals and any required permits from the appropriate Federal, State and local agencies. Also, the sponsor must acquire building and other local permits, if applicable.
- All consultants must be pre-qualified by ODOT. A list of consultants may be viewed at: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/ProdMgt/Consultant/Pages/default.aspx>
- The sponsor must use a Quality Based Selection process in accordance with 153.65 to 153.71 of the [ORC \(Ohio Revised Code\)](#). Coordination through ODOT consultant services is required for all projects over \$50,000 using federal funds.
- Any property acquisition must conform to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, as amended. Sponsors are responsible for obtaining appraisals, if applicable, and acquiring the necessary rights-of-way or property interests.
- Engineering and architectural designs for all facilities must conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The sponsor is responsible for all costs above the approved awarded funding amount. Therefore, obtaining realistic cost estimates for the services to be performed are extremely important to insure that adequate funding is provided. For this reason, the services of a professional engineer or other appropriate discipline must be obtained to assist in the development of the required project services and cost estimates. **Costs for professional services associated with preparation of the application are not eligible for reimbursement.** Sponsors should carefully control increases and overruns as they may jeopardize completion of the entire project. If the Sponsor decides not to complete a project, the applicant will reimburse all federal expenditures to ODOT.
- The sponsor must adhere to the original project scope. Make sure the application includes a detailed project description.
- If a plaque or sign is used on the project, ODOT must be identified as providing part of the funding for the project.
- The sponsor must commit to manage and maintain the project after completion. A facility must be open to the public for a period of not less than 20 years.
- The sponsor must comply with reporting requirements which will be explained in detail at the time of award.

- The sponsor must move forward with project development as quickly as possible if awarded funds.
- All records relating to project activity and/or expenditures must be maintained for review by ODOT for at least three years following the final reimbursement payment. Records are subject to Audit by ODOT and FHWA.

Attachment A

Selected* Federal Requirements

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

This act requires Federal agencies to disclose and consider, through an Environmental Assessment and, sometimes, through an Environmental Impact Statement, any significant effect a project may have on the environment (including cultural, natural, social and historical resources). Except in unusual circumstances, most SRTS projects will be processed as a categorical exclusion (CE). A CE does not mean that no environmental work is required, only that there is not a significant environmental effect; therefore, less documentation is required.

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, As Amended

This act provides requirements in the real property acquisition and provides for relocation payments. Note that all SRTS projects are subject to the Act except those that do not involve acquisition of additional property or relocations.

Brooks Act

Federally assisted consultant contracts for engineering and design services must use qualification-based selection procedures, which disallow price as a factor in the selection process. Note that Ohio's procedures mirror the Brooks Act.

Competitive Bidding

Construction projects must be advertised and awarded to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder through open competitive bidding.

Predetermined Minimum Wage (Davis-Bacon)

The minimum prevailing wage rate must be paid to all workers on Federal-aid highway projects that exceed \$2,000. Note that if the project is a transportation facility and is eligible solely on function (e.g., restoration of a railroad station, an independent bike path, etc.), then this Act does not apply unless the project is physically located within the existing right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway.

*This list is by no means comprehensive. Federal requirements should be discussed with the District Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Source: *Building on the Past Traveling to the Future*, Federal Highway Administration

For more information about the Federal Funding and The SRTS program refer to the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) their home page is: <https://www.cfda.gov/> Information about 20.205, which relates to SRTS is available on the programs page.