

Indiana Safe Routes to School Program Parameters

The Indiana Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program is based on the federal program and is designed to make walking and bicycling to school safe and routine. INDOT is responsible for administering the SRTS Program that makes federal funding available to eligible activities and project improvements.

Basic Program Parameters

- Funds will be available for eligible infrastructure projects, as well as for encouragement, education, enforcement and other non-infrastructure activities to increase safe biking and walking to school.
- Children in kindergarten through 8th grade are the primary target for this program.
- Projects should help improve access for children with physical disabilities.
- High school students, adults, neighborhood residents, children traveling by school bus and motorists are considered secondary beneficiaries.
- Trips for non-school academic purposes, like sports events, are only secondary considerations.
- Construction improvements must be located within a two mile radius of the intended school or schools.
- The SRTS program is available for private and public schools.
- Eligible applicants include individual schools, school districts and local government agencies (counties, cities and towns). State agencies and MPOs can no longer receive SRTS funds.
- Non-profit organizations can only partner with eligible applicants, but cannot directly receive SRTS project funding in Indiana.
- Infrastructure project sponsorship by cities, towns and counties is highly encouraged.



Fund Administration

- Non-infrastructure activities will be limited to a cost of \$75,000.
- Infrastructure projects will be limited to a cost of \$250,000.
- Funding will be disbursed only on a reimbursement basis, not as a cash grant.
- A 20% local match is now required under the new transportation legislation, MAP-21.
- Local efforts to improve and increase walking and bicycling are important for demonstrating local commitment to a Safe Routes to School activity or project.
- SRTS funds will only remain available for a limited time under the new transportation legislation, MAP-21.
- Basic rules regarding procedures for using federal transportation funds still apply, such as not incurring expenses before the notice to proceed..
- Infrastructure projects will require endorsement by the agency responsible for the land on which the improvement would be located.

- Projects in urban areas over 50,000 in population will require endorsement and programming by the responsible [Metropolitan Planning Organization](#).
- SRTS activities and projects must be programmed in the statewide transportation improvement program to receive federal funds.
- To document progress, all recipients of SRTS infrastructure and non-infrastructure funding must file quarterly progress reports with their respective INDOT district project managers, just as required for other types of INDOT projects.

Eligible Infrastructure Improvements (Within 2 Miles of School)

The following is a list of typical projects for improving and increasing bicycle and pedestrian travel to and from schools. All the parameters listed above apply. Infrastructure projects typically involve construction or installation and may include right-of-way acquisition. All federally-funded construction projects must comply with the terms of the "Americans with Disabilities Act". Please note this is not a comprehensive list of infrastructure projects.



- Construction or installation or replacement of sidewalks.
- Construction or installation of crosswalks.
- Pedestrian countdown signal installation.
- Curb ramp installation.
- Construction or striping of on-street bicycle lanes.
- Construction of off-street shared use paths, including road crossings.
- Purchase and installation of secure bicycle parking facilities and racks.
- Installation of traffic calming and speed reduction improvements near schools.
- Installation of traffic diverters near schools to redirect motor vehicle traffic.
- Purchase and installation of school zone signs and Safe Routes signage to alert motorists to schools and to guide bicycle and pedestrian traffic.
- Application or installation of pavement markings to improve recognition of walking and bicycling facilities directly serving schools.
- Purchase and permanent installation of school zone flashing beacons, Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons or special crosswalk flashing beacons to help control vehicle traffic and enhance pedestrian and bicycle traffic in route to schools.
- Permanent speed feedback sign purchase and installation.

Eligible Non-infrastructure Improvements

The following is a list of typical activities for improving and increasing bicycle and pedestrian travel to and from schools. All the parameters listed above apply.



Encouragement, education and enforcement or bicycle and pedestrian planning for specific schools are considered non-infrastructure activities. Please note this is not a comprehensive list of non-infrastructure activities.

- Walking and biking to school encouragement activities (i.e. "[bicycle trains](#)", "[walking school buses](#)", mileage clubs, walk or bike to school events, biking or walking contests, designation of remote drop-off sites for students living more than 2 miles from school).
- Preparation of a comprehensive Safe Routes plan or a school travel plan (single school, multiple schools, school district, community-wide or urban area).
- Pedestrian skills training sessions or bicycle safety skills training or rodeos.
- Preparation and distribution of walking or biking safety literature.
- Purchase of crossing guard clothing and equipment.
- Walking and biking incentive purchases (reflective backpack or zipper tags; high-visibility wristbands, shoelaces, shoe stickers or pant cuff bands; Safe Routes bookmarks, pencils or pens; bicycle lights, helmets, bells or locks; water bottles; Safe Routes T-shirts; healthy snacks).
- Various enforcement actions to enhance walking and biking.
- Professional safety evaluations of existing or proposed designated walking or biking routes to determine suitable improvements to increase safe walking and bicycling to school.
- Purchase and deployment of mobile safe routes equipment -- Limited by contract for use only at specific schools for arrival and departure times or at Safe Routes events (i.e. mobile speed trailers or flashing beacons, portable bike racks, movable barriers for controlling vehicular movements, portable pedestrian crossing Stop or Yield signs, portable bike-pedestrian counters).

Suggestions to Prepare for Your Program

There are several things that potential applicants can do to prepare for making application to the Indiana Safe Routes to School Program. Fundamental information will position school districts and communities to effectively plan for increased walking and bicycling to school and reductions in other modes of travel. Other ideas may be added later.

- To establish a base for measuring improvement, prepare accurate average daily counts of the children currently walking to school. It is recommended that counting occur during 3 consecutive days in September or May when weather is not a significant factor.
- Also to help measure improvement, count the average daily number of children presently bicycling to school. Again, to eliminate the influence of weather, counts should occur during 3 consecutive days in September or May.
- Evaluate transportation routes in the vicinity of elementary and middle schools to determine which routes children would most likely use to bicycle and walk to school.



- Determine the individual school policies concerning walking and bicycling to school. Schools that currently discourage or prohibit walking or biking to school must agree to change these policies to be candidates for Safe Routes to School funding.
- Be prepared to promote bicycling and walking as part of helping children to become more physically active. Schools should anticipate teaming with parents to establish a successful program.

General Recommendations

After seven years of experience the Indiana Safe Routes to School Program has prepared a few recommendations to assist current Safe Routes schools and new applicants in setting the stage for better proposals and stronger local programs. Many Indiana towns and cities, schools and school districts have already adopted some of these tactics. Keen competition during the annual application process has sparked considerable interest in preparing proposals that stand out and exhibit a comprehensive approach backed by sound planning.

Consider these recommendations:

- Form a local advisory committee to guide efforts & promote Safe Routes to School. Include health and law enforcement representatives, plus parents.
- Review & evaluate current school policies regarding walking and biking to school.
- Conduct SRTS planning to help create a foundation for future projects and activities.
- Plan in advance for the required parent and student surveys and coordinate with target schools.
- Coordinate Safe Routes planning with other local planning.
- Connect planned Safe Routes walking and biking facilities with other bicycle and pedestrian projects.
- Discourage driving to school and short distance bussing whenever possible.
- When estimating infrastructure improvement costs, consult with experienced engineers to include all the relevant project development phases, such as land survey, design, environmental documentation, right-of-way purchasing, construction and construction inspection.
- If feasible, pay for preliminary engineering and land acquisition activities with local resources and devote federal funds to construction activities.
- Demonstrate local commitment to walking and biking within the community.
- Be creative and build enthusiasm for an application that shines and a program that attracts local support.

Classifications and Differences in Implementation

INDOT is no longer classifying SRTS activities and projects.

*Images provided by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC) unless otherwise noted.