

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**2012 SRTS GUIDE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND NON-
INFRASTRUCTURE APPLICATIONS**

Introduction:

In 2006 the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) launched the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program to make bicycling and walking to school safer and more routine. Federal funds are made available to help create an environment where school children in grades K through 8 can get to school the way their grandparents did, by walking or bicycling. Americans increasingly realize that traffic congestion, fuel consumption and air pollution near our schools, coupled with growing health and obesity concerns, make walking and bicycling to school a low-cost, attractive option.

Public and private school officials, parents, local transportation officials, health care, law enforcement and advocate organizations are encouraged to work together under the SRTS program. Funds are available for infrastructure projects that improve the “built environment”, and for non-infrastructure activities that educate children, school officials and parents, encourage and plan for bicycling or walking to school, or enforce motor vehicle safety to protect children in their travel to and from school.

Funds are only available on a reimbursement basis for approved projects or activities. All applications received by INDOT are reviewed and evaluated by the SRTS Advisory Committee that consists of representatives from INDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and Indiana’s Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Recommendations from the Advisory Committee go to the INDOT Commissioner for final selection. Applicants are notified whether their proposals are selected or not and the list of approved activities and projects is published by INDOT.

To find out more about the National Safe Routes to School Program go to: <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/> and <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>. Please contact Michael O’Loughlin at moloughlin@indot.in.gov or visit the INDOT SRTS Web page, <http://saferoutes.in.gov>, to find out more about Indiana’s Safe Routes to School Program.

Please be aware that this guide will continue to evolve as clarifications and additions are included. Always note the edition date at the top of the SRTS Guide to make sure the latest version is being used.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2012

- All applicants must complete student and parent surveys. Last year, on a trial basis, non-infrastructure applicants were allowed to wait until notification of their award to conduct their surveys. This option is no longer available.
- The only survey requirement exceptions are if a community or school completed and can document that the necessary student and parent survey data was collected and submitted in spring of 2011 or later.
- Last year applicants were informed about the new online option for completing the parent surveys. This option is available again. Schools will choose whether to offer this option, based on how they typically communicate with parents. Schools need to notify parents if the online parent survey is the preferred option.
- INDOT must emphasize again that, for applicants indicating that affected schools currently discourage or prohibit walking and biking to school, to receive any SRTS funding those schools must commit to modifying relevant school policies.
- To assist with estimating infrastructure costs in Section 3, estimated sample costs for pedestrian and bicycle facilities have been updated to reflect March 2012 costs and are again posted on INDOT's SRTS webpage, <http://saferoutes.in.gov>.
- If a school or school district is planning any construction on public right-of-way, such as a shared use path, sidewalks, curb ramps or signage, it is advised that the city, town or county assume the role of project sponsor.
- Applicants are reminded in Section 5 that the scope of work in their contract with INDOT is taken from details provided in the application. Applicants should be aware of their commitment to completing all listed elements, including non-infrastructure elements included in an infrastructure application.
- Maps in Section 6 should only depict significant routes for school travel, not every conceivable route. Again, CURRENT and PROPOSED walking and biking routes must be clearly differentiated and participating schools must be shown and labeled. Questions about existing or new walking and biking routes have been reformatted.
- Applicants need to place more emphasis on increasing physical activity among students and improving the health of students, especially in Sections 7, 8 and 11. Within Section 11, applicants should establish a stronger link between school wellness policies and the proposed activities or projects.
- Data for Section 9, "Potential for Increased Walking and Bicycling" is still mandatory. Clarification was added that percentages traveling via different modes are to be calculated for each school using TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, not based on responses to the parent surveys. Except for total enrollment and percentage living within

two miles, all data for this section should be taken directly from the teacher-administered student tally sheets.

- Though it remains optional, responses to Section 10 are used to judge the strength of local commitment to walking and bicycling and the viability of investing SRTS funding. Applicants are advised to document recent local policies and plans supporting non-motorized travel, local initiatives and volunteer efforts aimed at making bicycling and walking safer and more convenient, and commitment of local funds for sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements, shared use paths and bike lanes. Progress on local facilities dedicated to active transportation is noteworthy and should be highlighted.
- New this year, any **2012 SRTS applications requiring INDOT district endorsement must be submitted to the appropriate district office for review by May 14th or earlier.** The May 29th application deadline at central office still applies.
- Also new this year, all applicants are to send a **digital copy** of the application to the INDOT district office instead of a hard copy.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **The official 2012 application deadline is 3:00pm May 29, 2012...FIRM.** Applications must be delivered to INDOT's Traffic Safety Office in Indianapolis by this date and time or clearly show a May 29th postmark or earlier.
- All applications must be typed and 20 pages or less, including all attachments. A **sponsor's cover letter** does not count toward the 20-page limit and should also accompany the application. Applications longer than 20 pages may be penalized.
- Applications without all the proper signatures (Section 4) will be rejected.
- Be succinct and direct in answering all questions. Vague or wordy responses cloud your meaning and detract from the perceived quality of your application.
- Applications should conform to an 8 ½ x 11 inch format, but maps or diagrams may be 11 inches x 17 inches and folded.
- **Do not attach front or back covers to the application.**
- Each infrastructure project or non-infrastructure activity shall be submitted as a separate application. The only exception is the small amount of non-infrastructure activity (up to 6% of total costs) that may accompany an infrastructure application.
- Please prepare 4 complete hard copies and one digital copy of each application, including the attachments.
- The **original and three hard copies** should be submitted to:
Indiana Department of Transportation
Asset Management Division, Office of Traffic Safety
IGCN Room 955
100 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204
- One **digital copy of your application should be sent to the appropriate INDOT District Local Public Agency Coordinator.** A digital copy may also be sent to the SRTS

Program Manager. The state is divided into six districts as illustrated on the agency's website: <http://dotmaps.indot.in.gov/apps/districtmaps/>. Go to this website to locate the correct district office and address.

- Remember to save a copy of the application for your own files, including the completed signature page and any attachments.

SECTION 1 -- Past SRTS Projects

Indicate any previous SRTS awards received within the community during the 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011 application cycles. Local city, town or county officials should be able to provide this information. In larger urban areas with populations over 50,000, the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) can provide the information. A map of 2006-2011 awards is also available on the Indiana SRTS webpage.

SECTION 2 -- School Walking and Bicycling Policies

Briefly define the target school(s) policies regarding children walking and bicycling to school. School administrators should be able to provide this information. Based on that information, characterize those policies by checking the most appropriate box. Following an award, if the school currently prohibits or discourages biking and walking to school, they will be required to commit to changing those policies.

Describe any pedestrian and bicycling training the school provides. Education may involve local law enforcement personnel, local walking and biking advocates or clubs, physical education teachers or resource staff. Most training will emphasize safety skills and awareness of surrounding vehicle traffic. Training offered as part of a school's curriculum is of particular interest. Many communities also offer bicycle rodeos outside of school hours.

SECTION 3 -- Cost Estimates

Cost estimates should be as accurate as possible. The estimates provided in Section 3 will establish the upper limit of funding available for the proposed activity or project if it is selected. Based on our experience, INDOT has provided 2012 sample costs for pedestrian and bicycle facilities on the Safe Routes Web page to provide a starting point for estimating infrastructure project costs. If costs are listed in Section 3 it is less likely that expenses will be overlooked.

The maximum infrastructure award amount is \$250,000. If minor non-infrastructure costs are included in an infrastructure project for planning, education, promotion, encouragement, enforcement, etc. the box at the end of Section 3 should be checked and costs should be listed on line 7. An upper limit of 6% of the total infrastructure project cost must be observed. For example, a \$230,000 infrastructure project could include up

to \$13,800 in non-infrastructure activities. In this case infrastructure expenses would account for \$216,200 of the total.

SECTION 4 -- Application Signatures

Proper signatures are absolutely imperative! Applications are rejected for lack of the necessary signatures. Only one individual serves as the activity or project applicant and all others provide endorsements. Most often the mayor, town board president, principal or superintendent is the official applicant. MPOs can also sponsor SRTS applications. In this case the MPO director must sign as the project sponsor.

Proposed infrastructure projects that would be located entirely on the grounds of one private or public school require only the endorsement of the school principal. If multiple schools serving grades K-8 are intended to benefit from proposed improvements, the appropriate school district superintendent needs to endorse the application.

Proposed infrastructure projects located partly or entirely off of school grounds require the endorsement of the highest relevant town, city or county officials. In most cases, the mayor or town board president is the most appropriate sponsor for infrastructure projects on public right-of-way. For many infrastructure applications it may be advantageous to have the city, town or county serve as official project applicant, due to the complexities of land ownership. Schools that serve grades 9 – 12 are considered secondary beneficiaries and are not required to endorse the application.

In addition, within Indiana's 14 urbanized areas (where the population is at least 50,000) the director of the responsible metropolitan planning organization (MPO) must endorse any SRTS applications. A list of Indiana MPOs and their addresses is available on the Indiana SRTS webpage, <http://saferoutes.in.gov>.

Infrastructure projects along, crossing or abutting a State, U.S. or Interstate Highway must have the endorsement of the appropriate INDOT District Director. Go to: <http://dotmaps.indot.in.gov/apps/districtmaps/> for a map of INDOT's Districts. If in doubt, including the district signature will not detract from a project. Remember, if a district signature is needed, the application must be provided to the district office by May 14, 2012 to allow enough time for their review.

SRTS project applicants may have one or more partners. For example, a local YMCA or fire station may partner with a school district to hold a bike rodeo to encourage safe bike riding practices. Partners may be non-profit organizations or other government agencies. Partners do NOT need to endorse the application unless they are also one of the key officials cited above. The applicant is responsible for the accuracy of any cost estimates by partner organizations that are submitted as part of the SRTS application.

For-profit businesses that intend to bill for services under an approved SRTS project or activity are considered vendors and should not be listed as partners. For-profit businesses and non-profit entities are not eligible applicants for SRTS funds.

SECTION 5 -- DETAILED DESCRIPTION AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Successful applicants will be required to document compliance of infrastructure improvement projects with current INDOT design standards and specifications and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and the AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities are recommended sources of relevant bicycle and pedestrian facility design information.

Infrastructure Project Application – Detailed Description and Cost:

Identify the categories below that best describe the work elements included in the proposed project and provide estimated costs for the specific work categories. Add all costs shown and include the total in Section 5. The construction total should match the “Construction” line item cost estimate shown in Section 3, Line 8. Below is a list of work categories and the typical work items contained within each category.

(Note: All sponsors of an infrastructure project are now required to designate a responsible employee who will be in charge of properly carrying out the local project. That individual will be provided basic training in project implementation by INDOT.)

Sidewalk Improvements

This category includes new sidewalks, widened sidewalks, sidewalk gap closures, significant sidewalk repairs, curb ramps, and curb and gutter if directly associated with sidewalk improvements serving elementary or middle schools. Sidewalks must be 5 feet wide or more and are NOT suitable as bicycling facilities.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Crossing Improvements

This work category includes new or upgraded traffic devices for bicyclists or pedestrians, crosswalks serving sidewalks or shared use paths, median refuges, pavement markings, traffic signs, pedestrian and/or bicycle overpasses or underpasses, flashing crossing beacons, traffic signal modifications that favor safe pedestrian or bicyclist crossing movements, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian activated signal upgrades, and sight distance improvements at crossings that enhance the safety of children biking or walking to school.

On-Street Bicycle Facilities

This category is for new or upgraded bike lanes or shared lanes that benefit bicyclists traveling to and from school. Related geometric improvements, turning lanes, traffic islands, roadway realignment, traffic signs and pavement markings would also be eligible if clearly intended to improve bike travel to and from schools serving K-8th grades.

Traffic Diversion Improvements

This category is intended to improve the safety of pedestrians and bicycles by removing or reducing motor vehicle traffic near school facilities, in school zones or along designated routes to school.

Off-Street Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

This work category is primarily for shared-use paths or trails that serve both bicyclists and pedestrians traveling to and from schools. Paths or trails must have an effective width of 10 feet or more.

Traffic Calming Measures

This category features measures that clearly benefit walking and bicycling to schools, such as curb extensions to reduce curb-to-curb crossing distances, roadway median pedestrian refuges, full and half-street closures, speed humps and speed tables, and other techniques to slow, reduce or discourage motor vehicle traffic.

Bicycle Parking Facilities

This category refers to bicycle racks, bicycle lockers, bicycle parking shelters and any other equipment designed to encourage biking to school and provide safe secure bicycle parking for students to use while attending school. Concrete pads to secure bike racks, bike lockers or bike shelters are eligible under this category. Bicycle parking facilities need to be located on school property in a prominent, convenient, high-visibility location.

Non-Infrastructure Activity Application -- Detailed Description and Cost

Identify the types of non-infrastructure work elements included in the proposal and provide estimated costs associated with each of the activities. The total in Section 5 must match the "Total" line cost estimate shown in Section 3, Line 9. Below is a list of activities and a description of typical work items within each category.

Comprehensive SRTS Plan Development and School Travel Plans

This category is highly inclusive and is meant to cover all planning activities associated with creating an SRTS program. Comprehensive plans include the school-specific travel plan, but also recommend suitable non-construction activities for each school to help increase walking and biking. Consultant costs are common and the work typically includes promotional, education & training, encouragement and enforcement actions.

School travel plans are the core of a comprehensive safe routes plan, but can stand alone. Travel plans identify the specific routes best suited for pedestrian and bicycle travel to each school, along with specific improvements needed for those routes. Professional evaluation and a phasing of improvements are typically part of a school travel plan.

Encouragement Activities

This category includes a variety of ways for schools, towns, parents and teachers to increase active participation in walking and/or bicycling as preferred modes for school travel. Competitions among grades and schools, scheduled days for walking or biking to school, mileage clubs, walking school buses and bike trains, and earlier dismissal times for walkers and bikers are typical encouragement actions. For students traveling more than 2 miles by car or bus, communities can establish remote drop-off locations for children to participate in walking events.

Minor incentives that serve as rewards for participation are also common ways to encourage biking and walking. It is recommended that incentives be used as rewards for participating after, rather than before, the planned activities.

Outreach and Promotion Activities

Actions meant to publicize and communicate the health, safety, economic and environmental benefits offered by walking and bicycling to school are considered outreach or promotion activities. Among the audiences for these activities are parents, city and town officials, developers, school boards and the media. Printed materials, such as safe route maps and safe biking or walking tips, and public service announcements are examples of eligible outreach and promotion activities.

Education Materials

Safe walking and bicycling pamphlets, video materials, training manuals, instructional coloring books, etc. for students, crossing guards and teachers are a few of the items typically considered under education materials. The purpose of these materials is to convey safe walking and bicycling techniques and skills to children and those in charge of teaching or monitoring the children's safety during travel to and from school.

Parent and Teacher Training

These expenses often accompany the education items mentioned above. Training sessions for parents, teachers and school crossing guards are the most common activities. Sometimes experts in the field are brought in to provide this instruction and associated expenses would be eligible costs under this category.

Student Training in Safe Walking and Safe Bicycling

This category includes instruction of students in various pedestrian and bicycling skills that enable children to walk or bike safely and confidently to school. Younger children, typically K through 3rd grade, are usually candidates for pedestrian safety training, while 4th through 8th grade children are generally old enough for learning safe biking techniques at a bike rodeo or other training format. Law enforcement agencies, physical education teachers and local bicycle club members might provide these kinds of training.

Traffic Enforcement Activities

Most of the actions in this category are directed toward motorists who drive near target schools. Speeding and unsafe maneuvers that endanger children are the principal behaviors that enforcement measures are meant to identify and eliminate. Stepped-up speed enforcement campaigns, setting up speed trailers and monitoring of school zones and traffic calming installations near schools would fall under this category.

Equipment Purchases

Certain kinds of equipment purchases are considered eligible non-infrastructure activities. These include clothing and equipment for crossing guards, portable in-road signs for highlighting pedestrian crossings and some other equipment that enhance the safety of students biking or walking to school. Equipment must be used at the intended school(s) and during arrival and dismissal times. Certain temporary equipment rentals may be

included if directly relevant to walking or biking to school. Some equipment purchases, such as speed trailers, carry specific limitations on deployment

SECTION 6 – IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED WALKING AND BICYCLING ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Maps must be included with all applications and must show the location of the “target” private and public school or schools. Please differentiate between existing and proposed safe routes. Clearly label all roads relevant to the walking and/or bicycling routes. Identify significant local features such as rivers, Interstate highways, major parks, libraries, universities, public recreation facilities and trails, and major commercial and employment centers. Provide a north arrow.

HINT: “Google Earth” or LocalLive.com provide good sources of free aerial photos and maps that can be downloaded as pdf files and printed. Local governments or MPO’s may also have Geographic Information System (GIS) map layers that contain this information.

SECTION 7 – IDENTIFICATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF NEEDS

Section 7 should define current safety concerns. Using quantitative data wherever possible, document safety concerns within the area of participating schools. Describe how problems were identified. Annual average daily traffic (AADT) data should be provided, if available, for sections of roads that are of concern. Please indicate the functional classification of any routes proposed for SRTS infrastructure improvements. Traffic and functional class information can often be obtained from the area MPO or the agency responsible for maintaining the road. Crash data is also very persuasive and may be available from law enforcement agencies.

Most schools have students that qualify for free or reduced cost lunches. The percentage of enrolled students that qualify is often used as a convenient method of expressing relative need among families attending different schools. School administrators can usually provide this number.

SECTION 8 – POTENTIAL FOR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS OR ACTIVITIES TO CORRECT OR ADDRESS THE PROBLEM

Check boxes are provided in Section 8 for applicants to indicate the type of SRTS solutions being proposed to address the problems identified in Section 7. Responses to the questions following the check boxes help the SRTS Advisory Committee further evaluate the proposed activities or project and compare applications received from around the state. This section is an opportunity to define how needs identified in Section 7 will be satisfied or eliminated and what other options were considered and discarded.

SECTION 9 – POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED WALKING AND BICYCLING AMONG STUDENTS

For data gathering purposes, **before** completing the SRTS application, each target school must administer the student and parent surveys found on the SRTS Web page. That information must then be submitted to the National Center for Safe Routes to School.

The student tally forms will yield the number of children currently riding with parents in a private vehicle, riding a school bus, riding in a carpool, riding a city bus, walking or biking to school. Data is to be collected on a consecutive Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, but not during a week when a special event is planned, such as Walk-to-School-Day or Bike-to-School-Day. Summarizing this information provides the overall percentages for each school for each mode. **Where percentages are requested in Section 9, we are looking for the percentages of the total school enrollment.** Data for four schools can be entered. If a special event or period (during which higher than normal biking and walking to school is anticipated) cannot be avoided, and it coincides with the data gathering days, please specifically note that fact in your application.

Completed parent surveys provide an indication of essential parental support, without which SRTS programs are unlikely to succeed. Parent surveys also highlight perceived obstacles to walking and biking to school.

One exception for the student and parent survey requirement exists for applicants who submitted proposals in 2011. **Applicants who completed surveys for the spring 2011 application or later do not need to repeat the surveys now,** however, they must still provide all the requested survey information and document that survey data was provided to the National Center. A 2012 applicant may conduct new parent and student surveys.

While completing the second part of Section 9, the applicant should refer to existing local or regional plans that provide support for specific bicycling or pedestrian routes. Typical sources include locally adopted comprehensive plans, thoroughfare plans, park and recreation plans, pedestrian and bicycling plans and other relevant documents.

SECTION 10 – ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED SRTS ACTIVITIES OR PROJECTS BY THE COMMUNITY AND INTERESTED PARTIES

In this optional section applicants should discuss relevant support for SRTS activities and for improved walking and bicycling in general within the community. **This section offers an opportunity to demonstrate local commitments to walking and bicycling.** Identify organizations supporting your SRTS proposal and describe what role they will play during implementation. When forming the local Safe Routes committee, consider asking these organizations to participate

If other work directly affecting the Safe Routes to School activity or project is being implemented by another entity, such as a route extension to another elementary or middle

school or a connecting link to a significant community resource (recreation complex, library, major retail center, regional park, university or local trail), it could increase the value of your SRTS effort and, therefore, merit documentation in this section.

SECTION 11 – COORDINATION WITH OTHER PLANS

In this section, describe how the proposed Safe Routes to School activity or infrastructure project relates to other plans. Plans that should be considered include long-range transportation plans, traffic safety plans, pedestrian and bicycling plans, park and recreation plans, thoroughfare plans, land use plans, multimodal transportation plans and trail and greenway plans. Indicate if any of these plans provide planning support for your proposed activities or project.

Be sure to document if the proposed actions or improvements in your current application originate from a comprehensive Safe Routes Plan or school travel plan. Such projects are given particular consideration during application reviews.
Complete the check box and questions regarding SRTS plans or school travel plans.

All school districts participating in the national free and reduced cost lunch program are required to develop a school wellness plan. Schools within each district must adhere to those plans. This section needs to highlight the ties between the school wellness plan physical activity elements and the intended health and physical activity benefits of the planned SRTS program or project.

SECTION 12 - COORDINATION WITH OTHER LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Activities, programs and developments that relate to the Safe Routes to School proposal should be reported in this optional section. This information can provide an indication about local support for walking and bicycling initiatives. Typical related activities might be a downtown redevelopment project that caters to pedestrians or a community program aimed at increasing physical activity and personal health. For example, applicants could document a new walkway constructed as part of a new housing or commercial development that could be used for school trips. A park and recreation plan that encourages walking and bicycling in the community can also provide proof of local commitment to non-motorized travel and improved community health.

Please complete the check boxes and questions related to other funding requested (or secured) for related improvements and programs that could increase the effectiveness of the proposed SRTS investments.

Edition: March 13, 2012