Virginia's 2009 Safe Routes to School Program Guidelines and Application Instructions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT IS NEW FOR 2009? 2
INTRODUCTION.....3
Background.....3
Safe Routes to School Program Purpose 3
Desired Outcomes.....4
The "5 E"s" – The Comprehensive Nature of Safe Routes to School.....4
VIRGINIA'S SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM 5
Virginia School Travel Plan – Phase One.....6
School Travel Plan Submission Process 6
SRTS Implementation of Local Programs and Projects - Phase Two.....7
Eligible Applicants.....7
Scale of Proposed Activities and Projects.....8
Funding Levels.....9
Program and Project Sponsorship Requirements 9
Eligible Projects and Activities 10
Ineligible Projects and Activities 12
Selection Process and Scoring.....13
Regulatory Requirements and Guidance 14
General Requirements for Funding Recipients.....15
Overview of Program and Project Authorization Process 16

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS.....17
Using Your School Travel Plan to Complete Forms 18
Completing Application Questions.....18
Attachments Instructions.....19
Submitting the Application.....20
Application Schedule and Contact Information 20
Resources 21

WHAT IS NEW FOR 2009?

Important dates –

Nov. 2, 2009 (5:00PM) – Final date to submit School Travel Plan to SRTS Coordinator for optional **Preliminary Review** and comment

Nov. 27, 2009 (5:00PM) – Deadline for submittal of final School Travel Plans to be eligible for 2009 SRTS infrastructure and non-infrastructure funding.

Dec. 28, 2009 (5:00PM) – Deadline for Applications (Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure)

(See Application Schedule for more information)

School Travel Plan

- The Virginia School Travel Plan: Reference Guide and Worksheet has been revised and reformatted and is available to communities on the VDOT Safe Routes to School Program website. (See School Travel Plan – 2nd Edition)
  - Under Section 5 Current School Travel Environment – additional information on arrival/dismissal procedures is included.
  - Under Section 7 Creating Solutions, the hazard or barrier being addressed by each proposed strategy is included.
  - Mapping requirements for the School Travel Plan have changed. (See School Travel Plan – Reference Guide #8)
  - Under Section 9 Action Plan, two columns for the estimated cost and percentage of students affected by the strategy are included.

Infrastructure Applications

- For each infrastructure project application, improvements should be in a single location or along one continuous route traveled by students to school; separate applications for multiple projects are necessary in the case of scattered locations not along a single home to school route. (See Scale of Proposed Activities and Projects, and also, Eligible Projects and Activities)
- The list of eligible projects has changed. (See Eligible Projects and Activities)
- The proposed project budget must include all funds including local funds that are necessary to complete the project. (See Infrastructure Application #7)

Non-Infrastructure Applications

- Each non-infrastructure application is limited to 4 separate elements. An “element” is made up on one or more related activities. (See Non-Infrastructure Application)
- The list of eligible activities has changed. (See Eligible Projects and Activities)
- Only those non-infrastructure elements made up of one or more related activities that can be ready for implementation by fall 2010 are eligible for funding.

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines provide information about funding opportunities under the Virginia Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program. After a brief introduction to SRTS, its purpose, benefits and comprehensiveness, these guidelines describe the School Travel Plan, eligibility, the application and selection processes, and requirements for managing a VDOT-funded SRTS program. To learn more about Safe Routes to School programs in general, visit the National Center for Safe Routes to School website. For a glossary of commonly used terms in SRTS materials, visit the Virginia SRTS Program website. The Resources section includes web addresses linked in the document as well as other SRTS information.

BACKGROUND

In less than a generation, the United States has experienced a dramatic change in the way children travel about their communities. In 1969, about half of all students walked or bicycled to school. Today, however, the story is very different. Fewer than 15 percent of all school trips are made by walking or bicycling, one-quarter are made on a school bus, and over half of all children arrive at school in private automobiles. The results have been costly both in terms of dollars and impacts to our health:

- School traffic can account for 25% of morning traffic, leading to traffic snarls and decreased safety around schools.
- School transportation operating costs in the U.S. exceed $14 billion annually, which is the second biggest cost in school budget behind salaries.
- Nationally, more than one third of school-aged children are overweight or obese as a result of poor diet and lack of physical activity.

One of the best ways to address all of these issues is to increase opportunities for regular, routine physical activity such as walking and bicycling to school. The SRTS Program involves schools, students, parents and advocacy organizations at a grassroots level in efforts to improve conditions for children in kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8) to arrive at school safely and under their own power.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Safe Routes to School Program is a federally-funded program created by Section 1404 of the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). As written in SAFETEA-LU, the purpose of the SRTS program is:

(1) to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;

(2) to 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) to 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.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Safe Routes to School is a cross-cutting program. There are many possible outcomes as a result of successfully implementing projects and activities at the state and local level. Desired outcomes of the Safe Routes to School Program 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
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Increased community security
- Enhanced community accessibility
- Increased community involvement
- Improvements to the physical environment that increase 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

THE "5 E's" – THE COMPREHENSIVE NATURE OF SRTS

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends that SRTS efforts at the local level incorporate – directly or indirectly – five components, often referred to as the "5 E's", namely:

Education – Teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.

Enforcement – Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors), and initiating community enforcement such as crossing guard programs.

Encouragement – Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.

Engineering – Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails and bikeways.

Evaluation – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the improvement(s).

VIRGINIA'S SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Virginia Department of Transportation is responsible for administering the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program in Virginia. The Virginia SRTS Program is funded under a federal aid program. It is based on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Program Guidance for SRTS (also see web addresses to all links under the Resources section of these guidelines).

The Virginia SRTS Program is a phased program. The first phase begins with the local development of a SRTS School Travel Plan. In the second phase, after approval of the School Travel Plan, the SRTS Program provides funding to participating school divisions, localities and other eligible entities through a competitive application process. The program is designed to facilitate the development of partnerships among schools and local governments for the planning and implementation of successful SRTS initiatives. A detailed list of eligible projects and activities in both the infrastructure and non-infrastructure categories appears later in these guidelines. Key features of the Virginia SRTS Program include:

Phase I – School Travel Plan

- A School Travel Plan: Worksheet and Reference Guide is available for schools and communities seeking to design a local Safe Routes to School program.
- Only those schools, projects and activities included in an approved School Travel Plan are eligible for funding.

Phase II – Safe Routes to School Implementation of Program Elements and Projects

- Once a School Travel Plan has been approved by the SRTS Program, funding to implement non-infrastructure elements (related activities) and infrastructure projects identified in the plan is available through a competitive application process.
    - Non-infrastructure program funding goes to start-up safety education, encouragement activities, improving an existing plan, and other activities that support a local SRTS program.
    - Infrastructure project funding goes to improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities within two miles of participating K-8 schools.
- SRTS is a locally-administered reimbursement program – selected project sponsors are reimbursed by VDOT. SRTS program elements and projects are funded at 100% with no local match required.
- Applications and other materials are available online from the Virginia Safe Routes to School Program.

PHASE ONE -- VIRGINIA SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

The School Travel Plan is the first phase of any SRTS effort. The plan outlines a school or community's intentions for making travel to and from school more sustainable and safe. Schools and communities create their own unique School Travel Plan. A completed plan must be submitted to and approved by VDOT in advance of any infrastructure or non-infrastructure funding request. The Virginia School Travel Plan: Worksheet and Reference Guide, containing the relevant information needed in order to complete travel plans, is provided on the Virginia SRTS Program website or from the Virginia SRTS Coordinator.

The purpose of the School Travel Plan is to help schools and communities develop the framework for a comprehensive SRTS program by (1) identifying the needs, issues, and impediments facing communities in the attempt to increase the number of students who bike or walk to school; and (2) developing strategies to address these issues and achieve increased participation in safe biking and walking. Local SRTS programs must include and address five major components, referred to as the "5 E's".

Tip: If SRTS programs for several schools are being developed for non-infrastructure activities only, consider creating one School Travel Plan for all of the schools together if they share similar challenges and opportunities. If SRTS activities and infrastructure projects are to be proposed for SRTS funding for a school, consider a separate School Travel Plan for each school or those in very close proximity.

SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN SUBMISSION PROCESS

The criteria for approval of the School Travel Plan for use in the SRTS process includes completion of all sections, endorsements by the school and school division (and where necessary, the local government,) and a comprehensive final plan of action. The plan's content is detailed in the Virginia School Travel Plan: Worksheet and Reference Guide. Any projects and activities for which funding is being sought through the application process must be included in a pre-existing approved School Travel Plan. Formal resolutions and letters of support will be required to accompany funding applications, but are not necessary at this stage.

The completed School Travel Plan should be submitted to the SRTS Coordinator by the dates included in the Application Schedule in the SRTS Application Instructions. Plans can be submitted to the Coordinator for comment at any time prior to the final date for Preliminary Review. Those submitting plans by the deadline for Plan Submittal will be notified within six business days if they have been approved for use in the Virginia SRTS process.

After a School Travel Plan has been approved for use in the SRTS process, it can and should be updated. A revised plan can be submitted for future application cycles. For example, if a community creates a plan that focuses on non-infrastructure aspects at a school, such as safety education and encouragement, in the first year, it can be used to apply for funding to implement the encouragement and education elements, as well as to fund consultant services to assist in performing a walkability audit. The plan would then be revised with the new information and could be used to apply for identified Safe Routes to School infrastructure improvements in subsequent years.

PHASE TWO – SRTS IMPLEMENTATION

After a school or community has completed a School Travel Plan to improve options for students in kindergarten through eighth grade to walk and bicycle to school, funding is available for implementation of the plan. The remainder of these guidelines includes important information about eligibility, and how to apply for funding for Safe Routes to Schools non-infrastructure programs or infrastructure projects.

Non-infrastructure program elements are one or more related activities that educate or encourage safe walking and bicycling for students. Non-infrastructure elements are programs and activities such as in-school safety education, public outreach activities, traffic enforcement, education on the benefits of walking and bicycling, and other related activities.

Infrastructure projects improve the physical or walking and bicycling "built environment" around schools. This can include many physical improvements such as installing sidewalks or crosswalks, installing pedestrian traffic signals, or slowing traffic near schools.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This section describes who is eligible to apply for Virginia SRTS Program funding:

School Travel Plan Completed and Approved: A completed plan must be submitted to and approved by the VDOT SRTS Coordinator in advance of any infrastructure or non-infrastructure funding request.

Grade Levels: Programs and projects on behalf of participating schools with students in kindergarten through 8th grade (K-8) are eligible.

Schools: Public and private schools may apply for SRTS funding. Infrastructure projects must be within the public right-of-way and a local government must be the project sponsor.

Type of Sponsors: The organization or agency administering the program or project must apply as the Sponsoring Agency. The Sponsoring Agency will act as the fiscal agent for all programs/projects and will front the initial funds. The entities who may apply for the two categories of funding include:

SRTS Non-Infrastructure Program Element:

- Schools (public and private)
- School divisions
- Local governments (cities, counties, or towns)
- Regional and state agencies working on behalf of a school or schools
- Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations working on behalf of a school or schools

SRTS Infrastructure Project:

- Local governments (cities, counties, or towns)

SCALE OF PROPOSED PROGRAM ELEMENTS OR PROJECTS

Scale of Proposal: The number of schools included in a proposal depends on whether it is for non-infrastructure activities or infrastructure projects.

SRTS Non-Infrastructure Proposed Elements (related activities) may serve schools at several different levels:

- Single school level
- Multiple schools in close proximity (schools within several blocks that draw from the same neighborhoods and/or pool of students)
- School division level, but does not have to be division-wide
- Regional or Statewide

Only non-infrastructure proposals that can be ready for implementation by fall 2010 are eligible.

SRTS Infrastructure Proposed Project must be located within 2 miles of the target school(s) and on public property or in the public right of way.

- Single school
- Two or more schools on the same campus or within a few blocks of each other and that draw from the same neighborhoods

If proposed projects are scattered throughout the school attendance zone, each project must be proposed on separate applications with separate budgets. (Most funded SRTS infrastructure projects are within a half mile of a school.)

- For each infrastructure project, improvements must be in a single location or along a continuous route traveled by students from home to school.
- More than one project can be submitted per school on separate applications; each project application will be reviewed separately.
- Projects must meet Americans with Disability Act requirements and should connect to existing infrastructure that is also accessible.

Three examples of separate project descriptions:

- *On-street bicycle facilities and secure bike parking. Stripe bike lanes along one and a half miles of Park Street (600-2000 blocks) from Main Street to Jefferson Middle School; install related signage, and bike racks under covered shelter near front door of school.*
- *Construct, repair and improve sidewalks. Construct new sidewalk along Mill Rd from Oak St. to Elm St. approx 1200 linear feet; repair/replace sidewalk on Elm St. from Mill Road to King Middle School approx 300 l.f. improve areas across existing driveways and add curb ramps (2)*
- *Install pedestrian crossing improvements. Improve intersection at Park St and Elm St by installing curb extensions on both sides of Park St.(4), curb ramps (8), pedestrian countdown timers (4) and crosswalk striping.*

FUNDING LEVELS

The funding limit for an **infrastructure project** is $500,000. A locality can submit more than one infrastructure project application up to $500,000 per locality. A single application can be no less than $20,000. Funding awards are based on a competitive application process with funding reserved for strong applications that are well-developed - including mapping and budgets, impact large numbers of students, and are at schools that strongly support walking and/or bicycling to school. Low cost solutions are encouraged!

The funding limit for **non-infrastructure program element(s)** is $100,000 per application. For funding at the maximum level, a non-infrastructure element (one or more related activities) must demonstrate a high level of planning and support and impact numerous schools throughout a school division or larger geographic area. All non-infrastructure elements combined on a single application can total no less than $5,000. The average request should be $5,000 per school unless it is a pilot program for the division. For more details on what a pilot program is, see the description for question #9 under the section on Application Instructions in these guidelines.

The Virginia SRTS Program funds locally-administered reimbursement programs. It is federally-funded, providing 100% of total funding with no match required. Applicants are encouraged to leverage funding from other sources.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

If selected, applicants must be able to enter into an agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation within six months of being notified of the funding awards. The period of agreements will be up to 18 months for non-infrastructure program elements and up to 36 months for infrastructure projects from the date of the "Notice to Proceed" letter.

PROGRAM & PROJECT SPONSORSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Resolutions of Support and Letters of Support must be obtained for Safe Routes to School applications in order to be eligible for SRTS funds. The sponsorship requirements are as follows:

1. A Resolution of Support from the government agency sponsoring the application and serving as fiscal agent must be submitted with all ***infrastructure*** applications. The Sponsoring Agency for infrastructure projects must be able to undertake the administration of a Federal-aid construction project. See the Regulatory Requirements section for more information.
2. All ***non-infrastructure*** applications must include the endorsement of the school division (if the school division is not already the main Sponsoring Agency), as indicated in a letter of support from the school division superintendent or designee.
3. All applications must include at least one K-8 school as a participating partner as indicated in letters of support from the principals of participating schools for single, multiple and district SRTS applications.
4. Non-profit entities and private schools are eligible for non-infrastructure program awards. For infrastructure projects that serve private school locations and are on the public right-of-way, the local government must be the project sponsor.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Safe Routes to School funding is intended for projects and program activities that specifically serve the SRTS Program Purpose and that are part of a comprehensive program that addresses the "5 E's" as described at the beginning of these guidelines. Also, SRTS funding is intended for start-up programs, new activities, and infrastructure projects without traditional funding sources.

Important: Only types of activities and projects identified as "Strategies" in the target school's School Travel Plan will be eligible for funding. If an applicant seeks funding for a program activity or project that is not included in the corresponding School Travel Plan, the application will not be considered. If you are unsure as to whether a certain project or activity is eligible contact the Virginia SRTS Coordinator. Fundable activities and eligible, costs are listed below. A Glossary of Terms is also available on the Virginia Safe Routes to School Program website.

Eligible Non-Infrastructure Program Activities: The following activities are eligible for funding through the Safe Routes to School Program (note: for the purpose of applying for funding, a "proposed element" is made up of one or more related activities):

Education:

- Creation of educational materials
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety skills training for students and parents
- Bicycle rodeo to teach on bike skills
- Personal safety skills training for students and parents
- Health, environmental and sustainable transportation benefits of walking and bicycling to students
- Educate parents and caregivers about safe driving procedures at the school
- Training, including SRTS training workshops that target school and community level audiences

Encouragement:

- SRTS promotional campaigns and materials
- Incentive activities that encourage safe walking and bicycling over time
- Walking School Bus programs
- Bike Train programs
- International Walk to School Day or other special event
- Walking/biking mileage clubs
- Community safe driving awareness and education campaigns

Enforcement:

- Crossing guard training programs and equipment
- Parent or student patrol programs
- Lower speed limits in school vicinity

Evaluation:

- Photocopying, duplication and printing costs, mailing costs for data gathering
- Counting the number of students who walk and bicycle to and from school (mandated for funded projects)
- Measuring parent/guardian perceptions of safety (mandated for funded projects)
- Consultant services for improving an existing School Travel Plan

Costs allowed for Non-infrastructure Program Activities:

1. Equipment and Supplies used for SRTS activities*
2. Educational Materials
3. Promotions, Incentives (less than $10 each) or Publicity
6. Printing, Copying and Postage
7. Consultant Services – including Planning and Evaluation and Associated Education and Training
8. Costs to Employ Area-wide Program Manager: A position to direct the start-up of a SRTS program for an entire city, county, or some other area-wide division (3 or more participating schools) for the identified non-infrastructure elements in the School Travel Plan and application. Funded program managers coordinate the efforts of numerous stakeholders and volunteers, and manage the process for implementation at the local or regional level. Requests for funding Program Managers will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis; the position is time-limited and funding should not supplant existing funding for staff who are already responsible for these types of activities.

* Contact SRTS Coordinator regarding eligible equipment and requirements.

Eligible Infrastructure Improvements: Only those improvements identified in an approved School Travel Plan will be eligible for funding. (Note: For each infrastructure project application, improvements should be in a single location or along one continuous route traveled by students to school and located within 2 miles of a participating school.)

Engineering:

Sidewalk Improvements

- New Sidewalk
- Sidewalk Gap Closure
- Sidewalk Widening
- Sidewalk repair/replacement
- Sidewalk Curb
- Sidewalk Curb Ramp

Traffic Calming/Speed Reduction

- Roundabout
- Bulb-out or curb extension
- Speed Bump/Hump/Table
- Lane Reductions
- Raised Intersection or Crossing
- Pedestrian Refuge
- Narrowed Traffic Lane/Choker

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing Improvements

- Crosswalks
- Median Refuge
- Raised Crossing/Intersection
- Sight Distance Improvements

Traffic Control Devices

- New/Upgraded Traffic Signal
- New Pavement Markings
- New Traffic Striping
- Driver Speed Feedback Sign (pole mounted)
- Bike Sensitive Signal Actuation Devices
- Pedestrian Signal Upgrades
- Pedestrian Countdown Signals

Traffic Diversion

- Full/Half Street Closure
- Traffic diversion away from school zone or designated route to school

On Street Bicycle Facilities

- New/Upgraded Bike Lane
- Widened Outside Lanes/Shoulders
- Geometric Improvements
- Traffic Signs
- Pavement Markings

Off Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- Shared-use paths
- Separation of bicycles and pedestrians from traffic adjacent to school facilities

Secure Bicycle Parking Facilities (for students' bicycles)

- Bike Racks
- Bike Lockers
- Covered Bike Shelter

Within the sets of fundable infrastructure improvements for a proposed project, the following costs are reimbursable to selected applicants through the Safe Routes to School Program:

Costs allowed for Infrastructure Projects:

1. Scoping / Environmental Evaluation
2. Preliminary Engineering
3. Right of Way Acquisition (with limitations)
4. Construction
5. Construction Engineering

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Funding is flexible for SRTS program elements and projects in order to encourage innovative solutions. Certain activities and projects however, are **ineligible**; they include:

- Recurring and operational costs, such as crossing guard salaries, will not be funded and indirect costs are not eligible.
- The use of funds for projects that reorganize pick-up and drop-off primarily for the convenience of drivers and their passengers rather than to improve access for those walking or biking to school is not permitted.
- School bus safety programs and improvements to school bus stops are not eligible for this funding.
- Projects and activities that are not included as Strategies in an approved School Travel Plan are not eligible.
- Infrastructure improvements that primarily serve to connect schools to after-school facilities are not eligible.
- Projects and activities that routinely receive funding from other sources or that are considered routine accommodations, such as sidewalks constructed as part of new development are not eligible for funding.

SELECTION PROCESS AND SCORING

Applications will be pre-screened by the VDOT Safe Routes to School Program staff for minimum eligibility requirements and completeness of application. Applications will be distributed to a selection committee for review and scoring. The selection committee includes members from the SRTS Advisory Committee made up of VDOT personnel from the Transportation and Mobility Planning and Traffic Engineering divisions, VDOT District SRTS Coordinators, and also staff from the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Department of Health, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. In recommending funding, the applications will be scored in accordance with the ranking criteria below. Funding award recommendations will be based on the scoring of applications and demonstrated need. Proposals will be scored based on six main criteria:

1. Potential to reduce child traffic injuries and fatalities
2. Potential to substantially increase the number of children walking and/or bicycling to school
3. Consultation and support for applications by school-based associations, local traffic engineers, local-elected officials, law enforcement agencies, parents and school officials
4. Demonstrated need for the program or project
5. Completeness of application including mapping and appropriateness of budget
6. Low cost solutions and capacity to accomplish the proposed program elements or projects

Special consideration will be given to:

- applications in support of Title 1 schools; and
- applications showing that applicants have administered the "Parent Survey" or similar survey measuring parent/guardian attitudes and included the findings in their School Travel Plan and application. (Instructions and surveys are available online from the National Center for Safe Routes to School website under Evaluation, Parent Survey and Instructions.)

Proposals may be evaluated and selected for full or partial funding. Also, in keeping with FHWA recommendations, applicants will compete only with other applicants proposing activities at the same geographic or system scale, whether they are one school, multiple schools, region-wide or state-wide. Official notification of funding awards will be made by VDOT via U.S. mail.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS and GUIDANCE

Selected applicants will need to comply with a variety of Federal and State requirements in order to proceed. Potential applicants should carefully review the next two sections and decide if they have the capacity to administer a SRTS program or project. The following requirements will be the responsibility of the applicant.

- **VPPA:** Use of Safe Routes to School funds must be in compliance with the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA). Local government and school divisions generally have a VPPA-compliant procurement process in place. Consult your agency's procurement officer to determine the requirements of procuring goods and services If SRTS funding recipients do not have a VPPA-compliant procurement process, VDOT's procurement process must be followed to ensure compliance.
- **ADA:** Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) includes all infrastructure requirements and making program materials available in alternative formats.
- **MPO TIP:** Safe Routes to Schools infrastructure project funds will be programmed in a Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), if applicable, and/or the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).
- **MUTCD:** Signage, striping and pavement marking projects must follow standards in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
- **NEPA:** Although SRTS infrastructure projects often fall under categorical environmental exclusions that recognize construction of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths, and facilities as not involving significant environmental impacts, the process to first comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a requirement of all projects. It is the responsibility of the award recipients to comply with NEPA and to coordinate environmental documentation with the VDOT District Program Manager.
- **USC Title 23**: Safe Routes to School expenditures must comply with Davis Bacon prevailing wage rates, competitive bidding, and other contracting requirements.
- **AASHTO**: Bicycle and pedestrian facilities must be designed in accordance with standards as described in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' manuals.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING RECIPIENTS

If selected, the Sponsoring Agency will be required to enter into a contract with VDOT in which the agency will agree to sponsor and administer the program/project and incur costs for work performed until reimbursed. This includes directing the project with a timely bid letting.

- Sponsoring agencies will be required to submit a work program outlining program or project goals as part of the contract.
- SRTS infrastructure projects are administered in accordance with Federal-aid projects as described in the Guide for Local Administration of VDOT Projects (or the Urban Construction Initiative (UCI) Guide for UCI communities.)
- **Only those costs incurred after the sponsoring agency has received a "Notice to Proceed" letter can be reimbursed.**
- All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to eligibility requirements.
- The sponsoring agency will submit quarterly progress reports.
- The sponsoring agency will submit proper proof of payment to VDOT for reimbursement.

- All fund recipients are required to meet the evaluation requirements of the program. This includes conducting some form of evaluation such as before and after Parent Surveys. This can be initiated during the School Travel Plan process, prior to any infrastructure or non-infrastructure application or as one of the first activities of the program. Instructions and surveys are available online from the National Center for Safe Routes to School website under Evaluation, Parent Survey and Instructions for surveys.
- The Sponsoring Agency will be Virginia SRTS Program's point of contact should the application be selected. The Sponsoring Agency will also have responsibility for maintenance.
- A final progress report including all deliverables is required at the end of the "period of performance".
- Final dates for implementation will be established once the funds are authorized and will become part of the project or program agreement. Failure to make substantial progress on the identified milestones by the agreed upon date could result in the termination of the funding. Any work performed by the applicant prior to receiving written authorization to proceed is not eligible for reimbursement.
- SRTS infrastructure projects must be completed within three years of the authorization date.
- All funds for SRTS non-infrastructure program elements must be expended during the "Period of Performance" in a Program Agreement, up to 18 months.

What is the "Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations"?

Adopted in 2004, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will initiate all highway construction projects with the presumption that the projects shall accommodate bicycling and walking. A link to the VDOT policy has been included in the list of Resources at the end of these guidelines.

What are the Secondary Streets Acceptance Requirements for new subdivisions in counties with streets maintained by VDOT?

The Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements (SSAR) are the rules that govern the development of subdivision streets for acceptance by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for perpetual public maintenance. Some rules apply to new subdivision streets in the vicinity of schools. A link to SSAR guidance and implementation has been included in the list of Resources at the end of these guidelines.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM & PROJECT AUTHORIZATION PROCESS

The table below contains a brief summary of the application process and notification of funding awards (Pre-Authorization) and the procedures involved in executing an agreement and performing work under the agreement after a Notice to Proceed letter has been executed (Post Authorization).

NON-INFRASTRUCTURE	INFRASTRUCTURE
Prepare School Travel Plan	
Submit School Travel Plan to SRTS Coordinator for approval	
PRE-AUTHORIZATION	
Complete application package and submit	
Review by VDOT SRTS staff for eligibility	Site visit by VDOT SRTS to determine eligibility
Review and scoring by SRTS Advisory Committee	
Award recommendations sent to VDOT Commissioner and Secretary of Transportation for approval	
Recipients notified of SRTS Program funding award	
	VA SRTS Coordinator requests inclusion of project in STIP/TIP (infrastructure project only)
VDOT Programming Division initiates federal authorization	
Agreement between VDOT and Funding Award Recipient prepared and executed	
Funding Award Recipient receives a **"Notice to Proceed"** letter from VDOT and can begin to incur costs in accordance with Agreement	
POST AUTHORIZATION	
Initiate procurement of consultant service, if needed	
	Submit environmental documents for VDOT approval
	Prepare construction documents and site plans
	Submit construction documents for VDOT approval
	Project let by competitive bid process
	Obtain all necessary permits
	Authorization to proceed with construction
Work commences	
Submit invoices to VDOT for reimbursement quarterly	
Submit quarterly progress reports to VDOT SRTS Coordinator	
Work completed	
Submit final progress report	
Program audited by VDOT and closed	

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL 2009 APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR NON-INFRASTRUCTURE AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you have completed a School Travel Plan (STP) for your school(s), submitted it to the VDOT Safe Routes to School Coordinator, and received notice that it has been approved, you may submit an application for funding of non-infrastructure elements and/or project identified as priorities in the plan.

Be sure to complete and submit the appropriate application based upon whether your initiative will be developing SRTS Non-Infrastructure Program Elements or a SRTS Infrastructure Project. A checklist below the application signature block has been included to help ensure that all required documents are submitted. It is highly recommended that you identify early on who will need to authorize the application and what resolutions and letters of support will be needed.

USING YOUR SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN TO COMPLETE FORMS

The SRTS non-infrastructure and infrastructure applications have been structured to be completed using your School Travel Plan. In the application blocks that ask you to refer to a "STP Section", use the indicated section to complete the question. In some cases, it will be a matter of transcribing school or plan information. The reason for this is to assist in the review of your funding proposal by the SRTS selection committee, the public and others.

Information from your STP section "Action Plan" (Section 9) determines which activities and projects are eligible for funding. The approved School Travel Plan sections 2 and 9 will be an attachment to each application.

COMPLETING APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

Review Virginia's 2009 Safe Routes to School Program Guidelines for eligibility questions, who can serve as a Sponsoring Agency, and how, when, and where to submit your School Travel Plan for review and approval. Note that instructions for the Non-infrastructure and Infrastructure applications have similar numbering. Be sure that you are completing the correct application.

1. Current Travel Modes and **2. Current Distance Information:** Complete the percentage blocks by dividing each mode (or distance) number by the total number of students at the participating school(s). Be sure to include how these were determined after "Source" and "Month/Year" in the space provided. If your proposal is funded, this baseline information will be important. If you are applying for more than one school, this should be the aggregate number for all schools.

3. Title 1 and other considerations: Title 1 is a designation for schools that are part of a federal funding program designed to help low-income students. Schools are designated Title 1 based on the number of students eligible for free and reduced meals. The principal of your school(s) will know whether or not it/they are Title 1 schools for the current school year. If the schools have low income or disadvantaged populations who will be served by non-infrastructure elements or a project proposed in the application, please briefly describe how it will impact them, even if the targeted school is not Title 1. Write N/A if not applicable.

4. Parent Surveys: The Parent Survey, available online from the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS), is not required prior to selection for funding, but is strongly recommended in order to measure parent and guardian attitudes towards walking and bicycling to school. If all school(s) have included the results of this survey or a similar one as part of the School Travel Plan's "Public Input Process," Section 3, briefly describe how they have been used to develop your application. **Do not attach any surveys to the application**.

5. Support for SRTS Efforts: List the names of people and organizations who support your SRTS program (including program planning) and activities to improve walking and/or biking to the participating school(s). Be sure to include those who will be responsible for implementing any of the SRTS 5E's whether or not you are applying for funding for each with this application. Attach all letters of support including those that are required. Also, be sure to attach Section 2 of the School Travel Plan to the application. List the people and organizations who have demonstrated support for efforts to advance Safe Routes to School on behalf of students at the participating school(s). *Please note if a letter of support or resolution from them is attached.*

6. <u>Non-infrastructure Application</u> **Description of Proposed Element(s) for Funding:**
Complete the questions clearly describing the program element made up of related activities (up to four separate elements per application), what barrier is being addressed and how each will increase the number of students walking and biking to school and/or improve the safety of those walking and biking to school. Only the "Strategies" that have been identified in Section 9 of your School Travel Plan that meet eligibility requirements in the 2009 SRTS Program Guidelines are eligible for funding. Be sure to attach Section 9 of the School Travel Plan to this application.
Or:
6. *<u>Infrastructure Application</u>* **Description of Proposed Project for Funding**
Complete the questions clearly describing the project that you are proposing for funding including what barriers the project is addressing, how it will increase the number of students walking and biking to school and/or improve the safety of those walking and biking to school. **Each proposed infrastructure project must be within 2 miles of the participating school.**

7. *<u>Non-infrastructure</u>* Application Cost Estimates: Create your own cost estimate table using the sample provided in the application and attach it as Attachment A. Each element must have its own line item on the estimate. If you include any local funds or donated goods and services, note who will be providing them; if it is a participating partner, please include a letter of support as an attachment and make sure to list them under the question on support for SRTS efforts.
Or:
7. <u>Infrastructure</u> **Application Detailed Budget, Line Item Cost Estimates and Project Schedule**: Create a budget for infrastructure improvements using the sample provided in the application, you must provide budgeted amounts for Environmental Documentation, VDOT review, Preliminary Engineering, Right of Way, and Construction and include any local (or other funds) funding the project; attach it as Attachment A. Check box if an engineer has developed the final estimates and schedule for this application (this is strongly recommended); if the

budget, estimate and schedule was not prepared by an engineer, please explain how these were determined. For the project schedule, the start date should be no earlier than September 2010.

8. Maps A, B, C, D, E for Infrastructure and Non-infrastructure applications: As part of the School Travel Plan, in Section 8, there will be an Overview Map (Map A), a Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Map (Map B), and for those School Travel Plans with proposed Infrastructure Improvements Maps, (Map C,D or E etc) showing the location and other details of the proposed improvements. Please include these maps as separate attachments to your application. Complete the checklist in this section for each map. Clearly label all maps. Additional mapping or more detailed maps and photographs can be included with this application.

9. Pilot Program (Non-infrastructure Only) - As described under "Funding Levels" of the 2009 SRTS Program Guidelines, an estimated $5,000 should be requested per school for start up programs. If a non-infrastructure application proposes more than $5000 per school, please describe how this program can serve as a pilot program for use in other schools in the division or if you are including any additional planning for the participating schools listed in the application.

ATTACHMENT INSTRUCTIONS:

Under the signature of the person who is authorized to sign the application, there is a checklist for the attachments that must accompany the application. Attachments are required unless otherwise noted.

Detailed Cost Estimate/Budget - Attach as "Attachment A"

School Travel Plan sections – Attach Section 2 "SRTS Team" and Section 9 "Action Plan"

Maps The Overview Map and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Maps must accompany every application. In addition, the Infrastructure Improvement Map must be included with any Infrastructure Application.

Endorsement of the School Division (For Non-Infrastructure Applications Only) The application must include the endorsement of the school division (if the school division is not already the main Sponsoring Agency), as indicated in a letter of support from the school division superintendent or designee.

A Resolution of Support by the Government Board (For Infrastructure Applications Only) The resolution in support of the project from the sponsoring locality's governing board (i.e. City Council, Town Council, or Board of Supervisors) should: 1) state who has the authority to enter into (sign) a legal agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation on behalf of the locality, and 2) acknowledge that this is a locally-administered reimbursement program/project. A resolution supporting this year's application is required.

Letters of Support from School Principal or Designee of each school benefitting from the activity or project and listed on the first page of the application.

Other Letters of Support (optional) local letters of support should be referenced in the application and included for partners providing financial or other program support. Those letters not included in the application packet cannot be assured consideration in scoring of applications.

501(c)(3) letter for non-profit organization sponsors (*Non-Infrastructure only)*

One Compact Disc (CD) with application materials and attachments

Additional maps (optional)

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

Mail or deliver five (one signed original, plus 4) paper copies of the completed application and attachments *and* one CD with all materials to the Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Virginia Department of Transportation, TMPD, 1401 E. Broad St., 1st floor, Richmond VA 23219. Applications must be received by VDOT no later than December 28, 2009 at 5:00PM.

Compact Disc For CD files include digital copies of application and other materials as MS Word documents (where possible) and renamed according to the following naming convention; "title" refers to an abbreviation of the name you have given the proposed project or program or "school" refers to an individual school. If applicant is an individual school, use the school name.

Program.App_2009_"title or school name".doc or
Project.App_2009_"title or school name".doc
Attachments (maps, images, photos) should also be included and follow a similar naming convention, for example
Program.App_2009_GWashingtonES_Map1.pdf

APPLICATION SCHEDULE

June 2009 – Release of applications, final guidelines and Virginia School Travel Plan

Nov. 2, 2009 (5:00PM) – Final date to submit School Travel Plan to SRTS Coordinator for optional **Preliminary Review** and comment

Nov. 27, 2009 (5:00PM) – Deadline for submittal of final School Travel Plans to be eligible to apply for 2009 SRTS infrastructure and non-infrastructure funding cycle.

Dec. 28, 2009 (5:00PM) – Deadline for Applications (Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure) Mail or deliver 5 (the original plus 4) paper copies and one CD of the completed application packet and materials to VDOT to the SRTS Coordinator**.**

January 2010 – VDOT conducts review of School Travel Plans and initial screening of applications and to ensure eligibility and compliance with all requirements. SRTS Coordinator or VDOT District SRTS Coordinator performs site visits of infrastructure projects.

January 2010 – VDOT distributes eligible applications to Selection Committee members.

February/March - VA SRTS Advisory Committee meets to review and rank applications and makes recommendations to VDOT Commissioner and Secretary of Transportation.

Late March/April – VDOT notifies selected funding recipients.

May-July – VDOT sends draft agreements to sponsors for signatures.

CONTACT INFORMATION – SRTS:

Sarah Weisiger, VA SRTS Coordinator
phone: 804-371-4868 / fax: 804-225-4785 / sarah.weisiger@vdot.virginia.gov

Mailing address:
Virginia Department of Transportation
Safe Routes to School Coordinator
Transportation & Mobility Planning Division
1401 E. Broad St., 1st Floor
Richmond VA 23219

RESOURCES

VDOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) website - http://www.virginiadot.org/saferoutes

VDOT Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations - http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/resources/bike_ped_policy.pdf

Guidance on Virginia's Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements - http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/ssar/

Guide to Local Administration of VDOT Projects - http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/LAP_Guide_August_07.pdf

Urban Construction Initiative - http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/UCI_Guidelines.pdf

National Center for SRTS (includes Online Guide for Developing SRTS Program) - http://www.saferoutesinfo.org

Parent Surveys and Student In-Class Travel Tally under "Evaluation" at http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/index.cfm)

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) SRTS Website and Program Guidance for SRTS - http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/index.htm ;

SAFETEA-LU Section 1404 http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/legislation.htm

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) "SRTS Toolkit" - http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike/Safe-Routes-2002/index.html

America Bikes - http://www.americabikes.org/SRTS.asp

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) - http://www.bicyclinginfo.org

Bikes Belong Coalition - http://bikesbelong.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk/

Federal Highway Administration Bicycle and Pedestrian Program - www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/

Institute of Transportation Engineers, Traffic Calming - http://www.ite.org/traffic/tcdevices.asp

iWALK: International Walk to School in the USA - http://www.walktoschool.org/

Partnership for a Walkable America - http://www.walkableamerica.org

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center - http://www.pedbikeinfo.org

Walking School Bus - http://www.walkingschoolbus.org