



Minnesota Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grant Application Guide

October 2012

Your Destination...Our Priority



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Infrastructure grant application overview

These instructions are for Safe Routes to School infrastructure implementation grants. These grants provide 100 percent federal funding for infrastructure projects located within two miles of a school with students in grades K-8 ranging in cost from \$100,000 to \$300,000. Funds from this program are reimbursed to communities after they are expended. Eligible applicants are listed on page 4 of this guide. All SRTS infrastructure applications require sponsorship from a state aid sponsor. A list of state aid cities can be found in Appendix B. For communities that are not in a state aid city, applicants must work with the county for sponsorship, as listed in Appendix C.

Infrastructure projects chosen in this solicitation must be ready for construction during the 2014 construction season. Together with MnDOT and local engineering staff, successful applicants must complete a process that includes, 1) complete environmental review documents required by the National Environmental Protection Act, 2) obtain authorization from the Federal Highway Administration for preliminary engineering, 3) complete preliminary engineering work (these costs can be covered by the grant) and 4) obtain authorization from FHWA for construction before construction may begin. All successful applicants are required to perform before and after classroom tally surveys. A detailed timeline that outlines this process is available on page 8 of this guide.

All applicants are asked to email their district State Aid engineer to inform them of intent to apply for this grant. More details about the role of district State Aid engineers are available on page 5 of this guide and contact info for all district State Aid engineers is in Appendix A. Applicants who are located in a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must inform the MPO of their intent to apply for this grant. More information about the role of MPOs is available on page 11 of this guide.

Detailed instructions for the application for SRTS infrastructure funds begin on page 10 of this guide. The application for SRTS infrastructure projects requires use of a free program called Formatta. Instructions for using Formatta can be found on page 10. A pdf of the application is available for review only (do not use this to fill out the responses) on the [MnDOT SRTS Infrastructure implementation grants website](#). Preference will be given to communities that demonstrate a strong local SRTS program that have completed planning for effective infrastructure projects through a public involvement process and can demonstrate that the project will be ready for 2014 construction. Scoring criteria are described in Appendix G.

Introduction

The Safe Routes to School program was created in Section 1404 of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act* (SAFETEA-LU). The legislation was signed into law on August 10, 2005, providing State DOTs with federal funding for the SRTS program. The SRTS program provides communities with the opportunity to improve the built environment and promote bicycling and walking to school with infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. The goals of the program are threefold:

1. Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
2. Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age

3. 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.

Each State DOT is responsible for the implementation and administration of the grant program. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the SRTS program works with schools, students and parents at a grass roots level to identify improvements that will make biking and walking to and from school a routine part of Minnesota students' experiences.

Though there are many possible outcomes of a successful program. Some of the identified desired results of the program include:

- Increased bicycle, pedestrian and traffic safety
- More children walking and bicycling to and from school
- Decreased traffic congestion
- Improved childhood health
- Encouragement of healthy and active lifestyles
- Improved air quality
- Improved community safety
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Increased community security
- Enhanced community accessibility
- Increased community involvement
- Improved 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 SRTS program incorporates the five E's for a comprehensive approach to meet the goals of the program. The following is how the five components are defined in the program guidance:

Engineering – Create 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.

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

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

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

Evaluation – Monitor and document outcomes and trends through the collecting data, including before and after the project(s).

Applicant eligibility

To ensure that the SRTS program is available to a broad spectrum of groups that represent K-8 students, both public and non-profit entities may submit applications for infrastructure funding with a state aid sponsor. More information about sponsors is below. Eligible groups include (but are not limited to):

- Schools, both public and private (K-8)
- School districts
- Cities
- Counties
- State agencies
- Federally recognized tribes
- Regional development Commissions
- Metropolitan planning organizations
- Public and non-profit entities working on behalf of a school(s) or school district

Infrastructure project eligibility

Infrastructure projects greatly improve the safety and ability of children to walk and bicycle to school within a two mile radius of the school. The infrastructure project could include the planning, design and construction phase.

The following are types of infrastructure projects that may be approved with SRTS funds.

- Sidewalk improvements: new sidewalks, sidewalk gap closures, curbs, gutters or curb ramps with sidewalks.
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements: curb extensions, speed humps, raised crossings, raised intersections or median refuges
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements: crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections or traffic control devices (including timed on/off beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs at speed transitions and pedestrian-activated signal upgrades)¹
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities: exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways that are separated from a roadway.
- Secure bicycle parking facilities: designated areas (bicycle parking racks, bicycle lockers, etc.) with safety lighting and covered bicycle shelters.
- Traffic diversion improvements: separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities.

*Note: ¹ Electronic devices must be permanent - **not** mobile.*

Infrastructure improvements must meet all federal requirements, including ADA, and comply with current MnDOT and State Aid standards.

The infrastructure project must be within the public right of way. This may include projects on private land that have public access, easements or public property that is owned by a public entity. Construction and capital improvement projects also must be located within approximately two miles of

a primary or middle school (grades K-8). Schools that include grades that fall within the K-8 range are eligible to receive infrastructure improvements.

Federal and state requirements

SRTS projects are required to comply with all federal requirements. The local project manager and sponsors are advised that following the federal regulations and process may require time and resource commitment. Below is a list of key requirements that are the responsibility of the local project manager and sponsor. A description of the requirements can be found in Appendix E.

- Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. In many cases SRTS projects will be eligible for Categorical Exclusion. A brief explanation of the NEPA requirement and a listing of projects that typically qualify as Categorical Exclusions can be found in Appendix E. All documentation is the responsibility of the local project manager.
- Securing all of the necessary local approvals and permits.
- Projects awarded must be amended into the State Transportation Improvement Plan, Area Transportation Improvement Plans (ATIP) and local Transportation Improvement Plans, in metropolitan areas. District State Aid engineers will provide assistance with this requirement.
- All infrastructure projects are required to follow the design and traffic signing requirements used by MnDOT and the State Aid for Local Transportation office.
- All projects must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Compliance includes all infrastructure requirements and making materials available in alternative formats.
- Communities receiving infrastructure funding must demonstrate the ability to maintain the improvement.

Communities that are not able to meet these requirements risk losing SRTS funding. For additional information on the federal process, see chapter five of the [State Aid Manual](#) and review the [Delegated Contract Process checklist](#).

Roles and responsibilities

Collaboration and coordination with state and local communities is important to making the Safe Routes to School program a success. The State Aid for Local Transportation office relies on the communication between the local SRTS project manager, the district State Aid engineer, and the sponsor to ensure that the processes smoothly—from submitting an application to closing out a project.

District State Aid engineer

Each MnDOT district has a district State Aid engineer that will assist communities with the SRTS infrastructure program. All communities interested in applying for infrastructure funds must contact their district State Aid engineer prior to submitting their application. District State Aid engineer contact information is provided in Appendix A. The district State Aid engineer will be able to assist communities with the following tasks during different phases of the program:

- Provide communities with sponsors contact information (if needed)
- Coordinate different MnDOT office reviews (Right-of-Way, Traffic, Permits, ADA, etc.)
- Provide information on agreements
- Approve and submit Public Interest Findings
- Approve and submit environmental documents

- Review and approve plans for standards
- Review and approve pay requests

Partnership role of the county/city sponsor

A state aid city or county sponsor is required for all infrastructure projects. See Appendix B and Appendix C for state aid city and county engineer sponsors. If the city in which the project is taking place is not listed as a state aid city, the city must work with the county as a sponsor. The sponsor must communicate with the local project manager and the district State Aid engineer throughout the project. The sponsor’s task could include but not limited to:

- Assist with plan preparation
- Ensure all federal, MnDOT and state aid requirements are met
- Ensure the project meets milestones and deadlines
- Communicate progress reports or updates
- Act as the fiscal agent on behalf of the community

Local SRTS project manager

The local SRTS project manager may be a champion of the community’s SRTS program or a representative from the city or school. He or she will assist with decisions on the project, coordinate the student and parent surveys, provide status updates as requested by the SRTS coordinator and communicate with the sponsor and DSAE on requirements during the project. The local SRTS project manager is required to attend post award training on the project delivery process and federal requirements.

Funding

Approximately \$3 million will be awarded for infrastructure projects that are ready for construction in 2014. Funds may be requested for preliminary engineering and construction engineering as part of the total project costs and be included in the budget for the SRTS proposal. To ensure that projects meet the project deadline and allow MnDOT to fund more projects, no funds are allowed for right of way acquisition. The infrastructure applications may represent one school or multiple schools that are in close proximity to one another (schools on the same or adjacent campuses, neighborhood or block).

The minimum and maximum amounts that may be requested for an infrastructure project are:

Minimum: \$100,000

Maximum: \$300,000

SRTS infrastructure projects are funded at 100percent for eligible items with no local match required up to the maximum amount. All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to eligibility requirements. **Any costs incurred prior to a project’s authorization are not eligible for reimbursement. Project applicants are responsible for all cost overruns above the grant amount.**

The SRTS Program is a reimbursable program, meaning recipients of the funds will front the cost of the project then submit pay request for reimbursement.

Under the federal guidance for SRTS, participants are advised funding is to supplement, not replace, existing funding sources. SRTS funds may **not** be used as a match for other federal funds.

Inappropriate use of funds

Types of projects ineligible for SRTS funds include:

- Projects that do not specifically serve the stated purposes of the SRTS program
- Projects that reorganize pick-up and drop-off primarily for the convenience of drivers rather than improve the safety of walking and bicycling for students
- Improvements to bus stops
- Equipment purchases not used exclusively for SRTS programs

Project timeline

The funding for this solicitation must be approved for funding by the Federal Highway Administration within the 2014 state fiscal year (July 2013 – June 2014). Projects that cannot meet the dates and milestones in the table risk delaying the project and losing SRTS funds.

	Dates	Milestones
	2/15/2013	SRTS application with required attachments due at noon
		NEPA documents for preliminary engineering
Preliminary Engineering	5/1/2013	FHWA authorization of preliminary engineering ^{1, 2}
		Preliminary Engineering Agreement
	1/1/2014	NEPA documents for construction project
	4/15/2014	Project construction plans and submittal package deadline (submit to SALT)
		Pay request for preliminary engineering ³
	6/30/2014	FHWA authorization deadline of construction project ^{1,2}
Construction & Constr. Engineering		Construction Engineering Agreement
		Project letting
		Contract award
		Project work commence
		Project work complete
		Pay request for construction project and construction engineering ³
		After student tally surveys and parent surveys
		Final project inspection
	1/1/2015	Request final audit and close out construction project and agreements

Notes: ¹ Work prior to authorization will not be reimbursed.

² The authorization for the preliminary engineering or construction project may not be submitted until the projects are in an approved Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

³ First pay request must be submitted within 11 months of the authorization date.

Program evaluation

Evaluation of the Safe Routes to School program will assist MnDOT and the National Center for Safe Routes to School to assess the results of the program locally and nationally.

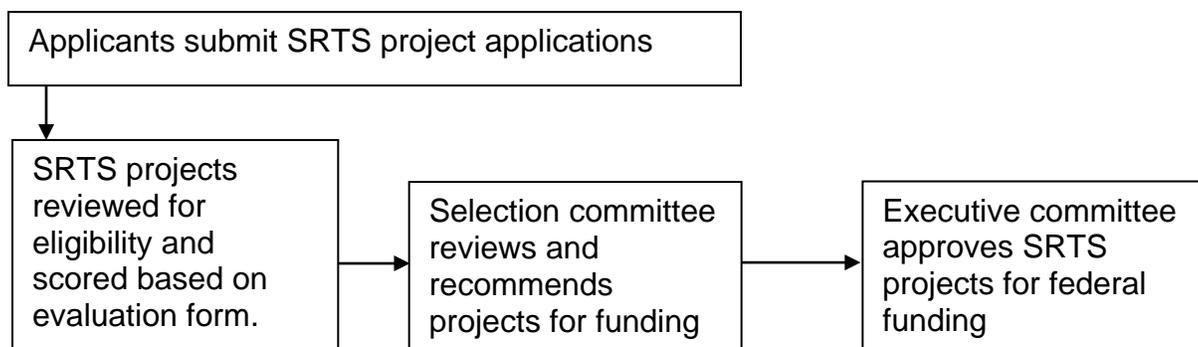
Baseline data reports with the Student Travel Tally and Parent Survey from the National Center for Safe Routes to School are required with the Safe Routes to School infrastructure application. After award and completion of the infrastructure projects, school(s) is (are) required to conduct after evaluations using the [Student Travel Tally](#) and the [Parent Survey](#). The applicant and sponsor should coordinate the evaluation measures with the school and community. The objective of the baseline and after surveys is to determine if there are changes to student travel behaviors and parental attitude changes.

The survey forms are available on the [National Center for Safe Routes to School website](#) and should be downloaded with the instructions. The reports can be generated once the data from the surveys are entered into the [National Center for Safe Routes to School data central website](#).

Applicants and schools may conduct additional surveys and evaluations to help demonstrate need and effectiveness.

Infrastructure project selection process

All grant applications submitted will follow the selection process shown below.



The applications will be initially reviewed for eligibility and scored base on the following criteria:

1. Comprehensive approach – understanding the current condition and using assessment tools to identify the problems
2. Engineering strategy – addressing identified problems through supported and proven measures
3. Community support for the SRTS program and the project

The selection committee will review projects that scored higher on the initial review and select projects for funding with other considerations. These other considerations include potential of the projects to benefit more students, geographical locations, urban/rural communities and availability of funds for the solicitation. See Appendix G for a breakdown of the scoring criteria.

SRTS infrastructure application

The SRTS infrastructure grant application is divided into two parts. The first document contains the grant application guidance, basic information and appendices. The second document is the actual application that must be submitted electronically and in paper format.

Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Application Guide
Minnesota Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Application

The SRTS infrastructure grant application is a Formatta based form and is designed to be completed on your local workstation. The procedure to download the form is available on the [MnDOT SRTS Infrastructure implementation grants website](#).

If you have questions on the SRTS infrastructure program or application, please contact:

Mao Yang
State Aid for Local Transportation
Transportation Building
395 John Ireland Blvd, Mail Stop 500
St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-366-3827
Fax: 651-366-3801
Email: mao.yang@state.mn.us

Application instructions

Use the following instructions to fill out each section. On the application, each section will have a help button or a pop-up window with some instructions on how to fill out the form. To remove the pop-up window with instructions, press the “esc” key.

Examples of completed infrastructure applications from the 2011 solicitation are available on the [MnDOT SRTS Infrastructure implementation grants website](#). These sample applications are provided for informational purposes only. The questions and requirements are different for each solicitation.

Section 1 Contact information

A. Local project manager (applicant). The local project manager is responsible for submitting the application and will be responsible for coordination and communication with MnDOT and/or the sponsor to ensure that the project requirements are fulfilled and the project is complete on time and within budget. The individual will be the first point of contact for the project status. Provide first and last name, the organization or group the person works with, address, phone number and email.

B. Sponsor information. The project sponsor is the fiscal agent for the project and must be an authorized representative of a state aid city or county. Additionally, this entity is responsible for ensuring that the project is complete in accordance with all state and federal regulations. The sponsor must be a state aid city or county listed in Appendix B or Appendix C. If the project affects a state highway, MnDOT may be required to be the sponsor.

C. MPO information. If your project is in a metropolitan planning organization area, provide the requested contact information. Communities in Duluth, Rochester – Olmsted, Fargo Moorhead, East Grand Forks, St. Cloud and the Twin Cities seven county metro area are MPO areas. A letter notifying the MPO of the project is required for projects in MPO areas and must be included with the application. You can find more information about MPO's at MnDOT's [Transportation Planning Partners website](#). A map of the MPOs in Minnesota is attached in Appendix D. This information is requested to assist MnDOT in programming the project, if awarded.

Section 2 Background

A. Location. Provide the city, county, and MnDOT district that the project is located in. This information helps MnDOT track communities interested in Safe Routes to School and determines which district State Aid engineer the local community will be working with.

B. Project type. Check any of the types of measures included in this project. Provide a short project title or description of the project.

C. School information. List the school and student information benefiting from this project. This information will help the program track schools that are interested in Safe Routes to School and that will be impacted by the project.

D. Roadway information. List the roads impacted by this project and the road authority for each road. A letter of concurrence from each road authority is required and should be attached. This information and required letter helps demonstrate that necessary road authorities are contacted and informed on the proposed project.

Relevant roadway characteristics such as number of lanes, widths, speed limits, etc., should be included in the project description of the current condition.

Section 3 Current condition

A. Identify any existing plan that the proposed infrastructure project is stemming from.

B. Describe the current conditions and tools used to assess the student travel modes. Use this portion to explain current student travel modes and tools used to identify barriers to increasing the number of students safely walking and bicycling. Information on the current condition should include current school policies that affect student travel mode to and from school and identified student travel routes. Assessment tools should include the Student Travel Tally Form and the Parent survey from the National Safe Routes to School Center. Other methods of collecting information and data could include crash data, traffic counts and speed data, interviews, [bikeability checklist](#), [walkability checklist](#), the [MnDOT SRTS neighborhood assessment guide](#), etc.

- Attach baseline data reports of the student travel tally survey data and parent survey data.
- Attach at least one map per location that identifies the existing student travel routes and hazardous areas.
- Attach at least one map per location that identifies the location of the proposed infrastructure project.

Communities may choose any mapping tool that works best for them. One option is the free [MnDOT interactive base map website](#), which allows users to create, save and print maps that will include features such as:

- Names of city, county, township, and MnDOT roads
- Average daily traffic data on certain roads
- Speed limits on certain roads
- Surrounding wetland, rivers and other bodies of water

C. *Summarize the results of assessment tools and supporting data used in 3B and describe the infrastructure problem(s).* Describe the physical barriers from the supporting data and assessment tools that this project will address. Is the physical barrier the main problem in getting more students walking and bicycling to school?

D. *Describe the public involvement process for developing this project with school members, parents, law enforcement, road authorities and other community members impacted by this project.* Explain the project development process used to address the problem with stakeholders. Be as specific as possible on the type of community involvement process; i.e. public hearing, newsletter, letters of notification, etc. Reference meeting dates, strategies, concerns raised, measures discussed and decisions during the project development process.

Section 4 Proposed project

A. *Describe the proposed infrastructure project and the types of improvements that will be implemented on the project.*

- Attach a plan view layout of the proposed project that includes right-of-way limits, environmentally sensitive areas, utilities and traffic control devices for the project
- Attach a typical section

A sample of a plan view layout and typical section is available on the [MnDOT Infrastructure implementation grants website](#). Additional information on what is included on a typical section may be found in the [State Aid Manual](#).

B. *Explain how the project will address the problem(s) in question 3C. Include guidance or research to support its implementation for the problems identified.* Discuss why the proposed project is selected and the approach in determining the measure for the project location. Demonstrate that the measure is implemented as intended and recommended.

C. *Explain and demonstrate how the project is ready for construction in 2014 and describe how it will be maintained.* Explain the steps or process the community has taken to show that this project is feasible and constructible. Describe how the infrastructure project will be maintained and by whom. Has there been a field survey completed on the area for the proposed project? Is there sufficient right-of-way? Have private and public owners impacted by the project been notified?

Section 5 SRTS support

A. *List the events, activities and programs that the school or community has been involved in that supports SRTS.* Provide a list of events and activities that the school or community has been involved in and a contact person who coordinated the events or activities. This will help demonstrate ways in which the school and community supports and promotes the goals of the program.

B. Describe how the 5 E's of the SRTS program are incorporated within the community. Describe the goals and objectives that the community has and include steps that have been taken to reach those goals. Explain how the community plans to address the 5 E's—education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation and engineering—in the community to meet these goals.

Section 6 Project costs

Provide a cost breakdown of all the components of the project listed. Cost for additional items not included in this section or on the required engineer's estimate to be attached will not be reimbursed. In addition, any costs determined to be not directly related to the SRTS program during the project delivery process will not be reimbursed.

- Attach a detailed engineer's estimate of the construction project cost

Section 7 Evaluation

All schools benefiting from the SRTS program are required to conduct after implementation surveys. These include the student tally form and the parent survey available on the National Center for Safe Routes to School website. The school(s) must submit the after evaluation data to the National Center for SRTS and provide a summary of the surveys to MnDOT within a year of the project completion date.

Additional Attachments

All attachments must be submitted with the applications by the end of business day on the day of the deadline.

City council resolution and/or county board resolution

The environment in Safe Routes to School communities can be greatly improved with new infrastructure projects. It is important that community members are aware and have approved the SRTS project in their communities. Each proposal submitted should include a city council resolution and/or a county board resolution if a county sponsor is required.

Letters of concurrence

The letters function as a signature and indicate to the reviewers that all affected parties have reviewed the application and agree to the project. For the application to be eligible for review, letters of concurrence ***must*** be submitted with the application from the following entities:

- School principal(s) or superintendent of school or schools benefiting from the project.
- **Each** of the affected roadway authorities, impacted by the project:
 - City engineer
 - County engineer
 - MnDOT State Aid engineer

Letters of concurrence should be submitted on official letterhead and contain the following:

- Declaration of project support
- Official signature

Letters of support

Applicants may provide additional letters of support from key partners beyond the required letters of concurrence.

Application checklist

- All sections are answered in concise narrative
- All required attachments are provided
 - County board and/or city council resolution
 - Map of established student travel routes and hazards is clear and legible (Option to use [MnDOT interactive base map](#))
 - Map of proposed project is clear and legible (Option to use [MnDOT interactive base map](#))
 - Summary report of baseline data from the student travel tally and parent survey
 - Plan layout of proposed project with right-of-way, environmentally sensitive areas and traffic control devices labeled
 - Typical sections with right-of-way and dimensions (only if applicable)
 - Letter(s) of concurrence from each school or school district
 - Engineer's estimate on the project cost
- Additional supportive documents are included and photos are labeled (letters of support, newspaper clippings, etc. to demonstrate strength of program)

Submitting your application

When the electronic application is complete, ensure that you have saved it to your local drive or server. The application is due February 15, 2013, by noon. The application is to be submitted in **two** versions.

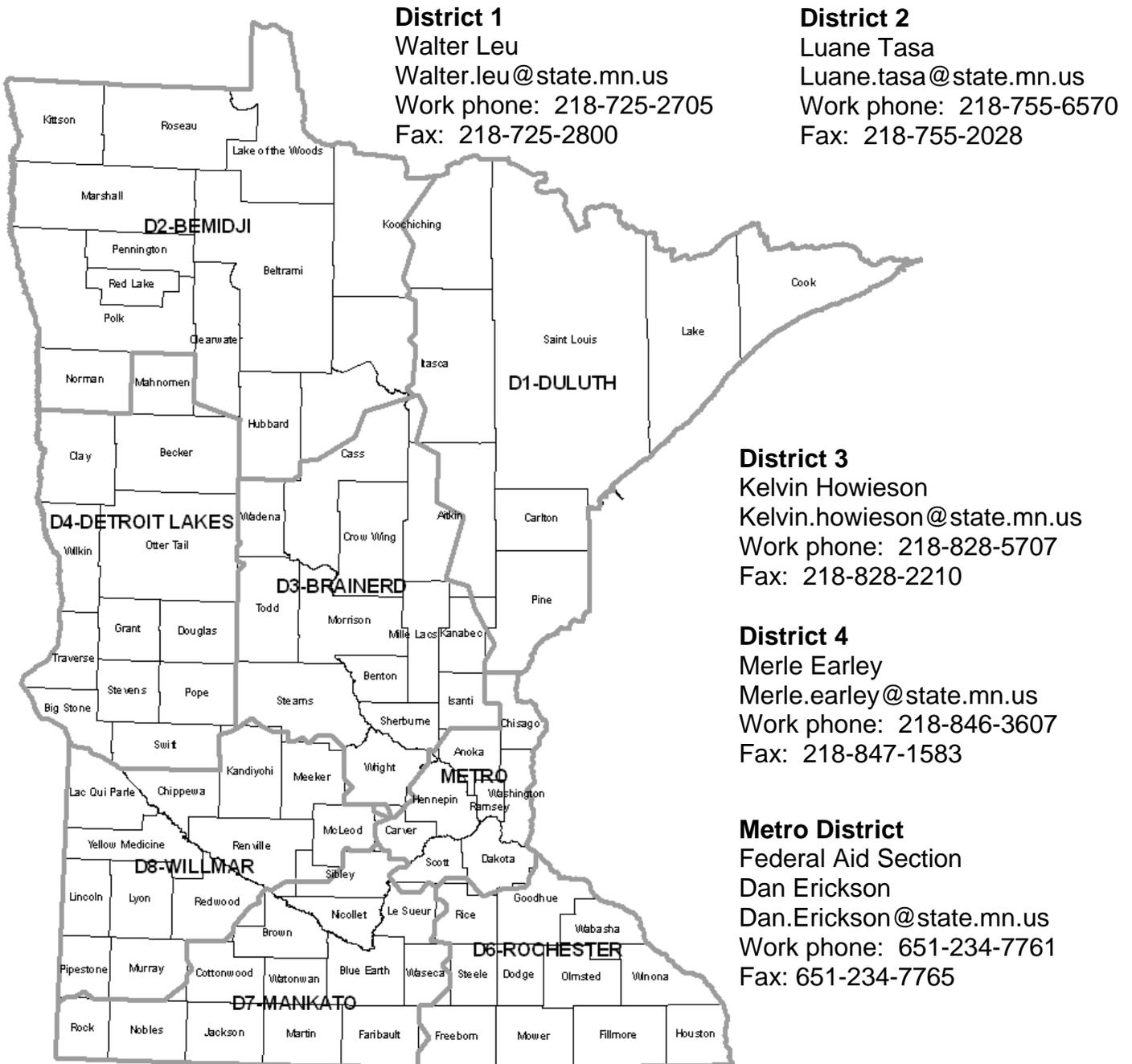
Electronic: Submit the electronic version of the application to SafeRoutes.DOT@state.mn.us

Print: Submit five copies of the completed and signed application and all required and relevant attachments to:

Mao Yang
State Aid for Local Transportation
Transportation Building
395 John Ireland Blvd.
Mail Stop 500
St. Paul, MN 55155

If you have questions about the program or application, submit them to SafeRoutes.DOT@state.mn.us or call 651-366-3827. All questions and answers will be posted on the [MnDOT SRTS website](#).

Appendix A: District State Aid engineer map

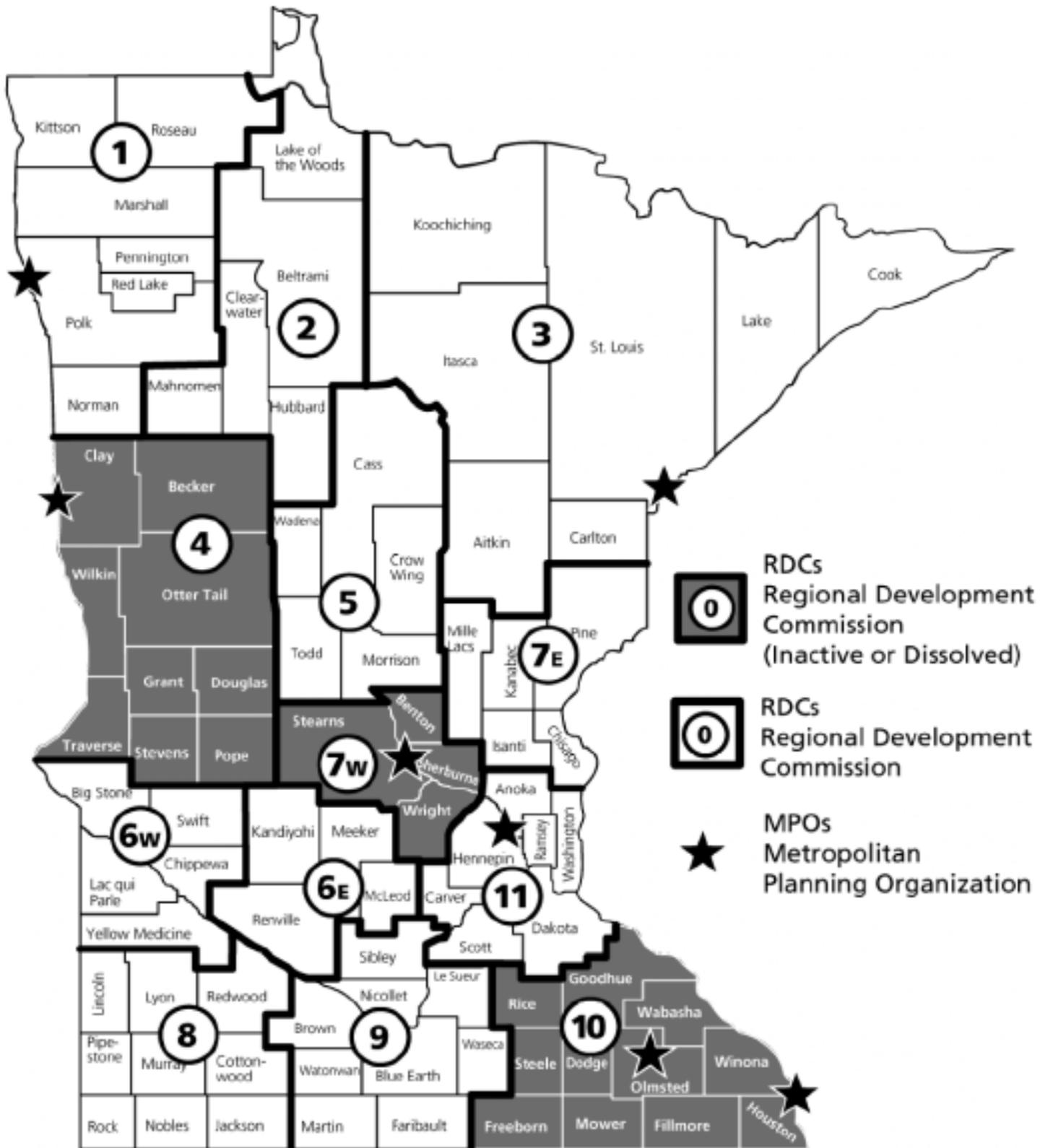


Appendix B: State aid city list

Albert Lea	Glencoe	Moorhead	Shorewood
Albertville	Golden Valley	Morris	South St. Paul
Alexandria	Grand Rapids	Mound	Spring Lake Park
Andover	Ham Lake	Mounds View	Stewartville
Anoka	Hastings	New Brighton	Stillwater
Apple Valley	Hermantown	New Hope	Thief River Falls
Arden Hills	Hibbing	New Prague	Vadnais Heights
Austin	Hopkins	New Ulm	Victoria
Baxter	Hugo	North Branch	Virginia
Belle Plaine	Hutchinson	North Mankato	Waconia
Bemidji	International Falls	North St. Paul	Waite Park
Big Lake	Inver Grove Heights	Northfield	Waseca
Blaine	Isanti	Oak Grove	West St. Paul
Bloomington	Jordan	Oakdale	White Bear Lake
Brainerd	Kasson	Orono	Willmar
Brooklyn Park	La Crescent	Otsego	Winona
Buffalo	Lake City	Owatonna	Woodbury
Burnsville	Lake Elmo	Plymouth	Worthington
Byron	Lakeville	Prior Lake	Wyoming
Cambridge	Lino Lakes	Ramsey	Zimmerman
Champlin	Litchfield	Red Wing	
Chanhassen	Little Canada	Redwood Falls	
Chaska	Little Falls	Richfield	
Chisholm	Mahtomedi	Robbinsdale	
Circle Pines	Mankato	Rochester	
Cloquet	Maple Grove	Rogers	
Columbia Heights	Maplewood	Rosemount	
Coon Rapids	Marshall	Roseville	
Corcoran	Medina	Saint Anthony	
Cottage Grove	Mendota Heights	Saint Cloud	
Crookston	Minneapolis	Saint Francis	
Crystal	Minnetonka	Saint Joseph	
Dayton	Minnetrista	Saint Louis Park	
Delano	Fairmont	Saint Michael	
Detroit Lakes	Falcon Heights	Saint Paul	
Duluth	Faribault	Saint Paul Park	
Eagan	Farmington	Saint Peter	
East Bethel	Fergus Falls	Sartell	
East Grand Forks	Forest Lakes	Sauk Rapids	
Eden Prairie	Fridley	Savage	
Edina	Montevideo	Shakopee	
Elk River	Monticello	Shoreview	

Contact the district State Aid engineer for assistance with a city sponsor

Appendix D: Regional development commission and metropolitan planning organization map



<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/pdf/RDC-MPO%20Map.pdf>

Appendix E: National Environmental Policy Act

As a federally funded program, all SRTS projects must be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 signed into law on January 1, 1970. NEPA was the culmination of the increasing environmental awareness during the 1960s. The legislation established a national environmental policy and stated that it is the "continuous responsibility" of the federal government to "use all practicable means" to "assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings."

NEPA mandated that federal agencies:

- a. Consider the potential environmental consequences of their proposals
- b. Evaluate the avoidance of potential impacts
- c. Document the analysis
- d. Make this information available to the public for comment prior to implementation.

In many cases, a categorical exclusion or project memorandum (project memo) may be used for the project's NEPA document. Categorical exclusions are "a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment...and for which, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required."

A project memo addresses the environmental impacts that the project will have on the project area. Types of projects most often proposed under the SRTS program will be those with minor impacts to the environment. Impacts reviewed in a project memo include:

- Impacts to park or publically-owned recreational property (positive and negative)
- Impacts to historical features currently existing in the project area
- Impacts to federal and state threatened and endangered species
- amount of permanent and temporary easements needed to construct, operate and maintain the proposed project
- Impacts to water resources such as floodplains, wetlands and open water

Additional information on how to address these impacts is available at:

www.mndot.gov/stateaid/sa_pmwriter.html

Assistance will be provided to successful applicants on how to research and prepare the project memorandum upon selection of their project into this program.

Appendix F: SRTS infrastructure authorization process

Safe Routes to School funds are Federal Highway Administration funds and must follow federal regulations to be reimbursed. While the funding provides incredible opportunity, communities are advised that following federal regulations requires a significant amount of time and resource commitment on the part of the applicant. Communities are encouraged to consider the following prior to submitting an application:

- Do I have the necessary staff to administer the project management and funding?
- Do I have the necessary land space and support from the city and neighbors to implement improvements?
- Do I have the funding to front the project's cost until the work is complete and the request for payment can be submitted?
- Do I have the funding to support costs that cannot be reimbursed with federal funds?
- Do I have the resources to support the continuation of the project maintenance, once the project is complete?

This document provides a brief overview of the Federal Aid process to assist you in determining if SRTS funding is an appropriate resource for your project and assist in the development of your project timeline. MnDOT district State Aid engineers will provide you guidance if your project is selected for SRTS funding.

Overview of project authorization process

Preliminary engineering authorization

1. Local agency determines who will do the preliminary engineering
 - a. Local forces (this includes consulting firms who are the city engineers)
 - b. Consultant (local agency must send out a Request for Proposal for competitive bids)
2. Local agency completes and submits environmental document for preliminary engineering
3. Local agency completes and submits public interest finding (only necessary if local forces are doing the design work)
4. State Aid requests a Disadvantage Business Enterprise goal and authorization request before sending out preliminary engineering agreement
5. Local agency executes and returns preliminary engineering agreement with resolution
6. Local agency may begin work on preliminary engineering phase

(The work in the preliminary engineering phase includes putting together the project memorandum for the construction project, any necessary construction surveying, the plans, final engineer's estimate and specifications. Additional work may be considered eligible if necessary for the construction authorization of the project.)

Construction authorization (includes construction engineering as proposed in the application)

1. Local agency determines who will be doing the construction engineering
 - a. Local forces (this includes consulting firms who are the city engineers)
 - b. Consultant (local agency must send out a Request for Proposal for competitive bids)
2. Local agency submits environmental documentation

- a. Include correspondence with MnDOT Cultural Resources on historical/archaeological impact
- b. Include correspondence with MnDOT Environmental Services on federal endangered species impact
- c. Include correspondence with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on state endangered species impact
3. Local agency completes and submits Public Interest Finding (If construction engineering is requested and local forces are used)
4. State Aid and FHWA approve environmental documentation
5. Local agency obtains permits
6. Local agency submits plans, right-of-way certificate, utility relocation and engineer's estimate to DSAEs
7. DSAEs and State Aid for Local Transportation review and approve construction plans
8. State Aid for Local Transportation requests Disadvantage Business Enterprise goal and federal authorization
9. State Aid sends out construction engineering agreement to local agency for execution
10. State Aid sends out approved plans, and the project Delegated Contract Process package with proposal language and special provisions to the local agency to proceed with project letting by competitive bid
11. Local agency lets project by competitive bid
12. Local agency awards contract after DBE clearance
13. Local agency commences with construction project
14. Local agency completes the construction project
15. Local agency submits project bills (first bill must be submitted within 11 months of authorization)
16. Local agency completes and submits student tally and parent surveys to the National Safe Routes to School Center
17. Local agency and State Aid request for final audit and close out project

Appendix G: SRTS infrastructure application evaluation form

Project eligibility (Any "No" answer may results in a disqualification)	Yes	No
Were all sections completed?		
Is the proposed work eligible for SRTS funding?		
Does the project meet location requirements?		
Is the applicant eligible for SRTS funding?		
Has a state aid city or county been identified as the sponsor? (county board resolution needed with county sponsor)		
Are the baseline student tally and parent survey summary reports attached?		
Are required maps for each location attached?		
Are the plan sheets and typical sections attached?		
Is the engineer's estimate for the project cost attached?		
Is a city council resolution in support of this project attached?		
Are required letters of concurrence from road authority and school(s) or school district attached?		

Current condition (45)	Score
3A. The project stems from existing planning efforts. (5)	
3B. The information provided and approach to understanding the current condition is clear and supported with use of assessment tools. (10)	
3C. The problem(s) is (are) clearly identified through the assessment tools. (20)	
3D. A public involvement process was utilized that includes all partners and stakeholders to build consensus during the project development process. (10)	

Proposed project (80)	
4A (1). The description of the proposed project is clear and the plan sheets and typical section includes all components of the project. (20)	
4A (2). The plan sheets and typical section shows that the proposed project meets state aid standards and federal requirements. (20)	
4B. The proposed project will address the problem identified in 3C. (20)	
4C. The project is ready for construction in 2014 and has a maintenance plan. (20)	

SRTS support (20)	
5A. The community is active with initiatives that support SRTS. (10)	
5B. The community considered the 5 E's to meet their SRTS goals and objectives. (10)	

Project cost (5)	
6. All cost breakdown is included in the application and engineer's estimate is attached	
Total	

/150

Other considerations for the selection committee:

- Geographical location
- Rural/urban schools
- Potential to have a greater impact on number of students walking and bicycling
- Funding

Appendix H: Definitions

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — Federal regulation that sets minimum design standards (in addition to other policies) so that people with disabilities can have access to facilities.

Authorization — Paperwork is submitted by MnDOT to the FHWA informing them that the project is ready to commence and has met all requirements to expend federal funds. In order to be authorized, a project must be in the currently approved State Transportation Improvement Program, must have completed the environmental documentation process, must have an approved plan (infrastructure projects), must have all necessary permits and agreements obtained (infrastructure projects) and must have all right of way acquired. Any work that starts prior to the authorization date is not eligible for reimbursement with federal funds.

Bid letting — For infrastructure projects, it is the date and time set when the estimates of the contractors proposing to perform the work are opened and the proposal with the lowest bid is tentatively selected as the contractor to carry out the construction work.

Construction engineering — One of four types of work recognized by the FHWA for authorization. It is the work to ensure that the project is being constructed according to the specifications, plan and accepted construction practices. Depending on the type of construction work done, a registered professional engineer may need to perform this work.

Construction plans (plans) — For infrastructure projects, it is a pictorial representation of the work that is proposed to be completed. It must meet state aid standards for plan preparation including the signature of a registered professional engineer who was involved in preparing the plan. See the [State Aid manual](#) online for plan requirements.

Cultural resources — Historic or archaeological items may be as large as a historic district or neighborhood and as small as a pre-contact pottery shard. MnDOT has been designated to act as the FHWA to review all infrastructure projects to determine if they will affect historic items. As part of this review, letters may be sent to tribal entities that have interest in the project location. If a project is determined to potentially have an adverse effect on a historic property, additional steps will be needed before the project can be authorized.

Delegated contract process (DCP) — Detailed process used to manage infrastructure projects to insure that all rules and regulations are met. The [DCP checklist](#) is available online for additional information.

District State Aid Engineer (DSAE) — Person designated as SALT's representative in each MnDOT district, who is the first point of contact for questions on the federal aid process.

Endangered species — All infrastructure projects must be reviewed to determine if they will have any adverse effect on federal or state threatened or endangered species. Review for federally listed species is done by MnDOT Environmental Services on behalf of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Review for State listed species is done by the DNR Natural Heritage Preservation Group.

Environmental document and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) — Signed into law on January 1, 1970, NEPA requires that all the proposed projects be assessed for impacts to the environment.

Estimate — A detailed and reasonable accounting of the cost to complete the project.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) — An agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that supports State and local governments in the design, construction, and maintenance of the Nation's highway system.

Force account — One of four types of work recognized by the FHWA for authorization. Work to be done by people involved in the project and not let out for competitive bid. A Public Interest Finding must be prepared and approved. See Public Interest Finding for more information.

Permits — any state or local permits required to complete the project.

Preliminary engineering — One of four types of work recognized by the FHWA for authorization. It can be the work to prepare the NEPA document, construction plans and specifications, design or other work necessary to complete the project.

Programmatic categorical exclusion — A document that covers the NEPA requirements on projects that are anticipated to have little or no impacts or controversy. It is assumed that most of the infrastructure projects proposed for Safe Routes to School will meet this level of documentation.

Project memorandum — A document that provides information about the purpose of the project and demonstrates the impact of the project on the environment (if any). The project memo takes place of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact study if there is no significant environmental effect from the project.

Public interest finding — A form filled out by person or agency within the project when they are performing the work and not putting it out for competitive bidding. The form justifies why the people involved in the project can do the project better and more inexpensively than someone who wins a competitive bid. This form is also used for material supplied by a private owner.

Quality based selection — Process used to select a consultant when expending federal funds on the design of a project. This is meant to foster the selection of the best qualified person to perform the work without looking at the costs.

Registered professional civil engineer — Person licensed by the State of Minnesota to oversee work done and designed in Minnesota. This person has met educational and character requirements as well as completed a comprehensive test of engineering principles. A registered professional civil engineer will need to be involved in your project design.

Reimbursable — Although these funds are called "grants," all Title 23 funds are actually distributed on a reimbursable basis. This means that the bills for the project must be paid and the receipts and/or invoices must be sent in to the district State Aid engineer for approval and then to State Aid for Local Transportation for reimbursement of the project expenses. Funds are not provided to the sponsor "up front."

Safe Routes to School selection committee — Committee with representation from federal, state and other partners that review and select potential SRTS projects.

Selection — Refers to the process by the Safe Routes to School selection committee choosing projects to receive funding. Once selected, the project must follow federal and state regulations to be authorized to commence.

Specifications — For infrastructure projects, it is written instructions for the standards of the work that is proposed to be completed. It will include the MnDOT specification book as well as any special provisions for any unique work on the project. It will also require the signature of a registered professional engineer who was involved in the preparation of the specifications.

Sponsor — Usually a county or a city with a population of more than 5,000 people. This entity will have fiscal responsibility for the project as well as responsibility that the project is completed in accordance with all state and federal regulations.

State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) — A Division of MnDOT charged with administering the funds for the project as well as ensuring that all federal and state requirements are met so that the money can be spent legally. This authority comes from state and federal regulations as well as the stewardship agreement between MnDOT and the FHWA.

Stewardship Agreement — Document that outlines levels of responsibility on federally funded FHWA projects.