



GETTING STARTED TOOLKIT

South Dakota Safe Routes to School How to Get Started Toolkit

BUILD YOUR SRTS TEAM

Section 1 page 2

CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR SCHOOL

Section 2 page 6

How to Get Started

Section 3 page 9

DEVELOP A BASIC TRAVEL PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL

Section 4 page 14

SRTS Glossary of Terms

Section 5 page 19

South Dakota Safe Routes to School How to Get Started

BUILD YOUR SRTS TEAM

The Team: Champions and Stakeholders

Implementing an SRTS Travel Plan requires pro-active interest of several community members who will form a team with diverse backgrounds and interests. The team will collaborate to reach one common goal: increasing the number of students walking and biking to school. The team will initiate and oversee activities that improve bicycle and pedestrian conditions and educate parents on the benefits of walking and biking to school. Your SRTS Team will consist of champions (coordinators) and stakeholders (the Task Force).

The Champions

First, your SRTS Team must have champions – two to four people who will be dedicated to leading and coordinating the team’s efforts in building an effective SRTS Program. The champions will lead the efforts to develop and evaluate SRTS goals for your community and will help monitor the program’s effectiveness in the future.

Champions often include:

- PTA Representatives
- Principals
- Teachers
- Local Bicycle/Pedestrian Advocates
- School District or Board of Education Representatives
- Communications/Marketing Representatives (school district, municipality, etc.)
- Regional Program Coordinators

This core group of individuals will make a commitment to improving travel to and from school by generating excitement now and maintaining momentum later.

The Stakeholders

One of the primary responsibilities of the champions in building an SRTS Team is to reach out to stakeholders who represent the interests of the school and community. These stakeholders can share insight into town-specific policies that might help shape your school’s program. By participating in an SRTS “Task Force,” stakeholders will broaden the team’s influence and relay their expertise as part of the overall goals of SRTS. The Task Force can be comprised of students, parents, teachers, school administrators, local government officials, law enforcement officers, crossing guards, local business owners, municipal engineers, urban planners, and county representatives. The Task Force may also include members of community organizations that advocate for:

- Traffic Safety
- Obesity Prevention
- Physical Activity
- Bicycling/Walking
- Children’s Health/Public Health
- The Environment

BUILD YOUR SRTS TEAM

Team Meetings

The champions and the stakeholders together comprise a *team* whose members want to realize the benefits of an SRTS Program. It is intended that your team be flexible and allow for members to work together or separately depending on what is most practical or convenient. However, it is important that some face-to-face time take place at the beginning of the process. Schedule at least two coordination meetings with your team champions to coordinate your efforts. In these meetings, you should review SRTS concepts and benefits and begin to identify goals specific to your school or community. You should also plan to establish your Task Force, make preliminary decisions on SRTS actions to initiate, and agree on a calendar of tentative meeting dates. Next, call a kick-off meeting with your Task Force to inform the stakeholders of the SRTS goals and proposed actions. Depending on your goals, your meetings may take on varying forms and venues. In addition, as some of the best input comes from the students, their ideas can be collected through surveys, classroom exercises and/or art projects, and then presented to the SRTS team at a meeting.

SRTS Team Roles and Responsibilities

The following tables outline typical roles of SRTS Team members.

Parents-Ultimate Decision-Makers	
<i>School Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid in identifying obstacles to walking and bicycling along the routes to school • Provide insight into what factors affect a parent's decision to allow their child to walk/bike to school • Garner support for the SRTS program from the school district as a whole • Educate and encourage other parents to participate

School/School District Representatives-Program Facilitators	
<i>Superintendents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage district-wide support for the program by encouraging SRTS in the classroom and at events • Oversee engineering and physical infrastructure projects on school property • Ensure that district policies support the mission of the SRTS program
<i>Board of Education and Other District Administrators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know facts and figures • Financial

BUILD YOUR SRTS TEAM

School/School District Representatives-Program Facilitators	
<i>Principals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage support for the program by integrating SRTS into the curriculum and special events • Manage engineering and physical infrastructure projects on school property • Ensure that school policies support the mission of the SRTS program
<i>Teachers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate SRTS-related lessons into classes • Rally support for SRTS from school faculty and staff
<i>Other Staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide insight into the students' attitudes toward walking and bicycling (i.e. Guidance Counselor)
<i>Communications Specialists</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use their knowledge of local/regional media outlets to publicize the SRTS program to various target markets
<i>Students</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify routes to school and perceived obstacles to walking and biking

Municipal/County Government Representatives-Community Partners	
<i>Mayor/Councilmen/Freeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate political support for SRTS, conveying that the municipality will work to advance SRTS
<i>Police Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide traffic safety information (i.e. crash data) • Address personal safety issues
<i>Crossing Guards</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe first-hand experiences with motorists' interacting with pedestrians and cyclists
<i>Traffic Engineering</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate on the impact that infrastructure design can have on improving the safety of walking routes • Coordinate physical improvements to the transportation infrastructure
<i>Planning Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the area-wide land use context and how bicycles/pedestrians can be integrated • Prepare master plan provisions for cyclists/walkers • Provide relevant maps
<i>Parks/Recreation Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about how local parks can be integrated into a walking/bicycling network • Provide information on events that can include SRTS
<i>Environmental Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide insight into various environmental efforts that complement SRTS efforts (i.e. reducing bus emissions)
<i>Economic Development Department</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on local demographics • Provide information on how the bicycle/pedestrian network can accommodate workers who walk/bike

BUILD YOUR SRTS TEAM

Community Representatives-Knowledgeable and Supportive Neighbors	
Bicycle/Pedestrian Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on bicycle/pedestrian issues and expertise and how they have been remedied in the past
Other Local Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment specifically on the benefits and hindrances of developing safer routes (health, environment, etc.)
Regional Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a broader perspective of how your SRTS program fits in with other pedestrian/bicycle projects in the region
Business Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide insight into how local businesses can be involved in financially supporting SRTS programming (e.g. coupons for contest winners) • Provide insight into how businesses can take advantage of a bicycle-pedestrian network for both their customers and employees

Take Action

Once you have formed your SRTS Team, you can begin to develop and implement your Safe Routes to School Program. Use the SD SRTS Toolbox as a guide. The Toolbox provides resources to support a successful SRTS Program including this step, *Build Your SRTS Team*.

Other useful resources you'll find in the Toolbox include Fact Sheets on:

- Basic Facts
- How to Get Started
- Engineering
- Enforcement
- Education
- Encouragement

Funding

Throughout the development of your program, the SRTS team can apply for funding.

Applications for funding will require a basic Travel Plan (see *Develop a Basic Travel Plan for Your School*). The organization in charge of submitting the funding application will depend on where the proposed improvements are to be made. For example, the municipality should be in charge of submitting applications if proposed improvements are along local streets, while the School District should be in charge if proposed improvements are on school property. Your SRTS Team can coordinate a wide range of improvements and activities that, together, will get South Dakota kids walking and biking! Funding for SRTS activities is available through the South Dakota

Safe Routes to School Program. Information on how to apply is available at <http://www.sddot.com/srts/>

CHECKLIST:

Building Your SRTS Team

- Identify team champions to lead and coordinate your SRTS efforts.
- Make a commitment to build and maintain an SRTS Program.
- Hold two coordination meetings.
 - Form Task Force
 - Identify SRTS goals
 - Develop initial target dates
- Hold a Task Force kick-off meeting.

**You've built your team.
Now, take action!**

South Dakota Safe Routes to School How to Get Started

CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR SCHOOL

What is a Needs Assessment?

A Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Needs Assessment is a simple way to see how accessible your school is to bicyclists and pedestrians. The tools provided here will help you to

- Characterize your school and neighborhood
- Determine their “walkability” or “bikeability”
- Conduct “travel pattern surveys”

These simple bicycle and pedestrian audits can enhance your SRTS Travel Plan by providing a means to monitor its success in the future and make adjustments to your Travel Plan as needed. The SRTS Travel Plan is a “living document” that can be updated to reflect changes over time.

It is recommended that you conduct bicycle and pedestrian audits throughout the school year.

There are already two excellent opportunities to highlight the issues as you perform your audits National Bike Month in May and International

Walk to School Month in October. Some of the Needs Assessment tools presented here can be incorporated into activities and events that have been developed for these occasions.

Who Does It?

Ideally, your SRTS Team will lead the effort to evaluate what your school needs to do to accommodate children who want to walk or bicycle (see the Building your Team Fact Sheet) to school. However, most of the information can be gathered by teachers in the classroom or as a PTA activity. You’ll see that this Needs Assessment guide provides tools like easy-to-use questionnaires that help to identify where students currently walk or bike, where they would if they could, and the conditions along the routes they travel to school.

Four Bicycle and Pedestrian Audits

1. School Characteristics Inventory
2. Walkability Checklist
3. Bikeability Checklist
4. Travel Pattern Survey

CHECKLIST:

Needs Assessment

- ✓ Evaluate your school and community.
- ✓ Conduct a walking audit in October.
- ✓ Conduct a bikeability audit in May.
- ✓ Conduct student oriented, hands-on travel pattern surveys (4/year).
- ✓ Conduct take-home travel pattern
- ✓ Surveys (2/year).
- ✓ Adjust your program approach to meet documented needs.

CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR SCHOOL

1. Description of Physical and Social Characteristics of Your School

Begin your Needs Assessment by describing your school and neighborhood. This is an opportunity to set the foundation for your SRTS program by understanding the existing behaviors of the school community – and the potential to increase the number of students walking and bicycling to school on a regular basis.

Start by evaluating the physical characteristics. Ask questions like

• Is it rural, suburban, or urban?	• Are there parks, trails or sidewalks?
• Is it hilly or flat?	• Are there other schools nearby?

Next, consider the social characteristics. Ask questions like:

- How many students attend the school?
- What are their ages and in which grades are they?
- How many of them live within walking or bicycling distance (two miles)?
- How many students currently walk and/or bike to school or are driven, either in a bus or by their parents?
- What proportion of students have health issues such as obesity, diabetes or asthma?

With these characteristics in mind, consider the likelihood of success for SRTS strategies. Think about how walking and bicycling fits into the culture and philosophy of your school and community, and how you might get more students to walk or bike to school.

2. Walkability Checklists

The Walkability Checklist can help you answer the question, “How walkable is your Community?” The easy-to-use form will allow you to evaluate your neighborhood and come up with immediate solutions for your SRTS program. The form can be downloaded from: <http://drusilla.hsrrc.unc.edu/cms/downloads/walkabilitychecklist.pdf>.

A walkability audit can be performed anywhere in your neighborhood. To enhance your SRTS Travel Plan, the best place to start is along the walking routes to school. Pick a route, walk it and use the checklist to describe your trip. Then see how your route rates on the walkability scale.

The walkability audit answers questions like:

- Does a sidewalk exist?
- Was it easy to cross streets?
- Was it easy to follow safety rules?
- Did you have room to walk?
- Did drivers behave well?
- Was your walk pleasant?

Because it is International Walk to School Month and Walk to School Day is typically held on the first Wednesday, October serves as a perfect time to perform a walkability audit.

CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR YOUR SCHOOL

3. Bikeability Checklists

The Bikeability Checklist can help you answer the question, “How bike-able is your Community?” Like the Walkability Checklist, this audit applies an easy-to-use form for evaluating your neighborhood for your SRTS program. The form can be downloaded from www.bicyclinginfo.org.

You should assess the needs of bicyclists anywhere in your neighborhood where you think people might bicycle to school. Pick a route, ride it and use the checklist to describe your trip. Then see how your route rates on the bikeability scale.

The bikeability audit answers questions like:

- Did you have a place to bike safely?
- How were the intersections?
- Was it easy for you to use your bike?
- How did your community rate?
- How was the pavement surface?
- Did drivers behave well?
- How did you make your ride safer?

May is a good month for a yearly bikeability audit as it is National Bike Month.

NOTE: The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), a clearinghouse for pedestrian and bicycle resources, has developed the Walkability and Bikeability Checklists referenced here; they are available for your use at www.pedbikeinfo.org

4. Travel Pattern Survey

A travel pattern can be defined as the ordered sequence of trips made during a day by the members of a household. Thus, the Travel Pattern Survey is a quick way to measure how students get to and from school now and how they would like to do it if conditions permitted.

Below are two types of Travel Pattern Survey forms. The first is intended to target how students travel to and from school and can be conducted by a teacher in the classroom. The second is slightly more detailed and is intended for the student to complete at home with his/her family. The results of these surveys, which should be administered by the SRTS Task Force, will help you decide which actions would best meet the needs of your school now and in the future. The third link gives instructions on the survey process.

It is recommended that the classroom survey be taken about four times during the school year to track seasonal differences (more kids will walk and bike when the weather is warm). The take-home version should be done twice a year.

http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/evaluation_student-in-class-travel-talley.cfm
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/evaluation_parent-survey.cfm
http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/evaluation_instructions.cfm

South Dakota Safe Routes to School How to Get Started

SRTS IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

What Is a Cost Estimate?

A Cost Estimate establishes the anticipated budget required to implement the actions (the improvement projects and programs) identified in your School Travel Plan (see Develop a Basic Travel Plan For Your School).

A cost estimate can be completed for individual projects or programs or for your School Travel Plan as a whole. However, the SDDOT SRTS program requests that applicants provide a total cost estimate as well as a breakdown of costs for each project or program activity.

What is included in a cost estimate?

A cost estimate should include all necessary pay items, in detail, associated with completing a project or program. This typically includes a line item for all materials used, along with an estimated quantity and unit price for each. Preliminary cost estimates for infrastructure projects should be sure to account for “soft costs”, such as planning, environmental documentation, right-of-way and easement acquisitions, necessary permits and final design. Cost estimates for non-infrastructure related projects should consider all anticipated pay items and expenses related to the activity.

Why Have a Cost Estimate?

Developing a cost estimate will assist in:

- Identifying the necessary funding required to implement your SRTS program(s) and the amount to be requested under the SDDOT SRTS program
- Setting project limits by defining a complete, identifiable and usable facility or activity.
- Fulfilling a requirement for securing federal funds from the SDDOT SRTS Program.
- Identifying all associated costs including “soft costs” such as environmental documentation, permits, planning and design activities.

Who completes a Cost Estimate?

When applying for funding for infrastructure (physical) improvements, a professional engineer should complete the cost estimate in accordance with Federal guidelines.

Checklist: **Project/Program Implementation Cost** **Estimate**

- ✓ **Identify a Project**, which will be implemented to produce an identifiable and usable facility or activity
- ✓ If project includes infrastructure improvements:
 - **Work with and Engineer** to define specific limits of the project and begin preliminary cost estimates.
 - **Work with County or local Municipality** to identify mutual opportunities
- ✓ If projects include non-infrastructure improvements:
 - **Work with the Working Group** to identify costs from similar efforts

SRTS IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

The assistance of an engineer is vital given the numerous factors, such as impacts to utilities and drainage that can greatly influence the cost of a project.

The assistance of an engineer will also ensure that your project is developed in accordance with the current standards of AASHTO, MUTCD, ADA, and other professional design standards.

This is a requirement to securing funding from the SDDOT Safe Routes to School Program.

It is important to discuss the goals and actions outlined in your SRTS Plan with your County or Municipal Engineer. You may find a partner with mutual goals, or an opportunity to integrate the actions outlined in your SRTS Plan within a current or future project of the County or Municipality. The engineer may also serve as a resource to assist in developing cost estimates.

When applying for funds for non-infrastructure (programmatic) improvements, you may reach out to others to research costs based on similar programs elsewhere or develop a rough estimate based on the labor hours and related expenses required to complete the program.

What types of projects should a cost estimate be prepared for?

A cost estimate should be prepared collectively and individually for all action items (projects and program activities) outlined as part of the SRTS Plan for which funding is being requested.

It should be noted that infrastructure projects, education and enforcement activities must be located within two miles of a primary or middle school (grades K-8) to be eligible to receive federal funding under the SDDOT SRTS Program. Encouragement activities do not have a location restriction. It may be advantageous to develop separate cost estimates for those projects and activities that fall within the two-mile limit and those that are outside.

What types of costs are eligible to be reimbursed by the SDDOT SRTS Program?

All costs associated with the preparation and implementation of projects carried out in fulfillment of a SRTS Travel Plan or which serve the general purposes of this program are eligible for funding under this program including:

Infrastructure Improvements

- Construction
- Design
- Planning
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Permitting costs

Non-infrastructure Programs & Activities

- Education
- Encouragement
- Enforcement
- Evaluation

SRTS IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

Applicants are encouraged, though not required, to utilize funds from other sources to pay for the “soft costs” such as environmental documentation, preliminary planning and design and all other relevant documentation required for federal funding.

What types of costs are not eligible to be reimbursed by the SDDOT SRTS Program?

- Preparation of SRTS Travel Plans and applications for funding
- Costs incurred prior to receiving FHWA project authorization
- Maintenance costs for upkeep
- Construction, capital improvement projects and traffic education and enforcement activities which are implemented more than two miles from a primary or middle school (grades K-8)

The SDSRTS Program is a reimbursement program for costs incurred after they have been authorized by FHWA. Matching funds are not required.

What do typical improvements associated with SRTS Plans cost?

The following listing of typical improvements and related costs associated with SRTS Plans is provided to familiarize you with current costs (Fall 2007). This listing is to be used to provide general guidance as to what level of costs might be anticipated. Also, since the goals and actions of each SRTS Plan will vary greatly, the listing of sample improvements should not be considered a definitive or exhaustive list. You may find that the costs may vary given the regional differences in the cost of construction materials.

1) ENGINEERING:	Cost
• School Crossing signs along school routes	\$400-\$500 each
• Stencil symbols along school routes	\$50-\$100 each
• Bike lane striping (4" white thermoplastic striping)	\$4-\$5 LF
• *Shared lanes “Sharrows”	\$150 each
• High visibility crosswalks along school routes	\$1,000 each
• Flashing Beacons at a main street crossing	\$6,500-\$7,500 each
• Sidewalks – concrete (5' wide)	\$50 LF
• Shared use path – asphalt (8' wide asphalt)	\$100 LF
• Bollards on sidewalk	\$250-\$500 each
• Pedestrian scale lighting around school (12' tall and installed every 50')	\$1,500-\$2,250 each
• Curb Extensions (high end - assume drainage modification required)	\$4,000-\$25,000 each
• *Speed Humps (Speed Tables)	\$3,000 each
• Raised intersection (includes paving, drainage, signs and striping)	\$80,000-\$120,000
*Items which no current data could be found	

SRTS IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

2) ENFORCEMENT:	Cost
• School Safety Zones	\$2,500-4,000
• Neighborhood Watch Programs	\$250
• Law Enforcement Presence	\$5,000
• Sidewalk, Building and Property Maintenance Laws \$0	\$0
• Pedestrian Sting Operations	\$2,500-4,000
• Speed Trailers \$2,500-4,000	\$2,500-4,000
• Photo Enforcement (Red Light Camera)	\$2,500-4,000
• Keep Kids Alive – Drive 25” Campaign	\$500-1,500
3 EDUCATION:	Cost
• Neighborhood Working Groups	\$250
• Walk or Bike Across America	\$0-minimal
• Walking Math	\$0-minimal
• Assemblies/Guest Speakers	\$0-250
• Walking Education Programs	\$250-2,500
• Walkability/Bikeability Assessments	\$0-minimal
• Classroom Activities	\$0-minimal
• Campus Walks	\$250
4) ENCOURAGEMENT:	Cost
• School Newsletters	Varies
• Board of Education / School District Newsletters	Varies
• Local Newspaper (opinion-editorials)	Varies
• Walk and Roll Days/Walking Wednesdays/Fridays on Foot	\$250 (initially)
• Frequent Walker Cards/Frequent Rider Miles	\$300
• Golden Sneaker Awards	\$3-\$55
• Family Picnic Activity	\$250
• Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Quiz Show	\$250
• Walk to School Days/I-Walk	\$0-minimal
• Media Campaign	\$600
• Walking School Bus or Cycle Train	\$0
• Pace Cars/Bumper Sticker Program	\$300
• Proclamations/Resolutions	\$0

5) EVALUATION*:	Cost
• Walkability/Bikeability Assessments	\$0-minimal
• Traffic Counts of all types (Speed, Volume & Classification)	Varies
• Existing Conditions Inventory	Varies
• Crash Data Summary	Varies
• Time Radius Map	Varies
• User Survey (Parents & Students)	Varies
• Documentation of SRTS Volunteers & Participants	Varies

* In order to track results of your SRTS Program, a pre- and post- improvement and/or activity assessment, should be completed. The costs for the post improvement survey should be accounted for in your cost estimates.

SRTS will not pay for any cost incurred before applicant has officially received notification that they will be awarded funding

It should be noted that zero costs outlined assume programs are often organized and completed with volunteer or internal staff and resources.

Next Steps

Funding for SRTS activities is available through South Dakota's Safe Routes to School Program. Information on how to apply is available at <http://www.sddot.com/srts/>

South Dakota Safe Routes to School How to Get Started

DEVELOP A BASIC TRAVEL PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL

What Is a School Travel Plan?

A Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Travel Plan “maps out” how to improve pedestrian and bike travel to and from school for the purpose of increasing the number of students and parents who bike or walk to school and/or improving safety. A School Travel Plan will help you to identify:

- Where students currently walk and/or bike
- Where students would walk or bike if they could
- What changes need to be made so that students can and will walk and bike safely to school

After completing a basic School Travel Plan, you will have pinpointed the issues and potential solutions associated with your specific SRTS program. This basic plan will enable you to take action in implementing some short-term solutions and identifying some long term ones. It demonstrates your commitment to SRTS and provides a blueprint from which you can develop a more comprehensive Travel Plan later.

Why Have a Travel Plan?

Some benefits of developing a School Travel Plan are:

- Creates partnerships between the school and surrounding community
- Generates ideas and actions for making walking and bicycling safer and a more desirable option of transportation
- Builds community excitement that can achieve a successful SRTS program

A comprehensive School Travel Plan will provide a strategic approach to incorporate the 5 Es of an SRTS program: Encouragement, Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Evaluation.

Who Gets Things Started?

You can! Whether you are a member of a school, government body or other community organization, you can follow these easy steps to develop a Travel Plan for your school. You should not try to do it alone. The first step involves forming a working group consisting of people who are either interested in enabling schoolchildren to walk and bike or who currently enjoy walking and biking themselves. The group can work on pieces together or separately depending on what is most practical or convenient. Some of the best input you’ll get is from the students; so don’t forget to include them in the SRTS planning process. Students’ ideas can be collected in many ways, such as surveys, classroom exercises and/or art projects.

South Dakota Department of Transportation
Safe Routes to School
How to Get Started

CHECKLIST: Develop an SRTS Travel Plan

- ✓ Establish a Working Group
- ✓ Identify existing Rules and Regulations.
- ✓ Outline and Execute Immediate (short term) Encouragement Efforts.
- ✓ Map or your school neighborhood and identify how it functions.
 - Evaluate where people currently walk or bike, where they don’t and why.
 - Identify optimal “routes” to school and key issues associated with each
- ✓ Brainstorm Solutions that represent the 5E approach.
- ✓ Prepare a List of Actions including a timeline and responsibilities.

DEVELOP A BASIC TRAVEL PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL

Six Steps to Develop Your Travel Plan

1. Establish a Working Group
2. Review existing Rules and Regulations
3. Outline Education and Encouragement efforts (short-term and long-term)
4. Develop a map of proposed Walking and Biking Routes to School (identify problems)
5. Conduct a Brainstorming Session (identify potential solutions)
6. Prepare 5E Action Items

1) Establish a Working Group

The working group might consist of principals, teachers, school board members, parents or PTA members, students, crossing guards, the mayor, the town administrator, the municipal engineer, police officers and/or other local groups. Bring together the people who are likely to have insight into school travel routes and conditions. The primary goal of the working group is to spearhead the program by advancing and delegating improvements and programs (see the Building Your Team Fact Sheet). It is possible that the working group may produce a Draft Travel Plan after only a few meetings.

2) Review existing Rules and Regulation (Working Group Meeting #1)

During the first Working Group Meeting a representative should be designated to request information from the school and conduct a search to determine what if any rules and/or regulations are currently guiding the transportation of students in your school and district. The results should be reported back to the group during Meeting #2.

It will be particularly important to identify any walking or bicycling routes that are currently designated as “Hazardous Routes”. These would have been established under the Safety Busing Policy (NJSA 18A:39-1), and this only applies to schools or districts that provide courtesy busing. If Hazardous Routes have been designated, they should be included as potential walking or biking routes in your Travel Plan along with **measures outlined to mitigate the existing deficiencies**. It should be noted that the school’s official list of “Hazardous Routes” may need to be updated to include additional routes identified during the development of your Travel Plan.

3) Outline Education and Encouragement Efforts (Working Group Meeting #1)

During the first Working Group Meeting you might identify immediate steps that will rise the community’s awareness of the SRTS Program, simply by announcing its existence and primary goals. This can be done with announcements and informative/promotional flyers.

Consideration should be given to long-term education and encouragement efforts that might be needed and would fit your community, such as the Walking School Bus. Efforts like this will require much more organization beyond the working group’s first meeting. Remember that establishing early contact with stakeholders (Parents/Students/Local Officials and Professionals) will increase your SRTS Program chances for success.

DEVELOP A BASIC TRAVEL PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL

4) Develop a Map of the proposed Routes (Working Group Meeting #1)

During the first Working Group Meeting you may be able to develop a map of school travel routes and a list of issues that need to be addressed.

- **Show Existing Conditions:** A map of the school and surrounding community are usually available at the local municipal building. Each municipality in South Dakota should have an official street map that works well as a base map. Have the working group identify what the school neighborhood looks like now (you can use photograph images to document conditions). This should include:
 - The area immediately surrounding the school – up to a two-mile radius
 - School parking and pick-up/drop-off areas
 - Sidewalks, paths, parks or other bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Circulation patterns for bicyclists and pedestrians (where people walk or bike now) and crossing guard locations
 - Circulation patterns for cars, trucks and buses, including major through routes, any one-way streets, bus stops, etc.
- **Evaluate:** Identify the routes that work well already and note where problems or conflicts currently exist. This step will help you when you begin to identify which routes to include in your Travel Plan (see the Conduct a Needs Assessment Fact Sheet).
Characteristics to note include:
 - Condition of sidewalks or shoulders
 - Existence and/or condition of crosswalks and curb ramps
 - Traffic problems – speeding, congestion, etc.
 - Local attitude towards pedestrians and cyclists (Are they well respected?)
 - Crash data review and summary (identify locations with high crash rates, taking special note of crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians)
- **Identify Potential Travel Routes:** This is when your working group members should begin to roll up their sleeves and consider which areas to target for improvements and what connections to make in determining your “Safe Routes” to School. The decisions should be guided by where children and parents would most likely walk or bicycle if the right facilities were available. Choices should also be based on the level of effort needed to mitigate existing deficiencies and hazards.

After you have selected the best potential walking and bicycling routes for your Travel Plan; identify the key issues associated with each one. For example, one proposed route may be appropriate in terms of distance and connectivity but the sidewalks may be in poor condition (engineering issue). Another route might have sidewalks and shoulders but drivers on the adjacent roads may be speeding (engineering/traffic calming and enforcement issue). Be sure to mark potential walking or cycling routes that you’ve identified on the location map. See: <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/resources/collateral/walkbikeroutetipsheet.pdf>

5) Conduct a Brainstorming Session on Potential Solutions (Working Group Meeting #2) Now that you’ve identified your potential routes and the key issues

South Dakota Department of Transportation
Safe Routes to School
How to Get Started

DEVELOP A BASIC TRAVEL PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL

associated with each one, you can begin to brainstorm about solutions. Some examples may include:

- Changes to the roadway that reduce speeding and/or other problems (engineering)
- Installation of safe crossings, walkways and bikeways (engineering)
- Partnerships with police to make sure that traffic laws are obeyed (enforcement)
- Community enforcement efforts, such as crossing guard programs (enforcement)
- Safety campaigns to raise awareness of bicycle and pedestrian issues (education)
- Bicycling and walking safety instruction in the classroom (education)
- Walking School Bus and Bicycle Train programs (encouragement)

6) Prepare 5E Action Items (Working Group Meeting #2)

Once you've established a preliminary list of solutions, you are ready to turn your ideas into specific action steps. You need to prepare a list of actions required to implement your SRTS Travel Plan, an estimated schedule in which to complete each action, and the person or group responsible for each action. Working group members should try to make sure that tasks can be completed within the time allotted. Note that the "solutions" you develop in Step 5 become the "actions" in Step 6. Use the table below as an example.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS FOR THE FIVE E's			
Educations Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
• Bike/Walk Safety instruction	School	Fall 2008	Low
Encouragement Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
• Walking School Bus	School	Fall 2008	Low
• Biking Trains	School	Spring 2009	Low
Engineering Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
• Stripe x-walks at intersections near school	Municipality	Spring 2009	Medium
• Fix sidewalks on Main Street	Municipality	Spring 2009	High
Evaluation Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
• Survey, Mode Choice of Students	School	Annually	Low
• Crash data Review	Police	Annually	?
Enforcement Actions	Responsibility	Time Frame	Cost
• Yield to Pedestrians at x-walks	Police	Ongoing	Medium

Next Step: Funding Application

The SRTS Travel Plan is a blueprint for action that can be used by members of the Working Group to apply for funding. (Note: Applications for funding may require more detailed descriptions and cost estimates, especially for improvements to the physical infrastructure.) The organization in charge of submitting the funding application will depend on what types of improvements are to be funded, and who will be carrying them out. For example, the municipality should be in charge of submitting applications if proposed improvements are primarily infrastructure improvements located along streets, while the school district should be the applicant if proposed improvements are located on school property.

DEVELOP A BASIC TRAVEL PLAN FOR YOUR SCHOOL

For funding options and ideas see:

<http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/resources.asp?resource=8&type=16&res=2560>

South Dakota Safe Routes to School How to Get Started

SRTS Glossary of Terms

Bicycle and Pedestrian Audit: a survey intended to identify locations of both adequate and inadequate walking/bicycling conditions, such as gaps in the sidewalk system, wide intersections, high-speed traffic and desolate areas

Bicycle Parking Facility: location where a bicycle can be locked and stored safely and securely (generally implies appropriate lighting)

Bike Rack: a device to which a bicycle can be securely attached to prevent theft; often bolted to the ground and used for short-term parking

Bike Locker: a small enclosed shelter in which a bicycle can be locked; often used by commuters for long-term parking

Crossing Improvement: new or upgraded intersection and/or crosswalk treatment that allows pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the street more safely

Center Line Yield to Pedestrian Sign: in-street pedestrian crossing sign used to remind road users of laws regarding the right-of-way at an un-signalized pedestrian crossing (see MUTCD, R1-6 and R1-6a)

High-Visibility Crosswalk: a crosswalk that is at least 10 feet wide and marked with a bold pattern, such as the 'piano' or 'ladder' style striping pattern

In-Road Illuminated Crosswalk: a crosswalk with lights that are installed in the pavement surface, providing extra warning signals for motorists

Overhead Illuminated Crosswalk: two signs, with an illuminated 'CROSSWALK' message, positioned over the center of the crosswalk approach lane

Designated School Routes: specific school travel routes that have been mapped and demarcated with directional signage and/or pavement markers

Education: teaching children and parents 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

Encouragement: using events and activities to promote children walking and bicycling to school on a regular basis

Bicycle Rodeo: a school and/or community event where certified instructors teach bicyclists safe riding skills through a series of exercises; a typical bicycle rodeo involves a course with several "stations" that teach and test various skills

SRTS Glossary of Terms

Walk to School Day: a school day when all students are encouraged to walk (or bike) to school, either from home or a designated drop-off point; the daylong event can also include exhibits that highlight the many benefits of walking (and biking) to school

Walking School Bus (WSB): a group of children led to school by a designated parent or other responsible adult; the children generally meet the “bus” at designated stops, usually corners at the top or bottom of their street, at designated times

Enforcement: partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws (i.e. speeding, idling, cell phone, yield-to-pedestrian) are obeyed in the vicinity of schools

Crossing Guard Training: any sort of instructional sessions or meetings held to demonstrate to crossing guards how they can make the school commute safer for children on foot and bicycles

Crosswalk Sting: an enforcement strategy that involves pedestrian decoys crossing at selected intersections; if a motorist fails to yield to that pedestrian, hidden police officers issue a ticket or warning

Speed Trailer: an electronic device that contains a large digital speed display; it can be parked at or near schools to show passing motorists their speed, and the speed limit

Engineering: creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure around schools to lower vehicle speeds, reduce potential conflicts between motorized and non-motorized traffic, and establish safe and 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 an intervention

Infrastructure Gap Assessment: identification of the missing or deficient segment(s) in an existing sidewalk and/or bicycle network

Infrastructure Gap Improvement: construction of new or upgrading of existing pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities that work to complete a network

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD): the document that governs the use and placement of all traffic control devices, including signs, traffic signals, and median barriers; used by most departments of transportation across the country

Off-Street Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility: trails and pathways that are separated from the main roadway; they can be used by pedestrians and/or bicyclists

On-Street Bicycle Facility: aspects of the roadway that are delineated specifically for bicycle use, including striped bike lanes, wide shoulders and shared travel lanes

SRTS Glossary of Terms

Public Awareness Campaign: an effort to encourage participation in the SRTS activities by utilizing public relations tools such as, newsletters, local newspapers, email list-serves, public service announcements (PSAs) and local television/radio stations

School Catchment Area: the geographic area from which students are assigned to attend a particular school

School Travel Plan: a document that presents 1) the existing conditions of the bicycle and pedestrian routes to school, 2) a demographic snapshot of the school/community, 3) issues relevant to commuting to the specific school, 4) ideas for improving the trip to school for students who walk and/or bike, and 5) a timeframe for the implementation of those ideas

School Zone Designation: identification and demarcation of the area around the school that experiences the most school-related traffic; this can be done through signage and striping that highlights the school location and likely presence of children

Advance Warning Sign: yellow 'student pedestrian' signs placed between 150 and 700 feet prior to a designated school crosswalk or school grounds (see MUTCD, S1-1)

Roadway Markings: symbols, letters or numerals, which are striped on the pavement, to guide, warn or regulate motorists (see MUTCD, Part 7: Traffic Control for School Areas)

Traffic Calming Device: a mechanism used to reduce traffic speed, or other negative effects of motor vehicle traffic

Center Island Medians: an elevated median constructed on the centerline of a two-way roadway that can serve as a place of refuge for pedestrians crossing the street
Curb Extension: narrowing of a roadway adjacent to an intersection, often by eliminating a parking lane, to make crossing distances shorter (also called bulb-outs)

Raised Intersections: an intersection – including crosswalks – constructed at a higher elevation than the adjacent roadways, with a transition similar in profile to a speed hump or speed table

Speed Hump/Table: extra-wide speed bumps that more effectively reduce vehicle speeds; typically for travel speeds of 25 to 35 mph, as opposed to speed bumps designed for 5 to 10 mph; they can also have a crosswalk striped across the middle

Street Closure (Full): a barrier extending the entire width of a roadway, which obstructs all motor vehicle traffic movements from continuing along the roadway

Street Closure (Partial): a semi-diverter, curb extension or vertical barrier extending to the centerline of a roadway, obstructing one direction of traffic

SRTS Glossary of Terms

Traffic Diversion Improvement: separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities, school zones and/or designated routes to school