

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Timeframe

- **Does the program have to run for three years, or can it be a shorter timeframe?**
 - The program can run from one to three years. The recipient has up to 36 months to start and complete the program. For sustainability reasons, it is recommended that the program extend beyond one year, have a large geographic reach, and involve a collaborative group of partners.
- **Will there be another call for applications in 2023 or 2024?**
 - No, this will be the only application period over the next three years.

Budget

- **Are applicants required to provide a 20% match?**
 - NCDOT will fund as many projects as possible at 100% of the cost. However, it is anticipated that some applicants may be asked to provide a local match if there is a significant demand for available program funds.
- **If a partner, not the lead agency, has outside funding to support the proposed workplan, can that be considered toward the match?**
 - Yes. On the application you're encouraged to note if an outside partner can help with the match. The work of the partner should be included in the scope of work and the match should be included in the budget.
- **Matching funds – can it be for 10% match or does it have to be for 20% match?**
 - Due to the requirements of the funding source, the match needs to be for the full 20%.
- **Does providing the match improve the potential of getting funded?**
 - NCDOT will fund as many projects as possible at 100% of the cost. Zero match will be prioritized for applicants that clearly demonstrate need and indicate that they are unable to provide the match. If there are projects that NCDOT is unable to fund at 100% due to federal funding stipulations, then the provision of a local match will be needed to receive funds.

Eligibility

- **For a regional, multi-county project administered by a council of government, must the counties be in the same municipal planning organization (MPO) or rural planning organization (RPO)?**
 - No.



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- **Are bike racks bought in accordance with Buy America an acceptable use of funds?**
 - Bike racks are considered infrastructure; thus, they are not a reimbursable item for non-infrastructure. For more information, see the Federal Highway Administration SRTS Program guidance at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/safe_routes_to_school/guidance/#toc123542175.
- **What is the ineligible aspect of drop-off and pick-up?**
 - Programs that don't specifically serve the stated purposes of the program including projects that focus on making it more convenient for the drivers rather than to improve youth walking and biking and/or providing access are ineligible. Surveys conducted at pick up /drop off areas are eligible.
- **Is wayfinding signage considered infrastructure?**
 - If the proposed wayfinding signage is in the right of way with its own post, it is considered infrastructure and not eligible for reimbursement. If the proposed wayfinding signage is on an existing post in the right of way, then NCDOT's Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) can coordinate with the applicant/awardee and NCDOT's Signing and Delineation office.
- **Is infrastructure an eligible expense?**
 - No. Applicants are encouraged to work with the local NCDOT Division office and regional planning organization for possible funding or inclusion on an existing project for infrastructure needs.
- **Are facilities between schools and transit eligible? Are subsidized transit passes eligible?**
 - Facilities between schools and transit are not eligible. However, education, encouragement and evaluation strategies including road safety audits are all acceptable in supporting safe routes between school and transit stops.
 - Transit passes are not eligible.
- **Are the studies of routes to school and need for future infrastructure eligible?**
 - Yes. Developing an action plan or road safety audit for each of the schools or a community or region is an allowable expense. Both are tools to (1) identify assets and safety concerns along school walking/rolling routes and (2) list actions or changes that need to occur to improve safety and increase use of these modes.
- **Is paint for marking a bike parking lot in schools to encourage biking an eligible expense?**
 - Yes, if located within the school property. If paint use is inside the right of way, it will require coordination with the local NCDOT Division office.
- **Are education, encouragement, and evaluation strategies directed to high school students eligible?**
 - Yes. The new Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act specifically identifies students in grades K-12 as eligible.



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- **Can funds be used to buy non-American steel bikes if there is \$2500 maximum per contract?**
 - Yes. The FHWA's regulations permit a minimal use of foreign steel and iron in the amount of \$2,500 or one-tenth of one percent, whichever is greater, to be used in a Federal-aid project. This use would be one time only per recipient during the life of the award.
- **Is a staff position(s) eligible for funding?**
 - Yes
- **Is funding a traffic garden to teach safe riding skills to students built on the school property or nearby recreation center eligible?**
 - Yes, traffic gardens are reimbursable. This funding does not allow “breaking ground” or infrastructure installation but materials for aiding the operation of traffic gardens are eligible.
- **Is a crosswalk from a neighborhood to a school eligible?**
 - No. A crosswalk is considered infrastructure. In addition to paint, crosswalk installation also includes ADA accessibility and can influence right of way, stormwater management, and environmental impact.
- **Is food, such as healthy snacks for biking events allowable?**
 - No. FHWA does not permit the purchase of food.
- **Can the funding be used for demonstration projects (i.e., tactical urbanism)?**
 - No. Demonstration projects are considered infrastructure and not eligible if they occur within the public right of way.
- **Who is the point of contact in the NCDOT Division offices?**
 - The division engineer. You can find their contact information in the directory for each division [online](#).
- **What is the purpose of the draft board resolution? If an agency does not have a governing board, what should they do to meet the requirement?**
 - The draft board resolution is intended to show commitment to the project’s administration and matching funds. If the lead agency has a governing board that would require a resolution before entering into an agreement with NCDOT, that draft should be written in the name of that governing board. If the lead agency does not report to a board, then the lead agency letter of commitment should be signed by the agency representative with the authority to financially commit the agency and no board resolution is needed.
- **Can wheelchairs be purchased as part of an ADA awareness training on accessibility for students and staff?**
 - NCDOT is awaiting response from Federal Highway Administration as to whether wheelchairs would be an eligible expense.

