

NORTH CAROLINA

Department of Transportation

North Carolina Safe Routes to School

Planning & Programming Grants Overview

Information for Prospective Applicants

October 7, 2026

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina

Agenda

1. SRTS Overview
2. Available Funding
3. Timeline
4. Applicant Eligibility
5. Eligible Programs and Activities
6. Evaluation Criteria
7. Conditions of Reimbursement
8. Application Process



What is Safe Routes to School?



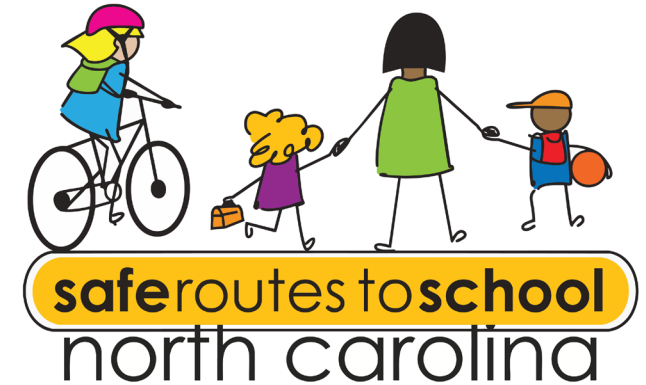
Community-focused efforts to support more students in safely walking, biking and rolling to and from school.

Where active travel to school is not possible, walk/bike *at* school programs provide physical activity and build lifelong safety skills.

NC SRTS Overview

The purpose of the North Carolina SRTS program is to:

- ✧ Enable and encourage children and teens in grades K-12, including those with disabilities, to walk, bicycle, and roll to school and in their communities.
- ✧ Build the skills, confidence, and knowledge students need to safely walk, bicycle, and roll to school and in daily life.
- ✧ Make walking, bicycling, and rolling a safer and more appealing transportation options for students.
- ✧ Support the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that improve safety and access around schools and help reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution.



Available Funding



- 🚲 Source: Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- 🚲 20% matching funds required
- 🚲 Reimbursement-based
- 🚲 18-month projects (1/1/2027 – 6/30/2028)
- 🚲 Proposal budgets between \$25,000 - \$400,000
(max updated from \$300,000)

Grant Program Timeline*

Oct 5	Call for Proposals opens
Oct 7	Informational webinar
Nov 6	Applications due by 11:59 PM
Dec 3	Board of Transportation approval requested
Dec 4	Applicants notified of proposal status & reimbursement agreements initiated

**This schedule is provided to assist with planning. Actual dates may be subject to change.*



Applicant Eligibility

- Local governments
 - Municipalities
 - County agencies (Public Health, County Tourism or Economic Development Office)
 - Councils of Governments (COGs)
- Regional Transportation Authority and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations under 23 U.S.C. 135(m)
- Transit agencies
- Natural Resource or Public Land Agency
 - Federal (USACE, National Forests, USFWS, and National Park Service)
 - State or local park or forest agencies (DENR)
 - State or local fish and game or wildlife agencies
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools (public or nonprofit private schools)
- Tribal governments
- Municipal Planning Organizations (MPOs) that serve urbanized areas with a population of 200,000 or fewer
- Nonprofit organizations
- Other eligible local or regional governmental entities with responsibility for or oversight of transportation or recreational trails

Eligible Programs and Activities

Planning

Develop or update a community-informed SRTS plan for one school, a cluster of schools, a school district, a municipality or county, or a broader service area. Planning may be a stand-alone project or part of a larger project.

Examples:

- 🚶 Assess existing conditions, barriers, opportunities, and student access needs
- 🚶 Engage students, caregivers, school staff, community members, transportation agencies, and other partners
- 🚶 Conduct walk or bike audits, safety assessments, mapping, data analysis, or other needs-identification activities



Eligible Programs and Activities

Programming

Provide education, encouragement, engagement, and other locally appropriate traffic-safety activities.

Activities and improvements should generally take place within 2 miles of a K-12 school, public or private.

Examples:

- 🚲 Walking/biking safety skills education
- 🚲 Hands-on safety education such as traffic gardens
- 🚲 Encouragement events such as Walk & Roll to School events
- 🚲 **Ongoing** programs such as walking school buses, walk at school programs, or bike buses
- 🚲 **Ongoing** outreach & engagement with students, families, school staff, and community partners



Eligible Programs and Activities

Additional Eligible Cost Types

- ⌘ Program coordination and staffing
- ⌘ Demonstration projects
- ⌘ Equipment and materials
- ⌘ Minor safety improvements
- ⌘ Evaluation
- ⌘ Other eligible costs



Eligible Programs and Activities

Inappropriate Uses of Funds

- ❏ Programs and activities that do not specifically serve the stated purposes of the SRTS Program
- ❏ Projects focused on pick-up or drop-off convenience for drivers rather than student safety or walking, bicycling, and rolling access
- ❏ Education programs that primarily focus on school-bus safety
- ❏ Promotional giveaways or incentive items that do not have a clear educational, training, or approved SRTS program purpose
- ❏ Costs incurred before a written Notice to Proceed
- ❏ Purchases or activities that do not comply with applicable federal or NCDOT requirements



Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Points	What Reviewers Will Consider
Project Need and Safety	25	How clearly the application describes transportation and safety needs affecting students and uses relevant local information to explain why the project is needed.
Proposed Strategies	25	How well the proposed activities respond to identified needs, support safe walking, bicycling, and rolling, and provide a clear and realistic approach for reaching intended students and communities.
Budget	15	Whether the budget is complete, reasonable, sufficiently detailed, and clearly connected to proposed activities and anticipated results.
Implementation Capacity	10	Whether the applicant has a credible plan and sufficient staff, contractor, partner, financial, and administrative capacity to begin, manage, and complete the project.
Comprehensive Access and Priority Populations	15	How clearly the application identifies populations experiencing greater barriers and explains how the project will intentionally reach and benefit those populations.
Coordination, Collaboration, and Partnerships	10	How schools, students, caregivers, community members, agencies, and other relevant partners helped shape the proposal and will contribute to implementation.

Conditions of Reimbursement

- ⚡ Executed agreement with NCDOT
- ⚡ Quarterly or Monthly invoicing
- ⚡ Progress reporting
- ⚡ Workplan and metric tracking
- ⚡ NCDOT review of training materials and or safety messages



Application Process

- Submissions are only accepted through the online Smartsheet platform.
- Required attachments:
 1. School Information Worksheet (use template provided)
 2. Proposed Work Plan (use template provided)
 3. Budget & Justification Spreadsheet (use template provided)
 4. Draft or final board resolution (use template provided)
 5. Letter of commitment/authorization from lead applicant agency
 6. School district and/or school letter(s) of support
 7. Partner letter(s) of support (for partners with substantial financial or implementation roles, as applicable)
 8. Resumes and/or job descriptions
 9. Proof of Indirect Cost Rate (if applicable)



Thank You!

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Application Deadline – Friday, November 6 at 11:59pm

For more information, please go to:

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/BikePed/Pages/saferoutestoschool.aspx>