

City of Falls Church Safe Routes To School



1.0 Safe Routes to School Program Overview/Introduction

1.1. What are Safe Routes to School Programs?

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs are sustained efforts by parents, schools, community leaders and local, state, and federal governments to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school.

SRTS programs examine conditions around schools and conduct projects and activities that improve safety and reduce traffic and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. As a result, these programs make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation choice thus encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age.

1.2. Why is the SRTS Program Needed?

Residents of communities today struggle with motor vehicles clogging roads, motor vehicle emissions polluting the environment and more children engaging in less physical activity and growing overweight.

The implications of SRTS can be far-reaching. Safe Routes programs can improve safety not just for children, but for a community of pedestrians and bicyclists. They provide opportunities for people to become more physically active and to rely less on their cars. Programs benefit the environment and a community's quality of life by reducing traffic congestion and motor vehicle emissions.

1.3. Points to Remember-VDOT SRTS Application

- For each infrastructure project application, improvements should be in a single location or along one continuous route traveled by students to school; separate applications for multiple projects are necessary in the case of scattered locations not along a single home to school route.
- Intended to improve conditions for children in *kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8)* to arrive at school safely and under their own power.
- Eligible Applicants- who is eligible to apply for Virginia SRTS Program funding:
 - School Travel Plan Completed and Approved: A completed plan must be submitted to and approved by the VDOT SRTS Coordinator in advance of any infrastructure or non-infrastructure funding request.
 - Grade Levels: Programs and projects on behalf of participating schools with students in kindergarten through 8th grade (K-8) are eligible.
 - Schools: Public and private schools may apply for SRTS funding. Infrastructure projects must be within the public right-of-way and a local government must be the project sponsor.
 - Type of Sponsors: The organization or agency administering the program or project must apply as the Sponsoring Agency. The Sponsoring Agency will act as the fiscal agent for all programs/projects and will front the initial funds.

- **SRTS Infrastructure Proposed Project** must be located within 2 miles of the target school(s) and on public property or in the public right of way.
 - Single school.
 - Two or more schools on the same campus or within a few blocks of each other and that draw from the same neighborhoods.
- All applications must include at least one K-8 school as a participating partner.
- Non-profit entities and private schools are eligible for non-infrastructure program awards. For infrastructure projects that serve private school locations and are on the public right-of-way, the local government must be the project sponsor.
- Proposals will be scored based on six main criteria:
 - Potential to reduce child traffic injuries and fatalities.
 - Potential to substantially increase the number of children walking and/or bicycling to school.
 - Consultation and support for applications by school-based associations, local traffic engineers, local-elected officials, law enforcement agencies, parents and school officials.
 - Demonstrated need for the program or project.
 - Completeness of application including mapping and appropriateness of budget.
 - Low cost solutions and capacity to accomplish the proposed program elements or projects.
- Special consideration will be given to:
 - Applications in support of **Title 1 schools**; and
 - Applications showing that applicants have administered the “**Parent Survey**” or **similar survey measuring parent/guardian attitudes** and included the findings in their School Travel Plan and application.

2.0 Review of VDOT SRTS Schedule (2009)

- June 2009 – Release of applications, final guidelines and Virginia School Travel Plan.
- Nov. 2, 2009 (5:00PM) – Final date to submit School Travel Plan to SRTS Coordinator for optional Preliminary Review and comment.
- Nov. 27 Nov. 30 (5:00PM) – Deadline for submittal of final School Travel Plans to be eligible to apply for 2009 SRTS infrastructure and non-infrastructure funding cycle.
- Dec. 28, 2009 (5:00PM) – Deadline for Applications (Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure) Mail or deliver 5 (the original plus 4) paper copies and one CD of the completed application packet and materials to VDOT to the SRTS Coordinator.
- January 2010 – VDOT conducts review of School Travel Plans and initial screening of applications and to ensure eligibility and compliance with all requirements. SRTS Coordinator or VDOT District SRTS Coordinator performs site visits of infrastructure projects.
- January 2010 – VDOT distributes eligible applications to Selection Committee members.
- February/March - VA SRTS Advisory Committee meets to review and rank applications and makes recommendations to VDOT Commissioner and Secretary of Transportation.
- Late March/April – VDOT notifies selected funding recipients.
- May-July – VDOT sends draft agreements to sponsors for signatures.

Note: 2010 applications, final guidelines and Virginia School Travel Plan not available yet; expected in September 2010.

3.0 Safe Routes to School Program & Project Authorization Process Overview

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

4.0 School Travel Plan Components

4.1. The Safe Routes to School Team

1. School
 - a. Principal and other administrators
 - b. Parents
 - c. Students
 - d. Health/physical education teachers
 - e. PTA/PTO representative
 - f. School nurse
 - g. School division transportation director
 - h. Adult school crossing guards
2. Community
 - a. Community members
 - b. Neighborhood association members
 - c. Local business
 - d. Local pedestrian, bicycle and safety advocates
3. Local Government
 - a. Transportation planner or traffic engineer
 - b. Neighborhood planner
 - c. Public health professional
 - d. Public works representative
 - e. Law enforcement officer
 - f. Local pedestrian and bicycle coordinator

Responsible Party - FCCPS and KLS Engineering (KLS).

Schools to provide:

1. A Champion for SRTS from each school as part of the SRTS Team.
 2. One representative on behalf of all the schools for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Group.
-

4.2. The Public Input Process

1. Administer Parent Surveys.
2. Incorporate School Wellness Policy.
3. Solicit student opinions.
4. Interview key stakeholders.
5. Publicize a public comment period.
6. Conduct a community “walkabout” or “bikeabout”.
7. Host public meetings.
8. Incorporate existing bike or pedestrian plan recommendations.

Responsible Party - *KLS in cooperation with FCCPS.*

1. *Item 1-3: FCCPS*
2. *Item 4-8: KLS (Some activities are being undertaken as part of the larger Pedestrian/Bicycle Study)*

KLS to provide:

Parent Survey Sheets to School for distribution.

4.3. Description of Schools

1. Describe the scope of the School Travel Plan.
2. Does the School Travel Plan address the needs of a single school, a school division, a city, a town, a county, or a region?
3. List the names of the schools covered in the plan, street addresses, school enrollment and grades served for each.

Responsible Party - *KLS in cooperation with FCCPS.*

Schools to provide:

School enrollment and grades served for each.

4.4. Current School Travel Environment

1. Student travel modes - The number of students traveling to school broken out by various travel modes (walk, bike, bus, family vehicle, carpool, public transit, etc.).
2. Distance from school –Distance from school of students in grades K-8
 - a. Number living within ½ mile of school
 - b. Number living more than ½ mile and less than 1 mile
 - c. Number living 1 mile to 2 miles from school
 - d. Number living more than 2 miles from school
3. What your school is doing already
 - e. Crossing guards
 - f. Student patrol
 - g. Parent patrol
 - h. Staff presence during drop-off/pick-up
 - i. Walking school bus
 - j. Bike train
 - k. Police department support
 - l. Neighborhood watch program
 - m. School flashing beacons
 - n. Other
4. School travel policies
5. Busing Service
 - a. Does/does not provide for every student
 - b. Criteria
 - c. GIS layers for bus routes and bus stops
 - d. Location of school bus violation (example: school bus stop arm violations)
6. Arrival/dismissal procedures
 - a. For Pedestrians and Bicyclists
 - b. For School Buses
 - c. For Private Vehicle Drop-Off/Pick-Up
 - d. For Carpools

Responsible Party – FCCPS in cooperation with KLS.

Schools to provide:

1. FCCPS to provide information on items 1-6.
 2. KLS to provide Student Travel Tally Sheet.
-

4.5. Barriers to Active Transportation

1. Traffic crashes-Any available data regarding the number of traffic crashes of all types within two miles of the school, especially those involving children in grades K-8.
2. Missing or insufficient walkways.
3. No safe place to ride a bike.
4. Crossing streets and intersections may be difficult or dangerous.
5. Major arterial roads and streets act as dividers.
6. Walkways may not be accessible to students with disabilities.
7. Distance to school(s) may be too far.
8. Bike parking at school(s) may be missing, insufficient or non-secure.
9. Dangerous driving and speeding on streets.
10. Drop-off and pick-up process may create congestion and unsafe behaviors.
11. Public safety concerns.
12. School policies that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists.
13. Local ordinances that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists.

Responsible Party - *KLS in cooperation with FCCPS.*

Schools to provide:

1. *School drop-off and pick-up process.*
2. *School policies that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists.*

City to provide:

1. *Local ordinances that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists (if any).*
-

4.6. Creating Solutions

1. Non-Infrastructure
 - a. Education
 - b. Enforcement
 - c. Encouragement
 - d. Evaluation
2. Infrastructure
 - a. Engineering

Responsible Party - KLS in cooperation with FCCPS

4.7. Mapping

1. Map A-School Overview Map
 - a. Location of target school(s);
 - b. A two-mile radius around school;
 - c. Attendance zone boundary for each school or a note that boundary is city-wide, for example;
 - d. Any major streets/roads
 - e. Location of proposed engineering strategies.
2. Map B-Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure within a half mile radius, show and label:
 - a. Existing sidewalks, multi-use paths and bike lanes within 1/2 mile of each school;
 - b. Identified barriers;
 - c. Neighborhoods or student clusters
 - d. Location of any traffic signals and crossing guard locations; and
 - e. Location of proposed engineering strategies.

Note: For School Travel Plans with multiple schools, it may be necessary to create several maps to show the pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure around the schools

3. Map C, D, E etc-Infrastructure Improvement Map (only if infrastructure changes are planned). In these maps, you denote the location of schools and planned improvements. Show and label the following:
 - a. Proposed strategies and surrounding street names, for example within three or four block radius
 - b. Stop, yield signs and traffic signals
 - c. School flashing beacons
 - d. Speed limit on roads/street
 - e. Vehicle counts on road (ie AADT, and peak hour)
 - f. School entrances, when nearby.

Note: If your Plan seeks to outline infrastructure improvements at several locations, create a separate map for each site.

Responsible Party - KLS in cooperation with FCCPS

4.8. The Action Plan

1. Strategy Type (which of the 5 E's)
2. Strategy Name
3. Strategy Detail
4. Time Frame
5. Responsible Party
6. Status
7. % of Students Affected
8. Estimated Cost
9. Possible Funding Source
10. Sample below:

Note: Should be revised routinely to reflect the current implementation status of each strategy. The Safe Routes to School Team should arrange regular meetings to amend, update and discuss the progress of the Plan.

Responsible Party - KLS in cooperation with FCCPS

4.9. Plan Endorsements

The following representatives to endorse the School Travel Plan:

1. Required: School Official (Principals from all four schools)
 - a. Name:
 - b. Title:
 - c. Representing:

2. Required: School Division Official (School Superintendent)
 - a. Name:
 - b. Title:
 - c. Representing:

Required For Plans With Infrastructure Improvements:

3. Local Government Official (City Manger)
 - a. Name:
 - b. Title:
 - c. Representing:

4. Other:
 - a. School Board
 - b. City Council

Responsible Party – FCCPS in cooperation with KLS

5.0 Data Needs

From The schools

- A Champion for SRTS from each school to represent in the SRTS Team.
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Group member-One representative on behalf of all the schools.
- School Wellness Policy.
- Current School Travel environment Information-Item 4.4.
- School enrollment and grades served for each.
- School drop-off and pick-up process.
- School policies that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists.
- School policy documents/guide relating to student travel.

From The City:

- Local ordinances that negatively impact pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Letters of support or intergovernmental agreements that have resulted from the School Travel Plan process

6.0 Schedule

Safe Route To School Plan for City of Falls Church - Schedule (July 19, 2010)

	Items	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
1	The Safe Routes to School Team	[Redacted]						
2	The Public Input Process	As part of Ped/Bike Study						
2.1	Administer Parent Surveys			[Redacted]				
2.2	Incorporate School Wellness Policy		[Redacted]					
2.3	Solicit student opinions			[Redacted]				
2.4	Interview key stakeholders		[Redacted]					
2.5	Publicize a public comment period	As part of Ped/Bike Study						
2.6	Conduct a community "walkabout" or "bikeabout"	As part of Ped/Bike Study						
2.7	Host public meetings	As part of Ped/Bike Study						
3	Description of Schools			[Redacted]				
4	Current School Travel Environment			[Redacted]				
5	Barriers to Active Transportation			[Redacted]				
6	Creating Solutions			[Redacted]				
7	Mapping			[Redacted]				
8	The Action Plan			[Redacted]		[Yellow Triangle]	[Yellow Triangle]	[Green Triangle]
9	Plan Endorsements		[Redacted]				[Yellow Triangle]	[Green Triangle]