

FY 2024-2025 Report on

Safe Routes to School in Minnesota

November 2025



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The cost of preparing this report is less than \$5,000.

Cover Letter

October 31, 2025

The Honorable Erin Koegel, Co-Chair
House Transportation Finance & Policy Committee
5th Floor, Centennial Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Jon Koznick, Co-Chair
House Transportation Finance & Policy Committee
2nd Floor, Centennial Office Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Scott Dibble, Chair
Senate Transportation Committee
3107 Minnesota Senate Building
Saint Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable John Jasinski
Ranking Minority Member
Senate Transportation Committee
2227 Minnesota Senate Building
Saint Paul, MN 5515

Re: 2024-2025 Safe Routes to School Report

Dear Legislators,

In accordance with [Minnesota Statutes 174.40, subdivision 8](#), the Minnesota Department of Transportation is submitting its Safe Routes to School program report for 2024 and 2025.

Since 2005, MnDOT has awarded more than \$80 million to Minnesota communities for SRTS projects. These projects have reached more than 1,000 schools.

Please contact me with any questions you may have, or you may contact Sarah Ghandour, Director, Office of Transit and Active Transportation, MnDOT, at sarah.ghandour@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Daubenberger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" and last name "Daubenberger" clearly legible.

Nancy Daubenberger, P.E. (MN)

Commissioner

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Legislative Request

This report is issued to comply with [Minn. Stat. 174.40, subd. 8.](#)

74.40 SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Subd. 8. Legislative report.

By November 1 of each odd-numbered year, the commissioner shall submit a report on the safe routes to school program to the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate committees with jurisdiction over transportation policy and finance. The report must at a minimum:

- (1) summarize program implementation;
- (2) provide an overview of grant evaluation and criteria used in project selection;
- (3) provide a brief description of each project funded in the previous fiscal year, including the amount of money provided from each safe routes to school account under this section and the amount provided under the federal program;
- (4) summarize the status of the federal program or successor legislation; and
- (5) identify any recommendations for legislative changes, including proposals to improve program effectiveness.

Safe Routes to School Overview

In 1969, 48 percent of students walked or bicycled to school, yet by 2014, only 17 percent of students walk and bike to school nationally. Safe Routes to School is a movement that aims to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. The first federally funded Safe Routes to School program was created in 2005 and has since undergone several legislative and policy transformations. In 2012, Congress created the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) by merging previous programs that funded active transportation (SAFTEA-LU, MAP-21). Furthermore in 2021, SRTS funding was bolstered again by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). While the IIJA did not allocated dedicated funds to SRTS, it did reauthorize and expand the program in several ways, including eligibility for high schools, explicitly including Tribal agencies as eligible recipients, requirement to prioritize high-need communities as a part of Transportation Alternatives funding, and the expansion of SRTS eligibility in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

At the state level, state departments of transportation receive Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) federal funds and select projects through a competitive process open to local governments and school systems. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) distributes the TAP funding to the Metropolitan Council and to each MnDOT District Office in Greater MN to select projects with a regional impact. At the local level, Safe Routes to School practitioners run education and encouragement programs with families and schools and push for strong municipal and district policies to support safe walking and bicycling.

And the demand continues to grow, especially for rural communities, communities of color, and low-income communities, where it can be especially difficult for anyone to safely and conveniently walk, bicycle, or get physical outdoor activity. These are the communities where the next generation of supportive SRTS policies and programs are needed most.



Safe Routes to School is a program that makes it easier, safer and more fun to walk and bike to school.

The 6 E's

SRTS programs improve safety, reduce traffic and improve air quality near schools through a multi-disciplinary approach that is structured around the 6 E's

» ENGAGEMENT

Listening to students, families, teachers, and school leaders and working with existing community organizations, and build intentional, ongoing engagement opportunities into the program structure.

» EVALUATION

Evaluating the projects and programs of each of the other five "E's" helps to track progress, set goals, and determine which programs and projects are most effective.

» EQUITY

Equity ensures that SRTS initiatives benefit all demographic groups, with additional attention toward addressing barriers and ensuring safe and healthy outcomes for lower-income students, students of color, and others that face significant disparities.

» EDUCATION

Classes and activities that teach children (and their parents) bicycle, pedestrian and traffic safety skills, the benefits of bicycling and walking, the best routes to get to school, and the positive impacts these activities have on personal health and the environment.

» ENCOURAGEMENT

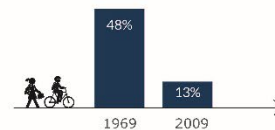
Events and activities that spark interest in both parents and students in walking and biking to school. Encouragement programs reward participation, build excitement about walking and biking, and inform children and adults about the personal and community benefits of walking to school.

» ENGINEERING

Infrastructure improvements (signage, crosswalks, signals, etc) designed to improve the safety of people walking, bicycling, and driving along school routes.

Why Safe Routes To School

» Within the span of one generation, the percentage of children walking or bicycling to school has dropped precipitously.



» Kids are not getting enough physical activity



» Roads near schools are congested, decreasing safety and air quality for children



KIDS WHO WALK OR RIDE TO SCHOOL:



- ☒ Arrive alert and able to focus on school
- ☒ Get most of their recommended daily physical activity during the trip to school
- ☒ Are more likely to be a healthy body weight
- ☒ Demonstrate improved test scores and better school performance
- ☒ Are less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety



For more information please visit:
www.mnsaferoutestoschool.org

Minnesota SRTS program overview

In 2012, a state SRTS program was established in [Minn. Stat. 174.40, subd. 2\(a\)](#), “...to provide assistance in capital investments for safe and appealing non-motorized transportation to and from a school.” The law establishes a SRTS account in the bond proceeds fund, and a SRTS account in the general fund. The Minnesota program follows many of the guidelines established in the federal SRTS legislation. The law provides specific program administration requirements and evaluation criteria, which MnDOT staff implement with state and federal funds.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation’s SRTS program is nationally [recognized by the Safe Routes Partnership as one of the top five State Safe Routes to School programs](#) in the country. With these accolades, Minnesota was selected through a competitive process to host the 2026 National SRTS Conference in Minneapolis next October. This opportunity will help recognize and highlight the work of local cities, counties, and school districts while inspiring new programs and strategies to keep Minnesota’s children safe while they are walking or biking to the places they need or want to go.

A [SRTS Strategic Plan](#) was finalized in 2020 after a year of local, regional, and state level engagement of partners and stakeholders. MnDOT’s second strategic plan provides a refined vision and new goals, strategies, action steps and performance measures to expand, strengthen and monitor Minnesota’s SRTS program. This document also identifies lead and support roles and implementation phasing recommendations for each action. MnDOT staff use the plan as a tool to guide the state’s program and local SRTS practitioners and partners in building a stronger, more equitable SRTS program at the local, regional, and state levels. Due to interruptions to schools by the COVID-19 pandemic, the strategic plan will continue to be used to guide the program through the next biennium.

Vision

Youth in Minnesota can safely, confidently, and conveniently walk, bike, and roll to school and in daily life.

Strategic Plan Goals

Six overarching goals will guide the implementation of the Strategic Plan to make progress towards the established vision:

1. Build Local Partners’ Capacity to Implement SRTS
2. Coordinate SRTS Implementation Statewide
3. Increase Awareness of SRTS
4. Develop Process, Policy, and Design Guidance that Supports SRTS

5. Measure Progress, Evaluate Impacts, and Continually Improve the Program
6. Innovate in Program Development and Implementation

The MnSRTS Strategic plan and Steering Committee guided implementation for FY 2024-25 with the following strategies:

- Grants for non-infrastructure and infrastructure projects
- Walk! Bike! Fun! Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Curriculum
- Active Transportation Safety Education Mandate
- Training and technical assistance for local, regional and statewide partners
- Minnesota SRTS Resource Center webpage
- Interagency coordination

Walk/Bike Safety Education and Events

Walk! Bike! Fun! pedestrian and bicycle safety education curriculum

Walk! Bike! Fun! is the Minnesota pedestrian and bicycle safety curriculum created for kindergarten through 6th grades with implementation over the past decade. The goals of the lesson plans are to teach children to walk and bike safely — building confidence and helping them stay safe, active, and healthy. In partnership through a consultant contract with the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, MnDOT trained over 200 teachers and educators how to teach pedestrian and bicycle safety in their classrooms through 26 train-the-trainer events. Three bike fleets are available to be loaned to school districts to support on-bike education for students with 48 reservations to 26 different school and community locations. And 18 trainings were held for the Walk! Bike! Fun! Ambassador training for out-of-school education.

Active Transportation Safety Education School Mandate

In 2023, the [State of Minnesota mandated that all students in public schools must receive age-appropriate education related to safe walking and bicycling](#) during the first few weeks of school. This legislation is similar to the law that requires students to receive bus safety education at the beginning of each school year. MnDOT's SRTS program provided existing resources for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years and is finalizing a suite of resources based on feedback and engagement from school and local partners to ensure meaningful implementation of the requirements which include:

- Students in grades K-3 must receive pedestrian safety education including crossing roads.
- Students in grades 4-8 must receive pedestrian safety education including crossing roads using the searching left-right-left for vehicles in traffic technique; as well as bicycle safety, including relevant traffic laws, use and proper fit of protective headgear, bicycle parts and safety features, and safe biking techniques.
- Non-public schools may provide this education but are not required to do so.

Walk and Bike to School Days

Encouragement events such as [International Walk to School Day](#), [National Bike to School Day](#) and [Winter Walk to School Day](#), are key to building interest at the school level while elevating issues of walking and bicycling with local leaders. Schools that register online receive toolkits to help generate excitement for their events. MnDOT also sponsors an annual [Bike to School Day poster contest](#), [Walk to School Day photo contest](#) and [Winter Walk to School Day Golden Snow Boot Award](#). Walk and bike to school days regularly have nearly 200 schools that participate each year. Many schools use this day to provide safety education, community awareness and

bring elected officials from cities, counties and school boards together to see the demand for walking and biking around schools and identify infrastructure improvements. Minnesota is consistently one of the top states for participation in these event days.

Technical assistance and training

The strength of Minnesota SRTS program is the expansive number of resources, trainings, and technical assistance that MnDOT staff provide to local cities, counties, schools, and partners. An annual survey guides the technical assistance and training plan to meet the needs of local partners to be successful in their efforts.

Webinars

- Monthly [SRTS Network webinars](#) average 45 attendees with featured topics such as local successes, innovative implementation strategies, and helpful tips.
- Monthly Skill Share webinars are offered to Regional Development Commission (RDC) transportation planners to deepen their knowledge of bicycle and pedestrian transportation and SRTS programing.

Conferences and Workshops

- Annual SRTS Workshop provides an in-person training and networking event to bring local and regional partners together for more interactive training with state and national leaders. In 2024 the event had nearly 60 attendees and in 2025 over 100 attendees attended.
- 2024 National SRTS Conference was in Fort Collins, Colorado in October 2024. To expand knowledge for our local programs, 4 registration scholarship were provided to assist local champions to attend and learn. Nearly twenty attendees were from Minnesota and featured in 8 separate breakouts and one poster session. The success of the scholarships and impressive number of Minnesota speakers helped to secure the 2026 conference to be held in Minneapolis, MN with MnDOT as the primary sponsor.
- MnDOT staff presented at countless state and national conferences to highlight successes, innovation, and promote SRTS.

Communications

- [The Minnesota Safe Routes to School Resource Center](#) serves as a centralized source of information, resources and training for communities looking to implement SRTS projects and programs. Resources are developed with a Minnesota perspective and added to the resource center based on engagement with SRTS stakeholders and their expressed needs on an ongoing basis.
- Monthly newsletter is shared to over 5,000 subscribers to provide grant information, training and technical assistance opportunities, program updates, relevant events, and share success stories to inspire local communities and school districts.
- The Safe Routes to School Facebook page provided a unique opportunity to highlight SRTS successes, upcoming events, and grant opportunities. However, this Facebook page has sunset to funnel all communications through MnDOT's primary social media pages.

Safe Routes to School Steering Committee

There has been an SRTS steering committee to provide guidance and oversight for the SRTS program since October 2011. The committee has members representing cities and counties, regional planning organizations, nonprofit organizations, schools, educators, and health professionals. Steering committee members are actively engaged in setting goals for the program, serving on grant selection committees and providing feedback on statewide initiatives. The committee supports the Minnesota SRTS program in setting future priorities and evolving the program to better meet the needs of changing demographics in rural, suburban, and urban communities across Minnesota. Since the inception of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) in 2023, the SRTS committee is now a subcommittee of ATAC for additional guidance and support across walking and bicycling programs.

Interagency Coordination

MnDOT works closely with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and other partners to leverage SRTS efforts supported by local public health agencies across Minnesota. MDH began supporting SRTS in 2009 through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). SHIP is a comprehensive set of evidence-based strategies for schools, communities, health care and worksites to reduce chronic disease, reducing the estimated \$3.2 billion spent on obesity-related health care costs annually in Minnesota. Safe Routes to School is a strategy that 65% of local public health agencies are implementing using SHIP funds for non-infrastructure activities which complements MnDOT's program aligning evaluation requirements, coordinate trainings and encouraging local partnerships between schools, regional planners and public health agencies.

During 2023-2024, 209 schools or partner sites across the state worked on implementing SRTS through the SHIP program. Many MnDOT SRTS grantees partnered with local public health SHIP staff on SRTS activities to leverage resources, partners and shared goals. MDH worked with MnDOT and Move Minnesota to provide SRTS technical assistance and trainings including coordination support of the Minnesota SRTS network in-person gathering.

During 2024-2025, MNDOT and MDH collaboration resulted in:

- 30% of SHIP partner sites making at least one policy, system or environmental change (PSE);
- 50% of the sites were actively working on a PSE change;
- 21% of local public health SHIP staff were focused on building relationships with schools and partner sites to support SRTS activities in the future.

SRTS grant program and awards

During the 2024-2025 biennium, MnDOT solicited SRTS projects for several non-infrastructure and infrastructure grants using a mix of state and federal funds. The solicitation timelines, requirements and applications varied by grant type.

MnDOT provide funding for the following SRTS grant programs

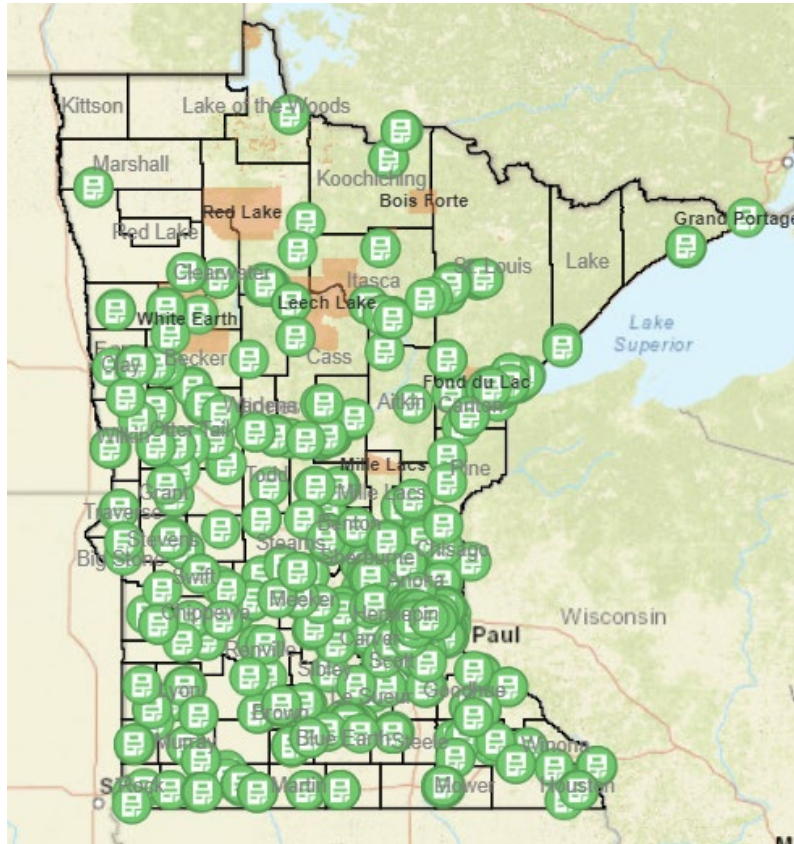
1. SRTS Planning Assistance
2. Boost (non-infrastructure) grants
3. SRTS School District Coordinator
4. SRTS Design Assistance
5. Infrastructure grants (state and federal funds)

Transparency of SRTS Funding

In the spirit of financial transparency, this [Visualizing SRTS in Minnesota interactive map](#) was developed to display the location of projects and programs around the state, and includes useful layers to examine their geographic distribution (including legislative districts). This map allows engineers, schools and other partners to immediately identify SRTS plans, awards and partners in their area.

SRTS Planning Assistance Overview

Supporting planning for an individual school, school district or citywide to develop a comprehensive plan including both infrastructure and non-infrastructure strategies to increase mode shift and improve safety for students walking, biking and rolling to/from school. Over 700 schools across Minnesota have received planning assistance since 2009.



Funding is contracted with a consultant to develop the plan using MnSRTS planning templates and process for consistency across the state. No funding is provided directly to communities who apply. Applications are divided into two review committees based on if they are in a Regional Development Commission (RDC) area or a non-RDC area which the Statewide Planning Consultant (Alta) leads.

Notably, many communities expressed an urgent need for planning as school transportation budgets cannot support existing busing and school district across the state have expanded their walk zones to reduce costs. Many of these walk zones do not have adequate infrastructure or staff support for the increase in students walking, biking and rolling to/from school.

2024 SRTS Planning Assistance – Regional Development Commissions region

There were 13 original applications for the RDC area, however two applicants requested to work with the Planning Consultant in lieu of their Regional Development Commission and were added to that review pool and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe requested to have their application withdrawn because of staffing issues.

- 10 applicants requesting \$175,260
- 9 applicants will be awarded \$165,260 for assistance funding 7 Regional Development Commissions to develop SRTS plans

Score	School District, School, or City	Number of Schools	Funding Request	MnDOT District	RDC
78	City of Lamberton	1	\$18,854	8	SWRDC
78	City of Browns Valley	2	\$14,951	4	WCI
74	William Kelley School, Lake Superior School District ISD 381	1	\$10,076	1	ARDC
73	City of Laporte	2	\$19,935	2	HRDC
66	Red Lake Falls	2	\$20,094	2	NWRDC
66	Grygla Public Schools	1	\$18,056	2	NWRDC
64	Chokio-Alberta Public School	2	\$17,458	4	WCI
63	City of Pine City	2	\$16,361	1	ECRDC
58	Canby Public Schools	2	\$29,475	8	UMVRDC
Withdrawn	Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	3	NA	2	Leech Lake Band

2024 SRTS Planning Assistance – Planning Consultant region

There were 9 original applications for the Metro and non-RDC area, however two applicants requested to work with the Planning Consultant in lieu of their Regional Development Commission and were added to the review pool totaling 11 applicants.

Seven applicants will be funded with a final amount about \$290,700

Score	School District	Number of Schools	Funding Request	MnDOT District
102	Frost Lake Elementary, St. Paul Public Schools	1	\$30,200.00	Metro
99	Dayton's Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary, St. Paul Public Schools	1	\$30,200.00	Metro
97	Lyndale Elementary, Minneapolis Public Schools	1	\$30,200.00	Metro
95	Richfield Public Schools	7	\$44,800.00	Metro
86	City of Rochester	17	\$54,100.00	6
82	City of New Brighton	12	\$51,600.00	Metro
78	Hastings Public Schools	6	\$49,600.00	Metro
72	City of Andover	5	\$45,600.00	Metro
71	North Branch	7	\$42,900.00	Metro
58	Center City	5	\$45,800.00	Metro
54	City of Mayer	2	\$31,800.00	Metro

2025 SRTS Planning Assistance – Regional Development Commission’s region

There were 10 applications for the RDC area, however one applicant requested to work with the Planning Consultant in lieu of their Regional Development Commission and their application was shifted to the statewide Planning Consultant review pool.

- 9 applicants requesting \$407,901
- Seven applicants will be awarded \$274,211 for assistance funding six Regional Development Commissions to develop SRTS plans in the 2025-26 school year.

Score	Applicant	Award	MnDOT District
88	Red Lake	\$23,766.00	2
86	Duluth	\$110,000.00	1
84	Thief River Falls	\$62,353.00	2
68	Ortonville	\$31,100.00	4
64	Floodwood	\$13,549.00	1
63	Remer	\$17,710.00	3
62	Battle Lake	\$15,733.00	4
48	Minneota	\$19,985.00	8
29	Upsala	\$17,710.00	3

2025 SRTS Planning Assistance – Planning Consultant region

There were 10 original applications for the Metro and non-RDC area, however one applicant requested to work with the Planning Consultant in lieu of their Regional Development Commission and were added to the review pool totaling 11 applicants.

- Eleven applicants requested \$607,000 of Planning Assistance
- Seven applicants will be funded with a final amount about \$405,000

Score	Applicant	Award	MnDOT District
114	Minneapolis - Camden H.S. and Olson M.S.	\$52,000.00	Metro
104	Minneapolis - Bryn Mawr Elementary	\$45,000.00	Metro
102	Brooklyn Center Community Schools	\$50,000.00	Metro
88	ISD 622: North St Paul - Maplewood - Oakdale	\$88,000.00	Metro
72	North Branch	\$62,000.00	Metro
69	Little Canada	\$58,000.00	Metro
67	Annandale	\$50,000.00	3
62	Chisago Lakes	\$58,000.00	Metro
60	Goodhue	\$43,000.00	6
52	Byron	\$58,000.00	6
49	ISLA	\$43,000.00	Metro

Boost (non-infrastructure) Grants

Boost grants are intended to boost Safe Routes to School programmatic efforts by providing funds for implementation of strategies identified in Safe Routes to School plans. Through these grant awards, MnDOT supports communities with existing Safe Routes to School plans, or other comprehensive SRTS approaches, in advancing non-infrastructure strategies for schools that support making it safe, easy and fun for students to walk and bicycle to school

2024 SRTS Boost (non-infrastructure) grant - \$400,000 available

Overview: Funding to support SRTS Plan implementation for Education, Encouragement, Engagement and Equity strategies. This is the fifth year of Boost grant funding.

There were 23 original applications for Boost funding requesting \$700,858.58

- One applicant was not an eligible entity and was removed by committee

Score	School District, School, or City	# of Schools	Funding Request	District	Project
119	Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) - Hmong International Academy (HIA)	1	\$45,437.00	Metro	Bike Fleet
119	Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)/Bruce Vento Elementary	1	\$16,460.00	Metro	Walking School Bus pilot with goal to replicate across district
116	Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS)	7	\$48,400.00	Metro	Bike fleet (second for district)
112	Lyndale Elementary Parent Teacher Organizations, MPS	1	\$8,689.00	Metro	Walking School Bus, Bike Train, education and outreach materials
109	Richfield Public Schools	9	\$29,660.00	Metro	'Trauma Informed Approach' for SRTS encouragement
104	Circle of Life Academy	1	\$38,559.40	4	Bike Fleet

99	Pedal Power MN	4	\$49,360.00	Metro	Bike Fleet
94	Voyageurs Expeditionary School	2	\$44,911.38	2	Bike Fleet
94	Rochester Public Schools	1	\$50,000.00	6	Pump Track
93	St. Anthony - New Brighton Schools, ISD 282	3	\$6,000.00	3	Bike Racks
92	Dakota Meadows Middle School, Mankato Public Schools (ISD77)	1	\$33,862.50	7	Bike Fleet
90	Highland Elementary School, Crookston	1	\$5,160.00	2	Crossing Guard pilot
90	Students Achieve Integrative Learning (SAIL)	3	\$8,920.00	6	Bike Fleet
89	Lykke Communities	4	\$24,476.00	7	Project Bike Tech – bike maintenance curriculum for community without a bike shop
87	Alexandria Public Schools	3	\$12,408.00	4	Crossing Guard gear, bike racks, traffic garden
86	Grand Rapids, ISD #318	6	\$46,919.00	1	Coordinator type grant working on 6 E implementation
85	West Central Initiative	2	\$23,225.00	4	Comic Book for outreach
85	Safe Kids Grand Forks	3	\$30,000.00	2	Helmet education, Story strolls, incentives
82	City of Frazee	2	\$35,200.00	4	Bike Fleet
81	Osakis Public School ISD 213	2	\$49,069.30	3	Bike Fleet
78	City of La Crescent	3	\$4,142.00	6	Walking School Bus, Bike Rodeo, incentives

63	Thief River Falls Public Schools	2	\$50,000.00	2	Retrofit school entryway
Removed	Light my Lotus LLC	5	\$40,000.00	2	Fund Coordinator for Walking School Buses and event days.

2025 SRTS Boost (non-infrastructure) grant – up to \$400,000 available

Overview: Funding to support SRTS Plan implementation for Education, Encouragement, Engagement and Equity strategies. This is the sixth year of Boost grant funding.

- 16 applications for Boost funding requesting \$467,412
- 12 applicants will be awarded \$326,229

Score	Applicant	Project Summary	Award	MnDOT District
112	ISD 625 - St. Paul	Bike fleet for Como Park High School for PE, Health, and MCJROTC classes	\$40,000.00	Metro
92	Richfield	Developing education for 7-12 grades and bilingual events	\$21,186.00	Metro
91	Strider Foundation	Strider bike fleets for 5 high need Minneapolis Elementary Schools including Dowling Elementary, Ella Baker Global Studies and Humanities Magnet School, Kenwood Elementary, Las Estrellas Dual Language School, and Sullivan STEAM School.	\$45,000.00	Metro
90	Minneapolis -	Youth led safety video creation, safe routes maps, and adding adaptive bikes to fleets	\$34,661.00	Metro
89	Pedal Power	Train additional bike program volunteers and provide bike education Minneapolis schools including Webster Elementary, Pillsbury Elementary, Waite Park Elementary,	\$29,330.00	Metro
87	ISD 197 - W. St Paul - Mendota Heights - Eagan	Bike racks with bike lock and helmets loaning program	\$14,362.00	Metro
85	Aurora Waasakone	Bike fleet for group rides, in school education, community safety courses, and biking field trips	\$17,200.00	2

80	ISD 318 - Grand Rapids	Traffic garden at new school and strider bike fleet	\$27,820.00	1
77	SAIL	Expanding bike fleet to include adaptive bikes and more sizes	\$14,870.00	6
75	Rochester	Mobile traffic garden and 2 permanent traffic gardens	\$49,227.00	6
75	City of St James	Bike racks, crossing guard supplies, bike education, community walk/bike safety promotion, and bilingual workshops	\$13,173.00	7
70	Twin Bluff Middle School, Red Wing Public Schools	Expanding bike fleet to include adaptive bikes	\$19,400.00	6
68	Aitkin	Education, Story Stroll, Bike Rodeo	\$10,686.00	3
67	HRDC	Walking School Buses	\$49,980.00	2
59	Safe Kids Grand Forks	Bike and Walk Safety education	\$37,448.00	2
50	Bancroft PTO	Student Patrol and bike racks	\$22,069.00	Metro

SRTS School District Coordinators - \$1.5 million available over 3 years

Supporting early implementation of SRTS plans and strengthening relationships between the school district and roadway authorities continues to be the most requested support MnDOT can provide outside of infrastructure funding. MnDOT offered the second SRTS Coordinator grant for school districts across the state. The School District SRTS Coordinators priorities are to rapidly implement their SRTS plan across numerous schools, maintain a SRTS Committee, and address policy or systems changes at a School District level. Supporting infrastructure changes by building strong partnerships between the school district and city and/or county roadway authorities. This is the second solicitation for SRTS Coordinators since 2019 which used federal funds.

- Seven communities applied for SRTS School District Coordinator funding including two new applicants and five returning applicants from the 2019 solicitation.
- Seven applicants requesting \$1,870,764.24 over three years
- Five applicants will be funded, with three returning and two new grantees

Score	School District	Funding Request	District	Schools	Applicant
123	Saint Paul Public Schools	\$ 372,815.00	Metro	40	Returning
115	Richfield Public Schools	\$ 226,797.00	Metro	7	Returning
115	Brooklyn Center Community Schools	\$ 220,495.00	Metro	4	New
108	Rochester Public Schools	\$ 339,419.28	6	17	Returning
93	Duluth Community Education, ISD 709	\$ 260,610.00	1	10	New
83	ISD #318 – Grand Rapids area	\$ 171,140.00	1	8	Returning
80	New Ulm Public School (with Sleepy Eye Public Schools)	\$ 279,487.96	7	5	Returning

Design Assistance Technical Assistance Grants

Design assistance is a new form of engineering studies. It intends to bridge the gap between safe routes to school plan strategies and implementation. Design assistance reports will verify existing methods and identify new engineering strategies to improve walking and bicycling routes to and from schools. The resulting document will include project summary sheets with concept-level drawings and a list of potential infrastructure projects prioritized by effectiveness in addressing safety risks, possible usage, and cost.

The SRTS design assistance solicitation received 7 applications for design assistance from both school districts and local agencies. Due to the availability of funding and quality of each application, all 7 applications were selected to be funded.

Applications	City Status	MnDOT District	Score
City of Shakopee	Second Class	Metro	86
City of Saint Paul	First Class	Metro	78
Aurora Waasakone School (Bemidji)	Third Class (school application)	2	76
ISD 390 (Baudette)	Fourth Class (school district)	2	69
White Earth Nation	Tribal Nation	4	62
Cook County (Grand Portage)	Tribal Nation	1	60
City of Eagan	Second Class	Metro	47

State Funded Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grants

MnDOT’s Office of State Aid for Local Transportation received 38 application submittals with a total request of \$18 million in SRTS Infrastructure funding in 2024. The Active Transportation Advisory Committee Infrastructure Work Group (ATAC IWG) convened and approved 23 projects for funding as an outcome of 2024 competitive solicitation of \$10.285 million.

To be eligible, all SRTS project applicants are required to submit a resolution of support from the appropriate decision-making body (e.g., city council or school board) to ensure there is knowledge of, and support for the application. Additionally, it is legislated that in order to be eligible for infrastructure funding “A statutory or home rule charter city, county, or town is eligible to receive funding under this section only if it has adopted subdivision regulations that require safe routes to school infrastructure in developments authorized on or after June 1, 2016.”

Table 1: Summary of SRTS Infrastructure Project Selections by Selection Pool

Selection Pool	Projects Selected	Total SRTS Infrastructure Selections	Percent of Selected Funding
Cities of the First Class	2	\$1,122,203	10.91%
MnDOT Metro District Communities	9	\$4,112,876	40.00%
Greater MN Counties & State Aid Cities	3	\$1,621,994	15.78%
Greater MN Non-State Aid Cities & Townships	7	\$2,560,594	24.90%
Federally Recognized Indian Tribes	2	\$864,000	8.40%
TOTAL	23	\$10,281,667	100.00%

Table 2: Cities of the First Class

District	Applicant Entity	Project Description	Amount
METRO	City of Minneapolis	21st Ave. S. traffic calming improvements serving South High Sch. & Folwell Elem. Sch.	\$1,000,000
METRO	City of Saint Paul (1)	Grace Street sidewalk serving Focus Beyond Transition Services	\$122,203

Table 3: MnDOT Metro District Communities

District	Applicant Entity	Project Description	Amount
METRO	Anoka Hennepin School District (ISD 11)	Diamond Lake Rd. safety improvements and trail paving serving Dayton Elem. School	\$346,500
METRO	City of Arden Hills	Old Hwy 10 multi-use trail serving Mounds View High Sch. & Valentine Hills Elem. Sch.	\$1,000,000
METRO	City of Bayport	CSAH 14 sidewalk serving Andersen Elementary School	\$311,376
METRO	City of Bloomington	Stanley Avenue sidewalk serving Poplar Bridge Elementary School	\$465,000
METRO	City of Richfield	64th St. W. and Russell Ave. S. sidewalks serving Sheridan Hill Elementary School	\$544,500
METRO	City of Shakopee (Sun Path)	Fuller St. crossing to High School & Quail Dr. sidewalk serving Sun Path Elem. School	\$72,000
METRO	City of Shakopee (Sweeney)	Adams St. traffic calming and crossing improvements serving Sweeney Elem. School	\$200,000
METRO	City of Shorewood	TH 7 multi-use trail connecting Galpin Lake Road and Excelsior Elementary School	\$468,000
METRO	Washington County	CSAH 12 multi-use trail serving Mahtomedi High and Middle Schools Campus	\$705,500

Table 4: Greater MN Counties & State Aid Cities

District	Applicant Entity	Project Description	Amount
2	Beltrami County	Multi-use trail along CSAH 7 from Bemidji High Sch. to Gene Dillon Elementary Sch.	\$770,000
4	City of Alexandria	Intersection realignment and crossing improvements at Voyager Elementary School	\$369,800
6	City of La Crescent	Multiple infrastructure improvements per La Crescent 2020 SRTS Plan	\$482,194

Table 5: Greater MN Non-State Aid Cities & Townships

District	Applicant Entity	Project Description	Amount
1	City of Aurora	Intersection realignment, safety improvements & trail extension at Mesabi East School	\$1,000,000
3	City of Mora	Multi-use trail along Wood Street serving Mora Public Schools Campus	\$123,900
3	City of Paynesville	Establish school speed zone at High School, Replace sidewalk at Elementary School	\$314,300
4	City of Graceville	Sidewalk improvements and safe TH 75 crossing at CGB School	\$70,648
6	City of Mazeppa	Multi-use trail along TH 60 serving Zumbrota-Mazeppa Elementary School	\$337,000
7	City of Adrian	5th Street sidewalk connecting Elementary School and Middle/High School	\$297,332
7	City of Lakefield	Multi-use trail to serve Pleasantview Elementary Sch. and JCC Middle School	\$417,414

Table 6: Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

District	Applicant Entity	Project Description	Amount
1	Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Trail connections, safety improvements and pedestrian crossing at FDL Ojibwe School	\$564,000
1	Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa	Multi-use trail serving Grand Portage Head Start & Oshki Ogiimag Charter School	\$300,000

Legislative Recommendations

Walkable and bikeable communities are desirable, accessible, safe and welcome people from age eight to 80. Safe Routes to School is popular with Minnesota schools and communities, as demonstrated by the number of project applications received each year and the level of involvement from communities across the state. Since 2012, the Safe Routes to School program has invested in community-wide plans, spurring more plans, programs and projects to be implemented throughout the state. To date, more than 700 schools have SRTS plans in Minnesota setting the framework for a multi-strategy approach to create a more walkable and bikeable community for children; however, there are still challenges to fully implementing the SRTS program.

Challenge 1: Infrastructure demand exceeds funding available

State funding approved in 2013 for non-infrastructure activities allowed the SRTS program to meet many needs throughout Minnesota with a broader reach into Greater Minnesota. Over the course of the program, demand (largely for infrastructure projects) continues to exceed available funding and communities continue to use SRTS planning to think about how to plan for connected pedestrian and bicycle networks.

Additional state funding for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects through the Safe Routes to School program, or the Active Transportation program, would allow the programs to meet the developing need as community interest in walking and biking grows.

In the past, general bond funds were allocated to SRTS for infrastructure; but bond funds are not able to be used for projects on the trunk highway system, to contract with tribal nations, or for engineering studies. Two-thirds of schools are within a half mile of a trunk highway. The 2020 SRTS Strategic Plan identified tribal communities as a priority population to address transportation system inequities, and engineering studies are a strategy for advancing and implementing planning priorities. Since these areas of work continue to be priority, funding from sources where these priorities are eligible to be funded, may be effective.

The demand for state and federal funds for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure continue to grow in the Metro and across Greater Minnesota. While communities continue to seek grant funding, there are also challenges with finding adequate funding within city transportation budgets to fund improvements for walking and bicycling due to many competing needs and limited resources. Local SRTS and transportation planning helps communities identify opportunities to align and integrate improvements into upcoming projects, and MnDOT continues to encourage walking and bicycling facilities into existing efforts. However, there are

existing network gaps that would benefit from separate funding. This creates a backlog of projects awaiting state or federal funds.

Enacting policies that incentivize complete streets and encouraging cities to develop their own funds dedicated towards walking and bicycling improvements to ease the backlog of state and federal grant requests may advance walking and bicycling generally, and also SRTS program goals.

Challenge 2: School location siting for new schools or school consolidation

As school districts grow or consolidate, attention must be given to long-term effects of the siting of the new school locations on student transportation costs, school health and the community. Schools are often sited near city limit borders without adequate facilities connecting students who walk and bike to school or nearby destinations after school. This increase of distance forces the school to provide hazard busing at the expense of the school district or ride with caregivers adding a time and cost burden to families in lieu of safe routes to school.

To advance walking and bicycling through the Safe Routes to School program, enacting policies that support schools and districts in finding a balance between new, larger facilities and long-term impacts of building schools sited away from where students and families live and play.

Challenge 3: Implementing reduced School Speed Zones

As schools are challenged with their transportation budgets, many are expanding their walk zones and reducing their busing. With the increase in students who do not have access to busing, there is an increasing demand to implement more School Speed Zones that reduce the speed limit during school hours or when children are present. However, there continue to be challenges with implementing these reduce speed zones as traditional speed studies do not show the 85 percentile that would justify a lower speed. Many other states have policies requiring reduced speeds of 20-25 MPH around all schools; or provide additional law enforcement support to serve as crossing guards around schools to ease concerns of speeding. During the next biennium, MnDOT's SRTS program will work to review national policies and practices around school speed zones to identify ways we can make it easier to reduce speeds around schools as requested by local communities.

Conclusion

Minnesota's Safe Routes to School program ranks in the top programs nationally and continues to see high levels of community engagement. There are opportunities for Minnesota to elevate

SRTS and address the challenges communities statewide face in a meaningful way. The 2020 Strategic Plan, built from local and regional engagement, will guide the evolution of this program through 2027. A stronger equity focus will improve safety and wellbeing for Minnesota's youth, priority populations and under-resourced communities.

The future of MnSRTS is that of growth and inclusion. Building on existing partnerships and successful initiatives, the program will continue to use the guidance of the 2020 Strategic Plan to grow the program. This will include an expanded focus on equity and resources to support local efforts, incorporating equity measures into funding solicitations, and prioritizing future initiatives for under-resourced communities. Emerging best practices around demonstration projects, design studies and training will continue to make local impacts in rural, suburban and urban areas to meet the unique needs of each community. The continued expansion of funding at a state and federal level will impact more Minnesotans and lead to a safer multimodal transportation network for our most vulnerable road users, our children. This is an exciting time for Safe Routes to School nationally and MnDOT intends to leverage funding and new resources to improve the lives, safety and health of Minnesota's youth.