

NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY

**Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)
Safe Routes to School Infrastructure (SRTS) Program Grant Solicitation
2024 Solicitation Guide
State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) Programs**

Note: This document is available in alternative formats by emailing ADArequest.dot@state.mn.us or for persons who have a hearing or speech difference by calling the Minnesota Relay Service by calling 651-602-9005 (Voice) or 651-964-1514 (Video Phone).

This grant announcement does not obligate MnDOT to award a grant or complete the project, and MnDOT reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest.

Responses to this grant announcement will be public information under the Minnesota Data Practices Act, [Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13](#).

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Program Overview

The Minnesota Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Infrastructure Program was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2012 and is defined in [Minnesota Statute 174.40](#). MnDOT State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) and the Office of Transit and Active Transportation (OTAT) share responsibilities for the administration and oversight of the SRTS program. SALT administers the SRTS infrastructure funds on local roads (county, city, township, and Tribal owned roadways), and OTAT administers the non-infrastructure SRTS funds. Up to \$8,500,000.00 in grant funds are available for this 2024 SRTS infrastructure solicitation.

Program Goal

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) administers the state SRTS infrastructure program with guidance from the Infrastructure Work Group (IWG) of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC). The process, criteria, and prioritization for the solicitation are required by statute to establish a geographic equity-based project evaluation and selection process that is competitive, criteria-based, and objective. Projects are selected and approved by the Infrastructure Work Group of the Active Transportation Advisory Committee to provide financial assistance to eligible recipients to construct capital improvement of transportation infrastructure that improves safety and encourages non-motorized transportation to and from schools.

Solicitation Timeline

The solicitation schedule for funding is provided below.

- **Monday, September 23, 2024** – SRTS Infrastructure Program solicitation kick-off. Letter of Intent period opens.
- **Friday, October 18, 2024** – Deadline for applicants to submit Letters of Intent
- **Friday, November 1, 2024** – Deadline for MnDOT to review Letters of Intent. Recommendation to proceed forward with full application or develop further sent to applicants.
- **Monday, November 4, 2024** – Opening date for full application submittals
- **Friday, January 17, 2025** – Deadline for applicants to submit full applications
- **By April 30, 2025** – Project selection finalized. Notification letters distributed to selected and non-selected projects

Funding Availability

SRTS infrastructure funding does not require any match by the grant recipient, and grants are paid on a reimbursable basis (the grantee finances 100% of the project cost up front and submits pay requests for reimbursement). Grant requests must be between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000. The grant funds are intended to fund standalone SRTS projects or the required match for a federally funded project to provide non-motorized transportation infrastructure components to and from a school. Applicants may also submit multiple applications for different SRTS projects in and around their community but only one

funding type for each project location. Regardless of which project type is chosen, construction cannot begin until a grant agreement is executed between MnDOT and the applicant entity.

Funding Types

State SRTS funds can be used to (1) fund up to 100% of the construction costs of non-federally funded projects, and to (2) provide the required match for already selected federally funded projects that have non-motorized transportation infrastructure components to and from a school. Construction cannot begin until a grant agreement is executed between MnDOT and the applicant entity.

1. *Construction Project (No federal funding)*

This option is available for communities that have a project identified in their SRTS plan or other non-motorized transportation plan and need funds to implement the improvements. This option may be used to fund up to 100% of eligible SRTS construction costs without any requirement for local matching. Projects should be planned for construction in 2025 or 2026.

2. *Local or Tribal Match for Federally Funded Project*

Funds may be used for the local or Tribal share on federally funded projects that have non-motorized transportation infrastructure components already programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). To be considered for a local or Tribal match, the project must already be awarded federal funding, have a federal MnDOT project number, and be listed in an approved STIP for construction in 2025 or 2026.

Project Requirements

Proposed projects must follow the listed requirements to be considered for grant funding:

- All improvements constructed with SRTS funding must have a minimum useful life of 10 years.
- The project must be able to enter construction in either the 2025 or 2026 calendar years.
- For non-Tribal applicants: the applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from their council or governing board supporting the project and application for SRTS grant funds. Resolutions of support are required from all non-Tribal agencies with right-of-way impacted by the proposed project.
- School, school district, township, and non-state aid city applicants require a state aid city or county to sponsor their application and project. If a project sponsor is required, the applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from the sponsoring entity's council supporting the project, agreeing to act as the project sponsor, and perform the project sponsor tasks described below.
- SRTS infrastructure grant funds can only be used on impacts to trunk highways or trunk highway right-of-way with an explicit letter of support from the MnDOT District Engineer.
- SRTS funds can only be used on infrastructure that will be owned and maintained by the grantee. SRTS funds cannot be used on private driveways, private parking lots, or other infrastructure improvements located on privately owned right-of-way unless the local entity can demonstrate an ownership over that right-of-way for no less than 125% of the useful life of the improvement.
- For projects being constructed entirely or in any part within public right-of-way, the applicant entity must have a local requirement or ordinance that mandates the construction of accessible sidewalks or bicycle infrastructure with the construction of new developments or large

subdivisions. Applicants must demonstrate adoption of these requirements to be eligible for this program. This requirement will not apply to Tribal applicants nor school/school district applicants whose projects will be constructed entirely on school property.

Eligible Entities

The 2024 SRTS Infrastructure Solicitation is available to a broad spectrum of entities that represent students. Townships, schools, school districts, and non-state aid city applicants must have a project sponsor. Note that a resolution of support is required from the applicant entity's governing council and from the project sponsor's governing council or board. Additionally, resolutions of support must be submitted from all non-Tribal entities that will have property or right-of-way impacted by this project.

Eligible applicants include:

- Counties
- State Aid and non-State Aid Cities
- Townships
- Schools, public, charter or non-public
- School districts
- Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

Project Sponsor

School, school district, township, and non-state aid city applicants require a state aid city or county to sponsor their application and project. If a non-state aid city is applying, the city must work with the county as a sponsor. The sponsor's tasks could include, but are not limited to:

- Serve as the fiscal agent on behalf of the community
- Request an SAP/SP number for the project
- Ensure the project meets milestones and dates for scheduled completion
- Assist local agency/community in execution of any grant agreement
- Develop, review, and approve the construction plan project
- Ensure that any required environmental documents and permits are received, and requirements are followed
- Submit plan, engineers estimate, and proposal to the District State Aid Engineer (DSAE)
- Advertise/let/award the project in accordance with state aid and/or federal aid procedures
- Submit the State Aid Pay Requests to the DSAE
- Communicate progress and updates with the DSAEs and Active Transportation Engineer or State Programs Engineer
- Ensure that the project receives adequate supervision and inspection to ensure that project is completed in conformance with approved plans and specifications
- Assist with project close out and final contract documents
- Retain project documents in accordance with document retention schedule

Scoring Criteria

Projects from similar types of communities will be scored against each other. Applications will be categorized into five selection pools. These pools are not based on the entity submitting the application, but rather based on the community in which the project will be constructed.

The selection pools are listed below:

- MN Cities of the First Class (Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Rochester, & Duluth)
- MnDOT Metro District Communities (excluding Minneapolis & Saint Paul)
- Greater MN State Aid Cities (excluding Duluth & Rochester)
- Greater MN non-State Aid Cities & Townships
- Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

Each project will be reviewed with the following criteria. The application criteria include (but are not limited to):

1. **Eligibility:** Applicant must follow all criteria identified in the *Project Requirements* section of this document, including the criteria outlined the *Funding Availability*, *Eligible Entities* and *Project Sponsor* subsections.
2. **Full Project Description:** All improvements are identified including the improvement location, schools impacted and any project maps or design exhibits.
3. **Safety Concerns:** Identified risks to safety for students walking or biking to school and percentage of students who may continue to walk or bike to school even though these risks are present.
4. **Risk Mitigation:** Project improvements address the safety risks and hazards identified and mitigate safety concerns
5. **Local SRTS Program:** Demonstrates previous work done in the local SRTS program, including a SRTS Plan, implementation of the [6E Strategies](#), and selection of a broad project team consisting of staff from the schools, school districts, cities, or counties.
6. **Equity Score:** Description on how this project will advance equity in the community and serve priority populations. Also using the Student Transportation Equity for Priority Populations (STEPP) score, which was developed to support equitable scoring for the SRTS grant application process. The scoring map can be found here: [SRTS Equity Atlas](#)

Eligible Improvements

SRTS infrastructure funds may be used for projects that enable students to walk and bicycle to and from schools. Eligible items include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following improvements:

- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements: pedestrian curb ramps, intersections or midblock crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, speed humps and curb extensions.
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities: exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails, sidewalks, pedestrian bridges, pathways that are separated from a roadway.
- On-road facilities: bicycle lanes, bicycle boulevards, and cycle tracks

- Traffic control and safety devices: signs, bicycle and pedestrian activated signals, flexible bollards, pavement markings, pedestrian-scaled lighting *Note: Electronic devices must be permanent – **not** mobile.*
- Basic curb, roadway, or turf replacement due to removals required to install the improvements listed above

Ineligible Improvements

SRTS infrastructure funds may **not** be used for projects that serve purely a recreational or leisure purpose. Additionally, items that are **ineligible** for SRTS infrastructure funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Landscaping planters, benches, and decorative fences
- Ornamental lighting beyond the standard
- Benches, bike racks or bike parking, fix-it stations, water fountains, wayfinding signs
- Aesthetic treatments above the standard
- Costs associated with engineering, construction administration and inspection, right of way acquisition, and water main, sanitary sewer, or private utility work
- **Work on trunk highways or on trunk highway right-of-way without a letter of support from the MnDOT District Engineer. Hence, work on trunk highways is only allowed if this letter of support is included with the grant application.**

Questions

Responders who have any questions regarding this grant program must submit questions by e-mail only to:

Steven Prusak at steven.prusak@state.mn.us

Questions must be submitted prior to 4:30 pm on January 15, 2025, to provide adequate response time.

Application Contents

The following sections provide guidance and assistance to potential applicants in filling out the application. Narratives in the application should be kept clear and concise. Note that the application is submitted as an online form. Responses will be saved as drafts until the form is fully submitted.

I. Project Information

A. Applicant Entity Information

This section should be completed on the basis of the applicant entity only. Do not enter third party preparer information here.

1. Name (First Name & Last Name): Provide the name of the contact person at the local or Tribal entity applying for the funds. This person should be the person to contact with questions about the application and who represents the entity submitting the project.
2. Entity Name: The name of the entity submitting the application.

3. Job Title/Position: The job title or position held by the applicant.
4. Phone: The work phone number of the person at the applicant entity.
5. Email: The work email address of the person at the applicant entity.
6. Entity type: Select the appropriate entity type radio button for the submitting entity: Township, Non-State Aid City (Population < 5,000), State Aid City, County, Federally Recognized Indian Tribe, School or School District.
7. Address: The number and street name of the applicant entity.
8. City: The city where the applicant entity is located.
9. State: This will always be Minnesota.
10. Zip Code: The zip code where the applicant entity is located.
11. County: For non-Tribal applicants, select the county where the applicant entity is located from the dropdown list.
12. MnDOT District: Select the appropriate MnDOT district where the proposed project would be constructed.

B. Project Sponsor Information

Any applicant that is a township, non-state aid city (population <5,000), school, or school district must have a project sponsor. Project sponsors may be a county or a state aid city. The project must be constructed at least partially within the jurisdiction of the sponsoring entity.

1. As a grant applicant, are you representing a township, non-state aid city, or a school or school district? If yes, you are required to have a project sponsor.
2. Sponsoring Entity Engineer Name (First Name & Last Name): Provide the name of the city or county engineer of the sponsoring entity.
3. Sponsoring Entity Name: The City or County that will act as the project sponsor.
4. Job Title/Position: The job title or position held by the sponsoring entity engineer.
5. Phone: The work phone number of the sponsoring entity engineer.
6. Email: The work email address of the sponsoring entity engineer.
7. Address: The number and street name of the project sponsor.
8. City: The city where the project sponsor is located.
9. State: This will always be Minnesota.
10. Zip Code: The zip code where the project sponsor is located.

C. Project Funding

Has the project been selected for federal funding? Answer “yes” if the proposed project has been awarded federal funding and identify the following information. Answer “no” if this does not apply.

- i) Indicate the name of the federal funding program
- ii) Indicate which STIP version (2023-2026, for example) the project is included in

- iii) Indicate the Sequence Number(s) from the STIP
- iv) Indicate how much federal funding is programmed

Applicants must ensure they have local or Tribal funds available for the local or Tribal share of this project.

Is the project applying for competitive funding from another source in addition to this program? Answer “yes” if other funding sources are being sought. Please provide the name(s) of these additional competitive funding sources and the amount(s) being requested.

Please provide details on the full funding participation for the proposed project, including your program grant request. The application will calculate your total project cost based on your entries. Please confirm that this total cost matches the total cost of your detailed estimate to be attached to the application. Applicants must upload an itemized project cost estimate that includes the total quantities and costs for both program eligible and ineligible items.

1. SRTS Grant Request: list the total grant request for the proposed project. The request must be between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000.
2. Other funding amounts and sources: list any other funding amounts and sources for the project other than SRTS infrastructure grant funds. This could include any of the following:
 - Federal funds and grants.
 - Other state or state aid funds.
 - Tribal funds
 - Local funds including city, county, or any other municipal funding.
3. Total project cost: The total costs for the project will automatically sum from the amounts entered into the sources listed above. Applicants should verify that the displayed total project cost matches the total cost from their project estimates.
4. Are all funds from all sources committed? If no, describe which sources are not committed and how they will become committed in the provided narrative box. (1500 character maximum)

D. Project Location

1. Confirmation of jurisdiction: Answer “yes” if the proposed infrastructure improvements will be constructed on the right-of-way or property of another entity other than the applicant and/or sponsoring entity. Answer “no” if this does not apply.
 - i) List all entities that are a part of this project. An entity should be listed if it is partnering on this project or if this project will be constructed at any point within its city/township/county limits.
2. Beginning Point – Latitude: Provide a latitude in decimal format for the project location. This may be approximated as the beginning point of the project. See [FAQs](#) for instructions on how to identify your project latitude and longitude.
3. Beginning Point – Longitude: Provide a longitude in decimal format for the project location. This may be approximated as the beginning point of the project. See [FAQs](#) for instructions on how to identify your project latitude and longitude.

E. Brief Project Description

Enter a brief description or title of your project. Example: “Construct shared use path along north side of CSAH 12 (Cedar Street) including bumpouts at all quadrants at the CSAH 12 and Main Street intersection in the City of Moose River.” (300 character maximum)

F. Eligibility Check

Proposed projects must verify their project complies with the listed eligibility requirements below. The application form will display responses when ineligible answers are marked. **If a question below is not included in your application, then proceed to the next question within the online application as logic has been applied to meet the requirements of each entity type.**

1. For non-Tribal applicants, the applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from their council or governing board approving the project and pledging support to fund engineering, right of way, inspection, and other non-SRTS eligible costs, as well as SRTS-eligible items in excess of the SRTS Infrastructure grant amount. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and has executed the signed resolution for attachment to the application.
2. Schools, school districts, townships, and non-state aid cities will need a state aid city or county to serve as their project sponsor. If a project sponsor is required, the applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from the sponsoring entity’s council supporting the project and agreeing to act as the project sponsor. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and has obtained the signed resolution for attachment to the application.
3. The applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from all non-Tribal entities (except MnDOT) other than the applicant entity or project sponsor whose property or right-of-way will be impacted by the proposed project. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and has obtained, if required, the signed resolution(s) from all impacted entities for attachment to the application.
4. Does the applicant entity have the ability to maintain the infrastructure improvement and provide an expected service life of a minimum of 10 years? The applicant affirms to the best of their current knowledge and belief that this requirement will be met.
5. Does the school district have plans to relocate or repurpose the school facilities benefiting from the infrastructure improvement within the next 10 years? The applicant affirms to the best of their current knowledge and belief that this requirement will be met.
6. Projects are required to be ready for construction in 2025 or 2026. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and will award a contract and be under construction prior to December 31, 2026.
7. Safe Routes to School infrastructure grant funds cannot be used on impacts to trunk highways or trunk highway right-of-way without an explicit letter of support from the MnDOT District Engineer. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and has obtained, if required, the letter of support for attachment to the application.
8. All non-Tribal eligible applicants for Safe Routes to School infrastructure funds must have adopted subdivision regulations that require Safe Routes to School infrastructure in developments authorized on or after June 1, 2016. The applicant understands this eligibility

requirement and can attach proof of compliance to the application via ordinance or other language that demonstrates how it is applied.

9. Only construction costs are eligible for the program. Development of engineering and construction plans are not eligible expenses nor are right-of-way acquisition costs. All selected projects must follow the State Aid process, which includes identifying applicable design standards and developing a construction plan set signed by a licensed engineer. The applicant must have the ability to develop this plan set or the funds to pay a consultant to develop this plan set. Exhibits from engineering studies do not qualify as a construction plan set. The applicant understands this requirement and has the ability or funds to develop the plan set.
10. Safe Routes to School funds cannot be used to pay school, local entity, or Federally Recognized Indian Tribe staff time to construct or install any improvements. School, local entity or Federally Recognized Indian Tribe staff time is not an eligible cost for SRTS Infrastructure funds. All selected projects must be put out to bid and awarded to a contractor. The applicant understands this program requirement and plans to bid the project out to a contractor.
11. Has the project received a legislative appropriation (also known as an “earmark”)?
12. Statute 16B.981 Subd. 2 (6) requires that no current principals of a grantee have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years. A principal is defined as a public official, a board member, or staff (paid or volunteer) with the authority to access funds provided by this grant opportunity or to determine how those funds are used. Political subdivisions as defined in Statute 465.719 (including school districts) and Federally Recognized Indian Tribes are not subject to this requirement. Checking “yes” is acknowledgement that if selected to receive a grant and if required by statute, the applicant will be required to complete a form certifying that no current principal of its organization has been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last 10 years.

G. Project Evaluation

Enter the contact information for follow up project evaluations. This contact should be a role or title with whom MnDOT staff can contact in the case of applicant staff turnover. The post-construction evaluations will be to gauge effectiveness and use of the eligible infrastructure improvements.

1. Name (First Name and Last Name): the first and last name of the representative who should be contacted.
2. Job Title / Role: the title or role of the representative who should be contacted to conduct project evaluations.
3. Email: the work email address that can be best used to contact the local or Tribal entity for follow-up evaluations.
4. Phone: the phone number that can be best used to contact the local or Tribal entity for follow-up evaluations.

II. Project Improvements & Safety

H. School Information

Please list the school(s) benefiting from the proposed project. The infrastructure applications for State SRTS funds may represent one school or multiple schools that are in close proximity to one another (schools on the same or adjacent campuses, neighborhood, or block with 1 mile of improvements)

- School Name: Full name of school including type
- School Location: City where school is located
- Grades Available: Provide the grades at the school (PreK – 5, 6 – 8, etc.)
- Number of Students Enrolled: Provide the total number of students enrolled at the respective school
- Percentage of Students Walking or Biking to School
- Percentage of Students Taking Bus to School
- School Type: Select public, charter or non-public or parochial

I. Safety Concerns

1. At any location in the project area, do pedestrians or bicyclists travel where safe infrastructure is not provided?

Please respond: Yes/No

If “Yes” please check any that apply below:

- Pedestrians walk along the grass or ditch.
- People walk or bike within a vehicle travel lane or roadway.
- People cross a roadway where pedestrian or bicyclist crossings are explicitly prohibited by signage.
- People cross a roadway at any point other than an intersection or marked crossing.
- Other

(i) If Other, please describe below.

2. Have safety risks or hazards related to vehicles been identified within the project area that prevent people from safely walking or biking in or near the project area?

Please respond: Yes/No

If “Yes” please check any that apply below:

- High vehicle speeds.
- High levels of traffic.
- Low stop or yield compliance for pedestrians or cyclists.
- Low visibility of pedestrians or cyclists / Drivers unable to see pedestrians or cyclists.
- Other

(i) If Other, please describe below.

3. List and concisely describe the safety risks, hazards, or uncomfortable walking or biking conditions that have been identified above, including the locations of these risks and conditions.

Applicants may also reference any survey data, crash data, pedestrian or bicycle plan, or other relevant sources. Upload any referenced sources when submitting this application. Each attachment must be referenced in the application, otherwise the attachment will not be considered in the scoring of the application. (1600 character maximum)

J. Types of Improvements

Select any and all improvements to be constructed from the list of common responses. Describe any unique improvements and include the specific locations of each improvement identified in the text box below. (Example: New sidewalk on west side of Elm St from 1st Ave to 4th Ave. New RRFB crossing Elm St at 4th Ave.) Include any project maps or design exhibits, which may be attached to your application. If the applicant includes exhibits, then please reference them in the description. Exhibits attached to the application without context in the description will not be considered in the scoring of the application.

K. Project Improvements

Schools: Describe how listed improvements would connect students to schools within your community. If your school provides hazard busing or has a no walking/biking to school policy in place currently, would these be removed or altered with construction of this project? (Example: “Constructing a new shared path along the north side of CSAH 12 (Cedar Street) will allow for safe and comfortable two-way active transportation access to and from Moose Lake Elementary School and an existing shared use path along the west side of Main Street. This will eliminate pedestrian and bicycle traffic using the adjacent lawns or parking lane for travel along this 35 MPH corridor. The trail along Main Street connects downtown Moose Lake to primarily residential neighborhoods north and south of the school. The new trail fills a missing link between these nodes.”) (800 character maximum)

Safety Risk Mitigation: Explain how each of the listed improvements in “Section J. Types of Improvements” would mitigate the safety risks and hazards described in “Section I. Safety Concerns”. (Example: “Safety for non-vehicular travelers will be improved with the addition of the new shared use path by providing a smooth and consistent route between Main Street and Moose Lake Elementary School. Users will be separated from high-speed traffic by a grassy boulevard and have increased visibility and comfort. Daily trips to and from school will be safer and easier for students of all ages.”) (1600 character maximum)

III. Community Engagement & Transportation Policies

L. Plans, Policies, & Studies

1. Does the applicant entity or project sponsor have a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan or any other non-motorized transportation plan(s) in place or under development?
 - If yes, describe the contents and extents of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) plan and/or non-motorized transportation plan(s). Include the year of adoption for each document listed.
 - If yes, attach plan(s) to the application.
2. Has the adopted plan received any updates, addendums, surveys, public engagement sessions, or any other changes since it was adopted?
 - If yes, briefly describe the updates.

- If yes, when submitting your application, attach any updates, addendums, surveys, public engagement sessions, or any other changes or community feedback that have occurred since the plan was adopted.
3. Are the improvements in this project identified in any of the above listed plan(s)?
 - If yes, provide the page number(s) on which the project is identified.
 4. Describe how the proposed improvements in this project were identified, planned, and prioritized. Also include any community/stakeholder engagement or public outreach activities. (800 character maximum)
 5. Has the applicant entity and/or project sponsor adopted a Complete Streets policy or other policies and practices encouraging and promoting Complete Streets policies and practices in planning, design, and construction?
 - If yes, describe these policies or practices and attach them to the application.
 - If no, please mark "N/A".

IV. Equity Score

M. Implementing the 6E Strategies

Check all of the 6E Strategies implemented at the school(s) or school district(s). Please describe events, policies and programs serving these strategies.

1. Evaluation
2. Equity
3. Engagement/Enforcement
4. Education
5. Encouragement
6. Engineering

N. Advancing Equity

1. Equity in transportation seeks fairness in mobility and accessibility to meet the needs of all community members. A central goal of transportation equity is to facilitate social and economic opportunities by providing equitable levels of access to affordable and reliable transportation options based on the needs of the populations being served, particularly populations that are traditionally underserved. Please mark which of the following priority populations are present within your project area or directly served by your proposed project. (Check all that apply)
2. Describe how the ability for priority populations to use active transportation will be advanced with this proposed project. Include specific project area schools and statistics that support the priority population boxes checked above. (1600 character maximum)

O. Safe Routes to School Equity Score

The Student Transportation Equity for Priority Populations (STEPP) equity scoring tool was developed to support equitable planning and scoring processes for bicycle and pedestrian improvements during the Safe Routes to School grant application process. A score is assessed for each public school in the State. These scores are used in the project evaluation process for this solicitation and can be found here: [Safe Routes to School Equity Score Map](#)

Scores on the map corresponding to the project location will be used to assess a final Safe Routes to School equity score. This section is for applicant information only. The final equity scores will be assessed by MnDOT staff based on the project location(s). While applicants do not need to enter any information into this section, they are encouraged to confirm that all public schools identified in the full application responses are able to be located in [this tool](#). Private, parochial, and other schools not already included in the tool may create a custom STEPP score by supplying school-specific data to State Aid ahead of the full application submittal. Please contact State Aid to initiate this request. All schools named in the application without pre-determined equity scores will be assigned the score of the lowest adjacent school. Please note that this may misrepresent your improvement area, adversely impact your overall score, and could result in application denial if an adjacent substitute within the limits of the applicant entity cannot be found.

V. Attachments

Ensure to upload and submit all requested materials with your application. Required fields are denoted with an asterisk (*). All uploads shall be in PDF format with the exception of the cost estimate in Microsoft Excel format. **If an attachment below is not included in your application, then proceed to the next attachment within the online application as logic has been applied to meet each entity requirement.** Ensure to include:

- a) Required attachments that do not affect the final application score:
 - For non-Tribal applicants: Submitting approved applicant entity resolution of support, including approved resolutions from any non-Tribal entity (except MnDOT) that owns or manages right-of-way that will be impacted with SRTS-eligible infrastructure improvements (*)
 - For all eligible non-Tribal applicants: Submitting agency certification, regulations, or ordinances that the community benefiting from this project has adopted subdivision regulations that require safe routes to school infrastructure in developments authorized on or after June 1, 2016. (*)
 - Approved project sponsor resolution (* if applicable)
 - Approved letter of support from MnDOT District Engineer if the project has MnDOT trunk highway projects (* if applicable)
 - Engineering or planning based cost estimate with itemized breakdown (*)
 - A timeline indicating major milestones of the project and their anticipated completion dates (*)
 - Federal grant award letter, when requesting local match for federal project (* if applicable)

- b) Required attachments that may affect the final application score:

- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan or other non-motorized transportation plan that identifies the proposed project or improvements or a link to these documents (*)
 - Any updates, addendums, surveys, etc. that show updates to the above listed documents (* if applicable)
 - At least one project location map with project routes or improvements identified. If you choose to include project photos, please make sure the project location map is the first page in this attachment. (*)
- c) Additional project attachments (if applicable or available) that may affect the final application score:
- Planning documents that identify the proposed project
 - Project design exhibits or sections
 - Community survey or crash data (related to safety concerns)
 - Baseline pedestrian and cyclist traffic counts
 - Additional approved letters of support

Attachments may be uploaded by selecting "Choose File" on the buttons below. Note that due to software limitations, only one file may be uploaded at a time. Note that attaching large files may cause the form to submit slowly. Please do not refresh the web browser until the form has been fully submitted.

25 MB maximum total attachment size per application. The form will present an ambiguous error message when this limit is exceeded and prevent your application from submitting. Avoid raw photos and consider trimming down large documents to relevant pages or sections. Including web links to otherwise publicly available documents is also acceptable.

VI. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Please read document and affirm that no potential organization conflict of interest exists. If a potential conflict of interest is determined, please describe the potential conflict and the measures proposed to mitigate it in the text box below. (2000 character maximum) All disclosures of potential conflicts will be reviewed and confirmed and do not necessarily result in ineligibility.

VII. Affirmation of Noncollusion

Please read the statements and affirm that this solicitation response has been submitted without collusion.

VIII. 2024 SRTS Infrastructure Application Submittal

Please affirm the following statement by clicking the "Yes" radio button: "The applicant affirms to the best of their current knowledge and belief that this letter of intent submittal is accurate and complete."

Click "Submit Form" to complete your letter of intent. A message stating "Thank you. The form was submitted successfully" should appear on your screen. The email address entered within the Applicant Entity Information section should receive a PDF version of the submitted responses. Please reach out to steven.prusak@state.mn.us if this PDF is not received.

Application Format & Availability

This application is submitted as an online form, which can be accessed on the [SRTS infrastructure grant webpage](#). The online form may not be available until the call for full applications on November 4, 2024. All prompts and questions on the online form will be the same as in this solicitation guide. A link may be generated to save responses until the whole form is submitted. This link will be valid for 30 days. MnDOT staff cannot retrieve information from an expired link. The final date to submit the full application form is January 17, 2025.

Proposal Evaluation

Representatives of MnDOT will evaluate all responses received by the deadline. The review committee consists of State Aid for Local Transportation staff members with assistance from an Office of Transit and Active Transportation (OTAT) staff member and Office of Traffic Engineering (OTE) staff member. State Aid will consult with each of the MnDOT District State Aid Engineers (DSAEs) and MnDOT Office of Tribal Affairs on scores and draft project recommendations. State Aid Active Transportation Engineer and MnDOT Office of Tribal Affairs Grants Manager make project selection recommendations to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC), as defined in [Minnesota Statute 174.375](#); to seek input on project recommendations; then selects and approves projects for funding. Overall, selections will strive for equitable distribution across the program selection pools and eligible MnDOT Districts statewide.

A 100-point scale will be used to create the final evaluation recommendation. The factors and weighting on which proposals will be judged are broken down in the following table:

Rating Factor	Weighting Percentage
Project Improvements & Safety	40%
Community Engagement & Transportation Policies	20%
Equity Score	40%

MnDOT anticipates that the evaluation and selection will be announced by April 30, 2025, pending the volume of applications received.

General Information

Responders must adhere to all terms of this RFP. All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the responder.

MnDOT Not Obligated To Complete Project

This RFP does not obligate MnDOT to award a Contract or complete the project, and MnDOT reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest.

Proposal Certifications

By submitting a Proposal, responders warrant that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential Contract award. Responder also certifies no conflict of interest or collusion has been or will be engaged in throughout solicitation, grant, or post award process. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from Contract award and may subject the responder to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to MnDOT, by law.

Public Data

Per [Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#)

- Names and addresses of grant applicants will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).
- All data created or maintained by MnDOT as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§ 13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed (for the purposes of this grant, when all grant agreements have been fully executed).

Conflicts of Interest

Responders must provide a list of all entities with which it has relationships that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest with the work that is contemplated in this RFP. This list should indicate the name of the entity, the relationship, and a discussion of the conflict. Responders must complete the attached “Conflict of Interest Checklist and Disclosure Form” and submit it as part of the proposal.

Organizational Conflicts of Interest

The responder warrants that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, and except as otherwise disclosed, there are no relevant facts or circumstances, which could give rise to organizational conflicts of interest. An organizational conflict of interest exists when, because of existing or planned activities or because of relationships with other persons, a vendor is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to MnDOT, or the successful responder’s objectivity in performing the Contract work is or might be otherwise impaired, or the successful responder has an unfair competitive advantage. The responder agrees that, if after award, an organizational conflict of interest is discovered, an immediate and full disclosure in writing must be made to MnDOT, which must include a description of the action, which the successful responder has taken or proposes to take to avoid or mitigate such conflicts. If an organizational conflict of interest is determined to exist, MnDOT may, at its discretion, cancel the Contract. In the event the responder was aware of an organizational conflict of interest prior to the award of the Contract and did not disclose the conflict to MnDOT, MnDOT may terminate the Contract for default. The provisions of this clause must be included in all subcontracts for work to be performed similar to the service provided by the prime contractor, and the terms “contract,” “contractor,” and “contracting officer” modified appropriately to preserve MnDOT’s rights.

Pre-Award Audit Process

The successful responder will be required to submit pre-award audit information and comply with audit standards. Failure to do so may result in disqualification. The Office of Audit reviews various financial documents to assess the financial strength of a grantee or subrecipient.

Post Award Audit Process

The final payment will be based on actual acceptable costs as determined by an audit conducted by the state. The audit will be conducted using the cost principles and procedures set forth in 2 Code of Federal Regulations – (CFR) part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. The state will pay the final payment due within 30 days of completion of the audit.

Title VI Notice

MnDOT, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d to 2000d-4) other nondiscrimination requirements and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement will be awarded without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, income-level, or LEP.

Sample Contract

You should be aware of MnDOT's standard Grant Contract terms and conditions in preparing your response. A sample [State of Minnesota Grant Contract](#) is available for your reference. Much of the language reflected in the Contract is required by statute. If you take exception to any of the terms, conditions, or language in the Contract, you must indicate those exceptions in your response to this RFP; certain exceptions may result in your response being disqualified from further review and evaluation. Only those exceptions indicated in your response to this RFP will be available for discussion or negotiation.

Construction Reporting Requirements

Per the [State Aid Manual](#), Chapter 6 Construction, VI. Payment Provisions, the State Aid Pay Request process will fulfill the reporting requirements and process for each project.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST CHECKLIST AND DISCLOSURE FORM

Purpose of this Checklist This checklist is provided to assist proposers in screening for potential organizational conflicts of interest. The checklist is for the internal use of proposers and does not need to be submitted to MnDOT, however, the “Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest” form must be submitted with your signed contract or along with your proposal/letter of interest.

Definition of “Proposer” As used herein, the word “proposer” includes both the potential Grantee and any sub grantees.

Checklist is Not Exclusive Please note that this checklist serves as a guide only, and that there may be additional potential conflict situations not covered by this checklist. If a proposer determines a potential conflict of interest exists that is not covered by this checklist, that potential conflict must still be disclosed.

Use of the Disclosure Form Proposers must complete the attached disclosure and submit it with their proposal/letter of interest (or separately as directed by MnDOT for projects not awarded through a competitive solicitation). If the proposer determines a potential conflict of interest exists, it must disclose the potential conflict to MnDOT; however, such a disclosure will not necessarily disqualify a proposer from being awarded a contract. To avoid any unfair “taint” of the selection process, the disclosure form should be provided separate from the bound proposal, and it will not be provided to selection committee members. MnDOT’s Contract Management personnel will review the disclosure and the appropriateness of the proposed mitigation measures to determine if the responder may be awarded the contract notwithstanding the potential conflict. MnDOT’s Contract Management personnel may consult with MnDOT’s Project Manager and Department of Administration personnel. By statute, resolution of conflict of interest issues is ultimately at the sole discretion of the Commissioner of Administration.

Material Representation Proposers are required to submit the attached disclosure form either declaring, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that no potential conflict exists, or identifying potential conflicts and proposing remedial measures to ameliorate such conflict. The proposer must also update conflict information if such information changes after the disclosure. Information provided on the form will constitute a material representation as to the award of this contract. MnDOT reserves the right to cancel or amend the resulting contract if the proposer failed to disclose a potential conflict, which it knew or should have known about, or if the proposer provided information on the disclosure form that is materially false or misleading.

Approach to Reviewing Potential Conflicts MnDOT recognizes that proposer’s must maintain business relations with other public and private sector entities in order to continue as viable businesses. MnDOT will take this reality into account as it evaluates the appropriateness of proposed measures to mitigate potential conflicts. It is not MnDOT’s intent to disqualify proposers based merely on the existence of a business relationship with another entity, but rather only when such relationship causes a conflict that potentially impairs the proposer’s ability to provide objective advice to MnDOT. MnDOT would seek to disqualify proposers only in those cases where a potential conflict cannot be adequately mitigated. Nevertheless, MnDOT must follow statutory guidance on organizational conflicts of interest.

Statutory Guidance Minnesota Statutes §16C.02, Subdivision 10(a) places limits on state agencies ability to contract with entities having an “organizational conflict of interest”. For purposes of this checklist and

disclosure requirement, the term “vendor” includes “proposer” as defined above. Pursuant to such statute, “organizational conflict of interest” means that because of existing or planned activities or because of relationships with other persons: (1) the vendor is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the state; (2) the vendor’s objectivity in performing the contract work is or might otherwise be impaired; or (3) the vendor has an unfair advantage.

Additional Guidance for Professionals Licensed by the Minnesota Board of Engineering The Minnesota Board of Engineering has established conflict of interest rules applicable to those professionals licensed by the Board (see Minnesota Rules Part 1805.0300) Subpart 1 of the rule provides “A licensee shall avoid accepting a commission where duty to the client or the public would conflict with the personal interest of the licensee or the interest of another client. Prior to accepting such employment the licensee shall disclose to a prospective client such facts as may give rise to a conflict of interest”.

An organizational conflict of interest may exist in any of the following cases:

- The proposer, or its principals, own real property in a location where there may be a positive or adverse impact on the value of such property based on the recommendations, designs, appraisals, or other deliverables required by this Contract.
- The proposer, or its principals, in previous work for the state has provided the final design or related services that are directly related to performance of work required under this contract. **Comment:** this provision will, for example, disqualify a proposer who performed final design for MnDOT and now seeks to provide construction administration services for that same project. MnDOT believes this is necessary because the firm that prepared the plans may be unable to objectively determine plan errors and omissions. This may cause a situation where: (1) the vendor is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the state; and (2) the vendor’s objectivity in performing the contract work is or might otherwise be impaired.
- The proposer is providing services to another governmental or private entity and the proposer knows or has reason to believe, that entity’s interests are, or may be, adverse to the state’s interests with respect to the specific project covered by this Contract. **Comment:** the mere existence of a business relationship with another entity would not ordinarily need to be disclosed. Rather, this focuses on the nature of services commissioned by the other entity. For example, it would not be appropriate to propose on a MnDOT project if a local government has also retained the proposer for the purpose of persuading MnDOT to stop or alter the project plans.
- The contract is for right-of-way acquisition services or related services (e.g., geotechnical exploration) and the proposer has an existing business relationship with a governmental or private entity that owns property to be acquired pursuant to this contract.
- The proposer is providing real estate or design services to a private entity, including but not limited to developers, whom the responder knows or has good reason to believe, own or are planning to purchase property affected by the project covered by this contract, when the value or potential uses of such property may be affected by the responder’s performance of work pursuant to this contract. “Property affected by the project” includes property that is in, adjacent to, or in reasonable proximity to current or potential right-of-way for the project. The value or potential uses of the private entity’s property may be affected by the proposer’s work pursuant to the contract when such work involves providing recommendations for right-of-way acquisition, access control, and the design or location of frontage roads and interchanges. **Comment:** this provision does not presume proposers know or have a duty to inquire as to all of the business objectives of their clients. Rather, it seeks the disclosure of information regarding cases where the proposer has reason to believe that

its performance of work under this contract may materially affect the value or viability of a project it is performing for the other entity.

- The proposer has a business arrangement with a current MnDOT employee or immediate family member of such employee, including promised future employment of such person, or a subcontracting arrangement with such person, when such arrangement is contingent on the proposer being awarded this contract. This item does not apply to pre-existing employment of current or former MnDOT employees, or their immediate family members. **Comment:** this provision is not intended to supersede any MnDOT policies applicable to its own employees accepting outside employment. This provision is intended to focus on identifying situations where promises of employment have been made contingent on the outcome of this particular procurement. It is intended to avoid a situation where a proposer may have unfair access to “inside” information.
- The proposer has, in previous work for the state, been given access to “data” relevant to this procurement or this project that is classified as “private” or “nonpublic” under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, and such data potentially provides the proposer with an unfair advantage in preparing a proposal for this project. **Comment:** this provision will not, for example, necessarily disqualify a proposer who performed some preliminary work from obtaining a final design contract, especially when the results of such previous work are public data available to all other proposers. Rather, it attempts to avoid an “unfair advantage” when such information cannot be provided to other potential proposers. Definitions of “government data”, “public data”, “non-public data” and “private data” can be found in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13.
- The proposer has, in previous work for the state, helped create the “ground rules” for this solicitation by performing work such as: writing this solicitation, or preparing evaluation criteria or evaluation guides for this solicitation.
- The proposer, or any of its principals, because of any current or planned business arrangement, investment interest, or ownership interest in any other business, may be unable to provide objective advice to the state.

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DISCLOSURE OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Having had the opportunity to review the Organizational Conflict of Interest Checklist, the proposer hereby indicates that it has, to the best of its knowledge and belief:

_____ Determined that no potential organizational conflict of interest exists

_____ Determined a potential organizational conflict of interest exists, as follows:

Describe nature of potential conflict:

Describe measures proposed to mitigate the potential conflict:

Signature

Date

If a potential conflict has been identified, please provide name and phone number for a contact person authorized to discuss this disclosure form with MnDOT contract personnel.

Name

Phone:

STATE OF MINNESOTA
AFFIRMATION OF NONCOLLUSION

Please affirm:

1. That I am the applicant or representative of the applicant entity; and
2. That the grant application in response to this solicitation has been arrived at by the applicant independently or in coordination with a consultant, partnering entity, or project sponsor and has been submitted without collusion and without any agreement, understanding or planned common course of action with any other solicitation applicant designed to limit fair and open competition; and
3. That I am fully informed regarding the accuracy of the statements made in this affirmation.