

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ROADS  
SAFE ROUTES NEBRASKA  
APPLICATION GUIDELINES  
6TH EDITION, 2013



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## ***I. SAFE ROUTES NEBRASKA PROGRAM OVERVIEW***

The purpose of this document is to provide prospective applicants with information on the Safe Routes Nebraska (SRN) Program for use in preparing applications for funding. This document outlines the details of the SRN Program, eligibility criteria, and project selection.

### ***A. SAFE ROUTES NEBRASKA PROGRAM***

The SRN Program is administered by NDOR with oversight by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Selection of projects is made by the SRN Select Committee, a state-wide committee of volunteers with expertise in the funding category. Approved projects are eligible for up to 100% federal funding.

The safe routes program developed for Nebraska is not intended for constructing or resurfacing roadways or simply building and replacing sidewalks. Rather, the intent of the program is to assist local public agencies (LPAs) in implementing projects that **both** enable **and** encourage K-8 children to safely walk and bike to school. Desired outcomes of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program include the following:

- Increased bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic safety
- More children walking and biking to and from schools
- Decreased traffic congestion
- Improved childhood health
- Reduced childhood obesity
- Encouragement of healthy and active lifestyles
- Improved air quality
- Improved community safety
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Increased community security
- Enhanced community accessibility
- Increased community involvement
- Improvements to the physical environment that increase the ability to walk and bicycle to and from schools
- Increased interest in bicycle and pedestrian accommodations throughout a community

### ***B. PROGRAM CONSULTANT***

Prospective applicants may contact the Program Consultant for assistance at any time during the preparation of the application. Application meetings and project site visits will be arranged prior to the Select Committee meeting. For assistance, please contact:

#### ***Sinclair Hille Architects***

*Angela Barry, Safe Routes Nebraska Program Coordinator*

*700 Q Street*

*Lincoln, NE 68508*

*Phone (402) 476-7331 Fax (402) 476-8341*

*abarry@sinclairhille.com*

## II. Funding Eligibility

### A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Most state and local governmental agencies or political subdivisions within the State of Nebraska are eligible to receive funding. This includes most local units of government (villages, cities and counties), Natural Resource Districts, and Nebraska State Agencies. Certain other governmental entities may also be eligible to receive funding.

Schools, school districts, and private nonprofit or civic organizations are not eligible to apply; however, NDOR recognizes that these non-government entities may have strong interest and support for use of these funds. Therefore, we encourage interested non-government entities to work with appropriate local, regional, and state governmental units (including the NDOR's eight district offices) to develop project applications.

NDOR encourages applicants outside a Transportation Management Area (TMA) to contact a professional design engineer for assistance in completing your application. TMAs generally are metropolitan areas with a population greater than 200,000; for Nebraska, that includes the *Lincoln Area Metropolitan Planning Organization* and the *Metropolitan Area Planning Agency*. All services and documents provided by the engineer during the application process are not eligible for federal reimbursement and, should your project be funded, must be provided to the Nebraska Department of Roads prior to receiving a project Program Agreement. There is no standard required process for hiring a design consultant, however, we do recommend you contact Mike Kleffner, NDOR SRN Engineer, at 402-479-4881 with any questions you may have regarding potential conflict of interest issues.

### B. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order for projects to receive funding through the SRTS Program, they must meet the criteria outlined below:

1. Research has shown the most successful way to increase walking and bicycling is through a comprehensive approach that includes the "5 E's" (Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation). **Applicants are required to address, either directly or indirectly, how they are implementing each of the "E's"**. These can be existing programs, enhanced programs, or new programs.

- a) *Engineering* – Creating operational and physical improvements to the infrastructure surrounding schools that reduce speeds and potential conflicts with motor vehicle traffic, and establish safer and fully accessible crossings, walkways, trails, and bikeways.
  - b) *Education* – Teaching children about the broad range of transportation choices, instructing them in important lifelong bicycling and walking safety skills, and launching driver safety campaigns in the vicinity of schools.
  - c) *Encouragement* – Using events and activities to promote walking and bicycling.
  - d) *Enforcement* – Partnering with local law enforcement to ensure traffic laws are obeyed in the vicinity of schools (this includes enforcement of speeds, yielding to pedestrians in crossings, and proper walking and bicycling behaviors).
  - e) *Evaluation* – Monitoring and documenting outcomes and trends through the collection of data, including the collection of data before and after the intervention(s).
2. Projects must comply with all federal and state guidelines and regulations. Federal and state requirements for the program are outlined in *Local Public Agency Guidelines Manual for Federal Aid Projects* (LPA Manual), which is available on-line at <http://www.transportation.nebraska.gov/gov-aff/lpa/lpa-guidelines.pdf>.
  3. Projects must conform to the desired outcomes discussed under section I.A.

**NOTE:** The following resources can be found on-line at

<http://www.saferoutes.nebraska.gov/links.htm>: K-8 Curriculum, Rewards Program Guide, Community Partnership Guide, Walk to School Day Event Planning Guide, Parents' Tutorial, frequent walker/biker cards, stickers, posters, back pack fliers, etc.

### C. *MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS*

All project proposals must meet these three criteria to be eligible for funding consideration:

1. Project proposals must fit within the eligible project category discussed under item III A. Infrastructure.
2. Project proposals must be within approximately **two miles** of a primary or middle school (**grades K-8**).
3. Applicants must provide a written description of how operation and maintenance of the infrastructure project will be provided now and into the future. This should be

presented in the form of a resolution by the governing board of the applicant organization and submitted with the application; see Appendix A for a sample resolution.

**D. APPLICATION PROCESS**

The application process is outlined below:

**Step 1:** Complete Intent-to-Apply Draft Application Form. Please provide a description of the proposed project, and specifically state what aspects of the project will require the use of safe routes funds. Also, include information on what program eligibility requirements the project will fulfill.

Send completed application, by mail or email (Postmark date Dec. 20, 2013), to:

Angela Barry  
Safe Routes Nebraska State Coordinator  
Sinclair Hille Architects  
700 Q Street  
Lincoln, NE 68508  
[abarry@sinclairhille.com](mailto:abarry@sinclairhille.com)

**Step 2:** The Intent to Apply Draft Application will be reviewed by NDOR for preliminary eligibility. If the project meets requirements for eligibility, the applicant will be asked to continue by completing the Final Application form by January 31, 2014. Meetings and project site visits for each eligible application will be scheduled by the Program Consultant after the completed Intent to Apply Draft Application has been submitted.

**Step 3:** A Select Committee meeting will be held in late February 2014; at which, each applicant will be given the opportunity to speak about their proposed project. The Selection Committee will review final project applications and make funding recommendations to the Director of the Department of Roads.

**Step 4:** Notification by the Department of Roads on the funding status of your project.

**E. FUNDING MINIMUM**

The program policy is to award a minimum of **\$500,000** to any individual application. Project applications under \$500,000 will not be accepted.

## F. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

There are several state and federal funding requirements that apply to the Safe Routes Nebraska Program. Some of these requirements include the following:

1. **Inclusion on STIP/TIP:** All projects funded by SRTS monies must be programmed in their metropolitan planning organization's (MPO) or regional planning affiliation's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Applicants should work in close cooperation with their metropolitan planning organization or regional planning affiliation prior to submitting an application, to ensure local support and consistency with regulations. For your convenience contacts for the three Nebraska MPOs are the following:

**Metropolitan Area Planning Association (MAPA):**

Michael Felschow - Transportation & Data Manager; 402-444-6866 Ext. 229

**Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO):**

Michelle Bostinelos – Director, 712-279-6286 Ext. 116

**Lincoln Area Metropolitan Planning Organization:**

Michael Brienzo - Transportation Planner, 402-441-6369

2. **ADA:** Facilities must be designed to reasonably meet the needs of persons with disabilities. In so doing, the applicant must comply with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additional information is available at [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/civilrights/programs/ada\\_sect504qa.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/civilrights/programs/ada_sect504qa.cfm). Please be prepared to discuss within your funding application how you will include students with disabilities within your SRTS Program.
3. **School Route Map Plan:** Applicants are required to provide a school route plan. The plan does not need to be elaborate, but should demonstrate thoughtful consideration between schools, community, and parents regarding the desired school routes for students to travel from their neighborhood to and from school. For assistance in identifying a safe, accessible and direct route, and to view an example school route map; visit: [http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/school\\_route\\_maps\\_and\\_the\\_tools\\_to\\_create\\_them.cfm](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/school_route_maps_and_the_tools_to_create_them.cfm)

Part of the Intent to Apply Draft Application attachment requirement is to complete and submit both the Bikeability Checklist and Walkability Checklist. It is recommended that each applicant complete these checklists prior to developing your proposed school route and project description so that these checklists can serve as a tool to assist in identifying existing concerns and develop a more comprehensive project.

The Bikeability Checklist is available in PDF format at the following web link:  
[http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/Bikeability\\_Checklist.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/resources/Bikeability_Checklist.pdf)

The Walkability Checklist is available in PDF format at the following web link:  
<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/sites/default/files/walkabilitychecklist.pdf>

4. **Sidewalk Width:** The minimum sidewalk or pedestrian zone width (area specifically reserved for pedestrian travel) shall be five feet.
5. **Traffic Control:** Applicants requesting funds for traffic control devices, such as traffic signals, or speed control measures are required to provide evidence of need. This would include, but not be limited to, traffic counts, speed data, pedestrian/auto collision counts, gap studies, etc.

### **III. FUNDING CATEGORY**

The eligible funding category for Fiscal Year 2014 is infrastructure projects.

#### **A. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS**

Eligible infrastructure projects include the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bicycle to school.

Examples of infrastructure projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements:** roundabouts, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crossings, raised intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, full- or half-street closures, automated speed enforcement, and variable speed limits.
- **Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements:** crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, traffic control devices (including new or upgraded traffic signals, pavement markings, and traffic stripes).
- **School walking/biking route improvements:** complete school walking/biking routes by closing gaps in walkway system, allowing for home to school connection.
- **Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities:** exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways that are separated from a roadway.
- **Secure bicycle parking facilities:** bicycle parking racks, bicycle lockers, designated areas with safety lighting, and covered bicycle shelters.
- **Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools:** separation of pedestrians and bicycles from vehicular traffic adjacent to school facilities, and traffic diversion away from school zones or designated routes to a school.

#### **IV. BUDGET PREPARATION**

It is very important that the budgets submitted with the application are carefully developed. Each request for funding must include a budget that lists each individual item of work involved with the project. Applicants are encouraged to contact a professional engineer or architect to assist in the development of project budgets. A sample budget is included on page 9.

##### **A. ENGINEERING AND NEPA COSTS**

**Preliminary Engineering (PE)** is the term used for the preparation of construction plans and specifications. These documents must be prepared and stamped by an engineer or architect registered in the state of Nebraska.

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** is a project development process which supports public involvement and interagency coordination. The NEPA Documentation process is a study of the effects of project implementation on the environment and provides for complete disclosure to the public.

Generally, applicants are encouraged to include approximately 30% for preliminary engineering and NEPA costs in their budgets.

Preliminary engineering and NEPA costs are only eligible for funding under certain conditions. Consultants who are to be paid with Safe Routes to School funds cannot begin work until funding authorization has been given in a letter signed by the Department of Roads. Funds spent by the applicant before the notice is given will not be reimbursed. Furthermore, any work done by a consultant prior to application and funding authorization cannot be paid retroactively with federal funds.

**Construction Engineering (CE)** Project budgets should include approximately 20% of the estimated actual construction costs for construction engineering and contingency. Construction engineering consists of contract administration, construction observation, and testing during construction and should be estimated at 15% of construction costs. A 5% contingency should be included for over-runs and change orders.

**INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT ESTIMATE**

**CONSTRUCTION COSTS**

Item	Unit	No. Req'd	Unit Cost	Cost
Clearing & Grubbing	Acre	7	\$2,300.00	\$16,100.00
Large Tree Removal	Ea.	16	\$400	\$6,400.00
Linear Grading (for RR Grades only)	LIN. FT.	4,800	\$1.45	\$6,960.00
Earthwork (Cut & Fill, N/A for rails on railbeds)	CU. YD.	7,210	\$8.00	\$57,680.00
6" Concrete Bikeway (1)	SQ. FT	52,523	\$3.10	\$162,821.00
Bike Lane Crossing	LF	833	\$30.00	\$24,990.00
Mill Curb	LIN. FT.	182	\$7.00	\$448.00
Retaining Wall	SQ. FT.	526	\$30.00	\$14,550.00
Seeding, Type B	Acre	1.86	\$500.00	\$1,274.00
Detectable Warning Panel	Ea.	42	\$300.00	\$12,600.00
Culvert Pipe, Type 1,2,7, 8 – 15"	LF	103	\$20.00	\$2,060.00
Silt Fence – Low Porosity	LF	220	\$3.00	\$660.00
Remove Walk	SQ. FT.	180	\$5.50	\$990.00
Area Inlet	Ea.	4	\$1,850.00	\$7,400.00
Signage (MUTCD)	Ea.	16	\$200.00	\$3,200.00
<b>CONSTRUCTION COSTS SUBTOTAL</b>				<b>\$318,133.00</b>
Mobilization (2)	LS	1	8% of Subtotal	\$25,451.00
<b>CONSTRUCTION COSTS TOTAL</b>				<b>\$343,584.00</b>

**ENGINEERING COSTS**

Preliminary Engineering (3)	30%	\$103,075.00
Construction Engineering/Contingency (4)	20%	\$68,717.00
NDOR Project Representative Costs (5)		\$7,500.00
<b>ENGINEERING COSTS TOTAL</b>		<b>\$179,292.00</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS</b>		<b>\$522,876.00</b>

**IN-KIND DONATIONS**

Seeding, Type B	Acre	1.86	\$500	\$930
<b>TOTAL IN-KIND DONATIONS</b>				<b>\$930</b>

**FUNDING REQUEST (6)**

ABCD Landscaping - Seeding, Type B	3%	\$930
Federal Funding Requested	97%	\$521,946.00

**NOTES:**

- (1) Include costs for subgrade prep
- (2) Mobilization Costs (Contractor set-up, typically 8% of construction costs subtotal)
- (3) Preliminary Engineering (design, plan preparation, and specifications) is optional, 30% is recommended.
- (4) Construction Engineering/Contingency costs are required at 20% of total project cost.  
These costs include 15% for construction inspection & testing, and 5% for contingencies.

Please clearly identify in-kind labor and/or materials.

Other costs to be aware of when estimating project costs are:

- Railroad crossings & Railroad insurance
- Trails under Bridges
- Pedestrian bridges over streams or rivers
- Existing bridges requiring modification to accommodate 10' wide trail with 2' wide shoulders
- Drainage

To find acres of clearing & grubbing use:

(20 ft. x trail length in feet), divided by 43,560 = acres

To find acres of seeding use:

(20 ft. minus trail width in feet) x trail length,  
divided by 43,560 = acres

(5) NDOR will assign a Project Representative who will monitor the construction progress; this cost is to be capped at 1% of the construction estimate with a minimum of \$5,000, plus \$2,500 for State Audit.

(6) If additional funds are being leveraged, please include the source, percentage of the total project cost, and dollar amount.

**NOTE:** This is only a sample budget. Unit costs may vary for your location.

**NOTE:** The minimum federal request per application is \$500,000.

***B. INELIGIBLE USES OF SAFE ROUTES NEBRASKA FUNDS***

Safe Routes to School funding is not permitted for any of the following purposes:

- Recurring costs such as personnel salaries
- Projects that improve pick-up and drop-off areas for the convenience of drivers rather than to improve child safety and/or walking and bicycling access
- Bus safety programs
- Improving routes to bus stops
- Expenses incurred in preparing the application

The Safe Routes Nebraska Program will only pay for items that are deemed “participating”. Other work items may be considered “non-participating” and are not eligible for reimbursement with safe routes funds. These “non-participating” items can still be included in the project, but must be paid for entirely (100%) by the project owner.

***C. LOCAL MATCH***

Federal legislation states that applicants for safe routes funding are not required to provide a cash match in order to be eligible for funding. However, applicants are encouraged to leverage additional funding sources due to the limited amount of safe routes funding and high demand.

**NOTE:** The ability to provide additional funding toward your safe routes project will not impact the scoring of your funding application.

***V. PROJECT SELECTION***

The selection of projects is made by the Safe Routes Nebraska Select Committee, a state-wide committee of volunteers with expertise in the funding category. The Select Committee will rank funding applications using an established scoring system. Following is a sample score sheet along with the scoring guidelines.

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>NDOR District #:</b>	
<b>Project Type:</b>		
	<i>Pts. Possible</i>	<i>Pts. Awarded</i>
	<i>1=low, 20=high</i>	
<b>1. Funding Criteria</b>		
Budget Accuracy	<b>15</b>	
<b>2. Project Feasibility</b>		
Demonstrates readiness to be constructed and awareness of scope, environmental and ROW issues	<b>20</b>	
<b>3. Project Assessment</b>		
<b>A. Environmental Justice</b>		
Project serves low to moderate income communities	<b>5</b>	
<b>B. Comprehensive Program</b>		
Demonstrates inclusion of "5E's" (engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation)	<b>20</b>	
<b>C. Problem Identification &amp; Solution</b>		
Successful identification of problem(s) and most cost-efficient solution(s)	<b>20</b>	
<b>D. Concept &amp; Quality</b>		
Concept of project and meeting desired program outcomes	<b>20</b>	
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>

## 1. FUNDING CRITERIA

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### BUDGET ACCURACY

- 15 Points.** Budget is complete AND unit costs (per AUP) and quantities appear accurate.
- 12 Points.** Budget is complete BUT unit costs and/or quantities don't appear accurate.
- 9 Points.** Budget is not complete BUT unit costs and/or quantities appear accurate.
- 6 Points.** Budget is not complete AND unit costs and quantities don't appear accurate.
- 3 Point.** Project is significantly over or under budgeted.
- 0 Points.** Project budget not provided.

## 2. PROJECT FEASIBILITY

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### PROJECT SCOPING, ENVIRONMENTAL AND RIGHT-OF-WAY NEEDS IDENTIFIED

- 20 Points.** Project Scope Identified, Environmental Issues Identified, and Right-of-Way Issues Identified.
- 15 Points.** Project Scope Identified, Environmental Issues Identified, Right-of-Way Issues Not Identified.
- 10 Points.** Project Scope Identified, Environmental Issues Not Identified, Right-of-Way Issues Identified.
- 5 Points.** Project Scope Identified, Environmental Issues Not Identified, Right-of-Way Issues Not Identified.
- 0 Points.** Project feasibility appears doubtful.

## 3. PROJECT ASSESSMENT

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### A. COMMUNITY LOW TO MODERATE INCOME (LMI) LIMITS

- 5 Points.** 46% or more of the community within the project area falls within the LMI limits.
- 4 Points.** 40% to 45% of the community within the project area falls within the LMI limits.
- 3 Points.** 35% to 39% of the community within the project area falls within the LMI limits.
- 2 Points.** 30% to 34% of the community within the project area falls within the LMI limits.
- 1 Point.** 25% to 29% of the community within the project area falls within the LMI limits.
- 0 Points.** 25% or less of the community within the project area falls within the LMI limits.

## **B. COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM**

- 20 Points.** Project addresses all five “E’s” of a comprehensive safe routes to school program AND the Applicant already incorporates these activities into their current programs.
- 18 Points.** Project addresses three to four of the five “E’s” of a comprehensive safe routes to school program AND the Applicant already incorporates these activities into their current programs.
- 13 Points.** Project addresses three to four of the five “E’s” of a comprehensive safe routes to school program AND the Applicant does not currently incorporate these activities into their current programs.
- 10 Points.** Project addresses two or less of the five “E’s” of a comprehensive safe routes to school program AND the Applicant already incorporates these activities into their current programs.
- 5 Points.** Project addresses two or less of the five “E’s” of a comprehensive safe routes to school program AND the Applicant does not currently incorporate SRN activities into their current programs.
- 0 Points.** The project does not address the five “E’s” and no SRN activities are being incorporated into current programs.

## **C. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION & SOLUTION**

- 20 Points.** Project makes significant contribution to solving the problem that hinders students’ ability to walk and bicycle to/from school
- 15 Points.** Project makes somewhat significant contribution to solving the problem that hinders students’ ability to walk and bicycle to/from school
- 10 Points.** Project makes moderate contribution to solving the problem that hinders students’ ability to walk and bicycle to/from school
- 5 Points.** Project makes little contribution to solving the problem that hinders students’ ability to walk and bicycle to/from school
- 0 Points.** No apparent contribution to solving the problem that hinders students’ ability to walk and bicycle to/from school

## **D. CONCEPT & QUALITY**

- 20 Points.** High quality concept that is very likely to result in multiple desired outcomes
- 15 Points.** Moderate quality concept that is somewhat likely to result in multiple desired outcomes
- 5 Points.** Low quality concept that will unlikely result in desired outcomes
- 0 Points.** Project is not sound and eligibility is questionable

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE APPLICANT TITLE (i.e. Mayor, Superintendent) AND APPLICANT GOVERNING BOARD (i.e. City Council, Board of Directors) OF THE APPLICANT NAME (i.e. City of Chadron-Nebraska, Chadron Public Schools):

WHEREAS, the Applicant Name, proposed to apply for assistance from the SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM for the purpose of brief project description, and

WHEREAS, the Applicant Name has available the funds to finance the activity until reimbursed by the Safe Routes to School Program, and the financial capability to operate, maintain, and manage the completed project in a safe and attractive manner for public use; and

WHEREAS, the proposed application and supporting documents were made available for public review at a properly announced meeting of the Applicant Name;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE APPLICANT TITLE AND APPLICANT GOVERNING BOARD OF THE APPLICANT NAME that the Applicant Name applies for assistance from the Safe Routes to School Program for the purpose of brief project description.

Passed and approved this (insert date).

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Mayor/Superintendent*

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*City Clerk*