

NOTICE OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY

**Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)
Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program Grant Solicitation
2023 Solicitation Guide**

Note: This document is available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities by emailing ADArequest.dot@state.mn.us or for persons who have a hearing or speech difference by calling the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529. This grant announcement does not obligate MnDOT to award a grant, 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 Office of 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 solicitations for the SRTS infrastructure funds to local agencies (city, county, township), federally recognized Indian tribes, and schools and school districts. OTAT administers solicitations for non-infrastructure SRTS funds under separate solicitations. For this 2023 SRTS infrastructure solicitation, a total of \$10.9 million in grant funds are available.

Program Goal

SALT administers the state SRTS infrastructure program with guidance from the 2023 AT (Active Transportation) & SRTS Infrastructure Advisory Committee. 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 2023 AT & SRTS Infrastructure Advisory Committee to provide financial assistance to eligible recipients to construct school-adjacent pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements.

Solicitation Timeline

The solicitation schedule for funding is provided below.

- **Monday, October 9th, 2023** – SRTS Infrastructure Program solicitation kick-off. Open letter of intent period
- **Thursday, November 9th, 2023** – Deadline for applicants to submit letters of intent
- **Wednesday, November 22nd, 2023** – Deadline for MnDOT to review letters of intent. Recommendation to proceed with full application sent to applicants.
- **Monday, November 27th, 2023** – Opening date for full application submittals
- **Friday, February 2nd, 2024** – Deadline for applicants to submit full applications
- **April or May, 2024** – Project selection finalized, and award letters distributed to selected projects pending volume of applications received

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 provide the required match for a federally funded that includes active transportation components. 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 agency.

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 active transportation components. Construction cannot begin until a grant agreement is executed between MnDOT and the applicant agency.

1. *Construction Project (No federal funding)*

This option is available for communities that have a project identified in their SRTS plan or other planning document and need funds to implement the improvements. This option may be used to fund up to 100% of eligible SRTS construction costs. Projects should be planned for construction in 2024 or 2025.

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

Funds may be used for the local or Tribal share on federally funded projects with active transportation 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 2024 or 2025.

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 2024 or 2025 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 agency's city council or county board supporting the project, agreeing to act as the project sponsor, and perform the lead agency 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 agency 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 school or school district applicants whose projects will be constructed entirely on school property.

Eligible Entities

The 2023 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 lead agency sponsor. Note that a resolution of support is required from the applicant agency's governing council and from the lead agency sponsor's governing council or board. Additionally, resolutions of support must be submitted from all non-Tribal agencies that will have property or right-of-way impacted by this project. Eligible applicants include:

- Schools, both public and private
- School districts
- Townships
- Non-State Aid Cities
- State Aid Cities
- Counties
- Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

Lead Agency 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:

- Be the fiscal agent on behalf of the applicant and have funds flow from MnDOT to the state aid city or county to the contractor
- Request SAP/SP number for the project
- Ensure the project meets milestones and dates
- Assist local agency in execution of a grant agreement
- Develop, review and/or approve the plan
- Submit plan, engineers estimate, and proposal to the District State Aid Engineer (DSAE)
- Advertise, let, and award the project
- Submit pay requests to State Aid
- Communicate progress and updates with the DSAEs and State Aid State Programs Engineer or Active Transportation Engineer
- Ensure that the project receives adequate supervision and inspection
- Assist with project close out

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 agency 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 *Lead Agency 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: Show 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
- 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 application.**

Questions

Applicants who have any questions regarding this grant program may submit questions by e-mail to:

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

Questions must be submitted prior to 4:30 pm on January 26, 2024, 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 Information

1. Name (First Name & Last Name): Provide the name of the contact person at the local or Tribal agency applying for the funds. This person should be the person to contact with questions about the application and who represents the agency submitting the project.
2. Agency Name: The name of the agency 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 agency applying for the funds.
5. Email: The work email address of the person at the agency applying for the funds.
6. Agency type: Select the appropriate agency type radio button for the submitting agency: 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 agency.
8. City: The city where the agency is located.
9. State: This will always be Minnesota.
10. Zip Code: The zip code where the agency is located.

11. County: For non-Tribal applicants, select the county where the agency is located from the dropdown list.
12. MnDOT District: Select the appropriate MnDOT district in which the proposed project would be constructed.

B. Lead Agency Sponsor Information

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

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

C. Project Funding

1. SRTS 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. 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)

E. 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 agency. 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. 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. 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.

F. Funding Sources

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 additional details on 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.

G. Eligibility Check

Proposed projects must verify their project qualifies for the listed requirements below. Responding “no” to any of the following questions means the project is ineligible for funding through this program. **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 each entity requirement.**

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 this document for attachment to the application.

2. School, school district, township, and non-state aid city applicants will need a state aid city or county to serve as their lead agency project sponsor. If a lead agency sponsor is required, the applicant must have a **full resolution** (not just a letter of support) from the sponsoring county or state aid city agreeing to serve as a sponsor and to support the project by performing tasks identified above in section “Lead Agency Sponsor”. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and has obtained this document 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) whose property or right-of-way will be impacted by the proposed project. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and has obtained, if required, this document from all impacted entities for attachment to the application.
4. Projects constructed with this grant funding must have an expected service life of 10 years minimum. The applicant affirms to the best of their current knowledge and belief that this requirement will be met.
5. Projects are required to be ready for construction in 2024 or 2025. The applicant understands this eligibility requirement and will award a contract and be under construction by December 15, 2025.
6. 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, this document for attachment to the application.
7. Township, City, County, and Tribal 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 via ordinance or other language that demonstrates how it is applied to the application.
8. Only construction costs are eligible for the program. Development of engineering and construction plans are not eligible nor are right of way acquisition costs. All awarded projects must follow the State Aid process, which includes 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.
9. Safe Routes to School funds cannot be used to pay school, local agency or federally recognized Indian Tribe staff time to construct or install any improvements. School, local agency or federally recognized Indian Tribe staff time is not an eligible cost for the program. All awarded 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.

H. 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 agency for follow-up evaluations.
4. Phone: the phone number that can be best used to contact the local or Tribal agency for follow-up evaluations.

II. Project Improvements & Safety

I. 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

J. 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. Please use this space to more completely list and 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)

4. Does the school(s) or school district have a no walking and/or bicycling to school policy? Check yes or no. If yes, please describe this policy and attach it to the application.
5. Does the school(s) provide hazard busing? Hazard busing refers to school bus services provided to students who live in the immediate proximity of the school because of a safety hazard to walking or biking near the school. Check yes or no. If yes, please describe this service and the specific safety hazard being avoided.
6. Does the school(s) district have plans to relocate or repurpose the school facilities within the next 10 years? Check yes or no. If yes, please describe these plans.
7. Does the school(s) or school district promote any activities or policies to encourage students walking and bicycling? Check yes or no. If yes, please describe these activities and policies.
8. What percentage of students walk or bike to school?
9. What percentage of students take the bus to school?

K. 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, these exhibits should be referenced in the description. Exhibits attached to the application without context in the description may not earn the applicant any additional points.

L. Project Improvements

Destinations: Explain how listed improvements would connect schools within your community. (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 K. Types of Improvements” would mitigate the safety risks and hazards described in “Section J. 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

M. Plans, Policies, & Studies

1. Does the school(s) have a Safe Routes to School plan?
 - If yes, in which year did the school adopt the plans?
 - If yes, attach the most recent plan 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 the listed plan?
 - If yes, provide the page number(s) on which the project is identified.
 - If no, have the improvements been identified in any other planning document or study?
 - If yes, please attach to the application and provide the page number(s) on which the project is identified.
4. Explain how the proposed improvements in this project were identified, planned, and prioritized. This includes any community engagement or public outreach activities. (800 character maximum)
5. Has the applicant agency or sponsor adopted a complete streets policy?
 - If yes, in which year did the local governing agency adopt the policy?
 - If yes, attach the complete streets policy to the application.
 - If no, list any applicant agency adopted transportation policies that promote safe walking, biking, and rolling and attach to the application.

IV. Equity Score

N. Implementing the 6E Strategies

Check any 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

O. Advancing Equity

1. Describe how this project will advance equity in your community. This should be specific to how this project will benefit students traveling to and from school in your community. Equity means that every person is able to safely, comfortably, and conveniently walk, bike, and roll, regardless of race, cultural identity, Tribal affiliation, immigrant or refugee status, language, gender or sexual identity, income, religion, and whether or not a student receives special education, has a physical or mental disability, or is homeless or highly mobile. An equity approach requires working with local partners to tailor programs and allocate resources to meet the unique needs of the community. (1600 character maximum)
2. Describe how this project will serve and protect priority populations in your community. Priority populations include individuals, groups, and communities who are more likely to rely on walking, biking, rolling, or transit for transportation; are more vulnerable to unsafe traffic conditions; or have suffered historic disinvestment in safe and comfortable, walking, biking, and rolling infrastructure. (1600 character maximum)

P. 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 applying 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 agency resolution of support, including approved resolutions from any non-Tribal agency (except MnDOT) that owns or

manages right-of-way that will be impacted with SRTS-eligible infrastructure improvements (*)

- For non-School or School District 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. (*)
- An approved sponsor resolution (if applicable)
- Approved Letter of support from MnDOT District Engineer if the project has MnDOT trunk highway projects
- Engineering or planning based cost estimate with itemized breakdown (*)
- A timeline indicating major milestones of the project and their anticipated completion dates (*)
- Awarded federal SRTS application and federal award letter (if requesting local match for federal project)

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

- SRTS or other planning document 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
- 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.

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.

Application Submittal

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 27, 2023.

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 February 2, 2024.

Proposal Evaluation

Representatives of MnDOT will evaluate all responses received by the deadline. 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	50%
Planning & Public Engagement	25%
SRTS Equity Score	25%

MnDOT anticipates that the evaluation and selection will be completed by April or May 2024, 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. 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.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST CHECKLIST AND DISCLOSURE FORM

Purpose of this Checklist This checklist is provided to assist responders in screening for potential organizational conflicts of interest. The checklist is for the internal use of responders and does not need to be submitted to MnDOT, however, the Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest form should be submitted in a separate envelope along with your proposal.

Definition of “Responder” As used herein, the word “Responder” 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 responder 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 A responder must complete the attached disclosure form and submit it with their Proposal (or separately as directed by MnDOT for projects not awarded through a competitive solicitation). If a responder determines a potential conflict of interest exists, it must disclose the potential conflict to MnDOT; however, such a disclosure will not necessarily disqualify a responder 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 The responder is required to submit the attached disclosure form either declaring, to the best of its knowledge and belief, either that no potential conflict exists, or identifying potential conflicts and proposing remedial measures to ameliorate such conflict. The responder must also update conflict information if such information changes after the submission of the proposal. 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 successful responder failed to disclose a potential conflict, which it knew or should have known about, or if the responder provided information on the disclosure form that is materially false or misleading.

Approach to Reviewing Potential Conflicts MnDOT recognizes that responder’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 responders 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 responder’s ability to provide objective advice to MnDOT. MnDOT would seek to disqualify responders 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 “Responder” 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 responder, 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 responder is providing services to another governmental or private entity and the responder 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 responder 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 responder has an existing business relationship with a governmental or private entity that owns property to be acquired pursuant to the Contract.
- The responder 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 responder’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 responders 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 responder 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 responder 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 responder 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 responder may have unfair access to “inside” information.

- The responder 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 responder with an unfair advantage in preparing a proposal for this project. **Comment:** this provision will not, for example, necessarily disqualify a responder 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 responders. Rather, it attempts to avoid an “unfair advantage” when such information cannot be provided to other potential responders. Definitions of “government data”, “public data”, “non-public data” and “private data” can be found in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13.
- The responder 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 responder, 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 responder 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 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: