

**STATE-LEGISLATED SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SR2S)
PROGRAM GUIDELINES
CYCLE 10**

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EXHIBITS

(THE EXHIBIT IS POSTED ON THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL WEB SITE)

Exhibit	Description
A	APPLICATION FORM

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STATE-LEGISLATED SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SR2S) PROGRAM

1 INTRODUCTION

California was the first state in the country to legislate a Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program. This occurred in 1999 with the enactment of AB 1475. In 2007, AB 57 was passed which extended the program indefinitely. On September 7, 2011, AB 516 was approved which revised a rating factor and added another factor in the evaluation of project applications. These changes have been incorporated in Section 4, Rating Factors (RF), of these guidelines. For more information on the legislative history of the program, go to: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov>

Section 2333.5 of the Streets and Highways Code calls for the Department of Transportation, in consultation with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), to make grants available to local governmental agencies under the program based upon the results of a statewide competition.

The goals of the program are to reduce injuries and fatalities to school children and to encourage increased walking and bicycling among students.

The program achieves these goals by constructing facilities that enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, primarily students in grades K-12 who walk or bicycle to school. By enhancing the safety of the pathways, trails, sidewalks, and crossings, the likelihood of attracting and encouraging other students to walk and bike increases.

This California SR2S program should not be confused with the federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program authorized under SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users). Although both programs have similar goals and objectives, their funding source, local funding match requirements and other program requirements are different. Please visit the Safe Routes to School web site at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm> for additional information on the SR2S and SRTS programs.

2 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The applicant is the agency that assumes responsibility and accountability for the use and expenditure of SR2S funds. The applicant must be an incorporated city or a county within the State of California. Unincorporated communities are encouraged to work closely with their local Public Works or Engineering Department in the application process.

3 FUNDING FACTS

The SR2S program is a reimbursement program. Funding is derived from the State Highway Account (SHA) in the annual budget development process. The amount of funding available in each cycle will depend on how well the program competes against all the other transportation programs funded by the SHA.

The Division of Local Assistance (DLA) at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Headquarters will announce a call for projects and allocate funding to each District based on student enrollment figures obtained from the California Department of Education.

With each cycle, the DLA will establish a one or two-year project list. Districts with low student enrollment - Districts 01, 02, and 09 - will receive a minimum allocation based upon available funds. For Cycle 10, the funding will consist of two year's allocation.

The maximum reimbursement percentage for any SR2S project is ninety (90) percent. The maximum amount of SR2S funds that will be allocated to any single project is \$450,000.

If the total cost for a project exceeds \$500,000 (\$450,000 reimbursable), the applicant must fund the balance of the project cost with other funds.

Section IV of the Application Form provides a table where the applicant can show funding arrangements for the project.

Requests to increase project reimbursement costs will not be granted except in unusual circumstances and subject to the availability of funds. Projects that have a construction award lower than the allocation will not be allowed to increase the project scope to use the excess funds.

4 RATING FACTORS

Projects will be rated on the basis of applicant responses to weighted questions in the application which are designed to cover the following broad areas:

- 1) Demonstrated needs of the applicant.
- 2) Potential of the proposal for reducing child injuries and fatalities.
- 3) Potential of the proposal for encouraging increased walking and bicycling among students.
- 4) Identification of safety hazards
- 5) Identification of current and potential walking and bicycling routes to school.
- 6) Use of a public participation process, including, but not limited to, a public meeting that satisfies all of the following:
 - a) Involves the public, schools, parents, teachers, local agencies, the business community, key professionals, and others
 - b) Identifies community priorities and gathers community input to guide the development of projects included in the proposal
 - c) Ensures that community priorities are reflected in the proposal
 - d) Secures support for the proposal by relevant stakeholders
- 7) Benefit to a low-income school, defined for the purposes of this section to mean a school where at least 75 percent of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program.

Scoring rubrics will accompany each of the questions to help both the applicant and evaluator determine the adequacy of responses. Other general factors include: consistency with the communities' general plan, practicality of the proposed project, completeness and accuracy of the application, funding history, and past project delivery performance.

5 ELIGIBLE PROJECT COMPONENTS

The SR2S program funds construction projects to improve the safety of students who walk or bike to school. Improvements must be made on public property.

Incidental costs are eligible for reimbursement up to a total of 10% of the construction total cost. Examples of such costs are:

- Costs for programs or activities related to education, enforcement or encouragement activities.
- Construction improvements on public school grounds consistent with the scope of the project.

A SR2S project can have several components. The following categories of work identify components that are eligible for reimbursement. Notations are made on components where eligibility could be questionable. When in doubt, contact your Caltrans District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE). For names and contact information, go to: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/dlae.htm>

Pedestrian facilities: Includes new sidewalks, sidewalk widening, sidewalk gap closures, curbs, gutters, and curb ramps. Also includes new pedestrian trails, paths and pedestrian over- and under-crossings. Because all pedestrian projects must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the city/county must obtain project approval from the State Architect on the plans and specifications. Refer to **ADA REQUIREMENTS** in Section 8 below.

Note: Sidewalk repairs are ineligible. Applicants that propose sidewalk repairs will need to explain why the procedures contained in Streets and Highways Code Section 5611 cannot be exercised to repair the sidewalk. This section allows municipalities to instruct property owners to repair sidewalks on, or fronting, their property.

Traffic calming: Includes roundabouts, bulb-outs, speed humps, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, median refuges, narrowed traffic lanes, lane reductions, full- or half-street closures, and other speed reduction techniques.

Note: Improvements to pick-up and drop-off areas are ineligible. The goal of this program is to encourage students to walk and bicycle to school.

Traffic control devices: Includes new or upgraded traffic signals, crosswalks, pavement markings, traffic signs, traffic stripes, in-roadway crosswalk lights, flashing beacons, bicycle-sensitive signal actuation devices, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicle speed feedback signs, pedestrian activated signal upgrades, and all other pedestrian- and bicycle-related traffic control devices.

Note: Applications that include traffic control devices that require minimum ‘warrants’ to be satisfied prior to their installation must attach the warrant sheets to the application. Traffic control devices that are not included in the most current *California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (California MUTCD) will not be approved for installation unless the applicant follows the processes described below under “Use of Experimental Traffic Control Devices”.

Bicycle facilities: Includes new or upgraded bikeways, trails, paths, geometric improvements, shoulder widening, and bicycle parking facilities, racks and lockers.

Note: Pavement repairs and rehabilitation of traffic lanes are ineligible.

Public Outreach and Education/Encouragement/Enforcement: These activities may include, but are not limited to: installing bicycle racks/lockers on school grounds, preparing and distributing safety and health awareness materials, coordinating “walking school bus” efforts, developing education programs for school personnel, students, parents, and other partners and stakeholders, etc.

Note: Compensation for crossing guards is ineligible.

General note regarding all categories: Ineligible project components may be included in the project scope as long as they are identified by the applicant on the drawings and listed in the Engineer’s Estimate as non-participating items. If you have questions about the eligibility of components in your project, contact your Caltrans DLAE.

USE OF EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Applicants that propose to install an experimental traffic control device on a public roadway must follow the process prescribed in Section 1A.10 of the California MUTCD. Go to <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/signtech/mutcdsupp/index.htm> for more information.

6 ELIGIBLE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Project implementation activities that are eligible for reimbursement include:

- Preliminary engineering:
 - Environmental clearance
 - Preparation of Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E)
- Right-of-way:
 - Engineering
 - Appraisals and acquisition
 - Utility Relocation
- Construction:
 - Construction costs
 - Construction engineering
- Outreach and Public education/encouragement/enforcement

7 SCHOOL CLOSURES

In the event that a school(s) included in an approved project is closed by the School District, notification must be made to the DLAE within three months of the school(s) closure. The project funds will be disencumbered and will not be transferred to another project in the region. If school(s) targeted for closure are among multiple schools identified in a project, a revised application must be submitted for the determination of continued funding. The amount of funding to remain encumbered on the project will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

8 DESIGN STANDARDS

All bikeway projects shall be designed in accordance with the Caltrans *Highway Design Manual* and the California MUTCD. Exceptions to these standards will be handled in accordance with the exception approval process described in each manual. All other projects shall be designed in accordance with the appropriate design standards applicable to the type and location of the improvement.

Chapter 11, “Design Standards” of the *Local Assistance Procedures Manual* (LAPM) describes statewide design standards, specifications, procedures, guides, and references that are acceptable in the geometric, drainage, and structural design of Local Assistance projects. The chapter also describes design exception approval procedures. These standards and procedures shall be used for all SR2S projects.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT REQUIREMENTS

All projects will be subject to meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). For more information on ADA compliance, please refer to Chapter 11, “Design Standards,” of the LAPM, or go to the Division of Local Assistance web site at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/DBE_CRLC/DBE_CRLC.html#ADA.

The California Division of State Architect (DSA) promulgates regulations and building standards which generally prescribe a standard of accessibility or usability equal to, or greater than those provided by the Accessibility Guidelines prepared by the Federal Access Board as adopted by the United States Department of Justice to implement the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336). The DSA web site, which includes a current publication of “*DSA’s California Access Compliance Manual*”, is located at: <http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/>.

Local agency plans and specifications that do not follow Caltrans 2010 standard plans or specifications for pedestrian facilities to be constructed with State funds must be reviewed and approved by DSA. The local agency will obtain DSA approval of the plans and specifications, and pay fees directly to DSA. DSA also uses Plan Review consultants that have been trained and are under contract to DSA, to certify that the plans and specifications are in full compliance with current ADA standards. DSA can be contacted for the names, telephone numbers, etc. of their Senior Architects in the appropriate Regional Offices at the above mentioned web site.

9 APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

The Application Form (Exhibit A – available on the SR2S web site) must be completed in its entirety. It must not exceed thirty one-sided pages in length. Exceptions may be made for applications in large urban areas involving a large number of schools. It must be bound only by a staple in the upper left hand corner.

Applications (the original, one color copy, and copy on CD) must be received in the appropriate Caltrans District Office by close of business or postmarked on the established due date.

Any maps, schematics, drawings or letters of support that are attached to the application should be made on 8-1/2" x 11" paper (11" x 17" plan layouts are preferred for plan checking purposes). However, the attachment must be folded to meet 8-1/2" x 11" dimensions.

Sections I - IV of the Application Form request basic information on the applicant, the project location, the proposed improvements and their costs. The editable fields are formatted to allow a limited number of characters on each line.

Section II requests the applicant to identify the school(s) by county-district-school (CDS) code. For information, go to: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ds/>. It is critical that the physical street address of the school(s)/school district(s) along with zip code be furnished for each school listed in the application. This information is necessary for notifying State Legislators of successful projects within their districts and for the evaluation of the program.

The applicant must provide information regarding student enrollment and the percentage of children eligible in the free and reduced price meal program. The applicant should also provide information on the numbers of students living along school routes proposed for improvement.

In Section III, the applicant must describe the project and its location relative to the school(s). These descriptions are limited to **250** characters allowed in the application form. Standard abbreviations in the description are preferred (e.g. ES for Elementary School or St. for Street). The state legislative districts must also be submitted based upon the project location.

The applicant must indicate the number of applications being submitted for review. If more than one application is being submitted, the applications must be ranked and prioritized with the priority of each application provided. The project selection committees will take the priorities into account when rating applications, but the priority assigned by the applicant does not guarantee a higher-ranked application being funded before a lower-ranked application.

It is highly recommended that environmental justice principles be used to prioritize project applications. Refer to the Environmental Justice Desk Guide at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/sr2s.htm>

Section IV requires the applicant to include cost estimates for all phases of the project.

The applicant must decide if the project selection committee can reduce the scope and the cost of a project if it contains ineligible or ineffective components.

Section V requires the applicant to estimate completion dates for major milestones.

Section VI contains six questions the applicant must answer in essay form. The responses to the questions are limited to 3000 characters.

The applicant's success in collaborating with the public, schools, parents, teachers, local agencies, the business community, key professionals and relevant stakeholders in developing a comprehensive and unified solution to bicycle/pedestrian safety problems that identifies community priorities through a public participation process will be taken into account as a rating factor in the application.

It is advised that applicants submit not more than three project applications. Applicants must prioritize candidate projects and focus on preparing excellent applications for the most deserving schools. It is rare when any single local agency receives funding for more than one project in a single funding cycle. Exceptions to this rule might apply to the few local agencies and counties with large unincorporated areas in the state that have hundreds of schools under their jurisdiction.

Section VI also requires applicants to submit the following attachments:

- A general map showing the location of all proposed improvements and their proximity to the school and school routes.
- A site plan for each improvement location showing existing and proposed conditions
- A detailed engineer's estimate
- Applicable warrants for projects with traffic control devices
- Non-infrastructure activity worksheet, if applicable

It is also advised that the following documents be submitted with the applications:

- Photographs
- Letters of support or commitment
- An incident or crash summary table
- Collision diagram
- SafeTREC SRTS Maps located at:
<http://tims.berkeley.edu/resources/srts/main.php>

When preparing the Detailed Engineer's Estimate, download the document provided on the SR2S website. The construction costs tabulated in the detailed engineer's estimate should equal the construction costs shown in Section IV.

Section VII requires the City Engineer or Public Works Director or designee sign the application to certify that the project is viable from an engineering perspective, and to agree to operate and maintain the facility once it is constructed. The School Principal, District Official, or designee is also required to sign the application to certify that the school supports the project and that there are no schools targeted for closure in the project. Applications submitted without appropriate signatures will be disqualified from review.

If the SR2S project proposes improvements on a freeway or a state highway that affects the safety or operations of the facility, the application must be reviewed and approved by the Caltrans District Traffic Operations Office.

If the SR2S project encompasses a freeway, state highway or county road where the CHP has enforcement authority, the application must be approved, and signed, by an official of the CHP. It is recommended that all other projects be endorsed by the local law enforcement agency.

10 PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS

Funds will be apportioned to each Caltrans District on the basis of student enrollment as determined by the California Department of Education. Student enrollment figures may be found at the following website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sh/cw/filesafdc.asp>. An original, color hard-copy and copy on CD of each application must be submitted to the DLAE on or before the due date. Those postmarked on the due date are acceptable. The DLAE will assemble a District Project Selection Committee comprised of Caltrans engineers and planners, CHP, law enforcement officers, and any other interested local/regional stakeholders to score and select projects up to their funding limit. Districts will submit their project list along with a hard copy of each selected application and electronic copy of the pdf form to the Safe Routes to School Coordinator at Caltrans Headquarters. A DLA team will validate District selections in terms of project eligibility, cost, scope, delivery; and compile a statewide recommended project list for Director approval. The DLA will play a strong oversight role during this process to ensure consistency and uniformity among all Districts.

All local agencies submitting applications will be notified of the results by the DLAE. The approved project list will be posted on the SR2S website at: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/saferoutes.htm

11 PROJECT DELIVERY AND MONITORING

The status of all projects will be monitored by the DLA. The DLA will track the following delivery milestones:

- Project Funds Allocated within 6 months of Approved Project List
- Award of Construction Contract within 30 months (2 years) of Approved Project List
- Close-out of Project within 54 months (4 ½ years) of Approved Project List

A status report showing the delivery performance of the Cycle 9 awarded projects will be posted at the SR2S website.

Projects that are on or ahead of schedule will be identified with a green checkmark. Projects that are behind schedule will be identified with a red flag. Red flags will be removed in later reports after the agency has completed the milestone.

Caltrans will not accept SR2S applications from agencies in responsible charge of projects with red flags on the current status report at the application deadline. If the agency has an updated project status not reflected in the current report, please contact the DLAE for status change requests.

Invoices for payment must be submitted a minimum every six (6) months in order for a project to be considered active.

Local agencies should refer to the General Guide for Implementing State-funded Safe Routes to School Projects posted on the SR2S website at:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoutes/documents/Rev_SR2S_Implementation_Instructions3.doc

For SR2S projects involving lengthy delivery elements, (i.e. right-of-way acquisition or environmental permits from outside or regulatory agencies), Caltrans recommends agencies consider alternatives to reduce the risk that they will miss the delivery requirements and be excluded from future funding until after the project is completed. Some possible alternatives include:

1. Completing all or part of the PE Phase before requesting SR2S funding.
2. Down-scoping the project to avoid the environmental, right-of-way or other project components that can cause the project to miss the delivery milestones.
 - a. Down-scoping the project should not reduce the net safety benefits of a given project.
3. Selecting a different project with equal or similar safety benefits that can be delivered on an expedited schedule.

It is understood that many local agencies may request SR2S funding as local match funds for critical, complex, lengthy and higher cost safety projects. For this reason, Caltrans will rate those types of projects similarly to other projects and leave the decision up to the local agency to seek safety funding with the understanding that there is a high risk that their project will miss the delivery requirements, be flagged, and the agency will be excluded from future funding under that program until after the project is completed.

12 EVALUATIONS

Successful applicants may be asked to conduct a before/after study or they may be asked to provide data to other researchers who are evaluating the program's effectiveness. Successful applicants should assist researchers when asked to do so. Safety deficiencies that are corrected by this program may justify continued or increased funding in future budgets.

13 REFERENCES

California Streets and Highways Code, Sections 890-894 and 2330-2334
Caltrans *Local Assistance Program Guidelines*
Caltrans *Local Assistance Procedures Manual*
Caltrans *Local Program Procedures*
Caltrans *Highway Design Manual*
California MUTCD
AASHTO: *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*
AASHTO: *Highway Safety Manual*
California Department of State Architect: *California Access Compliance Manual*
Caltrans *Environmental Justice Desk Guide*